Discipline and Learn

Theorising the Pedagogic Body
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The work presented in this thesis is to the best of my knowledge and belief original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in whole or part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

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*Discipline and Learn: Theorising the Pedagogic Body*

by

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A thesis presented to the University of Western Sydney in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

March 2003
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Acknowledgments

There are many people who contributed to this thesis. I’d firstly like to thank the principals, teachers and students in the two schools in which I conducted my research. Each school welcomed me warmly providing as much assistance as possible over the course of the year in which I visited classes and held interviews. The six teachers, however, deserve a special mention as without them there would be no thesis. They not only allowed me into their classrooms to observe their practice but were always on hand to answer questions and provide me with copies of students’ texts and other materials vital in researching this topic.

My principal supervisor, David McInnes, contributed invaluable guidance and support, always encouraging me to have faith in the strength of my empirical data to demonstrate the theoretical basis of this thesis. Thanks are also due to Cate Poynton who supervised this thesis in its early stages but due to illness was unable to continue.

A number of people provided thoughtful feedback on various chapters which assisted me in framing my argument. These people include Jay Johnson, Judith Kemphorne, Caroline Moir and Alison Lee. Sue Jackson, Elaine Lally and Peter Knapp assisted with the layout and design of the thesis and Leanne Harrison deserves particular thanks for drawing the classroom diagrams.

I’d also like to thank my mother and stepfather, Gwen and Keith Poole, who were always on hand to provide childcare assistance and numerous other forms of support affording me the time and space to write. My son, Declan, who was conceived and commenced school during the research and writing of this thesis, unknowingly provided a great deal of assistance in formulating key arguments for the thesis. Observing him as he made the transition from home to childcare to school gave me ongoing insight into the process of pedagogic embodiment.

Finally, Greg Noble provided an immense contribution to this thesis. He performed various roles: intellectual sparring partner, critic, editor, unswerving supporter and, at times, primary care giver to our child. It is to him this thesis is dedicated.
Abstract – Discipline and Learn

Education is generally only conceived as a cognitive process. The bodily nature of learning is largely obscured. This thesis, grounded in an empirically-based study of pedagogic practice in primary school classrooms, examines the corporeality of learning and, in particular, its role in the process of learning to write. Its central concern is the formation of a scholarly habitus in the primary years of education and the degree to which the embodiment of specific dispositions is fundamental in students acquiring the ability and desire to write.

Sociologies of the body tend to focus on embodiment as a repressive and disempowering process, especially in applications of Foucault’s notion of disciplinary power. This thesis explores the enabling dimensions of embodiment and how these can be generated through the pedagogic practices of institutionalised schooling. The body here, however, is not simply perceived as being shaped by the external, nor capacitated by its ability to retain affects, but, rather, as mindful, that is, where these affects form the basis of consciousness with embodied understanding being integral to how we learn. This thesis, therefore, asserts the inseparability of body and mind. It draws upon Spinoza’s monism in a reformulation of Bourdieu’s notion of habitus. Rather than conceiving the habitus as an unconscious, bodily phenomenon, it is seen to not only inform and guide, but to also respond to, the workings of consciousness.

The thesis is comprised of three sections: The Pedagogic Body in Theory, The Pedagogic Body in Text and The Pedagogic Body in Practice. In the first of these sections different conceptualisations of the body are examined, in particular its treatment within sociology and phenomenological perspectives. These various theorisations are assessed in terms of their usefulness in understanding the role of the body in learning and the need within education to posit an ontology that embraces both the body and the mind. The section entitled the Pedagogic Body in Text provides a genealogy of the educative body through an analysis of English syllabus documents within the New South Wales education system. It traces the ways in which the body has been configured textually and their concomitant implications for pedagogic practice. The final section focuses on the pedagogic body in practice. It comprises an empirically-based study centred on two schools examining the pedagogies employed by six teachers and the ways in which the disciplinary techniques they employ can contribute to their students’ acquisition of a scholarly habitus and, in turn, their ability and desire to write.
Introduction – Discipline and Learn

discipline, v. [a.F. discipliner (12th c. in Hatz.–Darm.) or med.L. disciplinare, f. L. disciplina
DISCIPLINE sb.]
a. trans. To subject to discipline; in earlier use, to instruct, educate, train; in later use, more
especially to train to habits of order and subordination; to bring under control.

A vivid memory I have from my years as a high school history teacher in the outer
western suburbs of Sydney is standing in front of a class and simply looking at the
students and thinking that some just didn’t know how to learn. I remember standing
there, watching their bodies fidget, having great difficulty assuming the stillness and
degree of focus necessary to complete what they were doing. This was not the case with
all students. There were those who settled into work quite quickly, demonstrating an
ability to apply themselves to a task effectively. Restlessness and difficulty concentrating
seemed more a problem for the less able students and I wondered why there was such a
contrast in the application that they each displayed, particularly as I felt I had
appropriately prepared the class for the exercise they had to complete. Part of the
problem seemed related to a difference in ability. Study of history at a secondary level
requires students to be able to read and write with reasonable proficiency; skills that are
assumed competencies across the curriculum by this stage of education. While students’
literacy skills are built upon in the secondary years, it was quite clear that many of the
students experiencing difficulty with writing had not yet acquired a good grasp of the
mechanics of the process, such as spelling, punctuation and basic syntax, despite being
in at least their eighth year of schooling. This made the construction of the various types
of texts required in history, in particular those drawing upon the grammatical resources
of argument, an almost impossible task for these students. It became clear that, despite a
lack of training, I would need to address this problem and place a much stronger
emphasis on teaching writing to my students.

It was at this point that I embraced what was then the fledgling genre-based approach to
writing, a technique that focuses on teaching the structural and grammatical features of
the key text types of schooling to students (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993). The theory
underpinning the approach draws heavily upon systemic functional linguistics and so it
utilises functional, as opposed to a more traditional, grammar. Despite finding the
approach useful, especially in assisting students to better structure the texts they wrote,
the semantic orientation of the grammar did little to address students’ poor syntax and
the underlying difficulties they faced with writing. Although working with the approach
over a number of years, I continued to feel frustration with the way many students experienced such difficulty in learning how to write. This was despite assisting in the development of an alternate approach with a process, as opposed to a product, orientation to genre that placed a greater emphasis on grammar (Knapp and Watkins, 1994).

By this time I was working as a literacy consultant for the New South Wales Department of School Education in both primary and secondary schools in the western suburbs of Sydney. I visited numerous classrooms and observed many lessons in the teaching of writing and continued to see those same restless bodies I had seen in my own classroom years before. It began to occur to me that in the years I'd spent trying to improve students’ writing skills I’d totally ignored the role of the body in learning. My focus, and that of the approach I had been working with, had been curriculum content; that is, the structure and grammar of the texts students were expected to write. While this is fundamentally important, especially given its neglect within education for some twenty years, the way this new curriculum was to be implemented was given far less attention. Pedagogy seemed to be simply collapsed into curriculum with the focus being on ‘what’ was taught rather than the practicalities of ‘how’. Genre-based writing does offer a pedagogic approach - a cycle of modelling, joint constructing and independently constructing texts with students. This three-phase model of curriculum implementation, however, was simply superimposed on an entrenched progressivist paradigm of learning which assumed that students could naturally provide their own structured learning experiences. Consequently, it was strongly resistant to the degree of sustained teacher direction implicitly framing the approach. Its resultant effect within classroom practice was often diluted.

These methodological concerns, which relate specifically to the role of the teacher and the nature of the teaching/learning dynamic, have considerable implications for the ways in which the body is configured pedagogically. The reasons why a number of my own students had trouble settling down and concentrating, a problem evident in numerous other classrooms, seemed to be that they lacked the discipline to do so. While I felt that my classroom management style was quite firm and that I provided a considerable degree of teacher direction to my classes, I only saw my Years 7 and 8 students (aged 12-14 years) for three, forty-minute lessons a week and so my impact was minimal. Also, by this stage of their education, students seemed to have already acquired a particular set of work habits. The ways in which they conducted themselves
in class and their overall approach to learning appeared quite engrained, dispositions formed largely during the seven years of their primary education. It occurred to me just how important those first years of school are, especially the role of the teacher, given that students spend five full days each week in their care. This seemed a formative period in terms of students’ approaches to school, a time in which certain dispositions of learning develop that are as much corporeal as they are cognitive.

This bodily aspect of learning and its impact on cognition, however, appeared to receive little attention. While the body may figure as a classroom management issue, learning is generally conceived in cognitive terms; the corporeality of the process is largely ignored. This seems to be particularly the case given the current educational paradigm in which student-centred learning and limited teacher direction still prevail. While the highpoint of progressivism may have passed and there is a perceived need for a more explicit approach to teaching than was previously the case during the 1970s and 1980s (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1994; Board of Studies New South Wales, 1998), there seems little understanding as to how this is to be achieved. The practices many teachers employ still bear the stamp of progressivism. The more strict disciplinary codes characteristic of instructional pedagogies are largely viewed as anachronistic. This is particularly the case in primary school where the existence of a romantic notion of childhood seems to have placed a more interventionist style of teaching in abeyance.

Emphasis is placed on establishing a learning environment with minimal regulation to allow students the ‘freedom to learn’. The teacher’s role is more to facilitate, rather than to direct, learning. In practice this is realised through a predominance of group-based and independent learning activities over whole class instruction. These less teacher-directed methodologies result in a far more relaxed disciplinary coding framing classroom practice, with a greater tolerance of talk and movement than is practicable with teacher-directed learning.

Effective educational experiences, however, require that students develop a form of bodily discipline conducive to applied intellectual effort. Different pedagogic modes are informed by different conceptions as to how this is achieved and hence exert differing degrees of disciplinary force upon students’ bodies. ‘Discipline’ is typically construed as a form of subjection in contemporary educational thought and practice and this negative meaning is often used as a rationale for de-emphasising the teacher’s role and promoting student-centred learning. Yet the etymological roots of discipline are not found in subordination. To discipline was originally understood as meaning to instruct, educate or
train, with the implication that learning was dependent upon a teacher directing a student’s acquisition of a particular set of knowledge and skills. This earlier meaning has an enabling quality that is generally lost within current usage. Where this meaning seems to be retained is in learning a sport, with training and discipline understood as necessary aspects of sporting achievement. In learning a sport, however, the role of the body is foregrounded. Within the academic realm the body is deemed relatively insignificant. The focus is on the mind with training viewed more as an impediment to creative and spontaneous thought, as if there is no requisite training for scholarly endeavour. Discipline and learning are construed as almost antithetical with an assumption that school education is best undertaken without such constraints. This is a view expressed by Preston and Symes (1994: 13) who refer to “developing a model of schooling which is transformative and emancipatory rather than reproductive and disciplinary”. The coupling here of the disciplinary and reproductive processes of schooling in opposition to those viewed as transformative and emancipatory attests to this conception of discipline as a purely repressive force. The ways in which discipline can capacitate students’ bodies and minds with the potential to be both transformative and emancipatory seems something beyond the ken of current educational enquiry. A truly transformative and emancipatory education needs to engage with the issue of what kinds of discipline are useful for educational success.

Discipline, however, is generally only conceived as possessing reproductive tendencies. The idea that the processes of reproduction might also be enabling is not considered. Reproduction theorists view schooling as one of the key mechanisms through which social inequality is replicated. While there is considerable variation as to how this is approached, from the quite crude principle of correspondence espoused by Bowles and Gintis in the 1970s, focusing on schools as essentially instruments of economic reproduction, to perspectives more concerned with the complexities of how reproduction is realised through socio-cultural means (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Willis, 1977; Apple, 1979), little, if any, attention is given to the enabling potential of pedagogy. Rather, what tends to preoccupy reproduction theorists is broad socio-structural outcomes. There is very little examination of the practices involved in attaining these and the resources that they provide students. Their analyses characteristically focus on the relative achievements of students in relation to their parents’ income, occupation and other variables (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Bourdieu, 1998a). Such forms of inquiry are indeed valuable but what they tend to foreground is the inequity embedded in the system, leaving the enabling processes of schooling
obscured. In neglecting the actuality of practice, they fail to address the pragmatics of pedagogy: that is, how economically advantaged children actually get the competencies that are inequitably distributed and also the ways in which teachers can counter inequity at a classroom level.

There are, of course, exceptions to this, both within and outside the broad spectrum of scholarship dealing with educational reproduction. Bernstein’s work on the linguistic codes governing schooling examines reproductive processes in more detail and why they are inequitably distributed (Bernstein, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1990). Through an investigation of classroom practice and the language of schooling, he was able to identify what he termed restricted and elaborated codes; that is, the different patternings of language underpinning working class and middle class discourse. To Bernstein, there were distinct parallels between the elaborated code used by middle class students and the discursive structures of academic writing. As such, working class students were at a disadvantage within the school system as the restricted code framing their patterns of speech was thought to impede their ability to read and write. There has been considerable criticism of this argument. There are those who claim Bernstein’s work denigrates the language and culture of the working class (Labov, 1972); those who challenge the linguistic efficacy of his notion of code (Tannen, 1982); and those, such as Bourdieu (1994), who critique his work on the basis that it fetishises the dominant discourse (Harker and May, 1993). Despite these criticisms, Bernstein’s work has proved influential, particularly in the field of literacy education. In conjunction with systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1990), it has, among its other applications, helped provide the theoretical foundations for the development of the genre-based approach to teaching writing (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993; Hasan, 1999). Bernstein’s central concern in his investigations of classroom practice, however, is language. His notion of pedagogy is framed almost entirely by the linguistic. There is no account of the corporeality of learning; the various disciplinary techniques employed by teachers and the ways in which they impact upon students’ bodies in the acquisition of literacy. This criticism is not intended as an attack on the value of Bernstein’s work, rather it is made to clarify the parameters of his enquiry and to highlight how the body is largely ignored within theorisations of pedagogy.

Emerging from the same politically progressive tradition as reproduction theory, critical pedagogy does allow for the enabling potential of education; but it conceives discipline in negative terms. Theorists such as Giroux (1983, 1988) and McLaren (1989) who,
finding work on reproduction theory yielded little scope for articulating any
transformative role for schooling, conceived of an alternative theory of education with
the goal being the social empowerment of students. Teachers are assigned a radicalised
role of assisting students to develop these critical capacities. As McLaren (1989: 221)
writes,

Teachers must engage unyieldingly in their attempt to empower students both as
individuals and as potential agents of social change by establishing a critical pedagogy that
students can use in the classroom and in the streets.

Despite the visionary rhetoric underpinning critical pedagogy, there is no substantive
account of how these ideals are realised at the classroom level. This is particularly the
case with Giroux and McLaren’s work. As Gore (1993: 34) writes,

... their approach is centred on articulating a ‘pedagogical product’ rather than
pedagogical practice, that is, a social vision for teacher’s work rather than guidelines for
instructional practice.

The same cannot be said about all those working within the field of critical pedagogy.
Friere (1972, 1985) and Shor (1992), for example, are concerned with explicating the ways
in which they feel critical pedagogy is actualised within classroom practice. What seems
to characterise the pedagogy that Friere and Shor advocate, and which is implicit in the
more abstract accounts of Giroux and McLaren, not to mention other theorists within the
field, is an underlying progressivism. Although acknowledging the need for teachers to
maintain a certain degree of authority in their role of empowering students, the
methodology underpinning critical pedagogy is essentially student-centred and, as such,
is framed by a quite limited degree of disciplinary force. Friere (1972: 46-47) outlines
such pedagogic principles in an early critique of traditional, teacher-directed learning, or
what he terms ‘banking education’. He writes,

1. the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
2. the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
3. the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
4. the teacher talks and the students listen – meekly;
5. the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
6. the teacher chooses and enforces his (sic) choice, and the students comply;
7. the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of
the teacher;
8. the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not
consulted) adapt to it;
9. the teacher the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his own
professional authority, which he sets in opposition to the freedom of students;
the teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects.

In this quite stereotypical account of teacher-directed pedagogy students are cast in a passive role with the heightened degree of disciplinary force generated by the approach conceived solely in negative terms. This is not to suggest that traditional teaching methods do not possess a repressive potential, but such a possibility is not unique to teacher-directed learning. Progressivist pedagogy, while not undertaken in such an overt manner, can exhibit similar tendencies (Sharp and Green, 1975; Walkerdine, 1984; Kalantzis, Cope, Noble and Poynting, 1990).

The point here is to present current perspectives on the nature and effect of disciplinary power within pedagogic theory and to highlight how its enabling potential in relation to capacitating students’ bodies is given little consideration. This is not only the case within education; similar conceptions of discipline and embodiment pervade social and cultural theory in general. Perhaps the most influential theorist in this field is Michel Foucault whose seminal text, *Discipline and Punish*, helped generate a sub-discipline within sociology which focuses on the social constructedness of the body. As in Foucault’s work, however, this field of scholarship is generally more concerned with the repressive aspects of discipline. While Foucault does make reference to its enabling potential, particularly in his latter work on technologies of the self (Foucault, 1990), his central focus is discipline as a subordinating force. This is clearly evident in his juxtaposition of the terms, ‘discipline’ and ‘punish’. In this thesis, however, discipline is linked with the verb ‘learn’ to foreground its capacitating effects. Although making an obvious reference to Foucault in this title, this thesis does not provide a Foucauldian analysis of the pedagogic body per se. The conceptual tools that are utilised here owe much to Foucault’s work, such as, his genealogical method and his approach to the analysis of temporal and spatial schemas. In focusing upon the enabling capacity of discipline, however, what was required was some mechanism for articulating the ways in which the affective impact of disciplinary force both accumulates and then functions in an agentic capacity in relation to individual practice. That is, a concept to demonstrate how what teachers do in classrooms impacts upon students’ bodies, and the extent to which the different forms of embodiment that ensue assist students in the difficult process of learning how to write. Bourdieu’s notion of *habitus* is helpful in this regard as it provides a means for negotiating the individual/social nexus, the relationship between student outcomes and pedagogic practice. Despite its benefits, there are aspects of Bourdieu’s
concept that prove problematic in theorising the pedagogic body, such as his insistence on the unconscious and exclusively corporeal nature of the habitus. In making no allowance for the intervention of consciousness, Bourdieu’s *habitus* provides a far too deterministic interpretation of practice. This is evident in his own application of the concept to education. In *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (1977), Bourdieu only seems able to account for the reproductive, as opposed to transformative, processes of schooling.

In theorising the pedagogic body, an ontology is required that views the body and mind as a single substance operating as parallel phenomena in the determination of practice. It is not so much that the habitus needs to make allowance for the intervention of consciousness but rather to view consciousness as itself embodied, with practice understood as a dialectic of bodily habituation and mindful reflection. The pedagogic body, as it is conceived here, is not simply a corporeal entity but one also invested with reason using embodied understanding as the basis of scholarly endeavour. Infused with a Spinozistic monism, the habitus can not only inform and guide, but also respond to, the workings of consciousness in the process of negotiating being in the world. It must be said that Bourdieu does take account of consciousness but, in his logic of practice, it functions more as an epiphenomenon rather than an integral, yet integrated, aspect of volition. To Spinoza, while it is only through the body that we come to know the world, the body and the mind act in concert. A Spinozistic interpretation of habitus, therefore, does not only allow the dispositions resulting from the accumulation of bodily affect to shape practice but, so too, the embodied consciousness that is produced from this corporeal engagement with the world.

Central to the accumulation of affect and the formation of a scholarly habitus is the role of the teacher. Although students arrive in kindergarten with differing dispositions, the disciplinary force generated by the pedagogy teachers employ can have a considerable impact on a student’s existing habitus. Discipline, in this sense, is understood as an enabling force, a process of investing the body with the capacity to learn. As Elias (1982: 328) writes, “No society can survive without a challenging of individual drives and affects, without a very specific control of individual behaviour”. The form of “control” envisaged here is not concerned with disempowerment, but, as Elias intends, quite the opposite, a training of the body for scholarly endeavour and, as such, a form of empowerment. Indeed, it is only through conceiving ‘control’ as empowerment that the
unequal distribution of certain capacities and their links to relations of power can be understood.

A complementary effect of the formation of a scholarly habitus seems to be an increase in the desire to learn. This very much tallies with Spinoza's notion of desire. As he explains,

> It is clear that we neither strive for, nor will, neither want, nor desire anything because we judge it to be good; on the contrary we judge something to be good because we strive for it, will it, want it and desire it. (Ethics, 111, P9, S)

If students possess the requisite bodily disposition it is more likely they will apply themselves to their work with their striving to be, or what Spinoza's refers to as conatus, framed by a desire for academic achievement.

While this thesis raises questions about the nature and cultivation of the desire to learn, in particular the extent to which it is derived from the accumulation of bodily affect, its central concern is the relationship between discipline and the formation of a scholarly habitus. In doing this, three broad areas of inquiry are considered: The Pedagogic Body in Theory, The Pedagogic Body in Text and The Pedagogic Body in Practice. The first of these sections comprises two chapters. Chapter 1, entitled Conceiving the Body, examines different conceptualisations of the body such as the phenomenological perspectives of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, early sociological accounts, as in Mauss, and its more recent treatment following Foucault's rediscovery of the body as an object of socio-cultural concern. These various theorisations are assessed in terms of their usefulness in understanding the role of the body in learning with consideration given to the need within education for an ontology that embraces both the body and the mind. These concerns are also addressed in the second chapter of this section, The Mindful Body, but focusing more specifically on the work of Bourdieu and Spinoza. In light of this analysis, a reconceptualisation of Bourdieu's notion of habitus, drawing upon Spinoza's monist ontology is proposed for use in the empirical study.

In the second section of the thesis the focus shifts to an examination of the pedagogic body in text. In Tracing the Body a genealogy of role of the body in education is provided through an analysis of English syllabus documents within the New South Wales education system. This explores the ways in which the body has been configured
textually and its implications for pedagogic practice. This is important in terms of
demonstrating how the body has been shaped historically, a perspective often neglected
within current socio-cultural analysis.

The final section focuses on the pedagogic body in practice. It comprises an empirically
based study centred on two quite different schools examining the pedagogic practice of
a kindergarten, Year 3 and Year 5 teacher at both institutions. A chapter is devoted to
each of these stages of learning analysing the disciplinary techniques the teachers
employ and the ways in which these contribute to their students' acquisition of a
scholarly habitus and, in turn, their ability and desire to write. In the conclusion,
*Disparate Bodies*, there is a return to the issues raised in the earlier theoretical chapters.
The corporeality of learning is re-examined in light of the findings of the empirical study
with a call for a reassessment of the role of discipline in the process of learning to write.

Notes

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The teaching of grammar was virtually phased out of the New South Wales primary school
curriculum with the release of a new language syllabus in 1974 which stated "This Syllabus
contains no requirement for the teaching of a system of grammar" (New South Wales
Department of Education, 1974: 5). The next syllabus to make explicit reference to the teaching
of grammar was the 1994 New South Wales K-6 English Syllabus.
Chapter 1 - Conceiving the Body

Many people have to be persuaded that studying too is a job, and a very tiring one, with its own particular apprenticeship - involving muscles and nerves as well as intellect. It is a process of adaptation, a habit acquired with effort, tedium and even suffering.
A. Gramsci (1973: 42)

Our understanding itself is embodied. That is, our bodily know how and the way we act and move can encode components of our understanding of self and world.
C. Taylor (1999: 34)

Education is not merely a cognitive process: it also has a bodily dimension. This point is captured by Gramsci who highlights the extent to which bodily discipline is necessary for academic success. The bodily nature of education is perhaps most obvious when children commence school. Much of the first few months in kindergarten are devoted to a form of corporeal induction whereby children's bodies are attuned to the temporal rhythms, spatiality and comportment of schooling. As time progresses there is an ongoing refinement of these disciplinary procedures as students' bodies also assume the regularities of literate practice: the spatiality of the page and the grip and movement of the pen. Yet despite the undeniable corporeality of schooling it seems to be taken for granted within mainstream education. It receives minimal if any mention in syllabus documents, even those related specifically to the K-6 years, the formative period within institutionalised education of what could be termed pedagogic embodiment. Rather, the body is relegated to the realm of classroom management and considered secondary to the role of the mind in learning.

While mainstream educational practice and scholarship appear generally indifferent to the body, this situation has been challenged by theorisations of the body within sociology and cultural studies derived largely from the work of Michel Foucault. Much of this work, however, focuses on the Foucault of Discipline and Punish rather than his later work around technologies of the self. As such, it tends towards an examination of disciplinary coercion, which, while valuable in highlighting the body's social malleability, falls short of assigning it any agentic capacity. The body, however, is much more than the product of institutionalised structures or even broader social experience. As Taylor (1999: 34) points out, "Our understanding is itself embodied". To be productive for pedagogic theory, conceptualisations of the body need to provide much more than these very partial accounts of embodiment; they need to consider how embodied data, often contradictory and fragmentary, is fashioned as a type of modus operandi for action.
In this chapter various conceptualisations of the body are considered. They tend, however, to coalesce around these distinct orientations; that is, emphasising either structural constraint or agentic capacity, with the latter generally receiving far less treatment. Despite their differences, these various perspectives on the body share a similar resistance to engaging with notions of mind and consciousness. In many respects this is understandable: their focus is the corporeal basis of being. Yet an implicit rationale underpins this work; namely, a rejection of Descartes’ dualist ontology and its privileging of mind over body. A focus on the body at the expense of the mind, however, does not correct this theoretical imbalance; it merely inverts Descartes’ dualism. To theorise pedagogy on the basis of a more viable ontology it is not sufficient to simply divert attention to the corporeal. Gramsci quite rightly points out that education has both a bodily and an intellectual dimension. A reassessment of the ontological foundations of pedagogy is therefore required to ensure the role of the body and the mind are given equal consideration. In doing so, a range of other oppositions are implicated, such as structure/agency, social/individual, consciousness/unconsciousness. These are also addressed in the first two chapters, which review a range of different perspectives on the body and their usefulness in relation to theorising the pedagogic.

Challenging Descartes – Husserl and Merleau-Ponty
Responsibility for the considerable interest in the body within social and cultural theory over the last fifteen years is due largely to the extent to which the work of Foucault has been embraced. Yet while there is now a wealth of material dealing with various aspects of the body (see Frank 1998), spawned by the uptake of Foucauldian theory, intellectual concern for the body has a long, yet generally unsatisfying, history. This is the case because western philosophy has coupled the body with the mind as a binary opposition, and, as Grosz (1994) points out, such dichotomous thinking generally results in a hierarchising of terms. Traditionally, it is the body that is subordinate and it is this view that has dominated its intellectual treatment. This secondary role has its roots in classical philosophy but it is Cartesianism that has more firmly left its mark on the modern era. Utilising Aristotle’s a priori category of substance, a category not simply prior to but existing separately, Descartes devised a metaphysics that recognised mind and matter as two distinct substances. According to Descartes, the mind is independent of the body. Descartes did, however, allow for mind/body interaction. He referred to the mind and body as being “substantially united” but, as Curley (1994: xxvi) points out, Descartes was never thoroughly able to explain this relationship which seems
contradictory given that he assigns both mind and body the status of substance. The form of interaction which Descartes intends, however, is unidirectional, a movement from mind to body. To Descartes the mind is the seat of reason and its role is to override bodily affects and quell passion and desire. The very act of thinking defines the self for Descartes and it is the mind that possesses the will to determine action. Man (sic) therefore is conceived as a “dominion within a dominion” (Spinoza Ethics, 111, P), but, as Lloyd (1994: 39) points out, “The price to be paid for Cartesian purity of consciousness is the separation of self from world”. Despite this, Descartes’ metaphysics have tended to dominate Western thought, developing into a commonsense logic whereby action is viewed as simply a function of will or ‘mind over matter’.

Contemporary social and cultural theory has reacted sharply against this understanding of action, questioning the very notion of self as simply pertaining to mind. While Foucault provided much of the inspiration for the intense scrutiny of the body during the 1980s, exemplified by the work of Turner (1984), it is with the diverse theoretical perspectives of phenomenology and sociology at the beginning of the last century that the body becomes a focus of study quite distinct from the mind. Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, first made the distinction between korper, the physical body and leib, the lived body (Welton, 1999: 4). This distinction allowed the body to be viewed as much more than a physical or natural phenomenon: it became both a cultural entity and a product of history. The preoccupation of Husserl’s phenomenology, however, is far from a study of corporeality. He viewed the task of phenomenology to study things as they appear in consciousness. In doing this, phenomenology had to deal with notions of consciousness, mind and the self. It had to confront Descartes’ cogito, which to Husserl was erroneously conceived.

To arrive at the point where Descartes concludes, “I am only a thinking thing, that is to say, a mind, an understanding, or reason”, he explains in the Third Meditation that he had to,

\[
\text{efface from my thinking all images of corporeal things, or since that can hardly be done, I shall at least view them as empty and false.} \\
\text{(Meditations III)}
\]

In his pursuit of philosophical truths, it was thought alone - in fact doubt itself - which provided the only certainty. To Descartes, the sensate body was variable and uncertain, an unreliable basis for ontological proof. Indubitability was only achieved by separation from the physical world. Such a position was antithetic to Husserl who
could not conceive of being without world. His project was to insert the cogito back into the world through a reformulation that questioned Descartes's notion of a pure act of consciousness. Husserl concluded that thinking had to be about something, that is, each cogito required a cogitatum (Husserl, 1977: 33). It is this intentionality of thought which implicates the world. To arrive at a point of pure consciousness, which Husserl still deemed possible despite his critique of Descartes's method, one had to bracket off experience, a process referred to as the phenomenological epoche (Smith and Woodruff Smith, 1995: 11). From this position the world could be held at bay and pure consciousness attained. Yet while Husserl could not venture a philosophy which divorced being from world the phenomenological epoche essentially had this effect. In actuality Husserl was an idealist. His notion of self maintained the Cartesian separation of mind and body privileging the former in a phenomenology of intentional consciousness.

Merleau-Ponty breached this divide with a radical interpretation of Husserl's philosophy. He claimed that,

> the whole Husserlian analysis is blocked by the framework of acts which imposes upon it the philosophy of consciousness. It is necessary to take up again and develop the fungierende or latent intentionality which is the intentionality within being. 

(Merleau-Ponty, 1975: 244)

To Merleau-Ponty, being and acting in the world could not simply be explained by a process of conscious acts. He viewed the self as much more than a mind, seeing subjectivity as embodied. In a sense he sought to excise the distinctions between mind and body, self and world or redefine them, as Crossley (1995: 47) points out, “as relational, intertwined and reversible aspects of a single fabric”. Merleau-Ponty saw the body as both acting and, being acted upon, in a seamless, generative process. Unlike with Husserl, where the subject is present in the world but somehow disembodied, with Merleau-Ponty the subject becomes a body-subject and is not merely present in the world but is of the world. There is a symphysis of flesh, the flesh of the body and the flesh of the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1975: 138).

In being a form of bodily consciousness, Merleau-Ponty’s notion of the body-subject is also an attempt to override the mind/body dualism that pervades Husserl’s phenomenology. As a result, Merleau-Ponty, particularly in his later work, diverges from Husserl. He even claimed he was “pushing Husserl further than he wished to go” (Merleau-Ponty, 1964a: 72). With Merleau-Ponty, emphasis is finally given to the role of the body in the constitution of subjectivity. His conception of self has both a psychical and bodily dimension with consciousness no longer maintaining
exclusivity over understanding. Subjectivity becomes not simply a function of consciousness but also a product of bodily praxis. Understanding, therefore, is both cognitive and corporeal with the mind and body possessing learning potential, the latter in the form of what Merleau-Ponty terms motor significance. Understanding is also not autonomously derived. In Merleau-Ponty’s use of the term, consciousness is intersubjective, forever reliant on “the living relationship and tension among individuals” (Merleau-Ponty, 1964b: 90).

What is missing in Merleau-Ponty’s work, however, is an account of the nature of the relationship between body and mind, and, in turn, their interaction with the world. While these dimensions of existence are evident in Merleau-Ponty’s work, they seem to dissolve into an amorphous mass, the “single fabric” of which Crossley speaks. For the purposes of phenomenology, as Merleau-Ponty (1999: vii) sees them - that is, as “a philosophy which puts essences back into existence” - the fluidity of being seems a useful concept. As the basis of an explanation for individual practice, it is only a starting point, a way in which to begin theorising the significance of body and world. While Merleau-Ponty provides a greater insight into the corporeal dimensions of existence, he is still faced with the ongoing quandary of how most effectively to deal with the ‘binaries’ of being. He recognises a distinction between mind and body, individual and world, but his work essentially blurs and, at times, collapses these categories, particularly in his use of the term flesh. Merleau-Ponty exhibits this dilemma in his repeated use of the chiasmus, a rhetorical device which inverts word order creating the effect of counterbalance and interconnectedness, for example, “We choose the world and the world chooses us” (Merleau-Ponty, 1999: 454). This may be interesting word play but it doesn’t explain much about the nature of the relationship between individual and world. Merleau-Ponty may have abandoned Descartes’ ontology but it seems he only moved part way towards providing a satisfactory substitute that effectively articulates the competing variables of subjectivity.

Mauss and Techniques of the Body

This emphasis given to theorising the body can also be found in the early sociology of Mauss. His essay on ‘Techniques of the Body’, published in 1935, has achieved seminal status. Mauss was interested in the socially acquired nature of bodily comportment. He made use of the term habitus to refer to the habitual nature of practice but wanted to instill a sociological quality in the term. While individuals may possess a particular gait which appears unique, Mauss recognised a
commonality across individual practice; an embodiment of the social as a form of 
practical reason that largely governs day-to-day being in the world.

It is this notion of habitus that was later adopted by Bourdieu, but, whereas Mauss
generally applies it as a descriptive category, Bourdieu reformulates it as an
explanatory concept providing an overall rationale for practice rather than simply
actions themselves. Also, there is some variance in Mauss and Bourdieu's
understanding of the social. To the former it is a term used to denote broad,
undefined social experience; to the latter the social implies the institutionalised
structuring of social experience encapsulated by Bourdieu in the category field. While
Mauss and Bourdieu clearly differ in their conceptualisation of the social and its
effect on the body, they have a common cause, that is, the theorisation of the body as
a sociological phenomenon. This contrasts significantly with the largely
philosophical perspective of Merleau-Ponty who, Turner (1996: 78) claims, provides:

an individualistic account of embodiment [which] is consequently an account largely
devoid of historical and sociological content.

In some respects, Turner's criticisms require qualification. There is an underlying
sociology in Merleau-Ponty's work, not only in his emphasis on intersubjectivity, but
in his ongoing difficulty with Husserl's notion of intentional consciousness which, to
Merleau-Ponty, privileged individuality over world. Clearly the world is present in
Merleau-Ponty's account but its sociological content is never thoroughly explicated.

Mauss (1979: 97), however, takes note of the socially reproductive nature of the
habitus, "the ways in which from society to society men (sic) know how to use their
bodies". He classifies the reproduction of bodily techniques in terms of gender and
age exemplifying how practice is rarely natural. To Mauss, bodily practice is learned
through on-going social interaction. The nature of this learning process, and the
pedagogy it involves, however, require further elaboration. Mauss states that,

In all [these] elements of the art of using the human body, the facts of education were
dominant. The notion of education could be superimposed on that of imitation.
(Mauss, 1979: 101)

Learning is understood here as mimesis. Through close observation of a particular
activity individuals 'borrow' what they consider successful and make it their own.
But there are various types of imitative behaviour, which are indicative of different
pedagogies. To many, what Mauss seems to intend here is a form of imitation that is
prereflective. It lacks a conscious aspect. That is, individuals simply mimic what they
see without necessarily acknowledging their intent to do so. Through repeated
performance the activity is embodied as habitus which is similar in some respects to Merleau-Ponty's fungienende, the intentionality of being. Both these notions, while differing in their sociological force, have been understood as forms of bodily know-how displacing conscious intent.

Mauss's work, although generally interpreted in this way, can actually be read quite differently with techniques of the body implying an initial conscious response, at least in some forms of imitative action. This is perhaps most obviously demonstrated in his frequent reference to training. He provides a number of examples where bodily techniques have been modified due to a change in training. In one of his first examples he recounts how the teaching of swimming had changed from when he first learnt. Mauss was apparently taught to open his eyes under water only after he had learnt to swim, which proved difficult, especially when it came to diving. As an adult Mauss observed how the technique had changed with children being taught to control their instinctive reflex of closing their eyes in the water and to feel at ease opening them prior to learning to swim. The result of this was an improved diving technique. In another example Mauss discusses how Maori mothers instruct their daughters in the acquisition of onioni, a particular way of walking. He quotes from a study by Elsdon Best who describes how mothers drilled their daughters in this accomplishment,

and I have heard a mother say to her girl: "Ha! Kaore koe e onioni" (you're not doing the onioni) when the young one was neglecting to practice the gait.
(Mauss, 1979: 102)

What both these examples suggest is that while Mauss was focusing on providing an account of a range of bodily techniques and their social reproduction, largely through mimesis, consciousness had an important part to play. Although he does not make this explicit, his references to training are very often accompanied by some mention of the use of language, albeit on the part of the trainer. To some extent language can be understood as an unconscious phenomenon. In the process of instruction, however, whereby a person in authority is outlining the steps involved in achieving a particular goal, language must necessarily involve consciousness. This is not only the case with the trainer but also the trainee, as one would assume a series of questions and answers would ensue to clarify aspects of attaining the desired technique. Much of what is discussed as part of the instructional process may retreat to the unconscious but, as Grosz (1994: 30) remarks,

By being expressed in language thought processes can become perceptual contents available for consciousness.
The techniques of the body to which Mauss refers are socially acquired but this is not simply as a result of subliminal habituation. Bodily techniques do become habituated and certain aspects of individual corporeality are obviously acquired without conscious reflection through immersion within a particular milieu. But Mauss's work is valuable to pedagogic theory not only because of this emphasis on the socially acquired nature of bodily techniques, that is, the body's receptivity, malleability and capacity to learn, but also because it provides an account of the body's ability to be taught, which denotes a quite different pedagogic intent. As Mauss (1979: 116) points out in one anecdote:

I can tell you that I'm very bad at climbing trees, though reasonable on mountains and rocks. A difference of education and hence of method.

Mauss's tree climbing ability suggests it was a childhood-learnt behaviour whereas mountaineering was a skill that he was explicitly taught. The difference in pedagogy seemed to result in a difference in the level of skill he attained.

This taught rather than simply learned nature of bodily techniques allows for a re-evaluation of the often-neglected role of consciousness in recent sociological analysis. What is generally missing from discussion of Mauss's work is the process whereby actions develop into habituated technique; that is, examination of the pedagogy involved rather than simply the end product. His reference to "drill", "practise" and "training" in relation to some techniques suggests not merely an unconscious adoption of bodily facility but conscious attention to what is being undertaken by both trainer and trainee. According to Strathern (1996: 12), however, "Mauss did not link habitus with personne. Habitus calls to mind the unconscious, and personne the conscious aspects of ourselves". In some respects this is correct. The focus in 'Techniques of the Body' is socially acquired bodily know-how but to Mauss this does not necessarily negate conscious intent. As he stresses at the end of this essay:

It is thanks to society that there is an intervention of consciousness. It is not thanks to unconsciousness that there is an intervention of society.
(Mauss, 1979: 122)

While bodily techniques may be socially acquired they are open to conscious manipulation.

In his essay on 'A Category of the Human Mind: The Notion of Person, the Notion of Self', as Strathern also points out, Mauss gives his attention to consciousness. But
what Mauss seems to be grappling with throughout his more oft quoted essay on the body is an appropriate term for the kind of corporeal intuition of which he writes. While he decides upon the term *habitus*, he wants it to be understood as involving “the techniques and work of collective and individual practical reason rather than, in the ordinary, merely the soul and its repetitive faculties” (Mauss, 1979: 101). Mauss indicates here that habitus is not simply habit of social origin but that it possesses a kind of rationality which is corporeal rather than simply cognitive. Habitus, therefore, need not be perceived as unconscious simply because it involves the social reproduction of the body. Rather, Mauss seems to be suggesting there is a conscious element in the development of what later becomes habitual. Strathern (1996: 12) recognises this in his own discussion of the Maori ‘onioni’ where he points out that, the teaching and learning are at first fully conscious. It is only afterward that the learned pattern becomes an unconscious part of bodily routines.

Mauss does not give emphasis to consciousness in ‘Techniques of the Body’ because he is dismissing it, or fails to recognise its role, but because it is not his prime concern. In many respects, particularly if this is read as early twentieth century sociology, the conscious aspect of practice is probably understood. Mauss wants to examine what was largely ignored at the time, that is the importance of the body in understanding practice. Perhaps this is why Mauss uses the word *techniques*, which tends to denote purpose and skill rather than habit and routine. What he ultimately wants, as he points out, is a term that signifies “skill, presence of mind and habit combined” (Mauss, 1979: 108). Consciousness, he would have assumed, could be taken for granted. He could not have anticipated the way consciousness was erased from much later theorisation of the body. The problem with Mauss is his failure to clearly articulate the role of consciousness in relation to techniques of the body. Not only is this essential in terms of theories of action but more specifically, for what is of concern here, in conceptualising the role of the body in pedagogic practice.

**Foucault – Rediscovering the body**

While the work of Mauss, and to a lesser extent Merleau-Ponty, have become influential in sociological analyses of the body, it is Foucauldian theory that has provoked a plethora of studies from different disciplinary areas on various aspects of the body. Foucault’s notion of the body, however, can be understood in different ways and has generated quite diverse theoretical perspectives, as is evident in the contrast between the work of Bryan Turner and Judith Butler. While to some extent there remains a constant within the corpus of Foucault’s writing in terms of the body
as discursive construct, what is evident is a broadening of what Foucault understands by *discourse*. The term, which in his earlier work simply denotes the linguistic, is reformulated in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* to include the extralinguistic, the material conditions of discourse, which he defines as “institutions, political events, economic practices and processes” (Foucault, 1972: 49). Discourse, therefore, comes to encompass much more than language. Through the associated concept of *discursive formation*, it becomes intertwined with the socio-historical relations within which language operates. The term from a Foucauldian perspective evolves into a metaconcept. In becoming such a bloated category, however, it has created theoretical confusion blurring the relationship between language and material practice with the latter, in some analyses, configured textually and so relinquishing its substantive quality. From this perspective subjectivity is viewed as primarily discursive, losing sight of the embodied nature of being.

It is this notion of the body, as discursive construct, which underpins Butler’s work with subjectivity conceived in terms of a process of *iterative performativity*. Butler (1993: 13) defines a performatives as “that discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names”. In this quite liberal application of speech act theory, Butler intends to demonstrate the materiality of language but what she fails to address is that materiality is not simply in the saying, it is a process of doing, a point of particular poignancy in relation to pedagogic practice. Her recourse to speech act theory simply conflates the two, and, as Turner (1996: 28) points out,

The lived body drops from view, as the text becomes the all-pervasive topic of research.

This is disappointing as the notion of *iterative performativity* has considerable application in terms of theorising the pedagogic body. As an essentially linguistic concept, which is Butler’s intent, it provides little insight into the ways in which pedagogic practice can result in different forms of embodiment. Of course language has a role to play, but so too do the myriad of disciplinary techniques that teachers employ that are not specifically linguistic but which are fundamental to the production of particular student bodies.

Hunter (1991: 47) also critiques the notion of *discourse* as a metaconcept. He argues:

language or discourse plays no fundamental or general role in these groups of relations. It is the techniques of living themselves - the open-ended ensembles of behaviours, forms of calculation, social relations, norms, architectures, trainings - that give rise to the forms of human agency and capacity characteristic of different departments of existence. And it is the role of linguistic (mathematical, etc) notations to
function as instruments deployed according to the highly various 'logics' of these instituted ensembles.

It is Hunter’s view that Foucault actually leaves behind his focus on discourse in his work on technologies of power and the self and instead concentrates on dispositifs or apparatuses, the ensembles to which Hunter refers. This perspective largely underpins the application of Foucauldian theory in sociology of the body as is evident in the work of Turner (1984) and Shilling (1994). Yet while there is a definite shift in Foucault’s work which tends to downplay the role of discourse in relation to subject formation, it is unlikely that he would concur with Hunter’s relegation of language as simply a product of the logics of practice. Hunter’s comments are refreshing in that he intends to mark out a clear space with which to theorise material practice, but he seems to be suggesting that it somehow lies outside the discursive. In theorising subjectivity it must be remembered, as Bordo (1998: 89) points out, that, ‘we cannot ‘get outside’ the (historically sedimented) discourses and representations that shape our reality’.

At the same time she questions whether this means that all we are legitimately allowed to discuss is “our reality ‘as’ discourse and representation” (Bordo, 1998: 89). While subjectivity is largely a product of everyday experience, analyses of practice must take account of the materiality and performativity of language. At the same time, however, this must not be conflated with the materiality and performativity of the body; that is, an individual’s physical presence in the world. It is this latter perspective which seems to preoccupy Foucault in Discipline and Punish, a text which has tended to dominate the limited analysis of the body in educational theory.

**Foucault and the Pedagogic Body**

In Discipline and Punish Foucault examines the disciplinary techniques of power within state institutionalised settings with particular emphasis on the development of prisons. This text is significant in its analysis of how space and particular regimens shape the body to maximise its functionality for purposes of social control. As Foucault (1977: 138) states, discipline,

... dissociates power from the body; on the one hand, it turns it into an 'aptitude', a capacity which seeks to increase; on the other hand, it reverses the course of the energy the power that might result from it, and turns it into a relation of strict subjection.

In a sense this is the central thesis of Discipline and Punish, the propensity of the body to acquire routinised traits through the imposition of particular spatial and temporal
schemas. This notion of embodiment, however, is overlaid with what is, ultimately, a rigid social determinism. The enabling potential of disciplinary power is short-circuited by the repressive demands of the socius.

This passive conceptualisation of embodiment has tended to dominate sociology of the body and is similarly evident in Foucauldian analyses of the body within education. To date there has been limited theorisation of the pedagogic body both within education and scholarship generally. As discussed earlier, the focus within education is generally the mind. Recent work by Jones (2000) and also an earlier study by Kamler, Maclean, Reid and Simpson (1993) prove exceptions to this. While other work in this area exists (Goodson and Dowbiggin, 1990; Luke 1992; Gore 1998), these studies typify much of the current application of Foucault’s work within education. Jones’s work is of particular interest as she provides an examination of the dynamics at play in learning to write. Her specific focus is the contradictory function of disciplinary power. She discusses the joy and sense of satisfaction a child feels in mastering the mechanics of handwriting but then interprets this newfound bodily facility as a form of submission to “the meticulous controls of pedagogy”. Jones seems to downplay the inherent pleasure of literate practice, the potential a child possesses in gaining control over a pen and acquiring the ability to manipulate text, in deference to what she terms “the strict subjection” of the pedagogic relationship.

While the power imbalance in favour of the teacher and the socially reproductive nature of pedagogy are not in dispute, it is these negative aspects of pedagogic practice which seem to be overemphasised in much educational theory. Such a perspective is given extensive treatment in the sociology of education, critical pedagogy and, more recently, in Foucauldian analyses of education. While the latter gives these issues a different gloss, namely the subjection of the body as opposed to the mind, the recurrent theme of pedagogy as social control is similarly foregrounded. What is lacking, as is the case with Jones, is an examination of the enabling potential of pedagogy. This requires viewing the student as not simply a “suppliant body” but as an agent invested with an aptitude which is not simply susceptible to manipulation by dominant social forces but which possesses the potential for acting competently in the world and also for resistance and change.

Jones’s work is also interesting in terms of her treatment of the socially regulative nature of pedagogic desire and its function within the teaching/learning relation. In recounting her own experience of learning to write she explains that,
Via perfect writing, I desired to deliver the perfect mind to my teacher. The predictable and painstakingly even shape of my words signalled my willingness to conform, to be controlled which pleased my teachers. (Jones, 2000: 53)

Jones’s willingness to please here is an act of conformity but not, as she seems to suggest, mindless obedience. The desire which drives Jones to write well and please her teachers results in her disciplining her body and endowing it with a capacity for literate practice. Jones views this social engineering of her desires in a negative light. But unless one wants to posit an essentialised notion of desire, it is difficult to conceive of it being formulated differently. It is not possible to operate outside the social. Desire for the Other, in this case the teacher, while possessing the potential to be abusive as in any unequal power relationship, is what motivates Jones to succeed. Her keenness to please, and so conform to the teachers’ desires, does not lessen a pre-existing sense of self; rather it leads to the acquisition of particular dispositions constitutive of her own subjectivity. Subjectivity is not produced autonomously, it is a process of intersubjective becoming. In cultivating Jones’s desire to write well her teachers are not simply pleasuring themselves, or acting as agents of social control, they are exercising their pedagogic role to assist students attain the skills and knowledge requisite for academic success.

Very often the teacher is represented as simply an instrument of the state, their individual practice objectified as repressive pedagogy. This is generally the interpretation of traditional forms of education criticised for their teacher-centredness; a criticism which lies behind progressivist inspired, student-centred learning. Minimising the teacher’s role, however, does not reduce the socially reproductive forces at play in a classroom; rather, a lack of effective teacher intervention can leave them unchecked. Jones’ disciplined body, evident in her mastery of the pen and scholarly comportment, is a necessary precursor for academic success. Illegible handwriting and an unruly body may suggest a form of resistance against the conformities of schooling but they also impede learning. From a broader social perspective, a lack of self-discipline and a failure to acquire socially valued skills leaves one susceptible to more insidious forms of institutionalised control, what Willis (1977: 3) terms self-damnation. What Jones is learning becomes part of her bodily make up, a fluid set of dispositions which can be contingently operationalised to conform or resist.

The disciplinary techniques of institutionalised schooling are generally viewed in a negative sense, especially by progressivist educators who advocate a greater degree
of personal freedom and fewer restrictions upon the student body. Yet in
frequenting almost any social space bodies must conform to particular rules of
motility, schemas which, while somewhat flexible, dictate speed, comportment and
spacing between other animate and inanimate bodies. These schemas, or what could
be termed *carnal genres*, may appear restrictive but they actually equip bodies with a
type of intuition with which to negotiate the world. Movement in public spaces is
structured around rules such as keeping to the left or right, queuing for service,
turntaking with regard to entering and leaving and maintaining a certain personal
space. These develop as carnal genres because they are functional, ensuring the
efficient and safe movement of bodies in social space. A similar perspective is
presented by Goffman who analyses the bodily routines used to maintain public
order (Goffman, 1972). In a school context these 'rules' are more rigidly enforced, but
this is necessitated by the concentration and particular use of bodies and the fact that
children are yet to habituate the carnal genres of schooling. In class students are
constantly told to 'sit still', 'put up your hands', 'don’t call out', 'don’t walk around
the room without permission'. In the playground they are told 'don’t run', 'sit in your
assigned area', 'queue properly at the canteen' and 'don’t litter'. The myriad of
instructions given to children are designed to elicit a particular behaviour which
when habituated constitutes a discipline that invests their bodies with the capacity to
act in a manner both effective and efficient.

As Foucault (1977: 211) points out, “The disciplines function increasingly as
techniques for making useful individuals”. Yet Foucault does not address the agentic
aspects of this utility. Ultimately, despite this potential, Foucault only discusses
disciplinary power as a form of social control. Within the context of schooling this
translates into a mechanism for ensuring obedience through the training of bodies to
behave in particular ways in and outside the classroom. Foucault views this form of
habituation as essentially negative. There is no acknowledgment of the need to
maintain order both inside and outside the classroom and the ways in which this is
of benefit, both from a social and individual perspective. Students are required to sit
and listen in class and talk quietly when appropriate not to ensure docile bodies ripe
for 'thought control', but to assist the 25-30 students within a class participate
effectively. In the playground the strict rules which govern movement and location
are equally important, formulated on the basis of logistics and safety.

Another application of Foucauldian theory in analysing the pedagogic body is found
in the work of Kamler et al (1993) who examine the disciplining of students’ bodies
in relation to the formation of a corporate body. While their particular focus is the
degree to which gender differentiation is evident in the first month of school they devote considerable time to examining how learning to be part of a class group is an important part of learning to be a school student. In their study of a class of twenty-seven kindergarten students in a state school in a regional Victoria, they document how the students’ teacher painstakingly ‘tames’ her class into the rituals of school. While Kamler et al draw on Foucault extensively in the analysis of their data, they also make use of Bourdieu to capture how this disciplining of the young students’ bodies develops into certain dispositions of behaviour or a “school habitus”. Beyond the actual acknowledgment of its embryonic formation in the first weeks of school, however, there is little or no consideration given to how these dispositions within the habitus might enable students to perform academically. Despite the useful connection they make between Foucault’s conceptualisation of discipline and Bourdieu’s habitus, Kamler et al also only seem to emphasise the socially deterministic, as opposed to agentic, aspects of disciplinary power. For example, one of the ritual practices of schooling Kamler et al investigate is song. They compare the use of song in pre-school kindergarten classrooms, where they see the purpose as simply pleasure, to its function in the more formalised structure of school proper, where it is used on a regular basis throughout the day as a classroom management technique. On various occasions the teacher in this study has her class not simply sing in unison but also perform accompanying actions. To Kamler et al (1993: 107) singing, which prior to school was,

a vehicle for pleasure, is transformed into a technique of power, whereby the teacher can get the group to look at her and be subject to her disciplinary gaze.

This is undeniably the teacher’s intent yet it is not simply a technique to foster “a collective student body” important in terms of the development of a school habitus. It is equally important on an individual basis in relation to how this discipline predisposes a student to the regimen of academic work, that is, listening and watching attentively and completing tasks in line with the teacher’s instructions. Rather than pleasure being lost from these activities, as if the students were somehow leaving behind an idealised stage of childhood, it simply functions differently, or with an added dimension. Pleasure is not only derived from the song itself; it is also linked to a sense of identification. Tomkins (1962: 444) sees identification as “one of the most powerful and ubiquitous modes of social responsiveness”. In following their teacher and other classmates, the students engaged in this activity are not experiencing diminished pleasure. Rather, through a desire for recognition and sense of belonging, essential in terms of subject formation, these students are learning a new social ethic as they move in time to the song.
In examining the development of a school habitus during students’ first month at school, Kamler et al’s central concern is gender. Although not the focus of this thesis, it is important to consider these aspects of their findings as their examination of gender differentiation also provides insight into the formation of a scholarly habitus in a more general sense. While Kamler et al see gender as “highly significant” they point out that it “becomes a relevant category which defines and differentiates interaction and subjectivity only in particular areas of classroom practice” (Kamler et al, 1993: 3). They consider that gender is often “sublimated” within what they refer to as the “androgynous corporate body” (Kamler et al, 1993: 75). Where they see the issue of gender as particularly relevant is in terms of the teacher “externally asserting her gaze” in relation to behaviour and disciplinary matters. Here Kamler et al observe a gender imbalance wherein the girls tended to be acknowledged in the class for quietness and obedience whereas boys were singled out for poor behaviour, such as being rowdy. Boys, as a result, were highly visible whereas the girls assumed a certain invisibility. This differential treatment of girls and boys is considered a matter of concern, yet in their analysis Kamler et al tend to focus on the girls and interpret their internalisation of the teacher’s gaze as problematic. The disciplinary techniques that the girls embody are seen as a form of regulation that results in docility. To Kamler et al, the teacher’s gaze disempowers the girls but there is something of a contradiction here. The girls are possibly being positioned to be quiet and sit still but in relation to what Kamler et al see as the need to develop a school habitus as a prerequisite for learning, the girls are actually being empowered rather than the contrary. The docility, which they exhibit and receive recognition for, actually functions as a precursor to literate practice: sitting quietly, following instructions and completing work independently. The boys, on the other hand, through their visibility tend to have poor behaviour reinforced and the teacher’s “taming” is less successful. Boys tend to develop the appropriate dispositions for schooling much later than girls and this could partly explain the problems many experience at a later date in relation to literacy skills.

Considerable attention is currently given to boys’ weaker literacy performance in comparison to girls yet explanation generally attributes this to a supposed ‘feminised curriculum’ and boys having been positioned as more interested in ‘technical’ subject areas (New South Wales Government Advisory Committee On Education, Training and Tourism, 1994; Alloway, Davies, Gilbert, Gilbert and King, 1996; Rowan, Knobel, Bigum and Lankshear, 2002). No consideration is given to the corporeality of literate practice and how girls and boys may embody differing
dispositions of learning both prior to and in the first years of school. Often, as in Kamler et al’s study, the enabling aspects of the girl’s positioning are obscured by a focus on the discursive rather than material aspects of bodily practice. Yet Foucault himself stresses that ‘docile bodies’ need not simply be understood as disabling. The discipline the girls in Kamler et al’s study embody can be enabling. As Foucault generally neglects to deal adequately with the empowering potential of discipline in his own work, applications of his theorisation of power also tend to stress its deterministic rather than agentic aspects. This does not mean that the girls are not disadvantaged in some way by their teacher’s actions. The girls may be empowered by a discipline which predisposes them to literate practice but the emphasis their teacher gives to rewarding quietness and not calling out may also encourage them to be less assertive than the boys. Either way the discipline that students embody is of a far more complex nature than that evident in this study. Kamler et al’s use of the term “androgynous corporate body”, therefore, is misleading and tends to mask aspects of a more subtle gendering of embodied dispositions which occurs in this class.

The aspect of disciplinary power that is presented as particularly insidious to Foucault (1977: 176) is its panoptic quality. In describing the spatial (and temporal) dimensions of panopticism, Foucault shows how the architecture of modern institutions distributes individuals in space in such a way as to enable a “new physics of power”. Such institutions can do this because their “analytical arrangement of space” produces an “axial visibility” which allows for the hierarchical observation that orders and corrects human movement and engenders the internalisation of reformed behaviours as second nature. This “architecture and geometry” involves “channels of power” which run along what might be called vectors operating in this field of visibility. Foucault analyses this disciplinary “cage” in terms of sequestration, constraint and subjection, but it could be argued, that these vectors and the regimens which can be deployed in them, enable the capacitation of human subjects. Such vectors are not simply the trajectories allowing observation from a position of authority; they are the lines of intersubjective engagement. These vectors are fundamental to the production of carnal genres, the particular ways of behaving motivated by specific institutions (Foucault, 1977: 200-208). In a sense, it is panopticism that contributes to the durability of embodied discipline giving it the potential to function as a technology of the self rather than simply a technology of power. Disciplinary power can be pedagogically productive. This is not simply because it aids classroom management, but, given its panoptic quality, it has the potential to function as a form of embodied social conscience, that is, as a corrective
mediating behaviour. In habituating the carnal genres of schooling, students also acquire a set of ethical dispositions that guide their behaviour as a member of a larger social group. Their bodies are infused with an understanding that effective social participation generally depends on a disciplining of their own bodies in terms of how they affect others. Social determinism, therefore, need not be seen as inherently 'evil', particularly if the determination to act is mediated by a notion of conscious intentionality, a point that receives further discussion in the next chapter.

The Discipline to Learn

While important pedagogically in terms of the development of a social ethics of the body, these effects of disciplinary power are enabling in other ways more specifically related to individual academic performance. As is evident in Gramsci's comment, studying has its own particular apprenticeship. This process of induction into scholarly labour begins very early, prior to schooling. The ability to sit at a desk for even short periods of time and concentrate on a task can be quite difficult for many children. Simply sitting at a table is a learned behaviour. Anyone having closely observed the stage when children move from a highchair to sit at a table to eat will understand this. Much of what is taken for granted in everyday practice requires learning. Once learnt, however, it tends to become naturalised to the point where the initial learning process is forgotten. Elias (1978) has explored this phenomenon in relation to the development of social etiquette, what he terms the civilising process, whereby individuals and societies over time implement particular 'rules' governing social behaviour which are learned and then assume a taken-for-grantedness within everyday life. Elias's focus is the mundane: using a fork, sneezing into a handkerchief and not farting in public. This notion of a civilising process also has applicability in terms of the learned nature of scholarly comportment. While much time is devoted in kindergarten to enculturating children into the practices of school life, this need not only be understood from a classroom management perspective. Such practices are also important in terms of developing a scholarly habitus, a naturalness about sitting at a desk to read and write and work independently. It is this learned behaviour, this civilising process, which constitutes an important part of the apprenticeship of academic learning. As Elias (cited in Shilling, 1994: 164) states,

... in the development of civilised bodies, the boundaries between consciousness and drives strengthen. The civilised body possesses self-controls manifest in 'morals' or 'rational thought' which interpose themselves between 'spontaneous and emotional impulses, on the one hand and the skeletal muscles, on the other', and which allow for the deferral of satisfaction. This prevents impulses from expressing themselves in action without the permission of these control mechanisms.
Practice is essentially governed by desire, but it is the nature and formation of this desire that is important in a study of pedagogic action. In assisting children to acquire a desire for academic endeavour (and what is of particular concern here, learning to write) they firstly require a certain scholarly habitus, a bodily disposition which engenders desire. The bodily dimension of writing, that is, sitting and labouring to construct a text - what is essentially habituated technique in proficient writers - is generally taken for granted. Being able to write and write well, however, is not simply a matter of will. Bodies need to be attuned to the dynamics of writing which requires a certain bodily discipline that curbs other desires, “the impulses” to which Elias refers. It is this discipline which eventually attains the status of a disposition generating an ongoing desire to write.

**The Importance of a Scholarly Habitus**

Many children enter school already predisposed to write. To teachers they are either seen as ‘natural’ learners or their early success related to a combination of social class and parental involvement. While the latter explanation is true, a blanket concept such as ‘class’ does not provide much insight into what it is that constitutes the readiness for academic learning. What these children possess can appear as natural due to its habituation but what they have acquired prior to entering school is a particular learning habitus. They are comfortable sitting at a desk and have considerable bodily control to complete a set task. The ease and early success experienced by children who have attended childcare for a number of years prior to commencing school can be partly attributed to this bodily preparedness for the classroom (Raban and Ure, 2000; Dockett and Perry, 2001). In childcare centres days are generally highly structured with time devoted to indoor and outdoor activities; much of the former either sitting at work tables doing puzzles, craft or sitting on mats listening to stories and singing songs. These regularities of practice are over time embodied by children and so they develop a somatic familiarity for the basic hardware of scholarly labour, that is the desk and chair. This formative period for the embodiment of scholarly posture does not signal the beginnings of a passive approach to learning. It is the necessary precursor to the self-discipline required for independent learning and academic work. In children whose bodies are accustomed to sit at a desk and concentrate for sustained periods, their body in a sense disappears as they begin to habituate a scholarly posture. It does not receive their conscious attention and they are no longer aware of its role in what they do. We use our bodies in virtually everything we do but over time we attain a level of
‘disengagement’ from each and every task, without which it would be impossible to function or to increase the complexity of our actions (Gehlen cited in Heller, 1984: 129). What is familiar and habitual is assigned to the unconscious, generally only resurrected by consciousness if modification is required. This disappearance of the body reduces cognitive load, resulting in a greater capacity for conscious thought.

To be able to write successfully children need to have habituated the biodynamics of literate practice. This entails not only mastering the appropriate writing technology, initially an implement such as a crayon, pencil or pen, but to be able to sit at a desk for sustained periods and concentrate on producing text. Children need to feel ‘at one’ with what they are doing, a sense of flow or naturalness about the actions they perform. Their use of the pen and their posture when writing must become a part of their being. As Merleau-Ponty (1999: 91) explains,

those actions in which I habitually engage incorporate their instruments into themselves and make them play a part in the original structure of my own body.

This process is also referred to by Foucault who discusses it in terms of body-object articulation. He writes that, “Discipline defines each of the relations that the body must have with the object that it manipulates” (Foucault, 1977: 152).

To Foucault the point at which the body and object work as one is attained as a result of a disciplined body. It is only through the incorporation of this bodily know-how, and disengagement from the very physicality of writing, that children possess the necessary cognitive capacity to focus more directly on the content of their work, the form and function of what they write. For learning in general this process of disengagement is ongoing, whereby what is learned retreats to the unconscious only to be accessed at point of need. What children acquire through the habituation of this scholarly technique is not simply a practical ability to write but a bodily disposition for learning. It is this generative capacity of disciplinary power and its agentic function that is missing in Foucault’s work.

The Problems with Foucault’s Body
In Discipline and Punish, Foucault (1977: 215) explains that,

‘Discipline’ may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus; it is a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a ‘physics’, or an ‘anatomy’ of power, a technology.
As its application within education seems to demonstrate, this technology does not seem to be utilised with any agentic discretion on the part of individual bodies. Rather, despite Foucault's statements to the contrary, his analysis of disciplinary power is ultimately institutional in the sense that it is only institutionally engendered. While it may not be directly identifiable with any particular institution, it is manifest in the particular procedures and routines which they employ and from which they alone benefit. According to Foucault (1977: 167), institutions harness certain aspects of disciplinary power which he categorises as: cellular, the manipulation of spatial distribution; organic, the coding of activities; genetic, the organisation of time and; combinatorial, involving the grouping of individuals. Despite the usefulness of these categories in analysing the differential form and function of disciplinary power, in his own analysis Foucault makes the mistake of investing the procedures themselves with the capacity to discipline. Crossley (1996: 107) also notes this problem, although specifically in relation to discipline imposed spatially. He states that,

Space is not an (external) object-like force which imposes itself on the body form without. It is a lived and shared dwelling whose 'effects' cannot be understood or accounted for independently of the human action which animates them.

Crossley's comments highlight Foucault's failure to account for any degree of agency in individual bodies' utilisation of space, which is indicative of his response to the array of disciplinary techniques he documents.

In critiquing Foucault's treatment of the disciplinary tendencies of spatial organisation, Crossley draws largely upon Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the body. He refers to Merleau-Ponty seeing the body in an "active relation to its environment" whereby it "creates a functional space around it" (Crossley, 1996: 106). Yet while Foucault is far too determinist, virtually ruling out any agentic function in terms of the disciplinary procedures he describes, Merleau-Ponty seems excessively subjectivist, endowing the body with the capacity to exact what it deems useful from its surroundings. Crossley points out that Merleau-Ponty provides some clarification of this in that the body is empowered to do this as a result of "acquired schemas and habits". What neither Merleau-Ponty or Crossley explain, however, is how these "schemas and habits" are acquired, and, in what way they provide impetus for action. There is no account of the process whereby bodies develop the ingenuity to manipulate their environment. Crossley (1996: 108) is aware of this problem and indicates that his argument "overlooks" the extent to which bodies are actually invested (internally) with power according to Foucault's analysis. This admission is
significant. It makes clear the need to articulate the processual nature and mechanism by which bodies are endowed with agentic potential, a point both crucial in theorising action generally and pedagogy specifically.

Crossley attempts to address this problem through his notion of a carnal sociology in which the body is both active and acted upon. He is justifiably critical of the tendency within sociology of the body to concentrate on the latter at the expense of the former. Yet even in highlighting both these perspectives the theoretical lacuna remains of conceptualising how it is that forces enacted upon the body are encoded and function to affect individual action. The notion of a dialectic relationship, as appears to be proposed by Crossley, is merely a partial explanation, and, as is generally the case in sociology of the body, it fails to account in any way for the role played by consciousness. If it is requisite within the sociology of the body to dismiss the mind it seems this theoretical vacuum, in terms of conceptualising action, will persist.

Foucault himself became quite aware of these problematic aspects of his theorisation of the body. In one of his last interviews he commented that,

> Perhaps I've insisted too much on the technology of domination and power. I am more and more interested in the interaction: between oneself and others in the technologies of individual domination, the history of how an individual acts upon him/herself in the technology of the self.  
> (Martin, Gutman and Hutton, 1988: 19)

Foucault's later concept of technologies of the self, can, in a sense, be seen as a balance to his view of discipline as a form of social subjugation. What Foucault seems to understand by technologies of the self, however, does not appear to act in concert with his notion of disciplinary power. In fact, the technologies of power and the self seem conceptually quite distinct. The former operates as an external force investing the body with a certain utility designed to meet the demands of the sほうす. The latter is defined by Foucault as allowing,

> individuals to effect a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity and wisdom.  
> (Foucault, 1990: 18)

What this seems to suggest is an internal force of will, the conscious mind determining action. And so while Foucault can conceive of the body as socially constituted, a product of the play of disciplinary forces, he seems unable to view
these as individually agentic and so gives the mind, rather than the body, the capacity to effect change in fashioning the self. In some respects Foucault's apparent insertion of the mind within a technology of the self is a pleasing theoretical development, considering its usual omission, but in failing to resolve the relationship between the mind and body in determining action he is left with an unhelpful dualism. His only explanation is to suggest subjectivity is a process of interaction between techniques of power and self; a proposal left untheorised and clearly only providing a partial account, as in the dialectic relationship proposed by Crossley.

**Turner and Frank – Structure v Agency**

Despite these unresolved gaps in Foucault's theorisation of the body his work was instrumental in spawning a wealth of interest in the body as a distinct area of intellectual concern. Within sociology his work has influenced what has developed into a burgeoning sub-discipline related specifically to the body as the locus of inquiry. Despite Mauss's insights during the 1930s and 1940s, the body was largely neglected within sociology, considered as either a topic of primarily biological explication, or, as an area where theorisation tended towards a form of individualism devoid of social constraint (Turner, 1984). It is this latter criticism which was often directed towards ethnomethodologists and social interactionists, such as Garfinkel and Goffman respectively, writing during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Their notion of the social as an instantiation of individualised ritual practice was often viewed as sociologically naive. It is understandable, therefore, how it was possible that Foucault's work provided the impetus for sociological analyses of the body in the 1980s. Foucault's structuralist perspective on the body possessed a theoretical parity with sociology, providing a framework with which the macro could be located within lived experience.

Bryan Turner's *The Body and Society* (1984) is one of the first examples of a specific sociology of the body. This influential text draws on and extends what Turner sees as Foucault's twin focus on 'anatomo' and 'bio' politics, the former a disciplining of individual bodies, the latter the regulation of populations (Turner, 1996: 63). To Turner, as with Foucault, theorisation of the body is primarily understood as an issue of societal order:

The rationalisation of Western society in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century found a new object of exploration and control - the human body itself. The spread of scientific and techno-rational procedures, having gained a foothold in technology and
consciousness, latched onto a new terrain, the body of individuals and the body of populations. (Turner, 1984: 160)

Turner's frame of reference is quite clearly the body as a product of social control (Turner, 1984: 91). This is evident in his model, Table 1.1, a diagrammatic summary of the key lines of argument in *The Body and Society* linking together what he sees as the four related dimensions of corporeal order: reproduction, regulation, restraint and representation with key theorists and associated illnesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Populations</th>
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<th>Internal</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reproduction</td>
<td>Restraint</td>
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<td>Malthus</td>
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<td>Onanism</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Space</th>
<th>Regulation</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rousseau</td>
<td>Goffman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phobia</td>
<td>Anorexia</td>
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</table>

Table 1.1

Here Turner intends to encapsulate how these dimensions are used to manage populations through techniques both temporal and spatial and how individual bodies are governed internally and externally. Although Turner indicates there is considerable overlap between these categories, especially when explicated empirically, he stresses their heuristic value in terms of theorising the body. These categories can be useful but here they have a particular theoretical bias not only towards a view of the body as social tool but of society as oppressive and disabling. Turner provides an explanation of structure at the expense of agency. But, even in doing this, he is only providing a partial account as his conceptualisation of the social fails to acknowledge the productive potential of societal forces, although this seems to be indicative of structural analyses per se. Not only is agency neglected but the dialectic of structure and agency is also ignored. Without the social being conceived in generative terms, structure is theoretically constrained and understood merely as subjection. This is exemplified in Turner's discussion of illness in terms of his four dimensions. His focus on illness both here and elsewhere (Turner, 1992) is ostensibly a way of demonstrating "the complex texture of the body in society and society in the body" (Turner, 1984: 92). Despite the insights he provides in this burgeoning field of enquiry, it is illustrative of a view of the body as simply being

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acted upon, illness being a function of social imposition. This perspective reinforces a simple, deterministic understanding of the relationship between the body and society which fails to acknowledge any enabling capacity which the social provides in the processes of being and acting in the world.

Each of the four dimensions of corporeality that Turner identifies is conceived in terms of a problem of social order needing to be solved. It is for this reason that Frank (1991) refers to Turner's typology as the "societal tasks" model. Frank critiques Turner's reification of society, which he sees as appropriating agency and formulating measures itself to manage bodies.

![Diagram of the body's control and relatedness](image)

**Table 1.2**

To Frank (1991: 48), "Bodies alone have tasks. Social systems may provide the context in which these tasks are defined, enacted and evaluated but social systems themselves have no tasks". Frank counters Turner's typology with his own model of body use in action, shown above in Table 1.2. Here Frank, in a sense, inverts Turner's model. Rather than the body being conceived as a problem of societal order, Frank sees the body as a problem for itself. Instead of resolving any theoretical dilemma, however, Frank simply creates an imbalance in favour of agency over structure. His
theoretical conception of the body is hierarchical with a movement from body to self to society. He sees a place for Turner's understanding of the relationship between the body and society only as the last stage of theorising. This is also the view of Williams and Bendelow (1998: 46) who state that, "Turner's analytical typology represents the final level of abstract systems theorising about the body, not its starting point". Yet the idea of a "starting point" is itself a misconception, particularly if the body is framed in terms of action and embodiment as is the case in Frank. The social cannot be divorced from action. It is constitutive of practice. This is, of course, not Frank's intent, despite the comment that social systems simply provide the context in which bodies act. What is of issue in his work, however, is how the social is understood and its role in determining action. In Frank this is not clearly articulated with his argument at times appearing contradictory. He sees bodies as an interface of institutions, discourses and corporeality. Society, however, is understood as institutionalised structures, similar in a sense to Turner, and, it appears theoretically separate or above individual bodies in action. There is no satisfactory explanation of the way in which these structures are embodied in any agentic sense.

The social can be understood in different ways. Structuralist perspectives, such as that proposed by Foucault, emphasise institutionalised structures. Within ethnomethodology the social is viewed as an aggregation of individualised action. Yet in theorising practice there are pitfalls in emphasising one over the other resulting in a pendulum swing favouring either structure or agency. This is clearly the case in comparing the conceptualisation of the social within Turner and Frank. In Turner there is a clear bias towards structure, whereas in Frank the focus is agency. Frank makes some attempt to incorporate social structure, but, while it is present, it seems to function as mere setting. Its central role in the development of bodily capacity and subject formation is never developed. The social, however, is not one or the other. It is both. That is, it is societal structures, or rather structuring, which, in the main, allows for individual agency. This is not simply theoretical pragmatism but rather an acknowledgment that the social and the individual cannot be understood as autonomous entities. It is the nexus that needs to be theoretically expounded not simply the poles. In the introduction to the second edition of The Body and Society (1996) in which Turner accepts and responds to criticisms of the 1984 edition, he refers to the "lopsided development of the sociology of the body" (1996: 32). He is concerned that research has been concentrated in a limited number of areas and has failed to treat adequately "questions relating to embodiment, body and bodily practices". However, in recent corrections to this imbalance there still appears to be limited treatment of this theoretical dilemma.
Shilling, Bourdieu and Embodied Capital

As in the social sciences generally, issues of structure and agency have tended to underpin debate within educational theory with the dominance of particular theoretical paradigms reflected in syllabus documents and teaching methodology at different times. What is generally ignored, however, is the interdependence between issues of structure and agency and those of the mind/body relation. Despite this, there is little or no theorisation of issues of mind and body and education is understood as primarily a cognitive process. The work undertaken within the sociology of the body is yet to impact upon mainstream education and so the relationship between pedagogy and embodiment is given little consideration. As already discussed, there are exceptions to this but they generally fail to adequately capture the enabling potential of pedagogic embodiment. Within the sociology of the body pedagogy has been largely overlooked as a focus of research, particularly in relation to schooling. An exception to this can be found in the work of Shilling (1991, 1992) who, while writing more generally on the relationship between the body and society (1994), has acknowledged the dearth of material which gives consideration to the role of the body in schooling (Shilling, 1992: 1). Unlike theorists within education, however, who have relied primarily on Foucault in theorising the pedagogic body, Shilling has instead sought theoretical guidance from Bourdieu. In doing this, he points out the selective application of Bourdieu’s work within the sociology of education, namely the widespread use of Bourdieu’s early work on social reproduction, which, while utilising his notion of cultural capital, tends to neglect its embodied state as acquired dispositions of body and mind (Shilling, 1992).

Shilling’s aim is to redress this oversight by examining how embodied capital is an important aspect of schooling, which through conversion into economic or symbolic capital, possesses a similar capacity for the reproduction of social inequality. Shilling’s view of embodied capital, however, seems somewhat narrow. He favours the term physical capital and tends to focus on how individuals make use of their bodies in relation to sport and leisure activities, key areas in which Bourdieu conducted empirical research. In the school context Shilling is particularly concerned with social class and gender differentiation in the teaching of physical education (PE). This is an important area of study, especially in relation to how it impacts upon the academic sphere and employment after school. Shilling, however, does not consider physical capital from an academic perspective, that is, in terms of the embodiment of scholarly dispositions, one of the central concerns of this thesis. A capacity for academic endeavour and, in particular, the ability to write, is not obviously a form of physical capital, yet it is embodied. Notions of embodied and
physical capital, however, seem to have different orientations. Embodied capital seems to suggest internalisation whereas physical capital suggests externalisation. Also, embodied capital gives emphasis to process whereas physical capital appears to stress product, the end result of a process of embodiment. Although clearly not Shilling’s intention, given the reference to ‘production’ in the titles of his work on physical capital and schooling (1991, 1992), it seems product rather than production is his focus. The actual production of physical capital is only given cursory treatment, examined predominantly in terms of the development of particular sporting skills, preference for physical activities and also as bodily representation, such as through dress. Shilling, however, could have explored the production of physical capital within the school context in more detail by incorporating academic skills and demeanour.

To do this, however, far more consideration would need to be given to Bourdieu’s notion of habitus, the set of socially acquired dispositions that generate individual practice. While Shilling mentions the term and acknowledges its embodied nature, he seems to attach minimal significance to it in terms of the production of physical capital. The actual production process, that is the acquisition of bodily dispositions within the habitus that produce physical capital, receives minimal explanation. This could partly be explained by Shilling’s critique of the concept itself which he details elsewhere (1994, 1997). Shilling is not alone in his criticism of Bourdieu’s construct (Aboulafia, 1999; Bohman, 1999; Margolis, 1999; Gartman, 1991; Giroux, 1982). To many the habitus is understood as a static phenomenon overly socially determined to the point where individual transformative action is virtually negated. Shilling (1997: 747) points out that,

As operationalised in Bourdieu’s work the habitus makes it impossible to separate out action from structure, as the two are inextricably entwined, or to account for social change as the two are mutually regenerating.

There are problems with Bourdieu’s notion of habitus but it is still highly productive as a concept with which to theorise a socially informed yet individually agentic understanding of practice. Bourdieu does conflate structure and agency within the habitus, but this is intentional on his part. The habitus is intended as a mediating device wherein structure is individuated. Bourdieu’s aim in doing this is to bridge the structure/agency divide. His success in achieving this, however, is debatable. As such, in his more recent work, Shilling seems to have discarded Bourdieu and sought answers to resolving issues around structure and agency in Giddens’ structuration theory and Archer’s morphogenetic approach. Interestingly, however, he criticises these theorists for their failure to engage with the corporeality of practice. He also
considers that they have an 'undersocialised' view of agency that places too great an emphasis on the role of consciousness in the determination of action. Shilling (1997: 748) states,

For structuration theory and the morphogenetic approach to incorporate a greater somatic component would require a view of the embodied dimensions of agency that is shaped by the social system but is no mere reflection of it, that possesses a creativity able to affect the reproduction or transformation of social structures; and that is subject to change over time.

What Shilling sees as a weakness in Giddens and Archer is actually one of the strengths of Bourdieu's work. The concept of the habitus allows for what Giddens and Archer fail to provide; that is, the capacity for a socially embodied form of action. Shilling is right to critique the habitus in terms of Bourdieu's failure to equip the concept with the means to affect change adequately but, given its strengths, particularly its socially embodied nature, it should not simply be dismissed. Bourdieu actually disclaims the idea that the habitus is immutable and considers this view a misinterpretation of his work. The habitus does possess the capacity for change but what is problematic is where Bourdieu locates this, that is, in social structures not within the individual. He writes,

... rupture cannot result from a simple awakening of consciousness; the transformation of dispositions cannot occur without a prior or concomitant transformation of the objective structures of which they are the product and which they can survive. (Bourdieu, 1998b: 122)

As such, Bourdieu leaves himself open to the criticism that the habitus is overly deterministic and lacking innovative capacity. To ensure the habitus is not so constrained by social structures that it is resistant to change, he needs to give greater emphasis to individual reflexivity as a socially acquired capacity. This, however, entails a re-examination of how the habitus deals with notions of consciousness and a reassessment of the mind/body relation which will be undertaken in the next chapter.

Although more obviously its concern, the theorisation of practice within sociology is overly preoccupied with issues of structure and agency at the expense of an adequate conceptualisation of the nature of the mind/body relation. The latter does play a part in sociology's theorisation of practice but generally only implicitly. It lacks rigorous exposition except in terms of an anti-Cartesian stance, which, while understandable, is hardly a viable alternative. As a result, tacit reference is given to the mind, as it seems almost antithetical to conceive of consciousness as integral to the shaping of action. Shilling appears to take such a stance in his theorisation of
practice. He is critical of what he terms “the theoretical weight” given to consciousness by Giddens and Archer, but, is equally critical of Bourdieu for failing to infuse the habitus with a greater potential for initiating change which is due largely to the omission of a conscious component within his theoretical construct. Shilling’s response to addressing these flaws, however, is to play with the balance or ratio of structure and agency rather than to engage more fully with issues of body and mind.

In analysing theories of practice Shilling has termed perspectives either ‘under’ or ‘over’ socialised which, while generally a useful description, does not in itself pose a way out of the theoretical pendulum swing between structure and agency. What needs to be introduced into this critique is what is generally left to philosophical explication, that is, the nature of the mind/body relation. In theorising pedagogic practice, issues of structure and agency are crucial but, as in sociology, they overshadow debate around the role of the mind and body in determining action. Within sociology this situation is understood to have been remedied by a focus on the body but what is evident in the now thriving scholarship detailing the corporeal dimensions of human existence is a type of mindless ontology which in pursuing an anti-Cartesian line has simply inverted Descartes’s dualism. Shilling’s (1997: 748) request for “a view of the embodied dimensions of agency that is shaped by the social system but is no mere reflection of it”, could be met with a reassessment of the mind/body relation which does not deny an active role for consciousness but views it as functioning dialectically with the more obviously embodied aspects of subjectivity. While always socially constituted, individual action is not simply a result of bodily determination, as is often the perspective within sociology of the body. While a considerable extent of everyday practice functions below the level of consciousness, and much can be theorised from a purely bodily perspective, individuals are equipped with a reflexive capacity which allows them to modify and refine what they do. So, although arguing against a Cartesian dualism, the heuristic distinction between mind and body needs to be recognised if a balance is to be found between the ‘over’ and ‘under’ socialised notions of agency of which Shilling speaks.

This interface between structure and agency, mind and body is where theorisation about the nature of pedagogic practice should be centred. Given its usual cognitive bias, educational theory has much to learn from the sociology of the body, but it will be of minimal use without an accompanying reconceptualisation of the mind/body relation. Shilling’s work on physical capital and schooling is useful in drawing attention to the body within education but, as with the Foucauldian perspective, the
enabling potential of pedagogic embodiment is generally ignored. This could, of course, be undertaken without recourse to consideration of the mind, but, such a theoretical treatment is bound to downplay agency and lapse into social determinism, as is the case with the theorisation of other fields of practice. A productive notion of pedagogic embodiment needs to embrace the mind, and, provide a reconceptualisation of the mind/body relation.

Anti/Ante Theory
With a tendency within much current social and cultural theory to neglect the mind, what appears to have developed to counter Cartesianism is a kind of *anti-theory* which, in being *anti-Cartesian* has also assumed a position of being *anti* the mind and conscious intent. This *anti-theory*, however, can also be understood as *ante-theory*. Its rejection of the mind and notions of free will can be seen to function as a prior, or preliminary, stage of reconceptualising the mind/body relation in the wake of Cartesianism's demise. It seems an almost necessary intellectual exercise, given the body's neglect within the western philosophical tradition, to focus attention on its role in the processes of being. Yet, there seems to be an implicit rationale that doing this provides a kind of epistemological correction to its previous neglect, that is, explication of the body and the processes of embodiment will somehow excise the mind/body binary. While analysis of subjectivity as an embodied concept is an important field of enquiry, failure to engage with notions of consciousness will ensure it remains only a partial account of human practice. What persists is a theoretical gap whereby the question of ontology remains undertheorised and unresolved. There are attempts to bridge this gap but, on the whole, particularly in relation to sociology, this theoretical problematic is conceived narrowly in terms of structure versus agency. What are not generally articulated are the epistemological links between the mind/body relation and issues of structure and agency. That is, in attempting to resolve the structure/agency divide the nature of the mind/body relation is also at issue. Generally, however, it is not given consideration except in terms of the rejection of Cartesianism and instead it functions as an underlying problematic failing to receive due attention. Debate around human embodiment, therefore, tends to concentrate on notions of structural constraint and bodily inscription on the one hand and phenomenological engagement and social interactionism on the other. Attempts to link what is done to the body and what the body does, are generally undertaken without reference to the mind and conscious understanding. What is also lacking is adequate theorisation of the intersection between these perspectives; a space of particular pedagogic concern which
necessitates engagement with issues of conscious intent, not as the sole determinant of action but as an integral aspect, along with corporeal competence, in explaining human praxis.

Crossley’s Carnal Sociology

Crossley’s attempt at bridging this theoretical divide has already been referred to in relation to his critique of Foucault’s work. He draws on a number of theorists in developing his concept of carnal sociology which aims at examining how embodied aspects of existence guide practice. In particular, he makes use of Foucault and Merleau-Ponty meshing structuralism and phenomenology to provide a more balanced account of the corporeal bases of being. Emphasis overall, however, is given to Merleau-Ponty and his concept of the body subject, a notion intended to counter Descartes’s dualist ontology. Crossley (1995b: 135) states that Merleau-Ponty,

shows how the field of perception and the field of action are articulated, how they function together in a mutually transformative fashion and thus how action is always oriented to a present situation which it will accommodate and transform.

This account of action, however, also seems to discount the role of consciousness. The body’s interaction with its surrounding is never presented as problematic. There is therefore no need in this account for reflexivity, a thinking through of the possibility of a bodily mismatch with circumstances and the need to consciously adjust behaviour. Instead there is an assumed ongoing complementarity. To Crossley, Merleau-Ponty’s conceptualisation of the body-subject is valuable because it not only equips the body with a social past, that is acquired bodily traits, but also a social present, namely, how these traits function as a set of competencies for effective action (Crossley, 1995b: 135). It is in terms of a lack of this understanding of a social present that Crossley critiques Mauss. He states that,

[Mauss’s] agents are encumbered with what Marx called ‘the dead weight of tradition’, but there is no account of how they are able to master this weight and transform it into the vibrant flux of everyday social interaction, how tradition becomes competence, know-how and action.
(Crossley, 1995b: 135)

While this is to some extent a valid criticism of Mauss’s work on the body in that he does fail to engage with notions of the immediacy of intercorporeality and spatiality, it must be acknowledged that Mauss does make reference to training and drill and so there is at least an implication of the pedagogic, the process whereby agents are taught to utilise their bodies more effectively and for specific purposes. Despite
Merleau-Ponty’s insights into the productive interrelationship of body and space, he also neglects to provide a detailed account of the process whereby agents develop and, in some cases, explicitly learn particular bodily capacities for social competence. In other words, Merleau-Ponty also takes the pedagogic for granted. The acquisition of particular competencies is understood as primarily a process of immersion whereby agents simply assume bodily know-how as a result of their being in the world.

Pedagogy, however, is much more than a process of unconscious osmosis. It requires recourse to consciousness, often as a result of the intervention of other more capable bodies and minds. The process of learning, even at a bodily level, involves degrees of reflexivity or conscious reassessment of the effectiveness and suitability of particular actions. Crossley points out that Merleau-Ponty’s treatment of bodily interaction has weaknesses and that it is Goffman who provides a more thorough account of how agents modify behaviour to maintain face and the requirements of appropriate social performance, but he adds that Goffman,

... is clear that such observance belongs to embodied action itself and not to any separate act of intellect: that is action follows rules without the mediation of conscious or otherwise ‘mental’ processes.
Crossley (1995b: 138)

The status of consciousness in Crossley’s account is unclear. With this interpretation of Goffman he seems to want to deny its role in the determination of action, but he also endorses Merleau-Ponty’s comment that “mindedness and embodiment of human life are inseparable” (Crossley, 1995b: 142). Overall, consciousness is treated as an uncertain category by Crossley, downplayed, perhaps, in deference to anti-Cartesianism. The nature of the mind/body relation is therefore left in abeyance. While his use of phenomenology and social interactionism allows Crossley to provide a more agentic perspective on human embodiment and action than is evident in much sociology of the body, his attempt to reconcile the structure/agency divide is handicapped by his failure to consider the role of consciousness in the processes of being and doing.

**Giddens and the Disembodied Agent**

Another theorist keen to bridge the structure/agency divide is Giddens. Whereas Crossley attempts to do so in relation to human embodiment and action, Giddens, working within mainstream sociology, tends to ignore corporeality viewing action more in terms of the function of a thinking and purposeful agent. Giddens’s
contribution to the theoretical impasse is the concept of structuration, which focuses on the duality of structure. To Giddens (1979: 5) structure is “both the medium and outcome of the reproduction of practices”. He rejects the notion of structure as constraint, viewing it instead as a set of rules and resources, the inherent properties of social systems that are in turn constitutive of practice. In terms of this fundamental interrelationship between structure and agency Giddens has much in common with Bourdieu, but, whereas Bourdieu has devised the concept of the habitus to mediate the structure/agency relation, Giddens has no such mechanism within his theoretical framework. Instead, Giddens (1979: 5) explains that,

structure enters simultaneously into the constitution of the agent and social practices and 'exists' in the generating moments of this constitution.

Giddens's use of the term constitution here in relation to the agent is misleading. Given his failure to deal with notions of embodiment it is difficult to ascertain the way in which structure enters the agent and functions as an enabling capacity to generate practice, except in terms of a conscious monitoring of activity. In Giddens's account structure does not sediment into corporeal dispositions as in Bourdieu's embodied notion of habitus. He does refer, however, to “stocks of knowledge” which appear to be the accumulation of agents' social experience which, while they may not hold conscious retention of, can draw upon to guide their behaviour (Giddens, 1979: 40).

Giddens (1984: 49), therefore, makes a distinction between what he terms discursive and practical consciousness. The former involves verbal expression, the latter simply tacit awareness during the course of activity, which an agent knows but cannot verbally recount. Giddens's understanding of what is involved in terms of practical consciousness, however, avoids the body and its own learned behaviour which, as habituated practice, is generally and necessarily below the level of consciousness. Giddens, however, wants to retain some ongoing form of conscious state in his account, but, in doing so, provides a particularly unpractical account of practice. Consciousness at various levels, or, in Searle's terms, “states of intensity”, is crucial in terms of understanding what agents do, particularly in relation to the pedagogic, but, so too, are inscribed patterns of behaviour of which we may not even be tacitly aware (Searle, 1997: 5). What is problematic about the corporeal is its apparent naturalness, which is easy to discount. It is this hidden embodied facility which is all but ignored in theorising the pedagogic, a domain understood almost exclusively in cognitive terms. Giddens's failure to account for the body and acknowledge the role of unconscious bodily intuition could be a result of his intention, through
structuration theory, to counter structuralist theorisations of practice. To Giddens (1979: 41),

the pressing task facing social theory today is not to further the conceptual elimination of the subject, but, on the contrary, to promote a recovery of the subject without lapsing into subjectivism.

Any lapse in relation to the workings of consciousness, by allowing a corporeal unconscious to assert a role in determining behaviour, from Giddens's perspective seems to work against what he understands by agency, thereby contributing to "the conceptual elimination of the subject". Giddens's notion of agency and what constitutes a subject, however, is theoretically impoverished. The subject of structuration theory is disembodied, acting essentially on the basis of conscious intent. Giddens attempt to reconcile the structure/agency divide is thereby thwarted by a failure to adequately theorise the mind/body relation. His conceptualisation of practice is underpinned by a dualist ontology which gives his own theory of practice a subjectivist slant, the very position he seems keen to avoid. In Modernity and Self Identity Giddens (1991) does attempt to engage far more with the bodily dimensions of subjectivity. Yet here he still gives little emphasis to the processes of embodiment, with his central concern being ontological security in terms of a kind of psychological monitoring of individual practice which draws heavily upon the work of Goffman and Laing.

Concluding Remarks
What tends to dominate theorisation of the body either implicitly or explicitly is a focus on structure or agency, or, alternatively, attempts to bridge this divide which invariably reveal a structural or agentic bias. While issues of structure and agency are foregrounded in analysis of the body and the processes of embodiment, this is only one of a number of what Turner (1996: 232) refers to as "perennial contrasts" which occupy social and cultural theory. He also refers to the related tensions of individual and social, nature and culture, consciousness and unconsciousness, mind and body, which are also enmeshed in the theoretical positions surveyed in this chapter. Despite the obvious intertwining of these relational factors, what is problematic, especially in relation to sociology, is the emphasis given to notions of structure and agency at the expense of the mind/body relation. A fundamental failing within theorisation of the body is its inadequate treatment of its ontological underpinnings. Cartesianism is summarily dismissed, but the ontological lacuna resulting from its demise is all but ignored, seemingly filled by the concentration
given to explicating the corporeal. What are considered problems in terms of issues of structure and agency may in fact result from this failure to engage with notions of consciousness and the mind/body relation. In the next chapter an attempt is made to correct this imbalance by proposing an alternate ontological framework that incorporates notions of body and mind which it is hoped, will provide a firmer foundation on which to theorise the pedagogic.
Chapter 2 – The Mindful Body

We learn bodily. The social order inscribes itself in bodies through this permanent confrontation which may be more or less dramatic but is always largely marked by affectivity and, more precisely, by affective transactions with the environment.

P. Bourdieu (2000: 141)

Reason is not seen as a transcendent or disembodied quality of the soul or mind; rather, reason, desire and knowledge are embodied and dependent, at least in the first instance, on the quality and complexity of the corporeal affects.

M. Gatens (1996: 110)

The focus in chapter one was to survey various past and present theorisations of the body, especially phenomenological and sociological understandings. Emphasis was also given to recent work within education, which has largely involved applications of Foucauldian theory. Despite the benefits of this scholarship in demonstrating the ontological significance of the corporeal, it has little interest in articulating the role of the mind in determining practice. While there needs to be a much greater appreciation of the bodily aspects of learning, this should not be undertaken without also acknowledging the role of the mind. Although “We learn bodily”, as Bourdieu states, this is not exclusively so; the mind figures substantially in the process. The problem here is that the mind and body are presented as separate entities, with the former seemingly devoid of any corporeal instantiation. This, however, need not be the case. In drawing on the work of Spinoza, Gatens (1996: 110) points out that; “reason, desire and knowledge are in fact embodied”. Rather than being distinct from the body, consciousness can be conceived as reliant upon the quality and complexity of corporeal affects (Gatens, 1996: 110).

This chapter will return to Bourdieu’s notion of habitus to explore this relation. While Bourdieu’s notion of habitus is a productive conceptualisation of the relation between social structure and bodily action, it nevertheless achieves this through displacing the question of human consciousness. This chapter proposes a reformulation of Bourdieu’s habitus that draws upon the insights of Spinoza’s monism. In doing this, it provides a foundation for a theory of pedagogic embodiment that considers the role of the body and the mind in the determination of action.

Bourdieu – Losing Consciousness

Bourdieu perhaps provides the most effective means of bridging the structure/agency divide through his theoretical construct of the habitus. He defines the habitus as:
systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organise practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them.
(Bourdieu, 1990: 53)

Bourdieu’s intention in devising the habitus is to counter both the subjectivist and objectivist tendencies within social and cultural theory, dissolving the binarism that permeates both sociological and philosophical inquiry. Wacquant (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 19) refers to Bourdieu’s theorisation of the social as “monist”:

it refuses to establish sharp demarcations between the external and the internal, the conscious and the unconscious, the bodily and the discursive.

Bourdieu is monist in the extent to which he captures the simultaneity of structure and agency in the operation of the habitus, but this still rests on a dualism of mind and body. Bourdieu’s ‘partial’ monism is made possible through his focus on embodied practice. Bourdieu (2000: 143) proposes a view of practice that is grounded in a “practical non-thetic intentionality”, which

has nothing in common with a cogitatio (or a noesis), [it] is rooted in a posture, a way of bearing the body (a hêxis), a durable way of being of the durable modified body which is engendered and perpetuated, while constantly changing (within limits), in a twofold relationship structured and structuring to the environment.
(Bourdieu, 2000: 144)

This bodily intentionality is lodged within the dispositions of the habitus acquired through the repeated experience of everyday life. These dispositions operate as a virtuality whereby schemas of action inscribed within the body take command and guide practice when interpellated to act. The possibility of any recourse to consciousness either prior to or during activity is not a matter for the habitus. Given the concept’s fundamental role in determining practice the conclusion to be drawn is that neither conscious intent, nor reflection, is integral to action. To obviate the need for conscious intervention, as in the case of a situational disjuncture, Bourdieu (1990: 61) points out that,

the habitus tends to protect itself from crises and critical challenges by providing itself with a milieu to which it is as pre-adapted as possible; that is, a relatively constant universe of situations tending to reinforce its dispositions by offering the market most favourable to its products.

Apart from the problematic of fetishising the habitus, Bourdieu seems to only ever deal with the construct as though it was already formed. The actual development of dispositions within the habitus, as in the case of young children beginning school, is
not considered. The pedagogic dimension of the habitus receives minimal theoretical explication in Bourdieu’s corpus. In his early work on education, pedagogy is viewed specifically from the perspective of “social reproduction” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977/1992). While this is an important aspect of pedagogy, it is only one dimension of its overall impact. In focusing on this, Bourdieu fails to capture the enabling potential of the process. As Bourdieu’s critics (Gartman, 1991; Giroux, 1982) quite rightly point out, if the dispositions within the habitus merely replicate given social structures, the concept is merely a cog in the process of social reproduction and Bourdieu’s sociology is overwhelmingly structuralist in orientation. Yet Bourdieu is adamant that this is not the case. He has responded in detail to this criticism, stressing that, “Habitus is not the fate that some people read into it” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 133). He explains that,

it is an open system of dispositions that is constantly subjected to experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures.
(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 133)

This point, however, does not tally with what Bourdieu has stated about the propensity of the habitus to avoid incompatible contexts, and its overall resistance to change. Even if some compromise is found between these two positions, and the habitus is understood as a more flexible concept, the impetus for change is located outside the individual with agency not only dependent on the external per se, but, on forces which have a sustained impact upon the habitus. It is only through iteration that a dispositional inclination is attained. This process, as detailed by Bourdieu, goes part way towards explaining the logic of practice and is critical in understanding the importance of habituation within the pedagogic process. The problem remains; however, to conceive of a socialised subjectivity which has some in-built mechanism for individual autonomy, without a resultant slippage into subjectivism.

To Bourdieu the habitus, as it stands, provides the requisite degree of autonomy. There is acknowledgment in his work of the need, at times, for conscious intervention, or, what he terms, strategic calculation. This mode of action, however, is not accounted for in terms of his overall logic of practice (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 131). He states that,

Times of crises, in which the routine adjustment of subjective and objective structures is brutally disrupted, constitute a class of circumstances when indeed, ‘rational choice’ may take over, at least among those agents who are in a position to be rational.
(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 131)
It seems that consciousness, as far as Bourdieu is concerned, is an aberration. It only intercedes at "times of crises". To Bourdieu, it is not part of everyday practice and neither is it an aspect of embodied subjectivity. Consciousness, from Bourdieu's perspective, seems to stand distinct, separate from the somatic in its sporadic intervention in practice.

Although Wacquant may perceive a monist intent in his work, Bourdieu's theorisation of the habitus is still hampered by an underlying dualism. Bourdieu may not draw sharp demarcations between the various modalities of human existence, but, at the same time, he is not even-handed in his treatment of their role in the formation of subjectivity and the determination of practice. One of the key strengths of Bourdieu's habitus is the conceptualisation of subjectivity as embodied. Bourdieu's understanding of embodiment, however, is still very much framed in terms of the anti-Cartesianism characteristic of the sociology of the body. That is, Bourdieu's notion of embodiment is almost exclusively corporeal. Rather than incorporating the conscious mind within his conceptualisation of practice as also embodied; it is instead marginalised in deference to the intentionality inherent in bodily schemas. Instead of exhibiting a monist ontology, Bourdieu inverts Descartes's dualism virtually effacing conscious intent from the processes of being and doing.

This exclusion of consciousness in the theorisation of the habitus is significant. The concept has generated much debate with commentary focused on its success or otherwise in bridging the structure/agency divide. Despite acknowledgment that the concept functions as a useful heuristic for explicating the individual/social nexus, there is considerable criticism that it limits agency. Turner comments that Bourdieu's description of the habitus is not dissimilar to Durkheim's account of social facts and that Bourdieu's work in general is a form of "disguised structuralism" (Turner, 1992: 90). This criticism is interesting in its failure to elaborate reasons which could account for the deterministic tendencies of the habitus that relate specifically to issues of the mind/body relation and Bourdieu's neglect of consciousness. There are some exceptions to this. Margolis (1999: 76), for example, states that, "I cannot see how to ensure the theoretical contribution of the habitus without a reasonably detailed account of the cognizing process of social life". Aboulafia (1999) and Bohman (1999) share similar views. In general, however, both Bourdieu and his critics display an ambivalence towards consciousness. Bourdieu attributes minimal significance to its role in the course of everyday life, yet his critics seem to contain their critique within the sole confines of attempting to resolve issues
of structure and agency generally only by altering the structural component of the equation or reframing notions of the social.

The agentic function of consciousness is generally downplayed as a result of the anti-Cartesian backlash. In cognitive science and neuroscience it has remained a central concern and through interdisciplinary dialogue there is renewed interest in some areas of philosophy (Searle, 1997). The humanities, however, still seem to view consciousness as a theoretical pariah with little attention given to its ontological significance. It is conceptualised as a cognitive phenomenon, the preserve of a unified, thinking, yet disembodied, subject prompted to act as a result of rational and calculated thought. Affect, emotion, desire and the body are all categories typically considered antithetical to consciousness and rational action. Bourdieu rightly rejects this epistemological stance and focuses his attention on the role of the corporeal in the formation of subjectivity and the determination of practice. In doing this, however, he has tended to limit the impact of corporeality and the effect of the sensate to the realm of the body and habituated action. Their role in the workings of consciousness are not considered. While broadening the philosophy of action to incorporate socially acquired bodily schemas of practice, he has maintained a Cartesian separation of body and mind.

**Consciousness – A Virtual Constant**

It could be argued that consciousness is a virtual constant of everyday life, not simply as Bourdieu sees it, as strategic calculation, but, as a set of capacities, which allow for various levels of reflection to impact upon practice. This may be as banal as what to wear on a particular occasion or reassessing the family budget. Such matters may not require the degree of intellect envisaged by Bourdieu but they do involve consciousness and a form of reflexivity with the potential to engender more sophisticated degrees of reflexive thought. Conceptualisations of consciousness, as Greenfield (2000: 168) points out, are often premised on an unnecessary and false assumption that it is “either on or off, there or not there”. She suggests it is better to view consciousness as a continuum – “not as a sudden blinding light but as a dimmer switch” (Greenfield, 2000: 168). Consciousness can be considered a polymorphous state, having various forms or, to be more precise, levels moving from basic wakefulness through to awareness, attentiveness and on to degrees of reflection which involve complex thought. As a result, it is variable, changing in intensity from one moment to the next.
In terms of understanding pedagogic practice, the role of consciousness cannot be ignored, particularly as it pertains to complex thought. In learning to write, its role is clearly evident. Before the mechanics of handwriting are routinised to the point of habituation, children first exhibit a mindful focus on the formation of letters and spacing between letters and words. If this conscious attention is not initiated by the children themselves their teacher is generally quick to intervene. What results is a play of consciousnesses between teacher and student and also among students themselves which is an integral aspect of the teaching/learning dynamic. Once a degree of competency is attained, there is little need for much conscious monitoring of handwriting and so greater cognitive processing can be devoted towards choice of words and the sense and flow of sentences, much of which must also be habituated for children to produce more sophisticated textual forms.

What is evident within school-base pedagogy, and which can be effectively extrapolated to the pedagogic of the everyday, is how consciousness operates in a dialectical and complementary relation to the habitus. Consciousness is not anomalous in terms of what we do, rather, it is an immanent aspect of practice. A distinction needs to be made, however, between the pedagogic of the everyday and institutionalised pedagogic practice, as in the case of schooling. While there is a dialectic in relation to the habitus and consciousness within all forms of pedagogy the ratio of habituation and consciousness may vary between the everyday and schooling. In the latter learning is concentrated. Specific skills and knowledge must be acquired within a shorter timeframe, and with additional restrictions. Schooling does not have the luxury of the time and organisation of the everyday and so habituation must be orchestrated and conscious awareness heightened. This can be achieved through a teaching methodology that emphasises the repeated and detailed treatment of certain skills and knowledge, together with a combination of explicit teaching and focused and sustained learning. Schooling *condenses* the everyday. This is a process many progressivist educators deride as artificial, and so work against, without fully realising the need for, and appropriateness of, this process.

Pedagogy has both a cognitive and corporeal dimension, as does practice per se. Bourdieu’s notion of the habitus, however, focuses on the latter and does not acknowledge the importance of consciousness as a factor in determining action. Despite allowing for consciousness in terms of strategic calculation, this lies outside the habitus and the realm of the corporeal. The concept itself is clearly devoid of any conscious intent and so consciousness is disembodied within Bourdieu’s philosophy. Consciousness, however, need not be understood as separate to the body. As Searle
(1997: 184) points out, “we ought to think of the experience of our body as the central reference point of all forms of consciousness”. Consciousness, therefore, can be understood as embodied and reliant upon the corporeal affects resulting from day-to-day experience. Much of this ongoing flow of sensation may not be registered overtly by consciousness, but, depending on its intensity and recurrence, may still have the capacity to function as a somatic marker alerting the mind to act. Damasio (1994: 174) refers to somatic markers as “a special instance of feelings generated from secondary emotions”. He explains that “these emotions and feelings have been connected, by learning, to predict future outcomes of certain scenarios”. An accumulation of affect, therefore, has the capacity to function as a somatic marker which has implications for habituation and learning.

Bourdieu’s account of practice needs to take account of this. While a considerable proportion of practice is routinised, and individuals function, as Bourdieu explains, with a socially embodied “feel for the game”, this is not the totality of what constitutes the logic of practice (Bourdieu, 1998b: 80-81). There is rarely one logical choice or move in a game. A feel for the game involves considering the array of options and instantaneously deciding on the best one, such as looking for the best kicker or fastest runner. In terms of writing, this could involve how best to construct a sentence, the choice between active or passive voice, for example. Although giving it a more sociological slant, Bourdieu seems to draw on Merleau-Ponty’s notion of the body-subject here, which emphasises the complementary relationship between body and space. As with Bourdieu, however, Merleau-Ponty’s concept neglects the potential tensions of praxis which require conscious evaluation, not simply a reliance on bodily intuition. While the two are interdependent, they are not one and the same. As Damasio (1994: 133) points out, even though we possess “the means to respond adaptively at an automated level … consciousness buys an enlarged protection policy”.

**Consciousness, Affect and Emotion**

Damasio’s understanding of consciousness, however, is not distinct from the body. It is reliant on bodily affects and their emotional states. He explains that,

feeling your emotional states which is to say being conscious of emotions, offers you flexibility of response based on the particular history of your interactions with the environment.

(Damasio, 1994: 133)
When Damasio refers to emotions, or feelings, however, he is not referring exclusively to states of mind. While emotions are essentially cognitive they are derived from bodily affects. Emotions, at least initially, result from the conscious registering of these affects. This important distinction is also made by Massumi (1996: 221) who points out that emotion and affect “Follow different logics and pertain to different orders”. In her discussion of Massumi’s work Boler (1996) points out how he sees affects as “intensities” and emotions as “qualified intensities”. He explains that,

In some sense, affect is similar to a preliminal/prediscursive and uncapturable dimension of experience, while emotion is an identified intensity, ‘or recognised affect.

Boler, however, is not happy with this distinction. She sees emotions as “inscribed habits of inattention” and states they need to be understood as “frequently imperceptible, less fixed and qualified”. What Massumi appears to be capturing in the distinction he makes, particularly with his reference to “different orders” and “different logics”, is how affects and emotions relate to different modalities of being. This should not be understood as a form of dualism. Rather, Massumi is referring to what pertains to the mind, namely emotions, and the body, that is affect, as having an ontological correspondence, similar in a sense to Spinozistic parallelism. Affect and emotion are at the same time different and similar: different in the sense that they belong to distinct modes of existence, but similar in that emotion is substantially a product of affect or, as Damasio (1994: 159) so succinctly writes,

Feelings (by which Damasio means emotions) offer us a glimpse of what goes on in our flesh.

Boler does not seem to want to make this distinction. Her conceptualisation of emotions as “inscribed habits of inattention” seems to locate them, along with affects, in the realm of the corporeal, with an implied resistance to any conscious expression. The distinction she draws between affect and emotion seems to focus on the longevity of their bodily effect; that is, affect is more fleeting whereas emotion is generally sustained. Affect, however, also has the propensity to be inscribed in the body, lodged in flesh as traces of experience. Although in this sense, it is as an accumulation of affects, or, as Spinoza would term them, “affections” (Deleuze, 1988: 48), resulting from the repeated impact of similar encounters with, and in, the world. They reside in what could be conceived as a bodily unconscious, a concept closely allied with Bourdieu’s notion of habitus. It is in relation to this that Massumi, no doubt, views affect as autonomous. While affect can receive conscious attention as emotion, it may not. Even without instantiation through consciousness, affect could
still possess the capacity to direct behaviour, or at least, provoke a response. In these instances, it could be viewed as autonomous. Such an example is provided by Massumi in his discussion of Hertha Sturm’s experiment of children’s reactions to viewing three different versions of a film (Sturm, 1987 cited in Massumi 1996).

As an initial bodily sensation, however, affect in itself is generally far too ephemeral to be viewed as much more than a combinatory element in inducing individuals to act in particular ways. By and large action is conditioned by, or rather learned through, the repetition of similar affects. This is also the view of Tomkins (1962: 181) who, while acknowledging that humans possess innate affective responses, stresses the impact of learning on affect. He states that,

Despite the undoubted significance of the innate endowment of affect in all human beings, and the innate individual differences in such endowment, it is also true that much of the variance of affective expression is a consequence of learning. (Tomkins, 1962: 182)

To exemplify this Tomkins refers to the affective response of crying in infants and how, over time, this response is considerably weakened through social conditioning to the point where few adult males cry in public. What is important here is that Tomkins is not simply referring to the outward display of the affective response, that is the act of crying, he explains that, “We also learn to change some of the internal components of the innate affective responses” (Tomkins, 1962: 182).

Humans, therefore, may possess affective predispositions but how affect operates in relation to subject formation and its role in shaping action is a function of pedagogy in its broadest sense. In ascribing affect autonomy Massumi neglects the role of the pedagogic in human response. What appears as a singular affect may in actuality be an assemblage of previously experienced sensations, perhaps even having received conscious mediation in the past.

Boler also has difficulty with Massumi’s notion of “the autonomy of affect”, yet her criticism is quite different. Boler suggests that viewing an affect as autonomous is not dissimilar from psychoanalytic notions of the “preliminal or prediscursive” (Boler, 1996: 12). This view, however, seems to narrow the domain of the unconscious to the psychical and fails to acknowledge that it is equally corporeal. Given Boler’s description of emotions as “inscribed habits of inattention” it does not seem that it is her intention to make such a distinction, as the term itself suggests that emotions function within the realm of the bodily unconscious. She does not adequately distinguish between affect and emotion which seems to result from her
overall neglect in articulating the mind/body relation except in terms of a blurring of categories. While emotion may possess corporeality, what is not clear are the ways in which this is distinct from that of affect. As it is understood here, affect denotes the sensate, the initial bodily reaction to ongoing encounters with the external. In contrast, emotion involves conscious awareness of bodily affects. A similar distinction is made by Nathanson (1992: 49) who uses “the word affect to describe the strictly biological portion of emotion”. Once receiving conscious attention emotions may lie dormant ready to be reactivated again and again given inducement by affect. The location of dormant emotions produced through this iterative process seems, from Boler’s perspective, to be the body. This is no doubt why she refers to emotions as “inscribed habits of inattention”. But what this definition obscures is the necessary conscious recognition involved with emotion. As Lupton (1998: 33) points out, “There is a world of difference between a physical feeling and an emotion, even where the embodied sensation may be the same”. To explain this point further Lupton cites Miller’s work on the emotion of disgust where he points out that,

Disgust is a feeling about something and in response to something not just raw unattached feeling. That’s what the stomach flu is. Part of disgust is the very awareness of being disgusted, the consciousness of itself. (Lupton, 1998: 33, original emphasis)

Boler, however, does not intend to deny consciousness; indeed a focus of her work is consciousness raising. Rather, it seems that she wants to merge affect and emotion. She explains that,

Emotions are in part sensational, or physiological: consisting of the actual feeling – increased heartbeat, adrenaline, etc. Emotions are also ‘cognitive’, or ‘conceptual’: shaped by our beliefs and perceptions. (Boler, 1999: xix).

However, while there may be a merging of feeling and cognition in our experience of emotion it is important to make an analytic distinction between the two, as what pertains to emotion and affect, like mind and body, consciousness and unconsciousness, have different pedagogic implications. As mentioned previously, in relation to Massumi, this recognition of the different modalities of existence is not about maintaining a dualist ontology but rather about accounting for the different aspects of the totality of being. Also, simply conflating affect and emotion provides little insight into the workings of consciousness. As Nathanson (1992: 114) explains, “Consciousness itself is a function of affect”. It is the actual recognition of an affect - that is as an emotion - which is the most basic form of consciousness (Greenfield, 2000: 161). Boler perhaps feels no real need to make a distinction between affect and
emotion given her work is essentially about considering the important, yet
neglected, role of emotion within education. In particular, she is concerned with how
feminine emotion has been devalued in preference to masculine reason, and how
emotions can in fact function as a powerful pedagogic resource. I would concur with
Boler on this point. Emotion is not only a significant aspect of thought, but it actually
provides the foundation for reason and rational judgment. Such a view of the
interrelationship of emotion, affect and reason relates very much to the Spinozistic
framework of knowledge discussed later in this chapter and resonates with
Tomkins’s point that,

Out of the marriage of reason with affect there issues clarity with passion. Reason
without affect would be impotent, affect without reason would be blind.
(Tomkins, 1962: 112)

In this thesis, however, the emphasis is not on the pedagogic significance of
emotions but on pedagogic embodiment and the formation of academic dispositions
for learning. As a result there is a need to acknowledge the difference between affect
and emotion and articulate how the former functions in relation to the corporeal and
the psychical, the unconscious and consciousness and to consider their respective
pedagogic effects.

The Embodied Mind
The blurring which occurs with the categories of affect and emotion is also evident in
dealing with conceptualisations of consciousness and unconsciousness. What the
terms consciousness and unconsciousness actually denote varies considerably. Not
only is there fractured understanding resulting from the disciplinary disjunction
between the sciences and philosophy but the terms’ almost exclusive association
with the mind is being challenged with some recognition that each has a corporeal
dimension. Within the sciences, consciousness has been predominantly studied as an
embrained, as opposed to embodied, phenomenon with notions of mind being
equated substantially with the brain. For example, Dennett (1998) uses the terms
mind and brain interchangeably, as though they were synonymous. Within
philosophy consciousness has tended to be a very loaded term evoking the ghost of
Descartes and humanist notions of an all-knowing, unitary self. Consciousness is
conceived as self-consciousness involving reasoned reflection and a notion of mind
as transcendent, divorced from bodily experience. Although this perspective and its
related ontology have been severely discredited, this has not seemed to provoke a
reassessment of the nature of consciousness. Instead, it has been left to languish as a
philosophical concept with there being a kind of theoretical ambivalence towards it in many areas of the humanities.

Despite this, in both the sciences and philosophy some inroads have been made into rethinking consciousness as an embodied aspect of human existence. From the perspective of a neurobiologist, though by no means within the mainstream, Damasio (1994: 118) writes, "The mind is embodied, in the full sense of the term, not just embrained".

Damasio is keen to draw attention to how the mind is shaped through experience. Given the emphasis assigned to genes and natural predisposition, resulting from the current fashion for genetic determinism, the contribution of the experiential on the formation of mind has been downplayed. While genes are important in detailing certain aspects of bodily make-up and also an individual’s propensity for particular diseases, many neuroscientists such as Greenfield (2000) want to stress how the uniqueness of mind is directly attributable to individual experience not a pre-programmed capacity. Greenfield and Damasio both share the view that experience does not necessarily have a direct effect on the brain; rather its impact is felt via the body through the skin, musculoskeletal system and in Greenfield’s case, the hormonal system. Damasio (1994: 111) states that,

as we develop from infancy to adulthood, the design of brain circuitries that represent our evolving body and its interaction with the world seem to depend on the activities in which the organism engages, and on the action of innate bioregulatory circuitries as the latter react to such activities.

It is interesting to ponder how such embodied notions of mind, and, in particular, the conscious mind, might be articulated with Bourdieu’s understanding of the logic of practice and the autonomy he assigns to the role of the habitus in accounting for agency. If consciousness is a product of bodily experience it seems worthwhile to incorporate its function within a theory of practice rather than treat it, as Bourdieu does, as an epiphenomenon to the processes of being and doing. This acknowledgment of the importance of consciousness in understanding practice does not run the risk of resurrecting Descartes; rather, with consciousness as an embodied concept it possesses an oppositional logic to Cartesian dualism in that mind and consciousness are a product of experience rather than distinct from it. Practice may be a product of habituated response but it also involves degrees of conscious reflection. These embodied processes of habituation and consciousness operate as a dialectic. Not only do some activities which were initially conscious become habituated overtime, but this habituated practice may also be reflected upon and
perhaps modified, as in correcting untidy writing. This example may seem trivial but the processes involved, that is, the movement between the habitual and consciousness, are evident in practice overall. Even practice that has become embodied without recourse to consciousness is open to conscious reflection. As mentioned, Bourdieu does allow for this, but only in terms of strategic calculation, which intercedes when there is a misfit between habitus and field. Conscious intervention, however, is always a possibility in the course of any activity. It may not result from a self-directed act of intellect; rather, it could be predicated on outside intervention. This is evident in such cases as a teacher drawing attention to a child’s poor writing or their inability to sit still. Such a comment by a teacher may trigger the child to make a conscious decision to change what they’re doing at that time, and, if the intervention is consistent and effective, may instil a type of habitual consciousness in the child to self-correct.

The understanding of practice proposed here does not involve such a tight fit between Bourdieu’s notions of habitus and field nor a singular causal relation. Instead it contends that, while individuals tend to perform almost automatically within specific milieus with which they are familiar and in which the processes of bodily enculturation have occurred, there is still the ongoing possibility of degrees of conscious reflection to modify behaviour, even within the context of the familiar. Also, rather than a “crisis situation” always resulting from the disjuncture between habitus and field, practice, with an ongoing recourse to consciousness, can be understood as far more seamless than that which Bourdieu proposes. As such, there is the possibility of reasonably fluid movement across fields; even those with which we may have little or no experience, depending of course on the particular make-up of an individual’s habitus. Such a view of practice can provide some explanation as to why some working class children confronted with what is largely the middle class culture of schooling still manage to succeed. It also frees pedagogy from the treadmill of social reproduction allowing it to be understood as a potentially enabling process. This enabling potential, however, is very much dependent upon the ability to habituate certain practices - one of these being the propensity or disposition for conscious reflection. This seems a contradiction in terms as the very process of habituation seems to rule out the intervention of consciousness. Yet with consciousness understood as embodied this supposed contradiction is no longer evident. Thought, therefore, can be triggered by a dispositional tendency, functioning in a similar way to Damasio’s notion of a somatic marker.
While this process of habituation is markedly different from what Bourdieu proposes, it does not require discarding the notion of habitus. Rather, it involves breaking down Bourdieu’s implicit dualisms of body and mind, consciousness and unconsciousness, and refashioning the habitus so it becomes a truly embodied concept with consciousness, and the potential for reflexivity, corporealised. Bourdieu does view the mind/body relation in a non-dualistic sense in terms of the unconscious, but when it comes to consciousness he seems to retain the binary relationship. Bourdieu (2000: 152) points out that,

The very structures of the world are present in the structures (or to put it better the cognitive schemes) that agents implement in order to understand it.

Bourdieu (2000: 176) explains, however, that these cognitive schemes “are not forms of consciousness but dispositions of the body (or) practical schemas”. The mindful state of unconscious understanding, or what Giddens views as “practical consciousness”, is corporealised by Bourdieu. The unconscious, therefore, can be understood as an amalgam of the psychical and the somatic, although Bourdieu’s notion of habitus tends to give emphasis to the latter.

The unconscious, as it is used here, is quite distinct from psychoanalytic understandings of the unconscious. The Freudian unconscious is conceived as a purely psychical phenomenon and a realm not simply below the level of consciousness, but, particularly in relation to Lacan, unable to be accessed by consciousness. Consciousness itself, however, is still quite distinct from the body. It is evident, therefore, that the terms consciousness and unconsciousness can be understood in a number of ways. Bourdieu has been able to transcend a solely mentalist notion of the unconscious through his incorporation of bodily habituation. Despite this broadening of the term to include the corporeal, Bourdieu views unconsciousness as being quite distinct from consciousness. He retains the latter exclusively within the psychical domain. The possibility of conscious reflection attaining dispositional status, therefore, is ruled out. This theoretical impasse is unfortunate, especially when Bourdieu is able to conceptualise the unconscious in such a productive sense as both mindful and bodily. With the embodied notion of consciousness being developed here, however, no such clear distinction is made. Unconsciousness is not radically differentiated from consciousness; rather, it is placed in a chain of intensities similar to the grades of light in Greenfield’s “dimmer switch” analogy. For this reason, and to mark its differentiation from psychoanalytic understandings, it would perhaps be more appropriately understood as non-consciousness, which denotes inattention or action that is not reflexive. Given this,
the movement between non-consciousness and consciousness is not difficult to conceive. What is required, however, given the corporealisation of these states, or intensities, is an ontological framework which, while recognising the role of bodily experience, does not simply collapse the category of mind into body but retains a analytic distinction between the two. In many respects this can be found in the work of Spinoza.

**Spinoza and Mind/Body Parallelism**

Despite Wacquant’s reference to Bourdieu’s work as monist, it is evident from the sharp distinctions Bourdieu makes between consciousness and unconsciousness and his separation of the former from any bodily instantiation that an underlying dualism is apparent in his work. In Spinoza, however, the dualistic tendencies of the mind/body relation are erased with a monism that identifies thought and extension as attributes of a single substance. Despite the inherent dualism in language whereby the very act of naming seems to maintain the binary distinction between mind and body, Spinoza (*Ethics*, II, P7) proposes a parallelism whereby, “The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things”. Thought and extension, and the finite modes of these attributes, namely individual minds and bodies, “are not separate entities but distinct expressions of the same reality” (Allison, 1987: 85). To Spinoza, the mind and the body act in concert or, as he states, “the order of actions and passions of our body is, by nature, at one with the order of actions and passions of the mind” (*Ethics*, III, P2D).

This contrasts markedly with Descartes’ dualistic account that sees the mind and body as separate substances. Despite this substantive distinction, which would seem to rule out any causative relationship between mind and body given a substance is by definition existentially autonomous, Descartes (unlike Spinoza) allows for mind/body interaction. What is significant about the notion of interaction informing Descartes’ account, however, is the hierarchising of mind over body and the latter’s exclusion in terms of understanding self and world. To Descartes (*The Principles of Philosophy*, Part 1, 8) “thought is known prior to and more certainly than anything physical”. The impact of the world upon the body is best resisted as it only serves to cloud the mind’s capacity for rational thought.

Descartes identified two modes of thinking: the intellect through which reason is attained, and the will, which is a free unbound capacity for choice. While to Descartes the will is infinite, the intellect is not. Herein, he contends, lies the basis of human
error, namely, acting simply in response to will which is not informed by the perception of the intellect. With the mind and body being substantively distinct, it is quite feasible, or in fact requisite within Descartes’ metaphysics, that the mind can be all-knowing. However, as Lloyd (1994: 39) explains,

The dilemma of the Cartesian self thus resides in its status as self-contained substance. This is the source of its supposed autonomy as knower; but, at the same time, it is the source of its separation from the world it purports to know.

To Spinoza (Ethics, II, P23), however, “The mind does not know itself, except in so far as it perceives the ideas of the affections of the body”.

In contrast to Descartes, Spinoza never views the order of understanding proceeding from mind to body. Rather it is the human body “which provides the focal point from, and through which alone the human mind can perceive its world” (Allison 1987:107). It is the body’s interaction with the world, its capacity to be affected by other bodies, which provides the basis of human understanding. It is this focus on the external world which has led Spinoza to be viewed as a materialist (Curley, 1988). Yet while there is a material grounding to his philosophy, Spinoza should not be read as simply inverting Descartes’ idealism, rather, the parallelism governing the attributes of Spinoza’s single substance, ensures equal weight is given to mind and body. Dualisms, as such, are avoided within his metaphysics. To Grosz (1994: 13), however, Spinoza’s psychophysical parallelism is problematic. While she rejects Cartesian dualism, she insists Spinoza fails to explain “the causal or other interactions of mind and body”. Indeed Spinoza (Ethics: III P2) writes that,

The body cannot determine the mind to thought; neither can the mind determine the body to motion nor rest, nor to anything else.

As an alternative to the ontological positions of Descartes and Spinoza, Grosz (1994: xii) proposes a position “somewhere in between these two alternatives” represented by the Mobius strip, which she suggests is able to capture “the fluid interface between mind and body, the internal and external”. Yet this notion of interaction between mind and body, maintains the dualism which she is keen to avoid. It seems only through the kind of parallelism proposed by Spinoza, where there is no question of interaction, that any form of dualism and its concomitant ontological problems are evaded. Parallelism renders the idea of interaction unnecessary. The relationship between mind and body is not one of interaction or reciprocity between separate entities. Rather it is one of coexistence, with the mind and body being isomorphic in nature. In Spinoza’s words (Ethics, III, P2D),
the mind and body are one and the same thing which is conceived now under the attribute of thought, now under the attribute of extension.

In some respects Spinoza’s psychophysical parallelism is not very far removed from some contemporary theorising within neuroscience. Greenfield, who holds the view that the mind is the personalisation of the brain resulting from individual bodily experience, points out that the brain and the body work in concert (Greenfield, 2000: 176). Yet, by this she does not intend a simplistic notion of mind/body interaction. She states that,

the brain and the body must have a form of communication that is more related to feelings and not dependent upon the fast zaps of simple electrical signals buzzing up and down the spinal cord.
(Greenfield, 2000: 176)

Her answer is hormones, but from a Spinozistic perspective, these bodily chemicals which are related to bodily sensation provide further affirmation of the ontological parallelism of body and mind.

While there is a bodily basis to Spinoza’s conceptualisation of self and human understanding, his parallelistic approach to the mind/body relation acknowledges the equally important role of the mind. Despite the distinct corporeality of his philosophy, Spinoza was undeniably a rationalist. Knowledge of the world maybe attained through the impact of bodily affects, yet to Spinoza this form of understanding is “mutilated, confused and without order for the intellect” (Ethics, II, P40 S). This kind of understanding, termed opinion or imagination by Spinoza, is merely the lowest level within a hierarchy of knowledge. Imagination, or the bodily basis of understanding, requires the order of reason for considered or, in Spinoza’s terms, adequate thought. Spinoza, like Descartes, placed reason at a premium. Where they differ, however, is that Descartes viewed reason as a product of an all-knowing mind, separate from world and bodily influence. To Spinoza the foundation of knowledge is premised on what Descartes rejects, namely the world and its impact on the body.

A Spinozistic Habitus

Spinoza’s parallelistic treatment of the mind/body relation and his embodied notion of reason have much to offer contemporary social and cultural theory which, in its rejection of Cartesianism, has embraced the body but generally excised the mind. In particular, it is useful in reassessing Bourdieu’s notion of habitus. As it stands
Spinoza resonates throughout Bourdieu’s work. Bourdieu actually makes use of Spinoza’s term *conatus* or *striving to be* in relation to how social structures “perpetuate their social being” (Bourdieu, 1998b: 19). Bourdieu’s main debt to Spinoza, however, can be seen in the emphasis he places on the body and the processes of social embodiment in understanding practice. The habitus as the key construct within this theory of practice is essentially an accumulation of bodily affects, which over time have sedimented into dispositions. These dispositions function like a set of virtual genres of practice which, given the nuances of a particular situation, are triggered into action. The habitus’s capacity to retain bodily affects, in essence the process of embodiment, is also referred to by Spinoza. He writes,

> The human body can undergo many changes, and nevertheless retain impressions, or traces, of the objects and consequently the same images of things. *(Ethics, III, Post. 2)*

The difference here is that, unlike Bourdieu, Spinoza is not simply considering embodiment as a corporeal process. Given his parallelistic ontology, it is simultaneously a cognitive process, hence his reference to bodily traces as also being images of things.

As already discussed, Bourdieu does not totally exclude the mind. He acknowledges the impact of embodiment on cognitive structures but to Bourdieu this does not mean consciousness. Rather he is referring to the unconscious mind, fusing it with the bodily unconscious, the realm in which the habitus functions. As such, Bourdieu excludes consciousness from the logic of practice and in doing so only provides a partial account of what guides human activity. His focus is the automatic which is an essential and, at times, all pervading aspect of practice. As Pascal writes, however, something that Bourdieu (2000: 2) cites, “we are as much automatic as intellectual”. Pascal also points out; “Custom is the source of our strongest and most believed proofs. It inclines the automaton about the matter”. The mind, however, does not remain in automatic mode. It is also inclined to reflect upon activity, which may lead to a modification of behaviour. The kind of customary knowledge Pascal is referring to here relates very much to what Spinoza terms imagination, but, as with Spinoza, he identifies other kinds, or levels, of thought, namely those involving reason and the intellect. Reason need not be understood as a separate or compartmentalised notion of thought as Bourdieu seems to suggest; only being activated at times of crisis. Rather, thought operates as a more fluid phenomenon. While for much of the time the mind and the body function in a habitual way there is also the ongoing
potential for reflection. This is particularly the case during the process of teaching and learning where there is a constant slippage between habitual and reflexive modes of thought. Generally the greater the aptitude for a particular activity the less the reliance on the reflexive. It remains, however, as a virtual corrective, often interceding even if not required, if individuals have developed a dispositional proclivity for the reflexive mode. Reflection, as it used here, does not necessarily typify higher levels of reason but it surely falls within the parameters of the rational. Reason is neither transcendent nor disconnected from the everyday, it is simply a point along a continuum of different modes of thought. It is therefore an essential aspect of the logic of practice yet one which Bourdieu has difficulty incorporating within his theoretical perspective.

Bourdieu’s habitus, therefore, needs to be reassessed. It is a far too useful theoretical concept to discard. It requires a more comprehensive treatment of the processes of embodiment whereby consciousness and unconsciousness are understood as being derived from a corporeal base. This is where a Spinozan reading of Bourdieu’s habitus is useful. Infusing the habitus with Spinoza’s parallelistic monism ensures the construct has the theoretical flexibility to not simply explain the habitual aspects of practice but to embrace a dialectic with consciousness which allows for degrees of reflexivity to be taken into account in terms of understanding the nature of practice. With the habitus conceived in this way, it has a far greater application to theorising the pedagogic which needs to be understood as encompassing both the cognitive and the corporeal.

**Vygotsky, Spinoza and Pedagogic Affect**

Central to theorising the pedagogic within a school context is trying to ascertain those practices that are most effective in equipping students with the skills they require for academic success. Within this thesis the focus is learning to write and one of the key theorists in this field is Lev Vygotsky. He investigated the relationship between thought and language development in the Soviet Union in the early twentieth century. In doing so, Vygotsky detailed the importance of teacher direction in relation to its impact on student learning. He theorised the notion of a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which refers to the gap between a child’s actual development determined by independent problem solving and their potential development achieved when assisted (Vygotsky, 1996: 187). The form of assistance Vygotsky intended, however, was not simply that which results from peer collaboration. This is very much the interpretation of Vygotsky’s ZPD within whole language and progressivist applications of his work (Berk and Winsler, 2002).
Although peer support can be beneficial, in outlining his theory of the ZPD, Vygotsky was detailing a particular pedagogic approach that is considerably divergent from the student-centred learning which underpins progressivism. Vygotsky was a fierce critic of the progressivist free education movement prevalent in the Soviet Union during the 1920s (van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991: 53) and claimed that,

 Instruction is one of the principle sources of the schoolchild’s concepts and is also a powerful force in directing their evolution; it determines the fate of [their] total mental development.  
(Vygotsky, 1996: 157)

Vygotsky did not base his understanding of the ZPD upon a theory of affect yet, before his death, as Wertsch (1985: 189) explains, he clearly demonstrated an interest in its role as an “integrating and motivational force for consciousness”. The effectiveness of the teacher-directed pedagogy underpinning Vygotsky’s ZPD is understood here as pertaining to a heightening of pedagogic affect and, as such, a heightening of consciousness, an effect which is not as potent with less teacher-directed pedagogies. Being a psychologist, Vygotsky’s focus was of course mental development. His theoretical perspective, however, was in sharp contrast to the biological determinism that governs Piaget’s theory of child development (Vygotsky, 1996: 45). While acknowledging an innate component, Vygotsky viewed development as primarily a social process; namely that a child’s intrapsychological processing is a function of prior and similar processing on an interspsychological plane (Wertsch, 1985: 60). It was children’s mental development and, in particular, the relationship between thought and language which was Vygotsky’s central concern. In relation to this, towards the end of his short life, he began to demonstrate some interest in the impact of affect on consciousness (Wertsch, 1985: 189). Vygotsky seemed keen to counter the dualism that he believed underpinned psychology. He commented that,

 the tragedy of all modern psychology [which] consists in the fact that it cannot find a way to understand the real sensible tie between our thoughts and feelings on the one hand and the activity of the body on the other hand.  
(cited in van der Veer and Valsiner 1991: 355)

Affect seemed to provide a solution to this problem and Vygotsky found Spinoza’s monism a much sounder ontological basis from which to theorise the impact of affect on consciousness and children’s overall mental development. Due to Vygotsky’s premature death his theorisation of the role of affect was never elaborated and to many there is evidence that Vygotsky finally felt that Spinoza did not provide the
answer. Followers, such as Leontev and Ileykov, pursued these ideas in what is now termed Activity Theory; an approach aimed at studying the relationship between human activity and consciousness (Cole, 1997). Given the significance that Vygotsky attached to instruction, it is interesting to contemplate how he would have theorised the relationship between pedagogic practice and affect and, in turn, how this impacts upon consciousness as an embodied phenomenon. Although much of his own work as a psychologist seems to confirm the cognitive bias within education, a perspective this thesis aims to challenge, Vygotsky’s interest in Spinoza’s monist ontology indicates a certain unease with this position. As Wertsch (1985: 200) points out,

Following Spinoza, Vygotsky argued that investigations are often misled in their attempts to understand the relationship between mental and neurophysical phenomena because their analyses are based on the false assumption that they are dealing with two substances rather than with two attributes of the one substance.

Education’s preoccupation with the mind at the expense of the body has major pedagogic repercussions. Consciousness needs to be understood as an embodied phenomenon in line with the logic of Spinoza’s monism. As such, the body as well as the mind must be viewed as an object of pedagogic concern with a view towards a parallelistic conception of the mind/body relation. Although not utilising a Vygotskian approach, this thesis has similar concerns, namely to theorise the affective impact of a teacher’s practice in terms of a Spinozistic notion of habitus or how classroom activity affects students’ bodies and minds. To a considerable extent this is a function of the disciplinary force generated by a teacher’s manipulation of the classroom environment and their particular approach to curriculum implementation, all of which possess considerable pedagogic affect.

Rethinking the Pedagogic Body
The theorisation of pedagogy tends to suffer from an impoverished ontological framework. Mainstream educational theory is still locked within a Cartesian paradigm whereby emphasis is given to the mind and learning is viewed as a purely cognitive process of conscious intent. For example, no account is made of the function of academic dispositions that predispose learners to the regimen of schooling and academic work. These dispositional tendencies are commonly understood in cognitive terms as concentration, persistence and interest generally linked to a Cartesian notion of free will, with a view that a child will succeed if he or she puts their mind to it. Yet a propensity for learning, particularly that associated with institutionalised education, has probably more to do with how a child’s body has been regulated prior to school and the extent to which they have embodied
abilities such as: sitting still, working for sustained periods of time and following instructions. Bourdieu does not specifically refer to this form of pedagogic embodiment but it relates very much to his understanding of the structuring of dispositions within the habitus and clearly shows the need for a more detailed understanding of the role of bodily habituation in learning. Habituation, however, does not simply relate to the unconscious as a bodily phenomenon, it also has a psychical dimension. In fact, without the ability to make knowledge and skills automatic, cognitive processing would become overloaded and learning an impossibility. While this is not a call to resurrect traditional pedagogic practices, such as those where students' learning experiences were dominated by the numbing overuse of drill and practice, it suggests there needs to be a better understanding of how certain skills and knowledge are best learned and the implication therein for the programming and delivery of curriculum.

In a sense, the contribution of the habitual in learning is evident in Spinoza in his account of the impact of affects on the body:

the more an affect arises from a number of causes concurring together the greater it is. A number of causes together can do more than if they were fewer. And so, the more an affect is aroused by a number of causes, the stronger it is. *(Ethics, V, P8 & D)*

The logic here is simple yet the implications profound, especially in relation to pedagogy. While Spinoza is not directly expounding the impact of the habitual on learning, the crux of his proposition is specifically related to this application. That is, repetition intensifies affect. Pedagogically this is significant as it indicates iteration leads to acquisition, a point Butler (1993) argues though more in a discursive as opposed to material sense. From a teaching perspective this would suggest a need for a systematic and consistent pedagogy and, in relation to learning, the importance of practice and sustained effort.

While habituation has an important yet generally neglected role in the processes of teaching and learning, it does not account for the entirety of how individuals function in the world. Also, it tends to minimise the degree of agency involved in human practice. One of the key criticisms of Bourdieu’s habitus is that it presents individuals as virtual automatons merely replicating the dictates of social structures within their own practice. Much progressivist education and critical pedagogy is accordingly directed against a teaching methodology which it is assumed simply reproduces social norms. The process of habituating skills and knowledge through drill and practice and structured curriculum is framed as ineffectual or, at worst,
inequitable. What is currently encouraged, although this was particularly the case during the 1970s and 1980s, is a kind of diffused curriculum with an unstructured and decentred delivery. What most progressivist educational theorists fail to recognise is that, while habituation may be reproductive, it is also potentially enabling. The ability to habituate certain skills and knowledge - like writing - is essential for learning and academic success. What is inequitable is that the habituation of academic dispositions and relevant skills and knowledge is not evenly distributed. Children from low socio-economic backgrounds have often habituated dispositions that are unsuited to schooling and academic work. Of course other children may also have failed to acquire these necessary traits. While there is a significant class basis to this failure to acquire what can be given the umbrella term academic dispositions there are other groupings of children whose poor academic success may relate to this factor, such as boys experiencing difficulty with literacy. This suggests that the teacher’s pedagogic role is central. They need to understand the dispositions of each student’s habitus and scaffold learning appropriately. For learning to be ongoing and productive it needs a dispositional foundation achieved through the habituation of certain knowledge and bodily capacity.

While habituation is crucial, learning would be a particularly passive activity if it were simply a process of inculcating the abilities to function automatically. Learning also involves conscious reflection. While there are certain skills and knowledge, which may be acquired relatively unconsciously, learning, particularly as an institutionalised activity, also involves consciousness, due to the speed, volume and nature of what is learned. What is important about this conscious processing, be it learning something new or in applying previously acquired knowledge and skills, is its effectiveness in modifying behaviour. Spinoza (Ethics, V, P9D) points out,

because the mind’s essence, that is, power, consists only in thought, the mind is less acted on by an affect which determines it to consider many things together than by an equally great affect considering one or few objects.

In effect, the mind needs to focus on a limited number of things at any one time to be effective and it is concentrated and sustained thought which heightens the degree and effect of reflection. This is significant in a number of ways, many of which relate to the pedagogic centrality of the teacher and their methodological approach.

Firstly, it suggests teachers need to provide activities which encourage the development of sustained thought in learners. While it is important to provide variety, it is essential that this is not undertaken at the expense of allocating ample
time, and depth, of application to learning. Activities need to be structured around key skills and learning outcomes. Variety can be offered within these parameters providing concentrated application of key knowledge and skills. To cater for what is often termed children’s short concentration spans; however, they are inundated with a variety of brief learning activities. While these may function as an effective short-term behaviour management technique, the brevity of these activities fails to allow the development of detailed understanding. As a result, this tends to compound the problems that students experience, which may not even be cognitive. Instead, they may relate to a failure in having habituated the appropriate bodily dispositions for schooling. Constant change and limited application only serve to reinforce this lack of bodily discipline.

Secondly, to intensify the effectiveness of cognitive processing as much understanding as possible needs to be processed automatically. This means that as much knowledge as possible needs to reside in the realm of the unconscious in a virtual state ready to be retrieved when required. Tomkins (1962: 115) also stresses the necessity of habituating knowledge. He states that,

This capacity to make automatic or nearly automatic what was once voluntary, conscious and learned frees consciousness for new learning.

This dormant bank of knowledge and skills has a complementary relationship with consciousness with the two states functioning dialectically. The repercussions for teaching methodology are significant. To ensure students can master more sophisticated tasks it is necessary that they have achieved a certain level of automaticity with regard to prerequisite understanding. In a sense, this is well recognised in some areas of learning. In learning to read, certain phonological, syntactic and semantic knowledge needs to be processed automatically if adequate comprehension and reading beyond the literal is to be achieved. This suggests the need for iteration to assist the habituation of required and at times foundational skills and knowledge. In terms of writing, however, the need for certain kinds of knowledge, such as lexicogrammar, to become habituated is not recognised. While proficient writers play with text through the manipulation of lexicogrammatical forms, little is understood, pedagogically, about how best to attain these skills, particularly in the early years of school. Since the mid 1990s there has been a greater acceptance of the need for children to develop a more explicit understanding of grammar and textual form, yet the theorisation of the pedagogy to support this is limited (Board of Studies NSW, 1994; Board of Studies NSW, 1998). It seems, however, that as with reading, the more knowledge that can be processed
automatically from basic syntactical understanding and sentence construction through to literary and rhetorical forms the more a writer can concentrate on the task at hand. The effectiveness of conscious intervention, therefore, depends on its dialectical relationship with the bodily and psychical unconscious; the location of previously habituated skills and knowledge. Consciousness is not only a part of the initial phase of a considerable amount of learning, that is, when attention is first drawn to a new concept or skill, it also intervenes in the habitual, and, through ongoing, heightened degrees of reflexivity, modification of both understanding and practice can ensue.

Learning, however, and practice in general, is not simply premised on the workings of the mind/body relation, it is also dependent on interaction with the environment: that is, the potency of affects generated by other minds and bodies which is discussed in more detail in the empirical treatment of these issues in section three. Consciousness should not only be understood as an embodied phenomenon, it should also be seen as intersubjective, its power to act not simply a result of accumulated bodily affects but also a function of the intervention of other consciousnesses. In relation to learning in the early years of school this suggests the importance of key others: parents, classmates and, in particular, the teacher. The teacher has a central role, not simply in structuring the classroom environment and designing activities for learning which are appropriately scaffolded, but for actively intervening in the learning process. What this entails is ensuring students are aware of what they are doing, that is, reflecting upon and evaluating their efforts to the point where they habituate, not only the knowledge and skills involved in the task at hand, but the actual capacity for reflexive thought. This process is not undertaken autonomously by the child. It is constantly reinforced by the teacher and the classroom activities he or she devises which of course also involve the contribution of all students in a class.

To many progressivist educators this form of intervention is seen as interference in a child’s learning. This criticism, however, fails to acknowledge the intersubjective nature of learning, and also that the teaching/learning relationship is not an equal one. This does not mean that the relationship is unidirectional with the teacher simply directing the child’s learning, but it does acknowledge a power differential, which is not simply a function of the teacher’s institutional position, but, rather, a result of their greater understanding. The teacher, therefore, through their own accumulated knowledge and skills, has a responsibility to guide and support a child’s learning. In actuality, the teaching/learning process is dialectical. The teacher
may direct their students’ learning, but, so too, the students’ learning will, and
should, direct the teacher’s teaching. Being is intersubjectively determined and quite
obviously so in the context of institutionalised education. While reference is made
here to the intersubjective play of consciousnesses, primarily in relation to the
teacher and student, intersubjectivity is also fundamentally an unconscious
phenomenon, in both a psychical and somatic sense. While these notions of
intersubjectivity are referred to in the later empirical study that comprises the third
section of this thesis, it is an area of enquiry which requires more detailed analysis,
particularly as it pertains to the cultivation of pedagogic desire.

Concluding Remarks
A prime concern in theorising the pedagogic therefore is to reconsider certain
ontological presuppositions of teaching practice. The critique of Cartesianism which
pervades contemporary social and cultural theory has yet to impact upon
educational theory and practice. The tendency to simply invert Descartes’ dualism
and concentrate on the body as the locus of understanding may shatter the
paradigmatic dominance of Cartesianism but its virtual erasure of consciousness
means it provides a less than viable alternate ontology. Bourdieu’s belief that we
“learn bodily” is only partially correct. The conscious mind is also integral in
determining what we do. Spinoza’s mind/body parallelism is a useful way to think
through not only the mind/body relation, but consciousness and unconsciousness,
reflection and habituation and the intersubjective torsion between one embodied
consciousness and others. Spinoza’s parallelistic monism effaces dualistic
understandings yet allows for an analytic distinction between mind and body,
esential in terms of theorising the pedagogic. While the mind and its capacity for
conscious reflection are prominent within Spinoza’s ontology, the corporeal basis of
understanding is always foregrounded. Spinoza, therefore, allows for what Bourdieu
only positions marginally: that is, an embodied notion of consciousness and a view
of reflection which is not separate to everyday practice but simply a particular level
of understanding linked to our ongoing imaginary. When infused with a
psychophysical parallelism, the habitus provides a more comprehensive notion of
practice wherein there is an ongoing dialectic between
consciousness/nonconsciousness and reflection/habituation, determining what
individuals do and how they do it. In relation to pedagogy, this dialectic provides
the means for understanding how knowledge and skills are acquired and are then, in
a sense, naturalised, embodied, yet available for conscious evaluation and
modification. The pedagogic body, therefore, needs to be understood as not simply
shaped by the external, nor capacitated by its ability to retain affects, but rather, as mindful, that is, where these affects form the basis of conscious understanding and where embodied reasoning is integral to how we learn.
Chapter 3 - The Pedagogic Body in Text – Tracing the Body

The school is the agency by which the child’s growing proceeds under helpful conditions. Hence it supplies him (sic) with material to work with. It supplies experiences that enrich his store of experiences. It encourages the formation of habits, muscle and nerve habits, thought habits and emotion habits.
New South Wales Department of Education (1922: v)

In the two previous chapters a range of positions on the body and the processes of embodiment were examined in relation to their efficacy in understanding the role of the body in teaching and learning. In this chapter there is a shift in emphasis from this theoretical exposition of the pedagogic body to an examination of the pedagogic body in text, the ways in which the body has been conceived over time in the syllabus documents that guide teaching practice. To date, it is the learner who has been the focus. There has been reference to the teacher’s effect upon a learner’s habitus but in many respects the teachers’ role, their affective impact, is yet to be detailed. This is best explored by examining what teachers do in their classrooms, how they interpret, organise and deliver the content of the curriculum. But prior to an analysis of the pedagogic body in practice in section three, it is helpful to examine what informs teachers’ practice, namely the syllabus documents they are required to implement. The particular form of pedagogic practice under investigation in this thesis is the teaching of writing in the primary years of schooling, specifically students in kindergarten aged 4 to 5 years, Year 3 students aged 8 to 9 years and Year 5 students aged 10 to 11 years. While a range of factors effect what and how teachers choose to teach writing, such as their own education, age, experience and the needs and ability levels of their students, syllabus documents provide something of a yardstick of pedagogic practice at any given time and are useful in that they reveal the institutional stance on how a subject should be taught.

The syllabus documents to be examined here were all issued by successive education departments of the government of New South Wales (NSW), the most populous state in Australia. Comprehensive public education in NSW dates from 1880 and the state now has one of the largest government school systems in the world. The English syllabus documents examined here begin with the first in 1905 to the most recent issued in 1998. The reason for examining a century’s worth of syllabuses is to not only highlight the changes in the approaches to teaching writing over this period but to document two dramatic shifts: firstly in the ways the pedagogic body has been configured historically and, secondly, in the decentring of the teacher within pedagogic practice. While the
point has already been made that education is generally understood as a cognitive process, analysis of particular syllabus documents reveals that the body has not always been ignored. At one time, bodily habituation was considered an essential aspect of the learning process, which necessitated a greater teacher-centredness than is now the case within contemporary education. This is evident in the extract from the 1922 *NSW Course of Public Instruction* shown at the beginning of this chapter. Here education is grounded in "the formation of habits; muscle and nerve habits, thought habits and emotion habits", with the school and the teacher bearing the responsibility for a child's acquisition of these capacities. In tracing the body in the syllabus documents issued throughout the twentieth century a move away from habituated learning and the corporeality of pedagogic practice suggests that the body, in a sense, disappears as a matter of pedagogic concern.

**The Habituated Body of Learning**

The first syllabus document issued after the Public Instruction Act of 1880 was the 1905 *NSW Course of Public Instruction for Primary Schools*, which replaced the Government's *Standards of Proficiency*. This first syllabus is interesting in terms of the intention of ensuring it was grounded in what was then referred to as the *New Education* (Barcan, 1965: 206). The aim was to produce a syllabus that incorporated the latest progressivist trends from abroad, in particular Britain and the United States of America (USA). Representatives from the Education Department travelled overseas to investigate innovative practice to inform the writing of the new syllabus (Legislative Assembly New South Wales, 1904: 116). They hoped to infuse the document with progressivist ideals and establish a clear break from monitorial notions of education (Barcan, 1965: 212). It was claimed in the *Report of the Minister of Public Education* for 1904 that,

> The syllabus, besides providing for a progressive course of instruction, is designed to give practical application to the principle of the correlation of the subjects of study, to make "the self-activity of the pupil the basis of school instruction", to bring the work of the teacher into closer touch with his home and social surroundings, and to make the school a powerful agent in the intellectual, moral and social development of the child. (Legislative Assembly New South Wales, 1904)

Despite this reference to the "self-activity of the pupil" being the basis of school instruction, a line that is also used in the preface to the resultant Syllabus, the progressivist ideal of student-centredness is not really evident in the 1905 document. While the adoption of the principles of *New Education* may mark something of a shift
from previous pedagogic models, in actuality the teacher was still central to classroom practice. There is an underlying ethos in the Syllabus acknowledging a child’s uniqueness and individuality, which is a clear break from the past, but this is coupled with a realisation that the school, and, therefore, the teacher, should retain the responsibility to direct learning. The Syllabus (New South Wales Department of Public Instruction, 1905: iii) states,

By [the school’s] influence upon character it should cultivate habits of thought and action that will contribute both to successful work and upright conduct, and, by the kind of instruction it imparts, it should prepare the pupils for taking up the practical duties of life and give them tastes and interests that will lead to activities beneficial both to themselves and to the community.

What these lines suggest is a pedagogy that promotes the capacitation of bodies. While there may be no explicit reference to the body of the learner, it is implicated in the school’s requirement to “cultivate habits” in their pupils. The acquisition of habits, be they of thought or action, is a bodily process but one, particularly in relation to school-based pedagogy, which also requires conscious attention at least in the initial stages of habituation. This is clearly evident in the Syllabus’s discussion of what it terms “the securing of correct speech”:

The teacher’s object should be to form in the children right habits in speaking. The correct pronunciation of the vowel sounds, the correct use of the aspirate and final consonants may be made habitual with children if due attention be given to the correction of errors of this whenever they occur. (1905: 21)

While the intention of altering a student’s accent is clearly a matter of concern and thankfully now a long forgotten objective of English teaching, the process involved in attaining this goal shows an understanding of the importance of the relationship between habituation and reflection in learning. For students to “correct” miscreant vowel sounds, and other indicators of an uneducated accent, it was the responsibility of the teacher to bring these to a child’s attention. Through constant reinforcement, whereby the child was made aware of any error, it was felt they would in time habituate the correct pronunciation. These repeated corrections, however, would not simply be registered by a student’s conscious mind; there is an affective dimension to this reinforcement resulting in a bodily acknowledgment of the teacher’s comments. In time consciousness would probably be bypassed with a slip in pronunciation functioning like a somatic marker to self-correct. The habituation of educated speech would not only leave a
psychological imprint; a physiological change would also be evident with the tongue, oral cavity and teeth habitually realigned to produce the desired accent. This alteration to the child’s linguistic habitus is dependent upon the extent to which these speech patterns became engrained.

Although this habituation of correct pronunciation may not appear as a form of capacitation from a contemporary educational perspective because of its devaluation of a child’s home accent, of interest here is how the 1905 Syllabus viewed habit formation as a pedagogic goal. This bodily basis to its notion of learning is evident in the preface, which places emphasis on the cultivation of habits of conduct. These make the usual connection between the body and classroom management - the need for students to acquire the necessary self-control to conduct themselves appropriately - but what is significant is the reference which is made to the relationship between discipline and “successful work”. These lines acknowledge that bodily discipline is required for effective learning and that academic success is dependent upon students having acquired a particular orientation to their school work. This does not simply refer to general good behaviour but to scholarly diligence. While reference is made to “habits of thought” this is not simply a psychical capacity, rather it is an embodied disposition acquired as a result of the habituation of certain work practices associated with schooling, namely sitting and working at a desk for sustained periods of time to complete tasks of increasing complexity. What appears to be thought is equally a bodily process; the function of what is understood here to be a mindful body.

A Foucauldian analysis drawing on the notion of technologies of power would no doubt interpret these lines from the 1905 Syllabus differently. The school’s intention to “cultivate habits of thought and action” would be read as a form of institutional control leading to the production of docile bodies. This power, however, which has been invested in students need not simply be understood as disabling. Docility is not necessarily a sign of passivity. This form of control also has the potential to capacitate bodies. This was Foucault’s own argument, yet one which was given little emphasis in his work. In this thesis, while the institutional basis of power is taken as given, its effects are not. The role of pedagogy in mediating technologies of power is generally undertheorised within social theory. This chapter’s analysis of syllabus documents gives consideration to the variable impact of the pedagogic on embodied subjectivity and, in particular, how it pertains to the formation of academic dispositions within a student’s habitus.
This first syllabus issued by the NSW Department of Education is relatively short. It does not detail any particular teaching methodology. What is clear, however, is its intention that teachers approach the delivery of their lessons in a systematic way to ensure the habituation of required skills in their students. In the next syllabus document, issued in 1916, specific pedagogic guidelines are more evident providing a clearer indication of how they impact upon the body of the learner. This next syllabus used the same preface as the 1905 document with few changes. It therefore endorsed the idea that schools cultivate "habits of thought and action" in their students. The 1916 Syllabus, however, is clearer as to how this is to be achieved. The document is more detailed than the 1905 Syllabus, referring specifically to the course of instruction for each year group from first class, comprised of 6 to 7 year-olds, through to eighth class with 13 to 14 year-olds. In contrast, the 1905 document grouped children into two divisions: the lower division of 6 to 8 year-olds and the upper division of 9 to 12 year-olds. As a result, curriculum content was not as clearly differentiated. The 1916 Syllabus also includes extensive notes on the teaching of each subject and five addenda outlining approaches to teaching specific aspects of the curriculum, such as a scheme of phonic exercises for speech training.

The 1916 Syllabus is an interesting mix of quite different pedagogic approaches reflected in its competing discourses of traditionalism and progressivism. It vacillates between practices that impose very little disciplinary constraint upon the body of the learner to those which are far more restrictive. There is an even clearer indication, however, of the adoption of progressive educational ideals. This is evident in the greater freedom given to students in allotting time for a free choice period and in the freedom, at times, to choose topics for written composition and oral expression. In terms of the guidelines on teaching methodology in the notes on self-expression, the Syllabus states that,

All artificiality should be studiously avoided, and the child's self-confidence sedulously preserved. Neither gesture, action, nor speech should be taught. Let them come naturally.
(New South Wales Department of Education, 1916: 29)

The advice to teachers here is to avoid intervention, to allow students to express themselves freely, unhindered by social convention. While not referred to specifically until the 1922 Syllabus, these directives seem to borrow heavily from Montessori teaching methodology. The Montessori Method, published in English in 1912, became
hugely influential at this time. It is important to consider here given the ways in which it implicitly affected curriculum development at this stage.

Maria Montessori’s movement towards the development of a scientific pedagogy emphasised teacher observation of students over intervention. Montessori claimed that,

> The origins of the development both in the species, and in the individual lie within. The child does not grow because he (sic) is nourished, because he breathes, because he is placed in conditions of temperature to which he is adapted, he grows because the potential life within him develops making itself visible, because the fruitful germ from which his life has come develops itself according to the biological destiny which was fixed for it by heredity. (Montessori, 1966: 105)

From Montessori’s perspective the role of the educator had to be rethought:

> In our system [the teacher] must become a passive, much more than active, influence and her passivity shall be composed of anxious scientific curiosity, and absolute respect for the phenomenon which she wishes to observe. (1966: 87)

Yet despite this insistence that a teacher needed to limit the degree of influence they exerted on a student’s learning, there are stark contradictions in the Montessori method in that certain techniques actually required considerable teacher direction. This is particularly the case in relation to the role of the body in learning. While the use of stationary desks and chairs was frowned upon within a pre-school setting, referred to by Montessori as “proof that the principle of slavery still informs the school” (1966: 16), she nevertheless considered certain forms of bodily regimentation a crucial aspect of learning. To her, bodily capacitation, at least in the pre-school years, was not born from sitting quietly at a desk performing what she considered to be passive activities, but through the formation of habits acquired through physical activities which equipped the body with a corporeal competence to perform specific tasks. Montessori (1966: 311) pointed out that,

> it is a difficult thing to arouse an activity that shall produce a motion unless that motion shall have been previously established by practice and by the power of habit.

In the early years of pre-school Montessori advocated what she termed *muscular education* to assist in the development of physiological movements. This involved children performing certain exercises on a repetitive basis to aid walking, breathing and speech. Muscular education also extended to a kind of *domestic gymnastics* where the fine
motor skills required for tying laces and fastening buttons were refined through repeatedly performing these tasks, using specifically designed teaching materials (1966: 145). The pedagogic goal was to develop what Montessori termed muscular memory, a form of bodily know-how required for successfully performing certain tasks (1966: 277).

Montessori extended this approach, however, beyond rudimentary physical activities. She recognised the need for children to develop a muscular memory in learning how to write. She designed a range of preparatory exercises for children to master prior to beginning to write. Montessori organised these exercises into three groups. The first of these involved students doing tracing and colouring in activities to develop the muscular control necessary for holding and using a writing implement. The second set of activities sought to unite visual recognition and muscular memory by having students use the index finger of their right hand to trace over sandpaper letters. Prior to doing this, the teacher would indicate the sound of the letter beginning with the vowels. Montessori explained that,

As soon as we have given the sound of a letter, we have the child trace it and if necessary guiding the index finger of his right hand over the sandpaper letter in the sense of writing. (1966: 276)

Here the intention seemed to be a maximisation of affect in that students gained a visual, tactile and muscular sense of each letter, in addition to the initial phonic signal provided by the teacher. Over time children simultaneously acquired a mental recognition of each letter, the directionality required in reproducing it and an understanding of letter/sound correspondence. This last skill is the focus of the third set of Montessori’s preparatory writing exercises. Children were presented with sets of cardboard letters of which they were familiar. Under the guidance of a teacher who initially modelled the exercise, children grouped combinations of vowels and consonants to make simple words. After children had repeatedly completed these exercises Montessori reports that there is a “spontaneous explosion into writing” (1966: 286). Rather than recognising the considerable teacher directedness involved in students reaching this point, whereby they have habituated the necessary psychophysical skills required for writing, Montessori (1966: 291) explains that,

We have come to accept the phenomenon with calmness and tacitly recognise it as a natural form of the children’s development.
Yet there is no *naturalness* about the particular regimens required for literate practice that Montessori developed. Her method entails a specific disciplining of the body to the point where it is invested with the necessary capacity for children to begin to write. What appears as a “spontaneous” act is instead the end product of the accumulation of motor proficiencies finally, and perhaps tardily, allowed to be applied. It is perhaps because so much emphasis is placed on the physicality of writing within the Montessori Method that the children’s move into writing is viewed as “natural”. Very often what involves bodily capacity, particularly within the academic realm, is assumed a function of natural development rather than the result of instruction. The Montessori method of teaching writing is a process involving the embodiment of the shape and phonic quality of letters coupled with the movements and dexterity to produce them. In contrast to mainstream teaching methodology contemporaneous with Montessori’s approach, the latter was indeed progressive. Montessori, however, seemed blind to the extent to which teacher direction, was integral to her technique.

The degree to which Montessori’s teachers actively engaged in children’s learning, manipulating materials and consciously drawing attention to aspects of the tasks they were performing, seemed to increase dramatically, particularly as children were approaching school age. Even Montessori’s dislike of rows of desks and children sitting quietly seems to subside as children leave the pre-school years. She points out that,

> To seat the children in rows as in the common schools, to assign to each little one a place and to propose that they shall sit thus quietly observant of the order of the whole class as an assemblage – this can be attained later as the starting place of collective education. (1966: 93).

There is an acknowledgment of the need for a certain social ethic to underpin schooling which allows for effective classroom management. Montessori’s view of pre-school education, however, is generally informed by a romantic notion of childhood which colours how she interprets the methods she employs. She insisted that schools “must permit the free, natural manifestations of the child” (1966: 26) but qualifies this by stating that,

> the liberty of the child should have as its limit the collective interest. We must therefore check in the child whatever offends or annoys others, or whatever tends towards rough or ill-bred acts. (1966: 87)
The Montessori method can be considered progressive in the emphasis it places on the liberty of children and its principles of a non-interventionist teaching style, but both of these points require qualification particularly as progressivism is a quite broad educational philosophy. It encompasses approaches with similar ideals to Montessori but many which are far more libertarian (Kalantzis and Cope, 1993: 45-54). Montessori’s view of the liberty of the child is conditional on how they conduct themselves as part of a group. Also, as Montessori placed emphasis on a child’s manipulation of teaching materials rather than overt instruction, the social constructedness of her techniques is masked. The naturalness and spontaneity of learning promoted by her techniques is a fallacy. Her method is grounded in the acquisition of certain bodily disciplines requisite for undertaking a range of tasks. The teacher is not a remote figure here; rather their direction is integral to the child’s formation of the dispositions essential for effective learning.

What appears to be a contradiction of teaching styles within the 1916 Syllabus - the insistence on one hand that teachers resist intervening in the learning process similar to that advocated by Montessori, and the more dominant recommendation of habit-forming exercises involving drill and practice on the other - is a reflection of the qualified progressivism of the time. While the Syllabus provides evidence of a trend towards giving greater licence to students, at the same time it acknowledges that learning has a bodily basis, which is premised on the habituation of certain skills instilled through teacher direction. This is evident in the teacher notes on written composition in the lower grades:

there are two distinct kinds of work – (1) the free composition aims at getting the pupils to write a page or so upon topics which interest them and (2) the more formal training in written composition will be begun by selecting in the second class, one sentence at a time, and in the third class, a few short sentences on one topic upon which children may be practised in correct form of expression’.
(New South Wales Department of Education, 1916: 29)

There is an intention, therefore, to provide a balance between student interest and skills acquisition. In relation to written composition, the aim was to have students perfect their written expression in short one-sentence texts before enlarging upon these. This seems to exemplify a Spinozistic notion of the concentration of affect as discussed in Chapter 2. By repeatedly concentrating on the syntax and compositional quality of short texts, young children had a better chance of maximising their understanding of what constitutes good expression. They were not sidetracked by the need to write more and
the complexities this entailed. Their interest in writing, however, was not curtailed as this concentrated teacher-directed technique was balanced by free writing time with the payoff that the good habits, which were learnt when concentration was given to expression, flowed through to students’ writing overall.

What needs to be emphasised in the pedagogy outlined here is its treatment of the mind/body relation. The students’ acquisition of good expression was not simply cognitive. While it involved students applying their teacher’s instructions to produce a well-constructed sentence, there is a bodily dimension to how the activity was framed, and how the syntactic and compositional knowledge was habituated. The process of limiting students’ writing has considerable affective impact. In being contained, the task was more achievable. This is, in itself, an incentive to complete the task and through repeatedly undertaking these activities, appropriate expression would have been habituated. Cognitive load was therefore reduced, allowing for conscious attention to be devoted to the more demanding aspects of content and form.

Students’ written composition was also aided by the approach to teaching handwriting within the Syllabus. Although students did not commence handwriting until the second grade, the approach that was taken emphasised drill and practice. The Syllabus states that,

Much time and trouble will be saved in the long run if pupils are practised in these forms so thoroughly in the beginning that their work becomes automatic.
(1916: 26)

To assist in this process the letters of the alphabet were classified according to their particular characteristics with children concentrating on certain strokes, lines and loops and the directionality associated with each letter. Although taking a vastly different approach to the Montessori method, the emphasis here was likewise the acquisition of muscular memory. The initial conscious attention to forming each letter would have eventually waned through repeated practice, resulting in the embodiment of graphic representation. The benefit of attaining a level of automaticity in relation to handwriting as early as possible ensured children could give greater attention to their written expression. Handwriting, therefore, was viewed as a means to an end not an end in itself. It may also have assisted in the acquisition of a dispositional inclination to scholarly work. As students sat at a desk and repeatedly practised forming letters they
may also have habituated the postures of academic work. This is a form of muscular education which Montessori neglected as she considered sitting at a desk a form of unnecessary bodily restraint rather than as a way of acquiring the appropriate postures of learning.

This strong focus on the habituation of skills in the 1916 Syllabus demonstrates considerable emphasis was given to the role of the body in learning. In the 1922 Syllabus the focus on habit formation was even more pronounced. A new preface was written which strengthened the emphasis given to bodily habituation referring to “muscle and nerve habits” as well as “thought habits and emotion habits” as opposed to “habits of thought and action” in the earlier syllabuses. The new preface reinforced much of what was detailed in the first two syllabus documents but concludes with the statement that,

By the time a pupil reaches [Sixth] Class the habits upon which the mechanical processes of schooling depend should have been acquired. In the Sixth Class the value of the teaching will be shown not merely by the body of useful knowledge acquired, but also, and mainly, by the intelligence which has been exercised in acquiring it, and by the degree of personal culture that has resulted from it.
(New South Wales Department of Education, 1922: vii)

By the time a child completed their primary education there was an assumption that the formative aspects of pedagogic embodiment would have been acquired. What the Syllabus foregrounds is not so much a child’s acquisition of knowledge, though this is of course important, but the way in which the child had acquired it. The pedagogic goal, therefore, was not simply for a child to acquire a body of knowledge but a knowledgable body: that they had habituated the skills necessary for academic success. While the Syllabus considered this a form of “intelligence”, it is actually premised on the capacitation of the learner’s body to undertake academic labour. The corporeal is actually intertwined with the cognitive in the term “personal culture”. From a Bourdieuan perspective this term would not only denote cultural capital or knowledge but embodied or physical capital, both acquired or inscribed in the body as dispositions within the habitus. The aim, therefore, was for the child to have acquired habits, through the direction and active intervention of the teacher, which would ensure ongoing learning and self-development.

The 1922 document also included prefatory notes for each subject. For English, as in other subjects, habit formation was emphasised:
(6) That habit-forming is an important part of education and its laws should be observed in all teaching.

Hence
(A) Desirable connections should be fixed into habits in the pupils by well-planned exercises, but no wrong connection allowed to develop into a habit which has later to be eliminated.

(B) Whatever should be done at all times the same way should be made a habit, e.g., pronunciation, writing, spelling, punctuation, capitalisation.

NOTE – The Syllabus indicates that it is expected that certain matters of form shall be fixed as habits before pupils leave certain classes. Pupils will of course have begun to form these habits much earlier.
(1922: 2)

The opening statement indicates the significance the Syllabus attached to the role of habituation in learning. Its advice to teachers was to design activities that encouraged habit formation. It contended that, while students may have exhibited some indication that they had made “desirable connections” independently, it was the teacher’s responsibility to ensure that these inclinations became fixed as habits. All the routine aspects of writing - handwriting, spelling, punctuation and capitalisation - are listed as skills to be habituated. This demonstrates an understanding that the practice of writing involves different capacities, some that can be habituated, which are itemised here and some that cannot, which require reflection. While to some extent there is a neat distinction between these mechanical skills (to which basic syntax could be added) and other aspects of writing such as style, it is not so clear cut. The movement between a reliance on habituated skill and reflection is also dependent on the task at hand and the expertise of the writer. Over time, given greater degrees of competency and the repeated completion of similar tasks, more complex syntax and variations of style may also be habituated. This is partly indicated in the Syllabus in terms of the writing of personal letters. It states that by the fifth grade “correct forms should be a fairly fixed habit” (1922: 10). There is, however, always the possibility of a recourse to consciousness even to reassess mechanical aspects of writing if this is necessary. Effective writers, even beginners, are constantly moving between these two states in the process of refining their writing skills. What is significant here, is the recognition of the need to ensure that certain skills became habituated within the primary years of education with reflection also being instilled as an habituated aspect of the writing process.

To achieve all this by the end of the sixth grade, the Syllabus suggests commencing the teaching of handwriting in the first grade, a year earlier than in the previous syllabuses.
It asks teachers to have students “practice on Montessori lines to gain power of control” encouraging a focus on muscular memory (1922: 4). As students moved into the second grade, handwriting classes emphasised the practice of correct letter shapes and individual writing drill. By the time students reached the Fourth Grade it was assumed that many would have reached a satisfactory standard of handwriting and could undertake free choice work during writing lessons. In addition to stressing correct letter shape, though allowing for individual style, the teaching of handwriting also emphasised the need for correct posture: the correct sitting position, placement of paper, distance from desk and pencil and pen grip (1922: 57). The insistence on a particular sitting position and other physical requirements of writing was to ensure a student’s whole body was habituated to the writing process.

A new syllabus was issued in 1925 yet, apart from minor revisions to the preface and more detailed elaboration of formal language work, the syllabus remained largely unchanged. This document includes the same prefatory note on English as the 1922 Syllabus accentuating the importance of habit formation. It also repeats information in the teacher notes which details how the routine aspects of writing are to be habituated. As in the 1922 syllabus, it refers to the “capitalising habit” and how this can be fixed in students through the “systematic use of dictation” (New South Wales Department of Education, 1925: 48). The different forms of capitalising are itemised - beginning a sentence, people’s names, names of places, headings - with each class from 2 to 5 assigned a particular set of capitalisation skills to master. A similar procedure was followed with punctuation:

In Class 3 the use of the apostrophe in contractions and simple forms of the possessive should be made habitual.
(1925: 49)

This focus on habituation is also evident in the approach taken with spelling:

Spelling should be passed over to the unconscious mind as fully as possible and to do this effectively the greatest care should be exercised to prevent wrong forms from being impressed on the mind.
(1925: 51)

This knowledge once habituated was not simply relegated to the psychical unconscious awaiting recall to the conscious mind. The process of attaining a level of automaticity with these aspects of writing was predicated on the synchronous relationship between
mind and body. The body and mind act in concert in both the habituation and retrieval of knowledge and skills. The writers of the 1922 and 1925 syllabuses seemed attuned to this. They understood the importance of having students achieve automaticity with routine aspects of writing early in the primary years so that they could then devote greater attention to the more complex and creative aspects of writing.

This strong emphasis on the role of habituation in learning is continued in the 1941 Syllabus (the 1925 Syllabus was reissued, unchanged, in 1929). Despite the interval of twelve years between the issue of syllabus documents, no doubt a result of the crises in international and domestic affairs over that time, the educational philosophy underpinning the new syllabus was similar to that of previous years. The preface has been revised but its opening paragraph states that,

[schooling’s] immediate aims are the inculcation of right habits – physical, mental, moral and co-operative.
(New South Wales Department of Education, 1941: v)

The reference to “muscle and nerve habits, thought habits and feeling habits” found in the 1922, 1925 and 1929 syllabuses is repeated in this preface and the prefatory note on English stating that habit-forming is an important part of education remains unchanged (1941: 2). Also, although more detailed in its elaboration of curriculum content, the 1941 syllabus is a similar mix of progressivist ideals blended with the formal training of basic skills. If anything, there is the emergence of a stronger emphasis on the former evident in references such as “the golden years of unfolding experiences” (1941: 5). This is the first syllabus to include a kindergarten curriculum and, in its instructions for teaching poetry at this level and Year 1, it holds the romantic view that,

Over-discussion and over-teaching should be avoided, as poetry is a thing of the spirit and of the emotion as well as of the intellect, and too much analysis may cause its beauty to vanish. It is questionable whether teaching has a plan at all in these tender years, discussion, talk, conversation of the intimate but informal type are invaluable.
(1941: 5)

These comments are balanced, however, by the guidelines on writing in kindergarten and Year 1 which once again refer to the Montessori method but state that,

Good writing depends upon the teacher; steady insistence upon her part and the development in the pupils of the will to write well will make for sound progress.
(1941: 7)
The kind of qualified progressivism found in previous syllabuses is also evident here. While the syllabus might state that "the process of growth is inherent in the child", it was also keen to stress that "the teacher and the school create conditions that foster this growth" (1941: v). These conditions did not simply refer to the choice of curriculum content but the "right habits" which schooling aimed to instil in the child. This is evident in the reference to the teacher's role in students attaining good writing skills. The notion of "will" here is not used in a free, unbound sense, characteristic of the essentialism of Rousseau, rather it is dependent on teacher guidance and reinforcement for its formation. While this conception of will may have been understood at the time as a function of mind, given the emphasis on the habituation of writing skills, "the will to write well" has an obvious bodily dimension, linked to the dispositions of a student's habitus. Will, or desire, essential in understanding the pedagogic process, is therefore not simply a psychical phenomenon, it is equally corporeal.

The inculcation of "right habits" referred to in the preface does not only include those related to academic achievement, for there is also mention of moral and co-operative habits. The instructions to teachers on how to conduct free reading time states that,

Pupils, although free at times to select and use the wisely provided materials, should be definitely trained to know that perseverance and concentration are necessary, that materials must be selected and wisely used in a purposeful manner, and replaced tidily and in good condition. Furthermore, all children must be trained to know definitely that no one is free to interfere with the liberty and comfort of others in the classroom. (1941: 8)

Once again emphasis is placed on the need to discipline students' bodies. Here, however, it does not appear to be solely for academic purposes. Although "perseverance" and "concentration" are obviously essential in terms of scholarly labour, discipline is viewed here more in terms of the need for students to develop a social ethic of cooperation, the basis of effective classroom management. The insistence on training demonstrates that the intention was for students to embody these traits of self-control and mutual respect coupled with a diligence for work so that good behaviour became a technology of the self. Free choice time was not viewed as a period when discipline lapsed; rather, it was a space in which students exhibited the extent to which they had acquired the bodily dispositions necessary for independent work.
The Psychological Turn

Although there are some exceptions, the trend from 1941 on appears to be at least a ten-year period of implementation for most syllabuses. The next syllabus, not issued until 1952, is no longer titled a *Course of Instruction* instead it is termed a *Curriculum for Primary Schools*. This name change is significant as it represents a shift in pedagogic stance. The title *Course of Instruction* placed emphasis on the teacher and what was to be taught, while the term *curriculum* refers to a course of study and what is to be learned. In a sense, the 1952 syllabus is a precursor to later syllabuses that firmly adopt a student-centred pedagogy. While the 1952 syllabus is not very much different from its predecessor, a point actually made in the document’s revised preface; overall it does have a more progressivist slant. This discursive shift is particularly evident in two new sections of the preface. The first is entitled *Social Education*, which is something of a misnomer given its privileging of the individual over the social. It states that,

> While the curriculum recognises the complementary nature of the individual and the social obligations of the child’s living, it seeks to emphasise the needs of individuality as an immediate concern.
> (New South Wales Department of Education, 1952: vi)

There are references to the needs of the individual in previous syllabuses but in the 1952 syllabus the individual appears to be foregrounded. This may be a result of the syllabus being a Cold War document, with the emphasis on individuality a reaction to its perceived threat under communism, but, even so, it signals a greater acknowledgment of the progressivist ideal of privileging the individual than in the past. Interestingly, this greater focus on individuality coincides with a movement away from the emphasis given to habit formation. While habit still receives a mention in the 1952 preface, its role is somewhat qualified in a new section entitled *Character Education*, which states that,

> Habits of health, physical and mental are matters of deep concern, but it should be fully appreciated that the good life is not a mere series of habitual responses. Well-founded ideals and attitudes must finally provide the motive force of right thinking and right action.
> (1952: vii)

Once again, this statement may reflect an anti-communist stance. Too great an emphasis on the habitual may have been considered comparable to the notion of blind obedience to a totalitarian regime. Whatever led to the inclusion of this statement in the preface it marks an institutional decline in the emphasis assigned to habituation. Here the habitual, conceived in terms of its contribution to character formation, is downplayed in
preference to an idealist ethic of rational action. It is the mind that is privileged with the bodily aspects of practice, signified by the habitual, assigned a secondary role.

This is also the case in relation to the role of the habitual in learning. The introduction to the English curriculum within the syllabus no longer includes the detailed statement on the importance of habit formation. Instead it states that,

The general plan in this course in English centres round retaining and developing the likely interests of the child in everything around him, and in providing conditions by which his ideas and powers of self-expression may grow abreast of each other. (1952: 61).

While there are references to cultivating a child’s interests in earlier syllabuses, the teacher is always presented as a more significant figure fashioning, rather than simply facilitating, a child’s potential. The teacher still retains an important role in the 1952 syllabus, as is evident from the detail of curriculum content, but it seems tempered by a pedagogy placing less emphasis on habituation and more on arousing a child’s desire to learn. This shift in emphasis represents a move away from a pedagogy acknowledging the bodily aspects of learning to one approaching a position where the body is subsumed by the mind. In the latter, learning is simply understood as a cognitive process with learning difficulties assessed primarily in psychological terms. While there are still references throughout this syllabus to drill and practice for the first time the impact of developmental psychology is evident. In outlining the approach to teaching reading the syllabus states that,

Modern research has shown that the child is not ready to begin formal reading before he has attained a mental age of at least six years. (1952: 83).

Here, there is a shift in emphasis away from the impact of instruction to a focus upon developmental stages where teaching is seen to have minimal effect until a child has reached a certain level of development. To some extent this is correct. A child must have attained a certain skill level before they are capable of more complex tasks. How the requisite ability is attained, however, is a key pedagogical issue: different positions concerning this question result in quite markedly different teaching methodologies. The more the focus is on development as a process of biologically determined maturation, the less the emphasis on teacher intervention. Vick (1996: 117) discusses this effect of educational psychology on the role of the teacher and points out that,
by the mid twentieth century the centre of educational knowledge, in so far as such a thing existed, had become psychology and is was this ... which formed the theoretical base from which pedagogy began to draw. And psychology put the subject of pedagogy, 'the learner', rather than the pedagogue at the centre.

Although the impact of educational psychology is minimal at this stage, after 1952 syllabus documents begin to embrace this theoretical perspective far more. What becomes evident is a pedagogic trend towards student-centredness with the teacher's role greatly diminished. In acknowledging this shift, Vick (1996:117) explains that,

The inseparability of teaching and learning [was] replaced by the teaching/learning binary with teaching now constituted as Other to learning.

The pedagogic effects evident in this psychologising of the child are not simply felt in terms of a decentring of the teacher; there is also a deemphasis in the role of the body in learning. Academic achievement now becomes largely a function of mental capacity with age itself assuming a specific cognitive dimension as a category of normative development; learning is increasingly understood as a process of innate psychological ability. The need for students to habituate certain skills and to acquire dispositions conducive to learning begins to wane. The 1952 Syllabus, therefore, acts as a transitional document with the influence given to psychology beginning to displace the previous emphasis on bodily habitation.

The impact of psychology in this document, though slight, is evident throughout. It features in sections detailing the reading curriculum and strategies to cater for individual student needs. In previous syllabuses the assistance that was given to students experiencing reading difficulties was to provide easier reading material, a more carefully graded approach and, as in the 1941 Syllabus, increased emphasis on “the establishment of right habits” (New South Wales Department of Education, 1941: 177). In the 1952 syllabus, however, there is a move towards psychological assessment. “Backwardness” is attributed to “mental or emotional factors”, “experiential background” or “specific reading disabilities”; the latter framed largely in cognitive terms as a function of developmental delay (New South Wales Department of Education, 1952: 87). Emphasis is given to the early diagnosis of specific disabilities through the use of psychometric testing to determine the most appropriate form of remediation (1952: 104). While the body is not absent in the strategies that are suggested, it is now conceived more as an adjunct to the mind; a kind of biological prop to cognitive processing. Reading difficulties are seen to result from eye strain, speech defects and
uncontrolled eye movement rather than inappropriate habits. The social constructedness of the body, evident in the previous emphasis on habit formation, is downplayed. The need for the bodily habituation of specific dispositions of learning has been forsaken for an increased focus on psychological reinforcement and a belief in innate stages of cognitive development. The inability to concentrate on reading, signalled by apathetic behaviour, yawning, irritability and nervousness is said to be remedied by checking the student’s social and emotional condition and by encouraging interest in other activities such as craftwork and drawing (1952: 104). The previous imperative to instil right habits is no longer considered a precondition of learning. The impact of psychology on education, therefore, rather than simply providing a broader perspective on the nature of learning seemed to operate as a new regime of truth (Walkerdine, 1984: 197); with the resultant displacement of the body bringing the dualist ontology underpinning education into sharper focus.

After the 1952 Syllabus there is a considerable change in the design and intent of curricula. The 1952 document is the last comprehensive primary school syllabus providing curricula for all subjects taught in the kindergarten to sixth class years. All following syllabus documents are either subject specific or devoted to a particular area of knowledge and skills within a discipline, such as, the next English syllabus in 1961 which was devoted to spelling and handwriting. In the nine-year interval following the release of the 1952 Syllabus the influence of psychology within education had become more firmly entrenched. The impact of Piaget’s notion of developmental stages, evident in the 1952 document, has by 1961 become something of a truism with developmentalism permeating pedagogic discourse. A recurrent term in the spelling and handwriting document is the notion of readiness which assumes that certain knowledge and skills are linked to particular stages of cognitive development (Sharp and Green, 1975: 42). Children needed to exhibit a readiness to learn prior to the commencement of any formal instruction. Development, therefore, was seen to precede instruction with the impact of premature instruction considered an impediment to learning: “Research indicates that readiness for formal instruction in spelling emerges during second grade”(New South Wales Department of Education, 1961: 6). This point is preceded by the statement that,

A premature insistence on formal spelling, letter by letter, before the child has developed some degree of independence in reading, may well lead to a confusion detrimental to both subjects. (1961: 6).
The advice to teachers was to ensure that they could recognise "the teachable moment", the point at which it was appropriate to introduce a new aspect of work. The implication was that the impetus for learning resided within the child. Developmentalism, therefore, was marginalising the teacher, positioning them, as Vick (1996: 117) points out, as "Other to learning".

What is also constituted as "Other to learning" as a result of this psychological turn within education is the pedagogic body. Up to this point English curriculum in NSW had given considerable attention to the processes of pedagogic embodiment in relation to the routine aspects of writing such as spelling and handwriting. Even in the 1952 Syllabus, clearly influenced by Piagetian concepts, there is reference to the need for drill and practice in these areas of the curriculum. By 1961 the role of habituation within learning is even more diminished. It is viewed as a rudimentary skill requiring considerable supplementation or recast in purely psychological terms as a cognitive function with its corporeality obscured. The pedagogy underpinning spelling, therefore, began to rely less on habit formation and far more on students developing a "desire to spell" (1961: 7). Teachers were advised that children would only develop the power to spell when they "want to spell correctly" (1961: 5). An understanding developed that the automatic recall of words was not simply premised on repeated enunciation and memorisation but on a view that language needed to be 'relevant':

The ability to recall underlies all correct spelling, but this should not be confused with mere memorization. Correct spelling requires an exact reproduction of a word but mechanical memory is not enough. The words presented should be meaningful and as closely allied as possible to the child's immediate and vicarious experience. (1961: 6)

While it is pedagogically effective to make connections between what is already known and what is to be learned, the insistence on relevance here, framed in terms of a child's own experience, tends to reduce learning to a process emanating from an essentialised notion of desire. This is reinforced in the document's advice to teachers "to keep in mind that children will develop the power to spell when they want to spell correctly" (1961: 5). The role of the teacher in cultivating a desire to learn, particularly using a pedagogy aimed at students habituating certain dispositions of learning, has by 1961 been largely repudiated. Pedagogic desire which had once been understood as both generated externally and possessing a bodily dimension, was now conceived as an internal, psychical force. With pedagogy demonstrating an epistemological coherence with
developmental psychology the teacher assumed a less interventionist role and the corporeality of learning slipped from view.

This shift in emphasis away from the body to an almost exclusive concentration on the mind is evident in the changes to the teaching of spelling. While in the past the aim was for students to acquire a spelling habit instilled through drill and practice, the 1961 Syllabus calls for students to develop a "spelling conscience". Although this "spelling conscience" was said to be derived from a student's general habit of thought, it was not termed a habit. Instead it was considered an "attitude" that "produces a sensitivity which instantly recognises correct form and refuses to be satisfied with a doubtful spelling" (1961: 7). What is interesting is that this function was previously performed by what was termed a habit, which required little or no recourse to consciousness unless a difficulty arose. Reconfigured as an attitude, what was once habitual, is now infused with rationality, able to make conscious decisions about how to spell. The use of the term "spelling conscience" not only signals a privileging of reason over other forms of understanding, it also suggests a particular moral stance emanating from within the student rather than as a result of teacher direction and guidance; reminiscent of a Cartesian sense of will which is devoid of external influence.

This shift in emphasis away from the habitual and bodily aspects of learning is also evident in the 1961 document's approach to handwriting. Of all areas of the English curriculum it would seem that handwriting was one that needed to maintain a strong focus on bodily habituation. Here too, however, the impact of developmentalism is felt with the body framed as a biological entity and the bodily capacitation of students viewed more as a function of natural development than as the result of drill and practice. This is illustrated in an appendix to the document entitled What Research has to Tell the Teacher. Rather than a matter of debate, the information in this appendix seems to carry the force of scientific truth:

> Scientific studies have thrown some light on the development of the handwriting movement ... The writing movement itself gains in continuity, with increasing maturity ... Because the adult writes with a more continuous movement, letters and words are units but the young child, writing letters and words as a series of more nearly separate strokes, gradually achieves continuity in the writing movement along with his natural development. This suggests that speed in writing should never be forced beyond the child's capacity to cope comfortably with the extra demands. (1961: 127)
While in the conclusion to this appendix it indicates that research is never definitive, developmentalism is clearly the dominant paradigm resulting in a reduced focus on habit formation and so less need for teachers to oversee and direct this process. As with spelling, teachers were advised to consider a student’s readiness for formal instruction in handwriting as it was “the concept of a developmental age rather than a chronological one [that] has special significance” (1961: 128). Readiness, in relation to handwriting, was conceived in terms of “mental maturity, visual maturity and motor development” (1961: 129). While in the past these capacities were seen to be cultivated by regimens of training, here there is an assumption that these skills develop naturally and so teaching is organised around recognising “teachable moments”: the point at which students demonstrate they have attained the necessary stage of development for instruction to commence. Teachers were advised, however, that their instruction, involving the practice to perfect handwriting, should not be too burdensome:

Practice consists of provisional trials which should be restricted in length as the period of child life from six to twelve years is characterised by restlessness and high fatiguability. (1961: 129)

The process of students inculcating academic dispositions of self-control and bodily discipline to counter this fatigue, what earlier syllabuses prized as a key role of teaching, was not considered appropriate here. Instead restlessness was understood as behaviour indicative of a particular stage of development which would subside with maturity. Pedagogy, therefore, was modified to make allowance for this with the teacher minimising drill and practice and similar forms of constraint but maximising encouragement and a child’s seemingly inherent desire to learn. With the impact of developmentalism the pedagogic body loses its malleability. The quite overt social constructedness evident in earlier syllabuses gives way, in the 1952 and 1961 documents, to a view of the body as essentially biological. Bodily capacity resulting from particular pedagogic processes is masked as simply natural ability. The role of pedagogy to capacitate bodies, to instil the dispositions requisite for learning, is effaced.

The next syllabus document to be issued in 1967 was the first to deal exclusively with the subject of English (it does not include curricula for spelling and handwriting, however, as the 1961 document remained current for these areas of the curriculum). The psychological turn evident from 1952 is firmly entrenched by this stage with the concept of readiness now considered “a general principle of teaching” (New South Wales Department of Education, 1967: xiii). What is particularly significant about the 1967
document, is that it is the last syllabus to make reference to the role of habit formation. While its contribution to the pedagogic process is greatly diminished, it is still considered a relevant aim of teaching. The notion of habit used here, however, is very similar to how it is conceived in the 1961 document, that is, as primarily a cognitive function. As such, it is often coupled with the term attitude denoting a particular way of thinking. This is the case in the *Statement of Guiding Aims and Underlying Principles* of the Syllabus where there is a section entitled *Attitudes and Habits* which comprises a list of what ethical behaviour is seen to constitute. In this section it states that,

> The development of right attitudes and habits requires skilful and sensitive teaching. There will be fruitful occasions for explaining to children, and helping them to understand, what the good demands.  
> (1967: xii)

Habits were not derived from the repeated performance of particular acts or ways of doing but were solely constituted from ways of thinking, a conscious understanding of what ethical practice involved.

This conception of habit, which tended to efface its corporeality, is also evident in other sections of the Syllabus more specifically related to English curriculum, such as listening, use of voice and word recognition in reading, termed here aspects of the "Language Arts". In relation to improving students' listening, a range of activities are suggested but the syllabus specifically encourages the use of modelling:

> The teacher will influence the child by his own listening habits. He who listens attentively, will increase the quality of listening in his classroom.  
> (1967: 56)

Habit here is not something acquired by students through the process of iteration, coupled with a regimen of teacher reinforcement, rather it seems simply reliant upon mimesis. There is the assumption that students will simply mimic the teacher's own listening habits and through this acquire their own. While habits can be acquired through what is generally unconscious mimicry involving immersion within a particular milieu, if formed in this way it requires a saturation of the skill to be habituated, something of an impossibility within a classroom context. Further, children would have already acquired certain habits in this way prior to school, which may require modification through concerted effort. The technique of modelling referred to here is not premised on the student being required to behave repeatedly in a particular way until they are invested with the same trait, a process implying bodily practice. Rather the
student *habituated* good listening skills through a desire to be like the teacher, which involves a purely physical notion of desire. The conception of habit used here, therefore, is based upon a desire to imitate, something of considerable pedagogic importance, but which fails to result in the habituation of particular skills without a student iteratively performing the requisite behaviour. Where practice is referred to, it is generally understood as a function of mind. The syllabus states that, "The development of efficient listening habits results from conscious practice" (1967: 57). There is a need, at least initially, to consciously register that one is listening in the process of attaining effective listening skills. Within a classroom context, however, practice eventually renders consciousness superfluous, with attention eventually solely devoted to the content of what is being listened to, rather than the act of listening itself. Through practice a dispositional tendency to listen is acquired. This involves bodily discipline and self-control rather than an ongoing conscious reminder to be attentive. Given the impact of developmental psychology, however, concentration and the ability to listen are understood as purely products of mind. Resultant automaticity is psychologised and the notion of habit is virtually disembodied.

**The Body Reformed**

The 1967 Syllabus was short lived. By 1974 it had been superseded by a radically new curriculum representing the point at which developmental psychology was at its peak in influencing curriculum design. This new curriculum was no longer conceived in disciplinary terms as English but as a curriculum for Language. This name change reflects the overall intent of the document to present learning from a psychological perspective as an individualised phenomenon resulting form natural development rather than formal instruction. The Syllabus states that, "Language learning is individual" (New South Wales Department of Education, 1974: 5). Any notion of the social is conceived merely in terms of interaction with the emphasis on personal experience. The role of the teacher was reduced to that of a facilitator merely providing students with opportunities to use language:

The child's language best develops where opportunities are given for him (sic) to use it - with others in social situations, in personal and creative expression, in discovering and recording knowledge - rather than through language exercises remote from his experience. (1974: 3)
Development was seen to be independent of instruction. Formal teaching was no longer presented as the modus operandi of classroom practice with the teacher as the vectorial force in the pedagogic space. Rather this curriculum functions like a centrifugal force decentring the teacher and rearranging the pedagogic space into a site of independent learning. The Syllabus does point out that,

There will be times when specific instruction is necessary to meet developmental needs and difficulties or to focus on some point of interest. (1974: 4)

In general, however, whole class teaching was presented as almost anachronistic, with the formal instruction that was provided conducted more on an individual or small group basis. This is the impression given by the photographs shown below that are included in the Syllabus, a new addition to the standard, densely written syllabus design. In line with this move away from formal instruction is the noticeable change in terminology to refer to the learner. In the past, syllabus documents had usually favoured the term pupil. In this Syllabus it is most often the child. In relation to contemporary educational discourse pupil is definitely an outmoded term with student or learner being generally used. This is significant in that a pupil is one who is instructed; a student, however, is one who learns or is undertaking a course of study. The implication is that a pupil’s ability to learn is reliant upon a teacher, while a student is far more independent and less reliant upon teacher assistance. This shift in terminology is emblematic of the pedagogic shift away from formal instruction to a far greater emphasis on student-centred learning. This use has a romantic quality derived from Rousseau, for whom a child’s learning should be unfettered by the strictures of formal education. In relation to its use within an educational discourse representative of the dominant paradigm of developmental psychology, the term signifies a view of learning as a process of natural development. This is the perspective adopted in the 1974 Syllabus which states that; “Language learning is a part of the child’s total development”. Accordingly, teachers are advised that,

The integration of language learning activities is recommended, as language learning cannot be separated effectively into discrete lesson segments. These activities arise from the child’s personal experiences in the whole field of the curriculum. (1974: 2)
Given this view which discourages the separate treatment of aspects of language - reading, writing, spelling and grammar - the Syllabus fails to specify curriculum in these areas. Instead, this very brief document, comprising 16 pages compared to the 150 pages
of the 1967 Syllabus, provides a range of guidelines to teachers on how to encourage children to use language for a range of purposes:

Language learning occurs as a series of related experiences in which one use of language leads naturally to others. (1974: 4)

This curriculum avoids any demarcation of content for specific year groups. There is no mention of a grading of knowledge and skills as this is considered unnecessary given that children will progress through the sequenced stages of cognitive development at their own pace. As Walkerdine (1984: 171) points out, commenting on the impact of developmental psychology on education,

If knowledge becomes naturalised the facts (social phenomena) can become of secondary status to concepts, so that content is subsumed in process. Knowledge as a social category is thereby marginalised in favour of knowledge as both individual production and competence.

The impact of this naturalisation of knowledge on the pedagogic body was overwhelming. It signalled the total erasure of habit formation from the curriculum and the disappearance of the body as a pedagogic entity. The very notion of habit formation as a pedagogic goal was inappropriate from the perspective of a pedagogy grounded in developmental psychology as it involved a form of external imposition upon the naturally occurring stages of development. A disciplined body, particularly in the early years of schooling was not considered natural. Instead, the passivity that it engendered was seen as detrimental to learning. The pedagogy espoused by the 1974 Syllabus promoted “active learning”, encouraging a more flexible organisation of classroom space so students were able to interact more freely.

Classroom design underwent considerable modification at this time with the traditional organisation of rows of desks facing a blackboard at the front of the room being replaced by groups of desks scattered around a classroom and portable black and whiteboards being favoured over the larger static model. A spatiality promoting disciplinary control was transformed into a space in which new postures of learning emerged characterised by less bodily restraint and more ease of movement. Less restraint was also evident in the apparent greater tolerance for talk. Within this syllabus there is a privileging of talk over other aspects of the language curriculum. It was given such precedence that reading and writing were simply considered its “natural extension” (1974: 15). In a sense the 1974 Syllabus provided a talk curriculum with the choice of the word talk over
previous terms such as spoken English, spoken expression or simply speaking, an indication in itself of a less disciplined approach. In contrast to the more formal terms of previous syllabuses, which suggested speech required a certain refinement in line with social convention, and hence required formal instruction, talk is a term which denotes the natural free flow of conversation which may require encouragement but is more likely to be stifled by an instructional pedagogy. Talk, in the 1974 Syllabus, was something to be promoted. It was a term that suggested activity and therefore learning. Quiet, on the other hand, was seen to represent passivity and a failure to engage in the learning process.

This was the position taken in a support document to the 1974 Syllabus entitled Shooting Down the Myths. Given the radical nature of the new curriculum, which involved such a dramatic departure from conventional teaching practice, teachers, it appeared, needed to be given assurance of the effectiveness of what the Syllabus advocated. Shooting Down the Myths aimed to discredit a range of practices which the new syllabus considered outmoded, one of these being the insistence on quiet in the classroom. In doing this, the document pointed out that while, “Continual excess noise is never productive. No noise at all is probably worse”. It also states that,

The majority of the time will probably be characterised by a steady murmur as children work in groups or individually.
(New South Wales Department of Education Directorate of Studies, 1977: 17)

Talk was viewed as the medium through which learning occurred. Establishing parameters regarding appropriateness could have inhibited its productive function. Self-control and discipline in this regard were seen to result from maturation. With this emphasis on natural development, the body now seemed to be understood almost exclusively in biological terms, and, as with the mind, any form of capacitation was conceived as pertaining to a developmental norm. The focus, however, was quite clearly cognitive development and so it was assumed that children would eventually develop an understanding of when talk was inappropriate:

By recognising and using everyday events which require certain forms of social behaviour, the child becomes aware of and practiced in the behaviour which is expected of him in these situations.
(1974: 13)
Consequently, it was simply through a conscious awareness of what was appropriate that children would modify their behaviour. The corporeality of practice was erased. Simple recognition replaced the need for habit formation instilled through a pedagogy that emphasised bodily discipline.

This emphasis on education as a purely cognitive process is also evident in the approach to writing in the Syllabus. Although writing ability was seen to flow naturally from effective talking and listening skills, the Syllabus pointed out that “Writing is a complex task”. Progress, however, was considered a function of encouragement provided by the teacher, coupled with the development of a child’s thinking skills said to involve the ability “to generate, organise and express ideas” (1974: 15). These skills were seen to relate to particular stages of development and so their acquisition was viewed more as a function of mental growth, aided by an enriched classroom environment. It was felt that formal instruction could hamper this natural process. The Syllabus also aimed to boost a child’s enthusiasm for writing by removing the need for correctness. It stated that,

Writing will be most rewarding for the child when he (sic) is encouraged to write without the inhibition of an overemphasis on formal skills and when his work is willingly accepted by the teacher...
(1974: 15)

The need for the habituation of the mechanical aspects of writing is thereby deemed not simply unnecessary but harmful. This deemphasis of formal skills was extended to the teaching of grammar. The 1974 Syllabus did not require that grammar be taught at all and the accompanying Shooting Down the Myths document argues that, “Training in formal grammar does not improve pupil’s written expression. In fact, it could hinder it” (1977: 10).

The ability to write was viewed as dependent upon individual cognitive development and so writing pedagogy was reformulated through the influence of developmental psychology into a process of cultivating a child’s desire to write. Teacher input was not directed towards students inculcating particular knowledge and skills and a discipline of body and mind, but towards providing uncritical encouragement which, it was assumed, created the necessary supportive environment for learning to thrive. Emphasis within syllabus documents shifted from a view of learning that was dependent upon bodily discipline to one that required psychological support.
The 1974 Syllabus demonstrates a distinct move from teaching to learning, a thorough bifurcation of the pedagogic relation. It is not surprising that a new syllabus was not issued until 1987 as there was no longer any need to specify externally derived curriculum content. The focus was on individual learning needs and it was a teacher’s direct contact with a student that could best determine what these might be. The notion of a syllabus functioning as a teaching manual was irrevocably changed by the 1974 document. While the syllabuses issued in 1987, 1994 and 1998 return to a format at least resembling the pre-1974 documents, teachers’ approaches towards implementing syllabus content have become far more diversified given the increased range of documents plus departmental and commercially produced support material, a point discussed in more detail in following chapters. While the next syllabus to be issued in 1987 contained the next writing syllabus for primary school, it was in fact a document outlining the teaching of writing from kindergarten to Year 12, hence its title, *Writing K to 12*. The only other English-related syllabus issued since 1974 was a document entitled *Communications* which placed emphasis on reading and talking and, despite providing greater curriculum content than the 1974 Syllabus, was based on a similar educational philosophy drawn from developmental psychology. In *Writing K-12* developmental psychology was still the dominant paradigm but there was some variation in terms of its application. Although this curriculum is still characteristically progressivist, it is not the same unbridled progressivism as is evident in the 1974 Syllabus. While it does not signal a return to a teacher-centred pedagogy *Writing K-12* suggests more teacher involvement in students’ learning. This involvement, however, still tends to take the form of encouragement and is far from an explicit instructional pedagogy. This is evident in a section entitled *Conditions for Learning Language* where, even though the teacher’s responsibilities are specified as a series of imperatives, the force of these commands is neutralised by what the instructions require the teacher to do:

Teachers should – provide students with examples of language, how it looks, works and is used by
- flooding the room with labels, charts and books
- having students spend time each day responding to this stimulus material.

Teachers should
- provide opportunities for student to identify what it is that they next want to learn
- create a learning environment that allows such language development to occur.

While ostensibly the responsibility here lies with the teacher, the pedagogic realisation is a transfer of responsibility onto the student. Even in the first example where the
teacher’s instruction is concerned with the teaching of the structure of written language, a particularly complex matter, the teacher’s role is merely to facilitate learning by providing students with appropriate material. The indication is that it is the students who determine its relevance for their own learning. The teacher does not provide this material in a staged and systematic way; it is simply among the variety of stimulus material available for use within the learning environment, which the teacher has created. In a section of the document devoted to explicating their role, teachers are referred to as “the architects of the learning environment” (1987: 48). The use of the term “environment” is in line with the metaphors of growth that proliferate in this and the preceding syllabus, demonstrating the paradigmatic dominance of developmental psychology. The term is suggestive of a pedagogy in which student learning was seen to result from natural development in a rich and vital environment.

Teachers, it suggests, could assist their students’ development in writing by tending the learning environment: flooding the classroom with stimulus material, ensuring that classroom organisation facilitates student interaction and providing support when required. Teachers were “architects” in the sense that it was their responsibility to construct this environment, yet the dictates of this progressivism, based firmly on the principles of developmental psychology, imply that it was only the learning context, rather than the learners themselves, which were manipulated. The pedagogic body, therefore, remained unconstrained to ensure freedom of movement and an active approach to learning. As with the classroom organisation depicted in the 1974 Syllabus, photographs in Writing K-12 show classrooms arranged in groups of desks with space allotted for independent work or informal group activities. In many photographs, as shown below, the teacher is absent, with students working independently or in groups. Students are often shown sitting or lying on the ground, or in a relaxed pose. Where teachers are depicted they are never shown addressing a whole class but are either shown one-on-one or involved in informal group discussion. With a range of different activities occurring at any one time in a classroom, learning was presented as an active process in which students’ minds were not to be encumbered by a regimented body but were instead given the freedom, through the construction of a relaxed and stimulating environment, to develop unhindered. In this way, the Syllabus states students “grow towards independence in writing” (1987: 7).
1. THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

1.1 Through language — through talking, listening, reading and writing — children learn about themselves, other people and the world. In using language for communicating, investigating and expressing, they make meaning for themselves and share meaning with others.
In a trend paralleling the increased influence of developmental psychology, the need for a disciplined student body had waned. Yet whereas this notion of the pedagogic body is absent from the 1974 Syllabus, in *Writing K-12* there is some sense of a more disciplined body resurfacing in its revised handwriting curriculum. As a complement to students learning to spell, teachers were instructed to "teach fluent, automatic handwriting" (1987: 140). In syllabuses prior to 1952, in particular, this would suggest a pedagogy designed to instil certain habits. It would require students iteratively to practise the formation of letters or, as a preliminary to this, mimicking the shape and directionality of letters through a range of different activities. In *Writing K-12*, however, the approach to teaching is more cognitive than corporeal. It points out that,

Students learn to handwrite by:-
• inventing marks: they create their own marks and manipulate them, exploring the limits of these marks as well as exploring their own capabilities
• forming hypotheses and testing them: they make guesses about what might work and they test their guesses. Inventing their own marks and testing these to see how well they communicate involves children in comparing their inventions against the teacher's model. As a result, children gradually revise their understandings and refine their handwriting skills.
(1987: 187)

Learning to write is presented as a process of deductive reasoning, a matter of trial and error to determine the appropriate signification. While to some extent this is an aspect of learning to write, it is more a feature of pre-writing which children exhibit in the years prior to attending school. By the age of 5 or 6 years when children commence school there is a need to acquaint them with the standardised shapes of letters as soon as possible to ensure a smooth transition from pre-literacy to literacy so that they possess the capacity to produce text effectively. To some extent this is recognised in the point that follows:

It is crucial that teachers show students how to produce the foundation movements and how to form the letter shapes of the NSW Foundation Style.
(1987: 187)

It would seem that teachers firstly needed to allow students to explore their own potential as sign makers without the inhibiting influence of teacher intervention. What was not recognised, given the influence of developmental psychology and its conceptualisation of language acquisition, is that writing is not an individual process. It may be performed by individuals but language is social, as indeed is any semiotic. Individual production and contextual variables ensure it remains a fluid phenomenon.
but its pragmatic nature does not discount that it is social. An instructional pedagogy seemed necessary therefore to ensure students acquired an understanding of the shape of letters and the directionality involved in how to produce them.

This understanding, however, is not simply mindful, it is also bodily. The pedagogy of demonstration referred to in the syllabus seems to give token consideration to the former and totally neglects the latter. Demonstration is still predicated on a notion of readiness, which could prove inequitable for children with little exposure to written text and its production prior to school. It is this form of experience, rather than any natural predisposition, which is more likely to influence readiness. Teacher demonstration, when it occurred, did not seem to be undertaken in any ongoing way with students then iteratively performing the movements that the teacher had modelled. Instead, three broad types of “handwriting learning experiences” were specified: self-discovery experiences, guided exploration experiences and self-direction experiences (1987: 187). The first involved the undirected pre-writing activities mentioned above. Guided exploration involved teacher demonstration, while the third category involved students applying the advice supplied by their teacher to refine their skills independently. Learning to write is conceived more as a function of mindful intent than bodily know-how. The Syllabus actually states that “teachers must help students progress on the basis of positive self-image and achievement (1987: 186). The body was viewed as simply following the mind’s commands. It did not require capacititation through a pedagogy of drill and practice. If the mind was predisposed to write then the body would act accordingly. This was in fact the assumption in the one reference to habit in Writing K-12. Teachers are advised to “encourage students to make it a habit to write and read every day” (1987: 19). Habit formation it seemed was a student responsibility that would result from mere encouragement. The need for students to embody a disposition for literate practice was not considered necessary.

The next primary school English syllabus was issued in 1994. It provided the first truly comprehensive English syllabus for kindergarten to Year 6 since 1952. All syllabuses released in the intervening period only addressed particular aspects of the curriculum such as spelling and handwriting, reading or writing or, as in the case of the 1967 and 1974 Syllabuses, omitted certain disciplinary content. The 1994 Syllabus was a much-anticipated document, not only for this reason but because the effectiveness of progressivist pedagogy was now being questioned (Reid, 1987; Knapp, 1989a; Gilbert, 1990). Disquiet over the ability of progressivist approaches such as whole language and
process writing to equip students with adequate literacy skills had surfaced in the mid-1980s. A number of education and linguistics academics had formed themselves into a group named the Literacy and Education Research Network (LERN) to lobby the NSW government prior to the release of Writing K-12 for the inclusion of a more explicit approach to the teaching of language, with a stronger focus on grammar and textual form. Writing K-12 was released with minor modifications, the most notable being the replacement of a statement that did not require schools to teach grammar with one suggesting that it was important to do so at point of need (1987: 52). LERN, however, in conjunction with the Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) in NSW government schools decided to produce their own curriculum support material for Writing K-12. Given the document's very general approach to language, these materials, despite their explicit treatment of textual form and insistence on the need for students to acquire metalinguistic knowledge, attained the approval of the Education Department. The approach to language adopted in these materials was termed the genre approach which drew heavily on Halliday's systemic functional grammar and a view of genre as text type, based on research conducted in the 1980s by Martin (1987) and Rothery (1986). This approach, particularly its systematic treatment of text, proved incredibly popular with teachers and the DSP released a wealth of additional support materials on the genres of school writing. On the basis of its wide acceptance and its success in improving students' outcomes, the genre approach was adopted as the model of language for the 1994 K-6 English Syllabus. Given the bitter debates throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s between proponents of the genre approach and process writing, the more neutral term text type was chosen to replace genre (Reid, 1987).

The 1994 Syllabus, therefore, marked a distinctive break from psycholinguistic notions of language that had influenced English syllabuses since the 1950s. Language was now considered "a social phenomenon" as opposed to the psycholinguistic perspective of being individual (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1994: 4). Yet while the 1994 Syllabus had discarded many of the progressivist ideals drawn from developmental psychology, its influence persisted in the pedagogy it proposed to support its more explicit approach to language. While a stronger focus on the teaching of textual form emerged, there was no accompanying resurrection of the need for students to habilitate the knowledge and skills underpinning the discipline of English. The ability to write was still perceived as an entirely cognitive process with the bodily aspects of learning obscured. Habit was a term that continued to be displaced by a focus on attitudes and, in the 1994 Syllabus, the term values was also added. The Syllabus objectives fall into three
categories, "Values and Attitudes", "Skills" and "Knowledge". In none of these is habit formation given consideration. Instead, values and attitudes assume priority in the stated objectives and are seen to result from teacher encouragement. The overall methodology outlined in the Syllabus, however, does intend much more than encouragement. Yet in a detailed staging of knowledge and skills presented as banks of student outcomes pertaining to stages of learning commensurate with the K-6 years, much of the responsibility for learning still lies with the student. Progressivist discourse permeates the document with students being merely "provided with opportunities" to learn rather than being specifically taught, and lessons still conceived as "learning experiences".

This may appear a shallow criticism with these terms now being simply representative of contemporary educational discourse but what must be understood is that they were originally used in relation to a particular pedagogic practice which discouraged teacher intervention and promoted learning as a largely student-centred activity. With a period of twenty years in which this was the dominant pedagogy, the inclusion of a more explicit approach to language conceived as a set of student outcomes does not erase the pedagogic approach these terms denote. The student outcomes itemised in the Syllabus are not presented as contingent upon specific teaching objectives and, with no statement included on the role of the teacher to mark any change from previous practice, the pedagogy here is at best unclear. What the Syllabus does provide instead is a smorgasbord of strategies, lists of activities which teachers can use in the classroom or, of which as the Syllabus states, "students should be made aware". In the case of spelling, these strategies relate to experimenting, visual memory, auditory memory, kinaesthetic memory, spelling rules, grammatical clues, syllabification. There is no indication as to how these activities should form part of a systematic teaching program. Instead, the Syllabus states that,

[Students] should be introduced to a range of strategies and encouraged to experiment until they establish those methods that best suit their individual learning styles. (1994: 208)

The emphasis given to each strategy is determined, therefore, not by the teacher, but by the student and so gauging their potential effectiveness becomes a student responsibility. Pedagogy remains essentially progressivist with the emphasis on a kind of na"ive eclecticism where the more varied the approaches used, the better equipped a student is assumed to be. More likely to result, however, is the dilution of pedagogic
affect. While affect may be maximised through the use of a range of different activities that target a particular skill, this is only the case if these activities are closely allied and function to scaffold a student’s learning. The selection of appropriate activities is best determined by a teacher with a clear sense of how their teaching objectives will lead towards the attainment of specific outcomes. A young child with rudimentary literacy skills simply selecting and completing an assortment of activities can not produce the same result. Pedagogic affect is weakened without the iterative performance and appropriate sequencing of the learning strategies a teacher can provide.

Pedagogic affect, however, needs to be understood as both cognitive and corporeal. While its impact here is ineffectual in terms of both domains, it is the mind that the pedagogy targets. The body, even in an area such as spelling that relies on automatic recall, and the requisite bodily disposition to support this habituation is neglected. There is, as mentioned, reference to kinaesthetic and tactile memory activities that suggest a specific bodily focus. Yet these are simply listed along with all the other strategies and, as their effectiveness relies on repetition and reinforcement, it can be assumed that in practice their impact would be minimal as habit formation is generally conceived as an outmoded pedagogic goal. Learning to spell is viewed as essentially a cognitive process with the teaching aims still reflecting a bias towards pedagogic principles drawn from developmental psychology. This is evident where the Syllabus states that,

The main aims in teaching spelling are to develop in students:
• an understanding of the importance of spelling in the communication of meaning
• the ability to use a variety of spelling strategies in their own writing
• a positive attitude towards themselves as spellers and towards using conventional spellings in their own writing.
(1994: 208)

There is an appeal here to a sense of reason in that if students possess an appreciation of the importance of spelling they will strive to be good spellers by using the strategies they have been made aware of in classroom activities. The ability to use these strategies effectively, however, is not premised on rational intent nor on, as the third point declares, “a positive attitude”, it is more a function of psychophysical habituation, wherein these strategies are made automatic and the conscious mind is generally bypassed. The pedagogy to support this habituation has a bodily basis emphasising rhythm and routine. A positive attitude towards spelling and any application of reason are not ends in themselves but are instead dependent upon this habituated skill base.
A pedagogy similar to that underpinning the 1994 Syllabus is also found in the 1998 Syllabus which is, in fact, a revision of the 1994 document. While teachers generally embraced the more explicit approach to text provided in the 1994 Syllabus there was a widespread reaction against its use of functional grammar and the quite sophisticated terminology which it utilised (NSW Department of Training and Education Coordination, 1995). As a result of this, when a new government was elected in 1995 an enquiry was held into the controversial document and, while its approach to text was retained, functional grammar was not. Instead it was replaced with a traditional grammar, which, while more acceptable to many teachers, did not possess an effective combined textual and syntactic orientation. As a result, the revised document created something of a schism between its approach to text and the primarily sentence level grammar it had adopted (Watkins, 1999). As with the 1994 Syllabus, however, it promoted an explicit approach towards the teaching of English with syllabus content once again organised as lists of staged learning outcomes. These outcomes were intended to form the basis of a teacher's class program yet the teaching reliant on the attainment of these outcomes, that is, what an explicit approach to the teaching of English actually entails, was not specified. Instead, the Syllabus simply provided curriculum content itemised as outcome indicators, supposed evidence that a broad outcome had been achieved. The pedagogy involved in students meeting these outcomes is far less explicit. Pedagogy itself is atomised into a diverse range of strategies with no apparent overarching philosophy to guide practice.

Once understood as teaching methodology, pedagogy has been reconfigured by both the 1994 and 1998 Syllabuses as simply the delivery of sets of discrete activities. Where there is greater extrapolation of the teacher's role, as in the Scope and Sequence charts included in the Syllabus - a section providing a more detailed account of the staging and delivery of content - pedagogic technique is generally confined to modelling and joint construction, the latter involving the co-operative production of text at either individual, group or class level. Although treated as discrete strategies within the syllabus, modelling and joint construction are in fact related strategies drawn from a teaching cycle developed to support the genre approach to writing (Callaghan and Rothery, 1988). This cycle is a three-stage model comprising modelling and joint construction, followed by a stage referred to as the independent construction of text, a term also used in the Syllabus. Although this model seems to appropriately stage the teaching of a new text type to students by firstly discussing its social function, pointing out the schematic structure and grammar of the textual form under investigation, working together to
produce it and allowing students to attempt constructing it themselves, learning is still conceived here as a purely cognitive enterprise. Part of the problem relates to the formulaic conception of text underpinning this approach, which lends itself to a pedagogy of simply, show, tell and do (Watkins, 1997; 1999). Once a teacher has shown students a particular text type, told them about its generic stages and grammar and conducted a joint trial construction, students are then expected to produce the text. What is missing here is any focus on the bodily aspects of learning and also an acknowledgment that writing is a practice requiring iterative performance to achieve competence. Models such as these tend to mask incremental steps implicit in each of these macro stages: steps which should be, characterised by considerable teacher-student interaction, that is the intersubjective engagement in the process of learning. In more concrete terms, this involves detailed teacher discussion and the guiding of students through the completion of tasks targeting smaller facets of what contributes to the production of textual form - the ability to manipulate the intricate patterning of textual and syntactic grammar. The process of learning to write does not simply require cognition of a text type's generic structure, it involves the habituation of a complex set of knowledge and skills which then allows for a student to give more mindful consideration to the production of text. Learning to write effectively is a long, arduous process requiring a particular discipline. These aspects of the learning process, however, are generally not addressed by contemporary pedagogy which still operates within an ontological framework that privileges the mind and ignores the corporeality of the learning process. Recent calls for a more explicit approach to the teaching of literacy in NSW schools leading to the adoption of a modified genre approach within both the 1994 and 1998 K-6 English syllabuses, assumes explicit pedagogy results from a detailing of content and anticipated student outcomes. In actuality the issue of what constitutes effective pedagogic practice is not addressed and the supposition that learning is purely a function of cognition remains unchallenged.

**Concluding Remarks**

The pedagogic body has undergone considerable transformation during the years in which it has been subject to the processes of institutionalised education. During the period 1905 to 1998 its role in learning has been slowly effaced within syllabus documents. In the years prior to the psychological turn the need for pedagogy to instil bodily dispositions conducive to learning was readily accepted. It was recognised that
learning required discipline, which provided the necessary foundation for academic work. The body also figured in the emphasis given to the formation of habits which targeted routine aspects of literate practice, such as spelling, handwriting, punctuation and even syntactic knowledge. As education embraced developmental psychology, the body began to slip from view reformulated as a natural entity. Learning was perceived as a function of cognitive development and so habit formation was viewed as an inappropriate and generally unnecessary pedagogic goal. It is not only the learner's body, however, which undergoes change at this time. The easing of the disciplinary techniques characteristic of pedagogy exemplified by syllabus documents issued prior to 1952, is matched by a decentring of the teachers' role within pedagogic practice. Development is seen as almost independent of instruction and the teacher is refashioned as facilitator discouraged from intervening in the learning process.

Learning is still generally conceived as a function of mind and there is little acknowledgment of the need to address the corporeality of the educative process. Pedagogic practice, however, is not simply revealed through a genealogy of syllabus documents. In actuality a range of factors influence teaching methodology and so current practice may exhibit a heterogeneity difficult to predict from what constitutes its theoretical basis. In the following section examples of current pedagogic practice are examined to gain a clearer picture of how the body fares in contemporary classrooms. In particular, analysis is directed towards the degree to which teachers address the bodily aspects of learning to write within their own pedagogic practice and the ways this impacts upon their students' ability to write.
Section 3: The Pedagogic Body in Practice - Introduction

Education in short, cannot be better described than by calling it the organisation of acquired habits of conduct and tendencies to behaviour.
William James (1906)

It's a sign you are going to do well if you hated it and every bone in your body didn't want to do it but you still made yourself [do it].
Kate Peterson Higher School Certificate Student (cited in Baird, 1999)

The previous chapter provided some insight into how education is generally only understood from a cognitive perspective. In tracing the pedagogic body’s genealogy, this focus was seen to be even more pronounced from the mid-twentieth century due to the impact of a ‘psychological turn’ within education. It is from this time that the view of learning expressed by William James begins to wane. From the 1950s, reference to ‘acquired habits’ of learning, the development of which was once a central pedagogic tenet, is slowly erased from syllabus documents. Education becomes dominated by a discourse of developmental psychology in which the body’s social constructedness is obscured. Instead, the body is refashioned as a biological phenomenon with the mind now more obviously the central pedagogic concern. As a result, pedagogic practice undergoes a paradigmatic shift with the rise of developmentalism leading to a corresponding marginalisation of the teacher’s role and a prizing of the learner’s individual development over the need for formal instruction.

An elaboration of Bourdieu’s notion of habitus to include Spinoza’s monism offers a more productive perspective on the mind/body relation in pedagogic practice to the dualist ontology that underpins much educational thought. A Spinozistic habitus acknowledges the bodily basis of learning but, unlike Bourdieu’s concept, it allows for an ongoing dialectic with consciousness, necessary in terms of understanding the pedagogic process and practice in general. The bodily basis of learning is derived from the accumulation of affect and the development of dispositions of learning habituated through iterative performance. The achievement of the HSC student cited above is not simply a result of a conscious will to succeed but a bodily disposition for sustained and concentrated effort, a key aspect of academic labour. Such diligence, however, is rarely self-derived. It is the function of a pedagogy that disciplines the body to act in such a way: a pedagogy, in relation to schooling, in which the teacher has a central role in orchestrating the learner’s embodiment for academic success. This process of embodiment is not simply manifested corporeally; it also provides the basis for
consciousness. Bodily discipline therefore allows for a meshing of habituated skill and conscious reflection, a dynamic which drives the learning process.

In this section an analysis of the pedagogic body in practice is conducted to examine the impact of disciplinary techniques upon the learner. The specific focus is the disciplinary techniques employed by primary school teachers: their organisation of the pedagogic space, the classroom regimen they establish and, what is of key concern here, their implementation of the curriculum for teaching writing. Some understanding of what guides current teaching methodology was provided in *Tracing the Body* but in actuality classroom practice is far more diverse than its textual realisation. In the following study of six teachers from two schools, this diversity of practice is evident with a range of disciplinary techniques being employed in teaching students how to write. This analysis will highlight not only the impact of each teacher’s practice upon their students’ ability to write but students’ overall disposition for academic work; that is the extent to which they acquire a habitus for learning.

**The Schools**

Two primary schools were chosen for inclusion in this study. For the purposes of this research they are referred to as Westville Public School (PS) and Northside PS. The rationale for their inclusion in the study was to investigate two very different schools having comparatively diverse drawing areas in terms of socio-economic background, ethnic mix and geographical location. This was to ensure that the diversity of the New South Wales school population was to some extent reflected within the study’s small sample. Initially this was not intended to be a comparative study. As the two sets of teachers in both schools taught a kindergarten, Year 3 and Year 5 class, and also differed in age and experience, it was assumed they would also exhibit differences in terms of their teaching methodology. While this was the case, there were also distinct similarities in relation to the pedagogic practice and overall educational philosophy of the teachers within each school. It also became clear that, despite individual differences, students from the three classes in each school displayed marked similarities in relation to their disposition for learning. There are several factors that could contribute to this, in particular, the differentials of social class and ethnicity. Socio-economic background has long been recognised as the major determinant of educational success. A wealth of scholarship exists examining the relationship between social class and scholastic
achievement (Connell and White, 1988; Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis and Ecob, 1988; Cope and Poynting, 1989) and, so too, the impact of ethnicity (Kalantzis and Cope, 1988; Kalantzis, Cope, Noble and Poynting, 1990). Another factor similarly impacting upon a child’s disposition for learning, particularly in terms of learning to write, is gender (Yates, 1993; Browne and Fletcher, 1995; Foster, 2000). In this study, however, while acknowledging the importance of these factors, it is teachers’ practice that is the central concern. This being one of only a few variables within the context of schooling amenable to change and yet seemingly receiving far less attention within the sociology of education than class, ethnicity and gender.

Westville PS is located in a far-western suburb of Sydney. The socio-economic status of the students is low, which is reflected in Westville’s classification as a Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) school, a program which has funded the school since shortly after it opened in 1972. While there is a spread of household types, a considerable percentage of the school population live in public housing with either one or both parents unemployed. Students are drawn from a diverse range of ethnic and language groupings with 38% of the population listed as from a non-English speaking background (NESB). The highest non-Anglo ethnic group is Filipino followed closely by Pacific Islanders. Other ethnic groups represented at the school are Korean, Vietnamese, Sri Lankan, Indian, Pakistani, Turkish, Croatian and Serbian. In addition to this, the school has a high Aboriginal population of 7%, compared to the national population of 2%. Within the area in which Westville is located, a region frequently in receipt of poor media coverage stereotyping the population of this working class suburban fringe as ‘Westies’ (Powell, 1993), the school has a good reputation, with parents outside the school’s drawing area keen to enrol their children.

Unlike many schools in the area, it has a pleasant environment with much time and money devoted to landscaping and overall ‘beautification’ of the school grounds. At the time of the study the student population was 577 with a staff of 21 classroom teachers and 9 support staff in the areas of learning difficulties, English as a Second Language (ESL), Library, Aboriginal Education and Community Liaison. With a few exceptions, particularly at an executive level, the staff could be considered young and relatively inexperienced with an average age of approximately 28 years and 4 years teaching experience. In 1999 there were five beginning teachers at the school. Despite its location in a difficult area the school has a relatively stable teaching population. This is probably related to a government ranking system which awards teachers additional transfer
points for length of service in DSP schools in an attempt to attract and maintain staff. While the teaching staff at the school was relatively stable, in the year of the study there had been a complete turnover in the senior executive at the school with the appointment of a new Principal and Deputy.

The new Principal, a dynamic woman in her early 50s, was quite candid in her assessment of the school in a lengthy interview conducted at the completion of the study. She had achieved her position through merit selection and had been informed at the time of her appointment that Westville was “a cutting edge school”. She explained that it was described as, “a long way down the track in literacy, a forerunner if you like in its use of ‘literacy Taskforce’”, a school-devised program operating from Years 1 to 6 targeting individual student needs. It is discussed in detail in chapters 5 and 6. To the new Principal, however, Westville was “anything but a cutting edge school in terms of literacy”. She pointed out that, “In fact, it’s been a major disappointment”. This disappointment she explained was not only that student literacy outcomes were very poor, evident in the school’s Basic Skills Test (BST) results, the standardised literacy and numeracy tests conducted annually with Years 3 and 5 in NSW government schools, but in the staff’s complacency over the school’s reputation as an innovator in literacy education. The Principal described the schools’ ongoing poor BST results as “a tram track or railway track, state average top line, our results bottom line” pointing out that, “in both literacy and numeracy they don’t converge”. She felt the school was “not making a big difference”. Teachers, however, reacted negatively towards her questioning of their teaching programs and the need for the school to re-evaluate its approach to teaching literacy.

In terms of the teachers’ expertise in the area of teaching grammar and textual form, the focus of the K-6 English curriculum, the Principal remarked it was “close to non-existent”. Although she displayed a genuine admiration for her staff’s commitment to their students, in particular their welfare needs and the maintenance of a happy and safe school environment, she was concerned with what she considered to be their lack of professionalism in relation to curriculum implementation. She explained that, “by and large the staff doesn’t read professionally. They rely heavily on commercial products”. She added that,

I just feel that some people are unaware of what it really means to be a professional person as opposed to a babysitter, teacher’s aid, call it what you will. They have no understanding
that the role they play actually means that children move forward and learn and grow and the responsibility is huge.

To be fair to the teaching staff, they had had a lot to contend with professionally in recent years. As with all primary school teachers in NSW, they had been given the onerous responsibility of implementing not only a revised K-6 English Syllabus (1998) but new Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) syllabuses. The additional workload involved in implementing these new curricula had been made even more complex by the introduction of an outcomes-based approach to curriculum design which provided the framework for curriculum implementation, and also assessment and reporting procedures. To many teachers, especially those with little grammar in their own education and pre-service training, recourse to commercially-produced material to implement the K-6 English Syllabus was a means of coping with the great demands placed upon them. They had little time to read professionally and design their own lesson plans. To the Principal, however, these problems were not simply a function of teacher workload and lack of grammatical knowledge, though these were of course contributing factors. The Principal considered the teaching methodology of many of her staff to be a key concern:

There is a belief that you tick a box, 'yes, I have done reports' because I once showed them how to do a report. So there's a real lack of understanding just how long the process takes to be able to write effectively.

An additional concern which impacted upon the teachers' practice was what the Principal referred to as the 'DSP philosophy', a particular ethos that permeates many disadvantaged schools:

if you're not careful it is almost a belief, well it's a DSP school, you can't expect anything more, so there isn't any major motivation to think, 'well, we can close the gaps or what should we be doing better'.

While there is some realisation of the existence of this ethos, which explains moves in recent years to actively improve student literacy outcomes in DSP schools, this philosophy is still firmly entrenched in schools such as Westville. This seems very much a product of the DSP's hiatus in the 1970s when a Schools Commission discussion paper declared,
I think that the Disadvantaged Schools Program is not primarily concerned with reading, writing and arithmetic. Reading, writing and arithmetic are not so much basic skills as basic social screening measures. I think the DSP is primarily concerned with making a happier and more stimulating experience for children and a more welcoming place for their parents . . .

Such a view provides an interesting perspective on the Principal’s comments made after she had completed a period of classroom observations to evaluate teacher. She remarked,

I mean, the best way I can describe it is, ‘yes’, everybody is busy. There are busy classrooms and there are classrooms where if you walked in you would think, ‘well they are all happy and content’, but it’s the content, it’s alarming. At times, it just alarms me.

At Northside PS, however, the situation was quite different. As its pseudonym implies, Northside PS is located in the northern and more affluent suburbs of Sydney, although by no means one of the prestigious suburbs of the North Shore. The school was built in 1928 and comprises a series of imposing two storey brick buildings and established demountables on a well maintained site. Northside is considered one of the top primary schools in NSW in terms of its BST results in both literacy and numeracy and the number of its students who acquire scholarships to prestigious high schools within the private system and places at selective state high schools. The Principal, a reserved man in his final year before retirement, pointed out that, “close to 50% of Year 6 would be in that category”. This is assisted by the school having Opportunity Classes (OC) in Years 5 and 6, selective classes drawn from gifted and talented students from schools within the district. In a sense this contributes to what the Principal refers to as “a very positive and very strong ethos. It’s a school that has a very good reputation both in perception and reality and it has had for a long time”.

Northside is a very large school. At the time of the study its student population was 870 with 42 teaching positions. There were also additional support staff in the areas of ESL and Library. Growth in the student population in recent years had been largely due to an increase in high and medium density housing in the surrounding area placing considerable pressure on Northside to accommodate rising student numbers. The school’s drawing area had been reduced to compensate for this increased population as the school site is relatively small. In the period since the completion of this study the OC classes have been relocated to another school in the district as an additional measure to reduce student numbers. Northside had not only been confronted in recent years with
rising student numbers but a dramatic increase in its NESB population which at the time of the study was 75%. Only fifteen years previously the school population was predominantly Anglo-Australian. In 1999 the largest group within the NESB population was Chinese, drawn from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore and elsewhere in South East Asia. Other ethnic groups represented within the school community were Korean, Indian and Sri Lankan. There were no Aboriginal students at the school. While the rapid rise in the NESB population resulted in the need to employ ESL staff, the initial language difficulties which the ESL students experienced did not significantly affect the school’s BST results with the Principal describing the school’s performance as “considerably well above the state average”. He added that,

the children in this school are very amenable by and large and highly motivated. The expectations of the NESB parents are very high and very demanding, in fact at times a little too demanding.

In contrast to Westville the staff at Northside are much older, on average 45 years of age, and also far more experienced. The staff is very stable with a minimal number transferring, receiving promotion or retiring. There are no beginning teachers at the school. As the Principal pointed out, “It certainly is one of those schools where people tend to gravitate and stop for a long time and therefore tend to be rather experienced”. With regard to the staff’s approach to implementing the K-6 English curriculum the Principal explained that, “they have been putting a lot of effort into coming to grips with it … the school had done a lot of work in this regard”. He indicated, however, that

Some of the younger ones, who have little or no experience of grammar, there is a fair bit of catching up for them to do but overall I am not aware of any alarming lack of skill in the area.

While monitoring student outcomes through indicators such as the BST results and the school’s work sample portfolio system of reporting, the Principal expressed great confidence in his staff and their professionalism describing them as “very good workers focused on the individual needs of students”.

Methodology
After agreeing to their school’s involvement in the year-long study, the two principals took responsibility for selecting a kindergarten, Year 3 and Year 5 teacher in their school to participate. Prior to the two sets of three teachers committing themselves to the study,
information sessions were conducted in both schools. It was explained that the focus of the study was the teaching of writing in primary school and that up to six, audiotaped classroom observation sessions would be conducted. In addition to this, teachers were told that observation notes would be compiled and teaching stimulus material and student work samples collected over the course of the study. These observation lessons were generally undertaken twice a term during the first three of the four school terms. This was not always possible given demands on the teachers’ time but on average each observation lesson was 1.5 – 2 hours in length and so a total of 10 -12 hours of each teacher’s classroom practice was observed. The only exception to this was the Year 3 teacher at Westville PS who unexpectedly fell ill during the third term so only four of her lessons could be observed. Some of these, however, were of a longer duration. At the conclusion of the classroom observation period towards the end of the school year each teacher was interviewed on aspects of their pedagogic practice and information such as pre-service training and overall experience. Each of the principals was also interviewed at this time to provide background details on the schools.

In the analysis that follows, the pedagogic practice of each teacher is considered in relation to how effectively they teach their students to write. Writing well, however, involves much more than the acquisition of a discrete set of skills and knowledge, although this is itself a complex process. As with learning in general, what is required is the requisite disposition, in this case for literate practice and academic work. Very often within education these dispositional tendencies are simply essentialised as a function of innate desire coupled with notions of the will to achieve. Likewise, they also seem to have a class, gender or even ethnic basis. While the cultural production of embodied subjectivities is always bound by class, gender and ethnicity, these should not be understood as pre-given, essentialised and determining categories, but emergent attributes produced in situated experience structured by social relations. If pedagogic practice treats these categories as essences, it will simply reproduce normative dispositions. This is most obviously seen in the difficulties many working class children encounter with school and similarly, what is so often worryingly perceived as girls’ propensity, and boys’ lack thereof, for writing (Rowan, Knobel, Bigum and Lankshear, 2002). The role of pedagogy therefore is crucial, that is the extent to which it impacts upon a student’s existing habitus through its maximisation of affect in the disciplinary techniques it employs.
The disciplinary apparatus associated with each teacher’s pedagogic practice, therefore, will be examined from three particular perspectives: their organisation of the pedagogic space, involving classroom design, ambience and use of space; classroom regimen, where noise level, movement and posture will be considered; and lastly, curriculum implementation, focusing upon lesson content, duration and overall approach. The empirical analysis of this data is organised in terms of three different year groups: kindergarten, Year 3 and Year 5, to highlight the differential techniques employed at these various stages of learning. Prior to the analysis of each teacher’s practice the teachers themselves are profiled providing some insight into the range of variables which impact upon their teaching methodology. Together with this, an overview of the teachers’ observation lessons is provided giving a shorthand account of the content and organisation of each.

Notes

1 Connell and White (1988: 3) report that, “Over sixty research reports on these issues have been published in the last ten years not counting school and program case studies which would more than double the number”. The relationship between economic and educational disadvantage is well documented.

2 While acknowledging the impact of class, gender and ethnicity, in their study of factors determining school effectiveness, Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis and Ecob (1988: 250) stress the importance, among others, of the following: structured sessions, intellectually challenging teaching, the work-centred environment, consistency among teachers and maximum communication between teachers and pupils.

3 The Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) is a federally funded education program that has been operating in Australian schools since 1974. Despite a name change in 2001 to the Priority Schools Funding Program, its objectives remain essentially the same to combat educational disadvantage largely through the funding of school-based programs.

4 Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) is a Key Learning Area (KLA) within the New South Wales education system which comprises the traditional subjects of history, geography and commerce.

5 Selections of each student’s writing, other work samples and teacher’s comments are collected together in a folder to record the student’s progress over the course of a year.
Chapter 4 - Supple Bodies - Learning to Write in Kindergarten

You're taking the kids on a journey and who knows where you're going to go.
Kindergarten Teacher Westville PS

There's not that proper development any more and for me personally; I like those structured steps where you actually wean them off and gradually push them on.
Kindergarten Teacher Northside PS

In this chapter the focus is on how children learn to write in their first year of school. Children arrive in kindergarten with differing abilities but, by and large, their existing habitus is quite malleable. Their first year at school is a formative time in terms of its impact upon their bodies and minds, the degree to which they develop a disposition for literate practice and the foundational skills involved in learning to write. As supple bodies they are more amenable to change. Pedagogy, therefore, plays an important role in ensuring students acquire the embodied capital requisite for academic success. The focus here is two kindergarten teachers who, as is evident from the quotes above, possess quite different educational philosophies and teaching methodologies. Their respective pedagogies appear to generate varying degrees of disciplinary force, an effect compounded by each teacher's distinctive classroom design and teaching/learning regimen. In the analysis that follows, emphasis is given to the affective impact of each teacher's practice and the extent to which this capacitates students in the process of learning to write.

Westville Public School – The Teacher

At the time of the study, Narelle Stevenson, the kindergarten teacher at Westville PS, was in her fifth year of teaching. She was 38 and had entered teaching later in life having left school early and worked in various jobs before gaining entry to university and teacher training as a mature age student. In the five years since she had completed her training, she had worked in numerous schools as a casual teacher - including Westville - and had recently secured a permanent position at the school, having worked there for a couple of years in casual positions. At Westville she had taught a range of different year groups but felt happiest teaching in the infants school and kindergarten, in particular. This was her second full year of teaching a kindergarten class.

In Narelle’s own school education she recalls having been taught grammar but had retained very little explicit knowledge of language. In her teacher education course
emphasis had been placed on a whole language approach with limited or no treatment of grammar and textual form. As Narelle pointed out, "All they would tell us was immerse, immerse, immerse". When asked about how the teaching of handwriting was approached in her pre-service training, Narelle remarked,

Oh, there basically wasn't any approach to the teaching of handwriting. There was a statement made that we should know the Foundation Style and that there would be a chalkboard exam but it was just a joke.

Despite this absence of any formal pre-service training in this area of the curriculum, Narelle used a range of strategies to teach handwriting.

With regard to how she would describe her education philosophy, Narelle placed emphasis on being a positive role model. She explained that, "You work hard and through your enthusiasm that flows through to the children". She added in relation to teaching writing that,

I think being positive is the most important thing 'cos I've had kids that will just scribble nearly the whole year and then all of a sudden they'll just get it. But if you discourage them early I don't think they're going to feel successful.

Given the emphasis she assigned to the psychological nature of learning seen in her focus on positive reinforcement and developmental readiness, Narelle was clearly influenced by progressivism. As with most teachers, however, Narelle's practice is quite eclectic and in certain areas of her teaching she differed quite markedly from the stereotypical whole language model of immersion. She explained that,

I agree with all that, but it's no good just putting it there if you're not going to do anything with it and I think the whole language philosophy is, 'no rote learning', but I think you need that.

Accordingly, Narelle was emphatic about the need for drilling her students in letter-sound relationships. This degree of regimentation and use of habit-forming techniques, however, were not evident in any other area of her practice.

Westville Public School - The Students

KS, Narelle's kindergarten class at Westville, was quite large. She had 28 students, 3 higher than the recommended class size of 25 for kindergarten. The class had a 40%
NESB population of mainly Samoan and Indian students, although there was also one Turkish and one Vietnamese student. In addition to this, KS had eight Aboriginal students, the highest number of Aboriginal students in one class in the school. As is the case in most state primary schools in NSW, KS was not streamed. A range of ability levels were evident in the class from children arriving at school with limited spoken English to those with some knowledge of letter/sound correspondence and the ability to write their name.

Organising the Pedagogic Space

When teachers are assigned a classroom at the beginning of a school year, the organisation of this pedagogic space is bound by a range of factors such as, size, aspect, and lighting. Within these constraints teachers organise the space to give it a particular character which reflects their educational philosophy and teaching style. Where they position their own and their students’ desks, how they organise teaching resources and display students’ work, where they locate and the extent to which they use blackboards, all in a sense possess a disciplinary function in their affective impact upon students’ bodies. Narelle’s classroom is very large, 11 metres by 8.5 metres. Often kindergarten classes are located in larger or double classrooms, if available, due to the range of activities they engage in, requiring desks, adequate floor space and additional discrete learning and play areas. This is the case with KS as is evident in the floor plan in Figure 1.1. Narelle’s classroom is spacious and well-resourced with its own toilet/washroom and bagroom. There are distinct areas within the classroom designated as specific learning spaces: the desks arranged in splayed fashion in front of a large blackboard; a sitting space marked out with gaffer tape for teacher-directed floor activities; a play area where toys, games and puzzles are stored; a computer desk for individual computer use and; a reading area with bean bags for free reading and reading group activities. As Narelle pointed out,

I need a big classroom. I think ideally every classroom should be that big for kindergarten to Year 6. Kids need space. They also need boundaries.

There is a suggestion here that despite wanting to provide students with a comfortable environment with plenty of room, the process of learning within a school context necessitates restrictions upon students’ bodies and an unfamiliar structuring of activity integral to the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Despite an understanding of the need
for boundaries, Narelle tended to arrange the pedagogic space more in terms of accommodating students' existing habitus. She explained that,

I think kids come into school, they've had four or five years of being able to watch a video, run around, play with their toys, listen to a tape, get on a computer. All of a sudden they get into kindergarten, they can't just sit there from 9 till 3 listening to one person talk. It's impossible so I think they need a lot of variety.

Narelle is attuned to the difficulties many kindergarten children face in coming to terms with classroom routines. Her solution to this problem of home/school transition, however, rests largely upon replicating the variety found in the home environment within the classroom. To a certain extent restrictions are imposed upon the students' bodies in Narelle's room through the use of a contained sitting area for teacher-directed activities, the use of desks and the compartmentalisation of the classroom into various discrete learning spaces. Each of these areas, however, impose a differential disciplining upon students' bodies resulting in a range of learning postures some more and some less conducive towards acquiring a disposition for academic work. Learning is presented as
an activity that can occur in a range of places. It is not only associated with sitting at a
desk or on the floor listening to the teacher.

This is, of course, the case. Learning, in general, is not dependent upon a specific context
or spatiality. This is not in dispute. What is of concern here, however, is the degree to
which the utility of a pedagogic space contributes to a specific type of learning, that is
the acquisition of a habitus for academic work and, in particular, for writing effectively.
Learning to write requires a certain bodily control and degree of concentration. It
demands a particular posture that allows the activity to be undertaken in an efficient
manner. Bodies, therefore, need to be invested with the discipline to firstly sit still and
then to work at a desk for sustained periods of time to complete the often, tedious
process of mastering the mechanics of handwriting, a skill habituated through iterative
performance. The embodiment of this discipline, a form of self-governance, is akin to
Elias’s notion of ‘the civilising process’ in that the students’ bodies are ‘civilised’ for
scholarly labour, a process thereby empowering them to learn.

In Narelle’s classroom the spatial design evokes a homely atmosphere of ease and
comfort more conducive to play than work. While it is important for children,
particularly in kindergarten, to feel that school is not an alienating experience there is
also an expectation that it is a place of learning quite different from home. This situation
is complicated by the existence of multiply coded spaces within the room. While Narelle
has designated certain areas ‘work spaces’, such as the gaffer-taped sitting area and the
desks, these sites are also used for play and so the boundaries imposed during teacher-
directed activities tend to dissolve when teacher supervision is reduced. For students
who have already acquired the necessary disposition for academic work this multiple
coding may pose less of a problem. This is often the case with children who have had
some experience of pre-school education where routines similar to school and the
practice of sitting at desks to draw, trace and write have already been instilled. To
children without this experience, or a home environment where sitting at a desk to
complete play activities and concentrate is not evident, a pedagogic space as is found in
Narelle’s classroom may simply confirm their existing habitus.

These observations about the utility of the pedagogic space in KS’s classroom should not
be considered as a rationale for a return to the rigid design of a traditional classroom
with limited space and rows of desks but rather to focus more attention on these early
years of school and the kind of bodily as well as cognitive skills children need for
effective learning. In learning to write it is essential that children acquire the requisite bodily discipline to enable effective cognition.

In kindergarten much time is devoted to socialising students into school and classroom routines. As Narelle points out:

\[\text{You start from day one teaching them little things about this is what we do at school. This is what we do when we need to line up, this is what we do when we're going outside and you have to teach that specifically.}\]

Such regimentation is necessary for effective classroom and playground management. Less emphasis, however, is given to the discipline required for learning. This is compounded in the early years of school by a romanticised notion of childhood that permeates early childhood and infants school education in which adult intervention is considered detrimental to a child's own maturation process. This romantic ideology impedes the formation of the appropriate corporeal dispositions for learning and this may lead to an embodied reluctance to engage in academic work in later years.

The size and design of the pedagogic space within Narelle's classroom also made supervision difficult which is important to consider in terms of its impact upon bodily discipline. During group work, the dominant pedagogic mode in Narelle's classroom, and during free time, which occurred when students felt they had completed their writing, students were located in a range of different sites within the room. This made supervision difficult and children were left to rely on their own self-discipline to monitor their behaviour. This does not present a problem if students already possess a disposition for academic work but in kindergarten this is something many children are yet to acquire. This dispersed arrangement of desks and learning sites reduced the room's panoptic potential. Panoptic power does not simply subject, it possesses immense pedagogic affect promoting self-supervision and greater attention to an assigned task, overtime equipping students with the discipline to work independently.

What is at issue here is the utility of a pedagogic space in terms of the degree to which it allows for the effective supervision of students especially in the first year of school, a formative period for pedagogic embodiment. This does not necessitate the serial arrangement of desks but rather an awareness that many students require as much assistance with the bodily routines of learning as with those related to school organisation. The arrangement of the pedagogic space with a view to panoptic force as a positive feature may assist students in acquiring these.
As well as the positioning of her students’ desks and various learning sites within the classroom, Narelle’s placement of her own desk was interesting. In a traditional classroom the teacher’s desk was always placed at the front of the room in a central position near the blackboard. This position reflected the teacher-centredness of traditional pedagogy in which the teacher acted as a vectorial force. Discipline was not self-derived, it was dependent upon a teacher directing and supervising activities until students were embodied with a discipline to learn. In KS’s classroom Narelle’s desk was located off to the side, functioning simply as her ‘work station’, where she placed books to be marked and where she completed small tasks, such as the preparation of teaching materials. The location of her desk seemed to represent a decentring of the teacher’s position within the classroom. This spatial design suggests that disciplinary force does not emanate from the teacher but is diffused; implying that it is a force already invested in students’ bodies rather than a product of pedagogic engagement in which the teacher has a central and determining role.

The relocation of the teacher’s desk to a far less central position within the room is characteristic of progressivist pedagogy which adheres to a student-centred notion of learning. This arrangement is thought to allow for a more active approach to the learning process in contrast to what is viewed as the passivity of ‘chalk and talk’. The passivity of the students’ bodies within a more traditional pedagogy is generally considered representative of a passive mind. This so-called ‘passivity’, however, may be demonstrative of a disciplined body in which corporeal governance allows for a highly engaged and therefore ‘active’ rather than passive mind.

**Establishing a Classroom Regimen**

While a pedagogic space possesses a particular disciplinary force it is the utilisation of this space which amplifies its affective impact upon students’ bodies, namely, the particular classroom regimen which a teacher establishes: the degree of movement allowed, the level of noise permitted, the use of different learning spaces and the classroom routine overall. All of these factors are constitutive of a disciplinary apparatus that has a formative impact upon the nature of a student’s pedagogic embodiment. In line with the progressivism that informs Narelle’s teaching methodology, the classroom regimen she imposed was relatively relaxed. While she was strict about the need for
routine, such as a particular structuring of the school day in terms of when and where activities were undertaken, and lining up to enter and leave class, within these parameters considerable license was given to students in terms of movement around the room, talking and use of free time.

Narelle made full use of her classroom. In addition to the arrangement of different learning spaces around the room, the walls were covered with a plethora of teaching materials, primarily displaying groups of words organised in relation to particular themes: family, school, activities, days of the week, songs and nursery rhymes in current use as well as a word of the week chart. Narelle was a great advocate of the use of environmental print, a strategy very much associated with the immersion philosophy underpinning the whole language approach. As she pointed out, “my classroom is just plastered with it”. Rather than simply displaying the words, Narelle had devised as part of her teaching routine what she termed a ‘word walk’. After the routine letter and sound drill, generally the first activity of the day conducted with students seated in the gaffer-taped floor space, the class proceeded to walk around the room visiting various sites where words were displayed, chanting word lists and responding to Narelle’s questions such as “Can you put this word in a sentence?” This was a highly motivating activity as students seemed keen to leave the more restrictive space upon the floor and move about the room. Yet, despite Narelle often rearranging children so they had a better view of the words on display or into different groupings so their friends did not distract them, it seemed that the same children sought the prime positions and participated more actively. As they repeated the words after Narelle, there were many who were saying the words but not watching as they were being pointed to. As a result, the aims of this exercise - to acquaint students with a range of words they could refer to and use in their writing and to increase their sight word vocabulary - were not being met as effectively as they could be. With the activity requiring movement around the room and periodic stops to complete each task many children found it difficult to maintain attention. They simply lacked the discipline required to curb their physical activity at regular intervals and concentrate on the task at hand.

This is not to suggest that this activity was not potentially worthwhile but rather to highlight how certain types of learning are simply taken for granted by the discursive construction of the body as a natural phenomenon and therefore not of pedagogic concern. The affective impact of the continual movement involved in this activity was viewed more from a psychical perspective, that is, as a motivational exercise. Its impact
upon the students’ bodies was not given consideration. Students’ ability to concentrate, dependent to a considerable extent on corporeal governance, was an assumed skill and was not understood as a learned capacity. As such, it was students’ minds rather than their bodies that were taught and children were left to rely on the embodied capital they already possessed. Children may have participated more effectively in Narelle’s word walk if it were undertaken at a more appropriate time, such as immediately prior to recess or even as the initial activity of the day. Consideration needed to be given to the staging of all activities in the morning session in terms of their disciplinary affect and the extent to which they encouraged postures conducive to learning.

Movement, however, was a feature of Narelle’s classroom regimen as is evident from the various locations of the learning activities itemised in the Observation Overview. In each of the observation sessions Narelle frequently moved the children to different sites in the room where a new activity was undertaken. Generally, however, with the exception of the morning ‘word walk’, whole class activities alternated between those conducted on the floor and those at the desks. Group activities could be undertaken in various locations with different groups working on the floor, in the bean bag area, at the desks or even just outside the classroom on the asphalt playground area. Time allocated to activities varied from 5 to 55 minutes with the morning sessions comprising 7 to 9 different activities and the mid-morning session involving 4 or 5. On average, activities were 15 to 20 minutes in length with the exception of two longer activities of 40 and 55 minutes. The first of these was a reading group session and the second involved a group work writing task in which those students who had completed their work then engaged in free play: drawing, reading, completing puzzles or educational games. The actual writing component of this activity varied depending on each child’s interest and application to the task.

The issue of the number and duration of activities will be returned to in relation to curriculum design and implementation. Here, however, these factors are significant in terms of how they relate to movement within the classroom. Given the number and frequent change of activities, children were not settled in any one spot for very long periods of time. Their bodies were frequently required to adjust to a new environment and to refocus their attention on a new task, often self- rather than teacher-directed given Narelle’s preference for group work. Throughout the course of the year there did
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**Observation Overview - Marjorie Stevenson KS**

- Morning
- Nick
- Week 1
- Week 2
- Week 3
- Week 4
- Week 5
- Week 6
not appear to be any graduated move towards children spending longer periods of time on activities, particularly those requiring them to sit at a desk and concentrate on a specific task. The emphasis was on movement. As Narelle explained, “they don’t spend long at their desks”. She qualified this statement by pointing out that, “they spend all of their writing time at their desks, so that would be for some about half an hour. For others it might be 15 minutes”. As writing time was generally self-directed with children choosing both topic and length, the less able students tended to make an attempt and then left the desk area to engage in other less taxing activities. This is not to say that Narelle did not provide assistance. She continually moved from student to student and desk to desk offering advice and positive reinforcement, yet the students spending longer at their desks were those who were more capable, students who felt comfortable sitting at a desk and who found writing pleasurable.

Reuben was an example of one of these children. He had arrived in kindergarten already able to write his name and several words. His handwriting was very mature for his age with quite small and well-formed letters. He was an Anglo-Australian boy, quite reserved and well behaved, interested in school and well liked. Narelle referred to him as her “top student”. Reuben was frequently observed as one of the last students to leave the desk area during writing time. During the quite extended writing session in the last observation lesson, Reuben not only completed his assigned task, but, rather than move to the floor or bean bag area, he left his desk only to sit at another desk in the play area and recommence writing. Reuben clearly already possessed a disposition for writing and academic work. This was evident from his first weeks at school. Reuben’s self-governance provided him with the necessary control and diligence for literate practice even when other students failed to display a similar level of application.

While the particular design of a pedagogic space may in itself possess a certain disciplinary force, it is how a space is used that is perhaps of greater importance. This is also the case with the use of objects within a space. Sitting at a desk is obviously more restrictive than sitting in a bean bag or lying on the floor and it necessitates a different posture, one that is far more constrained than that which many children are used to. In Narelle’s class it was not simply that most students did not spend much time seated at a desk but that when they did they did not seem to do so appropriately. Activity and movement seemed to pervade every aspect of the classroom regimen. Even when working at their desks children’s bodies were still moving, not only in terms of swinging
on their chairs and playing with equipment but also in terms of constantly getting up and down to move around the room to talk to other students, ask Narelle questions, or, less frequently, to access environmental print. Although at times Narelle did refer to her students' posture, most notably at the beginning of handwriting activities, movement was generally not checked.

It was not only that KS were constantly moving when working at their desks but there was also ongoing noise. When asked about whether or not students should talk during writing time, Narelle commented that,

'It never really worries me ... talk is good. They ask each other how to spell or find a word and run around and show them.'

There was not any time during writing sessions in which children worked quietly and independently; that is, time in which they had to think carefully and reflect upon their own work, rather than ask or talk to a friend. Movement and talk were indicative of the classroom regimen and most children embraced this mode of behaviour as standard practice.

This is not to suggest that students shouldn't talk to their classmates. The often prohibitive classroom regimen identified with traditional pedagogic practice stifled useful collaborative talk, but ongoing student interaction, especially when writing, does not allow for the quiet and degree of control needed to produce text effectively. This is especially the case in the early years when students are yet to habituate foundational skills such as forming letters and words. Constant interruptions to their concentration affect their ability to write.

**Curriculum Implementation: The Body of Writing**

Both a teacher's organisation of the pedagogic space and the rules and routines of their classroom regimen contribute to a student’s disposition for learning. The affective impact of each of these, while generally only viewed from a classroom management perspective rather than in terms of how they relate to a student’s overall academic performance, at least have something of a bodily focus with regard to their treatment within educational theory and practice. In relation to the design and implementation of curriculum, however, the body receives little attention with the process of learning.
conceived almost exclusively as a function of cognition. Learning, however, is equally corporeal, not simply in terms of the acquisition of appropriate dispositions, but also in terms of how knowledge and skills are learned and later applied in a dynamic relation with consciousness. In the following analysis of how Narelle implemented the English curriculum for kindergarten the focus is on how she approached the teaching of writing, that is handwriting - grappling with the graphic representation of the English alphabetic script - and also the production of text - writing longer stretches of text related to a range of topics.

Narelle started each day with a letter-sound drill of approximately 5 to 10 minutes in length, as is evident from the four morning sessions recorded in Table 4.1. Narelle felt that children “need to know their sounds and the names of the letters”. The use of drill and the degree of teacher direction it demands, however, were unusual in terms of Narelle’s overall pedagogic approach. Narelle’s practice tended to be dominated by the use of small group activities, often rotated, which allowed her the freedom to move from student to student to monitor progress and offer advice as children went about their work. This was Narelle’s approach to teaching handwriting, typified in the first observation session that involved children working in small groups completing different tasks on a rotational basis. In this 30-minute session, students were divided into four groups. Each group undertook a different activity aimed at refining their fine motor skills. These included playing with play dough, threading beads, painting down strokes with a brush and water and a guided drawing session conducted by Narelle. In this last activity students had to watch Narelle and copy the strokes she drew to complete a picture of a teddy bear. Groups only spent 6 or 7 minutes engaged in a task before moving on. These frequent changes tended to dilute the effectiveness of each task, as children became unsettled as they participated in each group activity, aware that they would be shortly moved on. This unsettledness was not conducive to the accumulation of bodily affect crucial to self-governance.

Together with students’ bodies tending to lack control due to the pedagogic mode which Narelle employed, the affective impact was also reduced as a result of the children’s lack of application to the self-directed activities: the bead threading, play dough manipulation and brush strokes. Children, such as Reuben and others who already possessed some rudimentary handwriting skills, seemed uninterested in these activities. Even those who had limited experience with writing tended to be more focused on talking to their friends and only sporadically engaged with the materials. The exception
to this was when children engaged in the brush strokes task; an activity they found quite fun especially since it was conducted outside on the asphalt play area. This location presented problems for Narelle as she periodically had to check students' disruptive behaviour and interrupt her guided drawing group. It was in this last group, however, in which Narelle directed the activity that children were quiet, sat relatively straight and concentrated intently on following what Narelle was doing. Here, as the students mimicked Narelle's strokes, they were learning to focus on a set task, employ the grip and assume the posture required for handwriting. Given this degree of application and its absence in the self-directed groups, it seems unusual that Narelle did not have all the children sitting at their desks engaged in the same activity. She could have then spent more time on guided drawing and begun to focus on certain strokes and the directionality of specific letters in a drill fashion similar to the technique she conducted with letter/sound correspondence.

With handwriting, however, there is a different affective impact, with the focus being the acquisition of a muscular and perceptual memory of letter shapes. Instead the pedagogic affect of Narelle's teacher-directed activity was nullified by its brevity. As soon as the children had assumed the appropriate posture and begun to concentrate on the set task, they then were required to adopt a more relaxed disciplinary stance of manipulating objects either on the floor or at another desk. The pedagogic affect of this writing session, which was intensified for the duration of the teacher-directed activity, would seem to have had little accumulative effect as it was neutered by the more frequent and combined longer duration of the other activities.

It must be remembered that the teaching of handwriting was given little consideration in Narelle's pre-service training and syllabus documents provide minimal assistance. With the notion of habit formation ostensibly erased from curriculum and the corporeality of learning little understood, the pedagogy employed for the teaching of handwriting depends on teachers themselves. When questioned about the activities she used to teach handwriting Narelle commented that,

I knew I was doing them for fine motor, bead threading and play dough and you know all those sorts of things, cutting, but I think I probably did them without having a full awareness of what I was doing.

It was not only whether these fine motor tasks were useful, given many students commenced kindergarten having already performed them on an iterative basis at pre-
school, and that guided drawing and tracing may have been more beneficial at this stage, but, also, whether the method of conducting these various activities was appropriate. Handwriting is a skill that needs to be habituated with a reasonable degree of proficiency before the end of kindergarten. If this does not occur it tends to impede students’ ability to compose text as they need to devote most of their conscious attention to forming letters rather than writing words and relying on embodied memory to perform the more mechanical work. Narelle seemed aware of this as she pointed out that,

It stunts their writing if they can’t form those letters and you know it’s such an effort for them to do it. It might be all in their head but if they can’t put it on the page it’s really hard for kids.

The disciplinary techniques required to ensure that students habituate handwriting skills, however, were generally absent from Narelle’s practice. The intensity of affect evident in Narelle’s teacher-directed guided drawing activity needed to be sustained and repeated on a regular basis for students to develop control over a pencil. It is only through this degree of iteration that they will habituate preparatory writing skills and eventually the shape and directionality of letters. The paradigmatic dominance of group work which seems to limit the frequency of teacher-directed lessons in many contemporary classrooms and the cognitive bias which exists within education are both evident in Narelle’s practice and work against her students being invested with the capacity to write as effectively as they might.

This is evident in the three examples of students’ work shown below, chosen by Narelle as being representative of the work of high achieving, average and low ability students. These work samples show the students’ writing at different intervals throughout the year: within the first couple of months, at mid-year and towards the end of their time in kindergarten. The work samples are not from specific handwriting lessons but from the various daily writing activities the children undertake. They, therefore, provide samples of handwriting not simply copied by students but produced without assistance. This arguably reflects students’ writing capability more accurately. Although dealing with aspects of handwriting throughout the year, Narelle did not introduce handwriting books till the last term. Students were familiar with letter shapes that were practised periodically but there seemed no imperative to ‘cement’ this understanding in the same way, as was the case with letter/sound correspondence. Narelle felt it was more
important for students to start writing straight away placing emphasis on the cognition of letters and sounds over the bodily skill of handwriting.

There is an incongruence here in Narelle’s treatment of the pedagogic body. She did not perceive a need for her students to habituate a muscular and perceptual memory of letter shapes, or at least was unclear about the pedagogy required to do so. Her drilling of letter/sound correspondence, however, with repetitive affect resulting in the embodiment of this knowledge, did implicate the body. In this respect, Narelle’s practice did address the corporeality of the learning process. While students may have developed an automatic understanding of letter/sound relationships, the following work samples suggest the same degree of automaticity was not attained with regard to their control in reproducing letters graphically.

The first set of work samples were written by a high achieving student named Reuben.

Figure 1.1a
In the first of his texts, Figure 1.1a, written during Term 1, Reuben shows considerable control with his writing. The letters are well formed and quite small, unusual for a child of his age. He includes narrow but uniform spacing between words and concludes his sentence with a full stop. He has illustrated his work with a detailed picture of himself, clothed and with facial features and, also, arms with hands and fingers. Once again this is a mature effort. Narelle pointed out that Reuben could write when he started school. In the other texts from Reuben’s sample of work, Figures 1.1b – 1.1d, the same degree of control is not evident.

Figure 1.1b
The Weekend

I was sick when Miss Johnson was.

Koalas sleep 10-14 hours a day and eat eucalyptus leaves. They like to sleep on trees. They can eat back or face.
This may be partly explained by the increasing complexity of the content of his texts. He is focusing more attention on 'what' his writing is about rather than 'how' he writes. Yet, given the marked difference between the first text and the three later texts, the latter showing much larger and less carefully formed letters, it would suggest that, despite possessing a good control of handwriting on arriving at school, Reuben was giving far less attention to this aspect of his work as the year progressed. Considering the relaxed disciplinary codes that operated in Narelle’s classroom, it could be the case that Reuben felt no obligation to give much attention to his handwriting. This may not have necessarily been a conscious decision; it was probably just symptomatic of Narelle’s pedagogic approach and the particular classroom regimen that she had established.

In the second set of work samples written by Kelly, a student Narelle judged to be of average ability, some progress was made throughout the year but it seems minimal. In Kelly’s first text, Figure 1.2a, she has written her name, though she has some difficulty with writing ‘e’.

![Figure 1.2a](image-url)
Two months later when the second text, Figure 1.2b was written, she is still writing a reversed ‘e’ in the words ‘love’ and ‘me’; the second of these words being one of the first learnt at the beginning of the year.

Figure 1.2b

Kelly has also attempted to write “my Mum and Dad love me”. With the word “Mum” she has successfully written the initial sound ‘m’ yet has made no attempt with ‘u’ and ‘m’. This is unusual given ‘Mum’ is a phonemically regular word, but together with this, the words ‘Mum’ and ‘Dad’ both appear on one of the environmental print lists within view of the desk area and yet Kelly made no attempt to access this information. Kelly also didn’t include the word ‘and’ in her sentence which is another common sight word and well known by the class by this stage.
Kelly's work seems to display something of the same lack of application that is evident, although to a far less extent, in Reuben's work. Given the regimen which exists within the classroom and Narelle's preference for a pedagogy with limited teacher-directedness, there seems to be insufficient disciplinary force to ensure Kelly's body and mind attend to the task at hand. She is largely reliant upon the dispositions which she brought to school. Given her age, these do not compel her to apply herself when working independently at a task, a capacity requiring considerable bodily control and concentration. This lack of application is also evident in her drawing that accompanies the written text. In the first text, drawn two months previously, Kelly has put a great deal of effort into drawing herself. There is more complexity and detail evident in the facial features and she has also drawn clothes, arms, hands and fingers. In her second picture the drawings are less complex. The facial features are quite immature, she has not included arms and necks and the figures are not clothed. Kelly's work here seems to display a lack of interest, a feeling of 'near enough is good enough' rather than any drive to succeed.

Despite the apparent lack of effort, Narelle writes 'You are wonderful', a comment offering little information about the work itself, in particular Kelly's difficulty in forming 'e'. While positive reinforcement is important, this is not balanced by any critical appraisal and more emphasis seems placed upon self-esteem than self-control. Narelle commented that,

I think the teacher has to have a really positive attitude. You need to have high expectations, to believe that the children can just do it.

It is this belief that seems to drive Narelle's pedagogy; that is, a view of pedagogic desire as an essentialised force emanating primarily from the students themselves and not necessarily grounded in any externally derived bodily affect related to knowledge and skill. A teacher's positive comments can have an important affective impact, as do negative comments, yet without the requisite embodiment of knowledge and skill the pedagogic effectiveness of this form of affect is limited.

As the year progressed Kelly's remaining work samples, Figures 1.2c and d, indicate she no longer has problems writing 'e' but she still displays quite irregular control over writing.
Figure 1.2c

I told them I like Miss Johnson because she is my favourite teacher.

Figure 1.2d

My class likes going to school. Their mum back.
In Figure 1.2c the words 'because', 'favourite' and 'teacher' were supplied and Kelly shows a more mature hand in writing these. In the rest of the text, however, a similar control is not evident. This would indicate the degree of strain placed upon Kelly's writing when she needs to devote attention to spelling words herself. Given its impact on a child's ability to compose text, this seems to provide justification for the habituation of the muscular memory of letters as early as possible. In the last of Kelly's work samples, Figure 1.2d, her writing seems to have made limited progress in the two and a half months since the previous text. However, her various attempts at drawing a koala show she is putting more effort into some aspects of her work. Given that writing is a far more difficult task at this stage, both cognitively and corporeally, and as there is no requirement to write more than she has, it is understandable that Kelly has chosen to use the time remaining before the activity concludes to give her attention to perfecting her drawing.

The last set of work samples was written by an Anglo-Australian girl named Anne Marie, who Narelle identified as one of the least able students in KS. It is clear from the first of Anne Marie's texts, Figure 1.3a, that she has not had much experience with writing prior to school.
Even after six weeks she is unable to write her name, one of the first requirements of kindergarten. There is evidence of the ability to form some letters but what is interesting, not only with this first text but with her sample set overall, is the backwards slope of her writing. This would suggest that Anne Marie is not using the appropriate posture for writing and also failing to position her pen and paper correctly. Clearly, there has been little teacher intervention here to correct this and even when marking Anne-Marie's work, Narelle simply provides the comment, "Great". Nothing is added which acknowledges the problems with her student's writing. Instead, Anne Marie without feedback and correction, is habituating incorrect form. Narelle commented that,

I guess you want them to start writing straight away, so they develop a few bad habits at the beginning and it's hard to break them sometimes.

This is evident in the corpus of Anne Marie's work. She has developed a writing style that seems to impede her ability to produce text. Narelle's comment seems to suggest that writing just happens rather than seeing it as a learned process, a skill requiring appropriate habituation. It needs a particular teacher-directedness to ensure the process of pedagogic embodiment is both effective and expeditious.

With a limited degree of guidance, as is evident in Figure 1.3b, which has been copied from the board, there is evidence of progress.

![Figure 1.3b](image_url)
Her letters, having been modelled by the teacher, are better formed, yet the same problem with incorrect slope is still evident and not commented upon. Unassisted, as in Figure 1.3c, Anne Marie experiences serious difficulty.

Figure 1.3c

She has been able to produce approximations of some letters but her writing lacks coherence. This lack of progress, particularly given that most of her classmates are already able to form letters, could have its own affective impact. Constant problems left uncorrected simply reinforce Kelly’s lack of ability. This could result in poor self-esteem and a dispositional antipathy towards academic endeavour, which, if engrained, are difficult to reverse. In Anne Marie’s last text, Figure 1.3d, there is a marked improvement, although she is reversing letters and some words.
As with Kelly, Anne Marie has decided to devote more time to drawing as opposed to writing and as this activity is largely self-directed, with limited externally imposed discipline, there is nothing compelling Anne Marie to improve upon the text she has written.
Narelle’s preference for limited teacher intervention is not only evident in her approach to handwriting but also in how she teaches written expression. This statement, however, requires some qualification. The first set of activities for the day: the letter/sound drill, the word walk and another activity termed ‘Secret Sentence’ were all teacher-directed. In the last of these activities, Narelle had the students return to the gaffer-taped floor area to read a sentence she has written on the white board. Usually Narelle used words from the word wall including the word of the week. After each word was read a student circled the word and this procedure continued until the sentence was completed. As a motivational strategy Narelle conducted the activity as a competition between herself and the students, a competition she always lost. Despite the problems already discussed in terms of the degree of movement involved in this set of morning activities, Narelle’s direction throughout tended to keep most students on task. Following the Secret Sentence activity, which Narelle explained was intended to model the writing process but was more about decoding and reading, students were generally given free writing time. This was a period of 15 to 30 minutes in which they could draw on the words from the word walk and Secret Sentence to write their own short text. In principle, this seems like an effective strategy. Having first conducted the letter/sound drill, acquainted students with a set of sight words and completed the Secret Sentence activity, it seems appropriate for students to then start writing. It is at this point, however, that students required considerable teacher direction and the narrowing of the parameters of what to write rather than a self-directed activity with no guidelines regarding topic.

It must be remembered that the students at this point had yet to habituate the mechanics of handwriting. A considerable cognitive load, therefore, was devoted to handwriting. With no topic provided, many children, like Anne Marie, simply floundered. Alternatively, they merely wrote about a limited range of topics, generally beginning, ‘I like …’ or ‘I love …’ as was Kelly’s tendency. It was only students such as Reuben, with a reasonable degree of handwriting competency and the habitus to work independently, who produced the much longer and more creative texts. Narelle referred to this narrow range of topics in her students’ writing: “For quite a while they were all writing ‘I like to, ‘I like school’, ‘I like my mum’ “. She added, however, that, “They were all doing that and then as more and more took more risks and tried to write different things and, that’s rewarded, then the kids took off”. In asking Narelle what prompted the students’ ‘risk taking’ she explained,
I think mainly I do. I say to them, you've got to be so careful because you don't want to deflate them, but you say to them, 'Look this is fantastic. I love the way you write this, but let's have a look in your book. Gee, you've been writing this a lot haven't you? Gee I'd love to see you write something different now'.

When left to their own devices students generally reproduced a limited range of topics. It was only through Narelle's intervention, although minimal, that students were prompted to experiment with their writing. Typically, however, the impetus for producing text resided with the student and, as such, the morning session was more about a display of their current writing ability and habitus for writing than developing and extending their capacity to write.

While a considerable amount of time in Narelle's classroom was devoted to self-directed writing, this was not always the case. Narelle judged the ratio of free writing time to writing on a teacher-determined topic to be 70% free/30% teacher-directed. In the two mid-morning observation sessions, Narelle provided an example of how she approached writing on a specific topic with KS. In both sessions students' writing was related to the unit of work Narelle was teaching on Australian animals. In the first of these sessions, the focus was koalas. Narelle explained that in the morning session she had read students a story about koalas and had conducted a modelled writing activity where she had jointly constructed a text about koalas with the class. Unusually no reference was made to this in the mid-morning session and the jointly constructed text had been removed from the white board during recess. Narelle commenced the lesson by reading another book about koalas to KS who were seated on the floor. This text was written in a personal style but contained quite a deal of factual information about koalas. Narelle frequently interrupted her reading to ask students questions to reinforce key facts. Following this, she then selected students to come to the front to repeat a fact about koalas using a puppet as stimulus. Many students had trouble remembering the key points and needed prompting by Narelle, but they managed to point out that koalas: live in trees, sleep nineteen hours a day and eat eucalyptus leaves. After this short recall of facts, Narelle had students move to the desk area to begin writing. She placed the words 'koala' and 'eucalyptus leaves' on the board and then asked students to "tell me some things about koalas". Students, however, needed more teacher direction to help begin and guide their writing rather than being left to work independently.

The term 'independently' is something of a misnomer in this case. All writing sessions in KS were conducted as collaborative exercises, yet 'collaboration' at a kindergarten level
is not particularly focused. That is, while there was a lot of talk little had to do with koalas and the task at hand. This is not to suggest that students should not work collaboratively with their classmates but rather that there needs to be a balance between talk and quiet, collaboration and independent work, to develop a child’s individual capacity to apply themselves to a task. As was the case with the free-writing sessions, it was the students with the greater self-governance and disposition for writing, such as Reuben, who applied themselves to writing about koalas, producing the longer and more effective texts. The number of words that students write at his stage is important as it is an indication of competence and application. In the time allocated, as is evident in Figure 1.1d, Reuben managed to write three sentences, one of which was a compound construction. He also attempted some simple punctuation. Reuben was able to make considerable use of the information provided in the previous activity to write a factual description. Kelly, however, as is evident in Figure 1.2d, only wrote one sentence and, while she included a fact about koalas, she has framed it in personal terms, drawing on the verb ‘like’ with which she was already familiar. She does not appear to have been extended by this activity. Apart from the word ‘koala’ written on the board, the only new word she attempted was ‘back’. As has been discussed earlier in relation to her handwriting, Kelly opted to devote more time to drawing and did not persist with a more detailed account about koalas.

This is similarly the case with Anne Marie in Figure 1.3d. She only wrote one sentence and drew on little of the information provided in the previous activity. There are a number of reasons for this, some of which have already been discussed in terms of her difficulties with handwriting and a lack of disciplinary force compelling her to persist with her writing. It may also be the case that Anne Marie, and Kelly for that matter, did not know what else to do. The affective impact of Narelle’s pedagogy was not sustained to the point where it allowed these students to effectively complete the task required. In Reuben’s case, at least at this stage, it was not necessary as he already possessed the requisite habitus to succeed with minimal input. For Kelly and Anne Marie, and also many other students in the class, there needed to be more scaffolding before they attempted to undertake such a complex task. There needed to be a staging of activities that dealt with the different aspects of writing this text to acquaint each student with, and reinforce, what was required. In other words, there needed to be a heightening of affect.
Affect here relates to the degree or intensity to which knowledge and skills are taught. In terms of writing about a topic, as was the case here, it could have involved:
• more detailed treatment of vocabulary: listing and possibly sounding out words;
• examining letter patterns, ie, words that start or end with the same letters and sounds, that abide by similar rules, etc;
• using these words in sentences, first verbally and then in writing on the board;
• practising letter shapes or writing certain words;
• compiling lists of verbs that apply to koalas, ie, sleep, eat, live, jump, etc;
• completing cloze exercises on these to model sentences;
• jointly constructing a text similar to what is required and then following it with students completing their own.

Such a staging of activities is not undertaken within one session or one day but over a period of days or even longer, slowly and effectively scaffolding a child’s eventual independent effort. This approach is framed by the intention of maximising affect to the point where there is the requisite accumulation to allow students to work relatively independently. It is a pedagogy which places emphasis on the incremental staging of knowledge and skills resulting in what could be termed a somatic familiarity for what is required to complete a task, which is formative in, and acts in concert with, the reflective processes of consciousness. As a result, when engaged in a task, a student’s body and mind work as one.

Narelle was generally unaware of the impact that the relaxed disciplinary codes she established in her classroom had upon her students’ learning. Her organisation of the pedagogic space and the regimen within the classroom were not geared towards students attaining the requisite dispositions for academic work and, in particular, those required for effective literate practice. Her pedagogy appeared to have limited impact upon her students’ existing habitus and so those students who arrived in kindergarten with the appropriate embodied capital for schooling were more likely to be successful, at least at this stage of their learning. The majority of students, however, were unaccustomed to the postures and work habits required at school and which are necessary in the process of learning to write. Without a regimen to exert the appropriate disciplinary force, these students had difficulty, as was the case with Kelly and Anne Marie. If this situation remains unchanged, it could compound in future years affecting their overall academic achievement.
This unawareness of the bodily aspects of learning and their impact on cognition was not only reflected in Narelle’s spatial design of the classroom and its routines, it was evident in her writing pedagogy. While demonstrating that she had no philosophical opposition to the use of drill, as it underpinned her approach to teaching letter/sound correspondence, Narelle failed to use a similar technique to ensure her students habituated the mechanics of handwriting. As a result, many students experienced difficulties with forming letters which impacted upon their written expression. This was compounded by Narelle providing insufficient teacher direction during writing sessions. The steps involved in producing a text were not appropriately scaffolded and so students were reliant upon their ability to access environmental print, discussion with classmates and their existing capabilities when writing. The pedagogic affect of this strategy was minimal and not sustained. Scaffolding knowledge and skills effectively to assist students to write may seem to have little connection with the corporeality of learning, yet it has a similar intensity to drill in that its aim is the maximisation and accumulation of affect, the corporeal data on which consciousness depends. Without this degree of intensity learning is far less effective. Despite Narelle’s enthusiasm for teaching and her positive reinforcement of students’ achievement, many students in KS moved into Year 1 with a less than adequate foundation from which to develop their writing skills.

Northside Public School – The Teacher

Jane Peters, the kindergarten teacher at Northside PS, had been teaching for thirty-one years. Throughout her career Jane had only taught in four schools, having spent over twenty years in the school she was appointed to prior to Northside PS. Teaching had always been a large part of her life. Her father had been a teacher, finishing his career as a principal. Having grown up in the country it was her father who had taught her in the town’s one-teacher school. Jane was trained as an infants teacher and had always taught kindergarten, Years 1 and 2. In NSW, primary schools are now staffed on a K-6 basis and so this degree of specialisation is no longer the norm, something Jane feels is a problem. She explained that, “I think there are certain skills that are needed in infants, especially kindergarten and Year 1”.

Jane had a good knowledge of language. She was taught grammar by her father at school. She commented that, “he used to have a very structured day because he taught
all grades so it was probably drilled”. She recalled quite a detailed treatment of how to teach handwriting in her pre-service training, explaining that “It was considered very, very important, more important than it is today”, with considerable emphasis placed on,

the position of the non-writing hand and the writing hand and the angle of the book, correct posture, pulling your chair in, making sure your back is straight, all that sort of stuff.

Jane considered that the key ingredients of effective teaching were to ensure children were “eager to learn and listening well”. To achieve this she stressed the importance of teacher control and explained that,

I suppose the sign of an effective teacher is if you’ve really got the children there in the palm of your hand for the bulk of the day, or for the bulk of the lesson.

Jane was trained at a time when the teacher’s role was foregrounded within pedagogic practice. Progressivism was yet to impact upon teacher education and so the traditional mode of pedagogy with the teacher out the front, directing students’ learning framed Jane’s pre-service training and still largely governed her practice. Thirty years later Jane maintained a strong commitment to these teaching ideals though she appeared hesitant in voicing them. She commented that,

I think it works best. The whole thing is, no matter what you’re learning in life be you an adult or child you’ve got to be taught something first, then there’s got to be an explanation and practice and after that then you’ve actually got this knowledge then you move off into applying it. But if you don’t have that instructional period first I don’t know how children can just drift around and learn ad hoc.

Jane had incorporated group activities into her teaching methodology and explained how she had varied her practice considerably over the years, particularly in relation to the teaching of reading and writing, but despite this she was adamant that instruction was vital for effective learning. Given the changes to education during her career, however, she pointed out that,

I’m not sure what our role is anymore … There’s so much more that has been crammed into a day and we don’t get enough proper teaching time.
Northside Public School - The Students

Jane had 24 students in her class. Of these just over 50% were from a non-English speaking background, with a number being ESL students with poor spoken English. The NESB students were from the main ethnic groupings represented at the school overall: mainland and Hong Kong Chinese, Korean, Indian and Sri Lankan. Parallel classes operated in kindergarten, as was the case throughout the school except for the two OC classes (one in Year 5 and one in Year 6). The ability level of students in Jane's class was diverse ranging from one student, Renee, classified as borderline IM, a category indicating a mild intellectual disability, to Sanjay, a student who Jane referred to as "one of the brightest most wonderful children I have ever had the pleasure of teaching". Overall, she summed up the class as average to below average. While definitely not an easy class, particularly given the behavioural problems which accompanied Renee's intellectual disability, Jane explained there were fewer problems with spoken English than in previous years. None of the students in KP, however, could read or write when they started kindergarten.

Organising the Pedagogic Space

In contrast to the kindergarten classrooms at Westville PS, those at Northside were quite small and Jane's was particularly so. As was mentioned in the school profile, space was at a premium at Northside. The school site was overcrowded and Jane's classroom was a small, old, timber demountable building away from the main school buildings facing the street and the shopping centre opposite the school. Its dimensions were 6.5 by 7.4 metres and Jane continually complained about its size. Although she said she would have preferred a larger room she explained that a classroom, "can be too big because you can't be really observing what's going on all the time and far corners of the room aren't used". Outside the classroom was a narrow verandah where students hung their school bags and a small storeroom where Jane placed some of her teaching materials and art and craft supplies.

The classroom was quite a distance from the main toilet block, which was an inconvenience for kindergarten. Jane may have lacked the space, resources and amenity of Narelle's classroom but she was able to arrange what was available into an effective yet somewhat crowded pedagogic space. There was a sharp contrast, however, between the design of Jane and Narelle's classrooms. Although partly influenced by the size of
the room, Jane opted for a more conventional classroom design as is evident in Figure 1.2. The desks were not organised in rows, as this is rarely the case in contemporary classrooms and particularly not so in kindergarten, but the desks and floor area were arranged in such a way that students were directed as much as possible to the front of the room where the blackboard, whiteboard, sight words, display table and teacher’s chair were all located. Jane’s desk was at the back of the room and functioned more as a storage space. There was not enough space to have her desk at the front as it would have obscured students’ view of the board. Jane’s chair therefore, rather than her desk, marked her presence at the front of the room. As such, the spatial vectors of the classroom were focused on a central position at the front of the room and learning seemed to be framed as a teacher-directed activity. Jane explained that if there were no space restrictions placed upon her with regard to how the classroom was arranged,

I’d have it organised so the children were as best as possible facing fairly front on, but in an informal situation, which sounds a bit double dutch but I think all children should be sitting front on to the black board, that’s really important.

In such a small classroom it was difficult for Jane to achieve this but she had managed to ensure her students’ gaze was directed towards the front as much as possible.
This arrangement seemed to invest the classroom with a panoptic quality that exerted a particular disciplinary force upon KP. While students’ attention was drawn to the front of the classroom they were also aware their teacher’s gaze was directed at them instilling a self-corrective to monitor their behaviour. Even early in the year, KP demonstrated a considerable degree of quiet and control. Students seemed to have embodied the classroom routines quite rapidly and exhibited considerable self-governance in how they conducted themselves within the pedagogic space. This was evident on an occasion during the second observation lesson in the eighth week of Term 1. Shortly after the students had entered the room in the morning and settled themselves on the floor area at the front Jane was called outside for a few minutes. The classroom door was closed and so Jane could not see or hear the students. Inevitably, one or two children started to talk but as a result of peer correction they stopped, and so when Jane returned shortly after, the class was quiet and sitting up straight. Of course, there are many factors contributing to the students’ self-discipline and desire to behave well. It is not simply a function of the organisation of the pedagogic space and the classroom dynamic that this created. Many of the children in KP may have attended childcare or preschool and so were more amenable to the restrictions placed upon their behaviour in the classroom. The ethnic mix of the class could also partly explain their behaviour. In addition, having an observer present may have had some impact on the class.

There were marked differences between the size and organisation of Jane’s and Narelle’s classrooms and also the use they made of them. In Jane’s classroom there was a different ambience to that in the kindergarten class at Westville PS. The former seemed to effuse a sense of order and control. The size of the room automatically restricted movement. There was not the range of learning sites available, as in Narelle’s classroom. For KP the options were limited. Learning was generally undertaken seated at a desk or more commonly in rows or in a discussion circle on the floor with Jane in a central position. The bodily discipline exerted by this arrangement seemed more intense and sustained than that in Narelle’s classroom.

The intensity of the discipline generated within Jane’s classroom was not simply a result of its spatial design, it was also a function of how Jane utilised the space. Jane offered few free time activities during the day and so the issue of the multiple coding of space was of less concern with KP. To Jane’s students, spaces within the classroom were more obviously coded as work rather than play areas and so there was no confusion as to what behaviour was required. There was one small space in the back corner of the room
where toys and puzzles were stored and where group listening activities were conducted but this was only used at specific times during the day. Group activities were usually only undertaken in the mid-morning session with craft and free choice periods left to the afternoon. As a result, the space as a whole functioned as a work environment for set times during the day and students seemed to routinely adopt the postures and behaviour for this mode of practice. In doing this for sustained periods during the morning session KP soon embodied the necessary discipline to work reasonably independently during the mid-morning group activities when Jane’s guidance and supervision were less constant as she moved around the room attending to one group at a time.

Another factor contributing to KP’s ability to work effectively during group activities was the panoptic quality of the classroom design. When she conducted a lesson, Jane had students seated either at their desks or on the floor facing the front of the room. During group activities this was not necessarily the case. Students were located in different sites around the room, although apart from the students in the listening post area, most groups seemed to have been seated at a set of desks in the group activity session that was observed. Given that during a sizeable portion of the day preceding group time, students were facing the front of the room with Jane conducting lessons and closely monitoring their behaviour, when given a greater degree of independence to work in a group without constant teacher supervision, students seemed able to do so with few checks. There seemed to have been a residual effect from the morning session. Although no longer constantly under the teacher’s gaze, the intensity of her presence in the time preceding group activities seemed to have left a lasting impression. Consequently, if engaged in group activities or independent work when the teacher’s gaze was temporarily removed, students were able to work effectively.

Establishing a Classroom Regimen

Jane constructed a classroom regimen that emphasised order and quietness. This does not mean that the students never talked, raised their voices or laughed, but there was a sense of calm and regularity that pervaded the room. Every morning at Northside PS the day commenced with an assembly for the infant years. Prior to the morning bell, kindergarten, Years 1 and 2 lined up in class groups to listen to news and events that could affect the day’s routine. At Westville assemblies were generally only a weekly
occurrence. Daily information was relayed to students through an intercom system that periodically interrupted the lesson. Following the assembly at Northside, students forwarded to class in lines accompanied by their teacher. KP were stopped outside their classroom to ensure they were orderly and, after hanging their bags on their hooks on the verandah, proceeded into class. Once inside, students sat in a semi-circle on the floor with Jane at the front seated on her chair. Jane commenced each morning with a similar routine. Unusually, given Northside is a state school and a diversity of faiths are represented there, Jane started each morning with a prayer. Children said their prayers with their eyes closed, head bowed and hands together, which seemed to have a settling effect before they commenced the day’s activities. After this, Jane said "Good Morning" to the class and they responded, the children were questioned about the day of the week and then one student was given the responsibility of counting the number of boys and girls present. This information was then recorded on the black board before Jane commenced a review of the previous day's work. During this time Jane awarded stickers to children who had produced good work or had tried hard, often reading out, as well as displaying, their efforts and also having some children correct or complete their work. To Jane this was an important way to start the day. As she explained "it provides a link with the day before" and focused students' attention on what they had learned. By establishing continuity with previous work an associative bond was created seemingly strengthening students' understanding of the relationship between aspects of their work. It also functioned as an important motivational strategy encouraging students to work as well as their classmates who had been rewarded.

Following this, Jane commenced the day’s teaching with language work. The morning session was generally devoted to reading, writing, talking and listening skills. KP did not begin work on letter-sound correspondence until the beginning of Term 2. As there were so many NESB students with poor spoken English, Jane felt it was better to work on improving their facility with spoken language before embarking upon a drill in letters and sounds. During Term 1 therefore there were a lot of verbal activities coupled with daily sight word and sentence construction tasks. Jane also devoted considerable time to developing students' fine motor skills and having students perfect the movements required in handwriting. Despite differences in what they taught, Jane and Narelle both emphasised the importance of routine and the need to instil the particular rhythms of the school day in students as soon as possible. Jane remarked that, "It's very important, very, very important and I probably can't stress that enough actually". Yet, while both teachers viewed this aspect of kindergarten teaching to be important the
routines Jane and Narelle established in their respective classrooms differed considerably. Jane, like Narelle, focused on aspects of the English curriculum in the morning session and instituted a regular set of activities at this time. Students in both classes had similarly been taught to raise their hands to answer questions, not to call out and to follow instructions. Yet beyond these standard classroom practices, which were differentially enforced, expectations with regard to students’ behaviour in the two classes varied markedly. Jane’s sense of routine extended beyond basic classroom management. She favoured a regimen that curbed movement and noise within the class and encouraged bodily composure when lessons were in progress. Although movement was curtailed in Jane’s classroom due to a lack of space, it was also kept to a minimum as Jane felt it had an unsettling effect on students. As a result, Jane located the sight word chart and other similar stimulus material at the front of the room near the board within easy view where students could access the information if required without moving from their desks. While she felt environmental print could play a valuable part in the teaching of writing, she explained that,

I don’t want them running out, getting a word card and taking it back to their desk and copying that work and putting it there, that’s just wasting time, so I’ve always tried to make them have a go, to make it all become aural, and not so much visual.

Jane is reflecting on a particular method here whereby once she commences teaching letter/sound correspondence and developing students’ written vocabulary, she encourages the use of students’ own knowledge to form words rather than seeking information from class displays.

Jane promoted self-reliance. Such an approach, however, requires students to be able to focus their attention and not be distracted from the task at hand. This is not simply a function of cognition it requires bodily control, the precursor of a scholarly disposition. Jane therefore aimed to establish quite a sedentary routine within her classroom. As the classroom observation overview demonstrates, most activities during the morning session were conducted with students seated on the floor at the front of the room with generally only one desk-based activity. Given that students were required to sit still and listen for long periods, Jane interspersed these floor-based activities with what are here termed ‘body breaks’, short intervals between activities when students either moved their bodies by following simple instructions - for example, “two wiggles, three claps, one jump, two turnarounds, touch your toes, sit on the floor” - or sang songs with accompanying hand and body actions. Such techniques are standard practice for
kindergarten teachers and were also used by Narelle. However, with KS they were used far less and for a different purpose. Jane tended to weave them into her classroom routine as a strategy for signalling a change of activity and to allow a temporary relaxation of the bodily postures she required of her students when lessons were in progress. Narelle generally used them as an intermittent corrective for poor behaviour, and to gain students’ attention during group work when noise levels were too high. For Jane body breaks were a technique to prevent restlessness during teacher-directed activities. To Narelle they seemed to function more as a periodic interruption to a classroom regimen in which movement and noise were the norm.

Posture was an important issue for Jane not simply in relation to the teaching of handwriting, which will be discussed below, but in terms of how it affected students’ overall performance. She explained that:

Posture, at any point in time, is really important because if you’re not sitting properly well you’re probably not thinking properly.

Jane saw a connection between bodily control and academic achievement and so from the beginning of the year sought to establish a regimen geared towards her students acquiring what she considered the appropriate postures for learning. The minimisation of movement within the classroom and Jane’s concentration on teacher-directed activities in the morning session were not simply classroom management techniques but strategies to encourage the acquisition in her students of a habitus for literate practice and for learning in general. To Jane, self-governance was an essential aspect of learning and the nature of her pedagogic practice demonstrated she felt it was something that needed to be taught. She did not seem to view bodily discipline and a corresponding diligence for work as simply a function of maturation but as skills that required persistent training for them to be habituated as bodily capacity. Jane explained that many children arrived in kindergarten finding it extremely difficult to sit still for sustained periods of time. She remarked that at home “a lot of children don’t even sit at a table to eat any more, they often just lie down on the floor”. Jane, therefore, sought to train her students to gradually accustom their bodies to the demands of scholarly labour. To Jane, students needed to appropriate the requisite embodied capital to work effectively. Her pedagogy, while ostensibly quite conventional, was actually about heightening rather than inhibiting agency, seen here as the ability to write effectively and so act with a greater degree of control in and on the world.
<table>
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<th>DURATION</th>
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**OBSERVATION OVERVIEW - JANE PETERS**

- **Week 1:** Review of previous class' work, sound of the week.
- **Week 2:** Review of previous class' work, sound of the week.
- **Week 3:** Review of previous class' work, sound of the week.
- **Week 4:** Review of previous class' work, sound of the week.
- **Week 5:** Review of previous class' work, sound of the week.
- **Week 6:** Review of previous class' work, sound of the week.
Although KP did not appear to spend a lot of time at their desks, at least in the morning session, Jane considered there was a 50/50 split between desk and floor time. More desk-based activities were undertaken in the mid-morning and afternoon sessions and Jane explained that as the year progressed she would have children spend more time sitting at their desks and so accustom their bodies more and more to the seating arrangement favoured in the later years of school. When seated at their desks Jane required students to sit straight and not lean back and rock on their chairs. Similar demands were made by Narelle but generally not adhered to by students. Jane seemed far more vigilant, or at least students were more responsive to Jane's requests for this type of behaviour. This was not so much because Jane repeatedly asked her students to sit up but because the classroom regimen emphasised order and control, a feature that was reinforced by the organisation of the pedagogic space. Similarly, when KP were sitting at their desks, at least during the morning sessions, lessons were teacher-directed. The students were focused on Jane and completing their work and their bodies simply conformed to the postures required and which the regimen and spatiality encouraged.

Although Jane favoured teacher-directed activities before recess, her lessons with KP were not always conducted in this way. She did have the class perform group-based activities at this time. This format was more a feature of the mid-morning session and was generally organised as a set of rotational language-based tasks followed by work in maths groups. In the one mid-morning lesson that was observed Jane organised the class into five groups. Each group was allotted one of the following tasks: story writing with the beginning provided (e.g., I like to go ...); cut, colour and match; a differentiation and classification task; a word building exercise using 'ig' and 'og' words which were then to be placed in sentences and; a listening post and reading exercise. Prior to the class commencing these activities, Jane gave an explanation of each task, questioning students to ensure they understood what was required. What was interesting about the way Jane conducted group-based activities was that her students only undertook one activity in the time allocated. Activities were rotated but not within the single thirty-minute time slot. Instead, Jane rotated activities over the school week and so each day, each of the five groups undertook only one of the five different activities organised for the week. KP, therefore, were engaged in an activity for a sustained period of time, an important pedagogic point in itself. In addition to this, Jane's organisation of group-based activities was designed to minimise movement and so maintain the regimen of order and control which had been established by the teacher-directedness of the morning session. Even though Jane's supervision was far less intense during this time, because students were
engaged in a single task and movement was limited, the change in pedagogic mode did not result in a marked relaxation of disciplinary power exerted upon their bodies. KP seemed to have embodied a considerable degree of self-governance which allowed them to undertake group-based activities in an efficient manner, applying themselves to a task with diligence and minimal talk.

Jane was also insistent about minimising noise in the classroom:

When we’re doing handwriting I expect them to be quiet and concentrating and ‘yes’ they generally are because I’m doing it with them. When we do directed drawing you could hear a pin drop.

This was not only the case with handwriting sessions; in all Jane’s teacher-directed activities, either at the desk or on the floor, students were very attentive. This did not mean they were mute for they actively engaged in class discussion and responded to questioning, but there was limited unnecessary noise and an understanding about when talk was and wasn’t appropriate. Because her teacher-directed activities allowed a regimen which promoted quiet or only constructive talk, children engaged in limited chatter and collaborated quite effectively during group activities. This was also the case when students worked relatively independently such as during story writing. Jane allowed some talk during this time because, “With story writing it’s part of the process. They’re listening to other people trying to sound out words and that’s good. That’s all part of learning”. By talk here Jane meant that which was related to constructive engagement in a task, such as listening to other’s vocalisations and learning from their ability to determine letter-sound correspondence. While students did engage in other forms of talk during these sessions it was generally minimal. There was therefore little noise in Jane’s classroom and a sense of ‘a corporate body’ working towards a similar end.

Kamler et al (1993: 3/4) identified a similar phenomenon within the kindergarten class they observed: “The ‘student body’ of the school and classroom is a collective body, with individual parts of it acting as parts of a larger whole”. To Kamler et al, however, the notion of a ‘corporate body’ is only understood in a negative sense. The “disciplining and shaping” of students’ bodies that they observed is conceived in Foucauldian terms as a form of subjection with the intended aim being the production of a corporate subjectivity:
Learning to position oneself as a student subject means becoming more like everyone else, minimising difference, and ‘rounding off the edges’ of the other less desirable subjectivities one may take up in different contexts in order to fit into and to produce a classroom habitus. (Kamler et al. 1993: 4)

In many respects this is the case, yet it need not necessarily be understood as a problematic process. By assuming that the production of a corporate body results in a corporate subjectivity, Kamler et al. seem to ignore the possibility that disciplinary power possesses agentic potential. They fail to acknowledge that, while certain classroom practices may appear to produce a homogenising effect, the disciplinary power that results, and is invested in students' bodies, can be utilised in potentially enabling ways. Also, students’ subjectivities are far more fluid than what they suggest. Kamler et al. similarly neglect the sociality of being; the necessity within the school context, and indeed any institutional setting, to conform to a particular set of bodily schemas which allow for the productive functioning of bodies in space. These carnal genres inscribed within bodies possess a utility largely indicative of the spatiality in which they were formed. While in one sense they are restrictive, they can also be productive in that without particular generic codings bodies perform less efficiently. In Jane’s classroom she has instituted a regimen which allows for the production of carnal genres which discipline her students' bodies and minds in such a way as to promote a great propensity for academic work and, in particular, for learning to write.

Curriculum Implementation: The Body of Writing

What characterised Jane’s practice was the emphasis she placed on teacher directedness. This impacted upon the classroom regimen she established and it was also an integral aspect of her approach to curriculum implementation. When questioned about this feature of her practice and her attitude towards group-based activities Jane was quite tentative about her response at first. She remarked that, “In theory probably the whole day should be worked in groups because they always say that’s how you get to work with individuals better”. Jane felt that there was some obligation upon her to let group-based activities dominate her practice but she expressed reservations about devoting too much time to this methodology. She explained that,

I’m not there as a guiding force when they’re in groups so I can’t see what they’re doing. I think it’s extremely difficult unless you’ve got a lot of helpers in the room and those helpers have to know what they’re doing.
To some extent Jane felt she was abrogating her responsibility as a teacher if she placed too much emphasis upon group work. She added:

For the life of me I couldn’t structure my whole day as groups my conscience wouldn’t let me. Teaching a new concept in maths or correct letter formation or ... I couldn’t do it. They need social mixing time, free time, learning to take turns, etc but it’s a lot easier to get around and observe when everyone is doing the same thing and you can quickly check that they’re doing things properly.

Jane did not simply prefer teacher-directed lessons because she felt they were easier to organise but because she viewed them as a more effective way of teaching. That is, she felt more assured that students would understand a particular aspect of work with her explaining it to them and guiding their application than if they undertook this process themselves, as they would within the context of group-based learning. In many respects it is an issue of the intensity of affect that is amplified with sustained teacher direction. Although not expressed in these terms, Vygotsky’s ZPD refers to a similar process, that is, that students are more capable of successfully completing a task if they firstly receive guidance.

Jane’s practice exhibits a pedagogy in line with this position yet one not simply focused on educating the mind. In implementing the curriculum for writing, Jane placed considerable emphasis upon the physicality of the writing process far more than is evident in the current syllabus. She not only drilled her students in letter/sound correspondence - although not until Term 2 - she also drilled her students in the mechanics of handwriting:

They need a lot of practice at it because it just doesn’t come automatically. If they can’t do their letters now they’re not going to get time in Year 1 because you’re just ‘chock-a-block’ doing spelling and thousands of other things. Kindergarten is the crucial time to develop correct pencil grip, correct posture, correct position of the book and the resting arm and the direction and starting of all our letters of the alphabet. Unless they get it now teachers don’t have the time to devote to it later on.

To Jane it was vital for students to habituate the shape and directionality of letters in kindergarten. Consequently, she commenced activities which focused on fine motor skills as early as possible, such as cutting and pasting, and combined these with guided drawing and writing activities to enable students to acquire the basic movements of handwriting. She provided a detailed account of the appropriate progression of these activities, explaining that:
Chalk boards, play dough, bead threading, all those things come into early writing to develop fine motor skills then we start off using very thick crayons and doing simple down lines and horizontals, also tracing and curved lines and this sort of basic pattern is another one too (demonstrates loop movement). They’re the movements that basically go with handwriting (demonstrates again). Then we do oblique lines, shading, all these are early writing skills and then you will gradually find that by then you’ve started sounds, gradually mixing it in with the sounds that you’re learning and you’re writing.

Jane displayed a thorough knowledge of the skills progression required in learning the mechanics of handwriting. This was obtained over her many years of teaching and from her own education and pre-service training which occurred in a period when there was still a focus on handwriting skills. Much of this knowledge has simply disappeared from English curricula. Yet it is not only that Jane demonstrated a detailed understanding of the requisite skills for handwriting, she was also acutely aware that if her students were to habituate the appropriate technique then it required a pedagogy with considerable teacher direction. As a result, Jane explained that although she conducted group work activities in bead threading, play dough moulding and cutting, early in the year to assist fine motor development, in the teacher-directed activities in the morning sessions she also tried to ensure time was devoted towards a guided drawing or writing exercise each day. This was not always possible given the demands of the curriculum but it appeared to be a regular occurrence for at least the first half of the year. At these times KP sat at their desks and were extremely attentive, their gaze alternating between the board, observing Jane’s movements, and their books, reproducing the shapes Jane had drawn on the board.

During these sessions students did not simply acquire a grounding in basic handwriting movements and the directionality and shape of the letters of the alphabet, but the discipline required for engaging in literate practice. Over the course of the year students appeared to embody a particular composure when writing which allowed them to apply themselves to their work for sustained periods. Even Renee, who experienced a great deal of difficulty in keeping still and applying herself to a task, was influenced by the corporate nature of this bodily control and attentive behaviour and worked well given the behavioural problems associated with her intellectual disability. The affective impact of the group dynamic was considerable, an effect which was achieved through the regularity of performing the task and the teacher direction involved while doing so.

Given that Jane did not commence work on letter/sound correspondence in any systematic way until the beginning of Term 2, her approach to story writing was quite
different from that of Narelle’s who started her students writing from the beginning of Term 1. As mentioned, Jane was slow in beginning this work because many of her students had poor spoken English. In Term 1, therefore, she placed emphasis upon improving their facility with spoken English, developing their sight word vocabulary, acquainting them with concepts of written language such as the sentence, and employing strategies to reinforce English syntax. A regular daily activity conducted throughout the year in the morning session involved the class working with sight words. At these times KP sat on the floor at the front of the room close to the sight word chart displayed on the left-hand side of the board. The chart contained a set of sight words that were on permanent display throughout the year. By Week 9 the chart contained twenty-nine words: red, yellow, blue, green, pink, orange, purple, this, is, can, a, boy, my, dad, am, school, television, girl, little, see, watch, grandpa, jump, teacher, to, mum, colour, went, friend. Jane explained that the words were primarily drawn from a standardised list of 220 most frequent words, although other words related to class work were also included. By Week 9 there appeared to be a range of grammatical categories represented allowing students to compose a variety of simple sentences from what was available. The number of words that were added each week increased as the year progressed enabling greater degrees of complexity in sentence structure.

Jane’s routine with the chart involved pointing at words and having students read them out aloud. Each word was written on a card and could be moved to different places on the chart. Following this, Jane tested students’ comprehension by having students close their eyes and hiding a jelly bean behind one of the words. Students then had to guess where the lolly was hidden. This exercise was repeated about 3 or 4 times at which point Jane removed a series of words and placed them in a sentence such as ‘I can see my friend and ‘My dad is a friend’. Before reading out each sentence Jane had the class count the number of words in the sentence and drew their attention to the spaces between words. After this she chose a series of words and jumbled them so they didn’t make sense. She asked the class if these words made a sentence and, if not, to place them in the correct order. Jane’s intention was to reinforce the notion of a sentence and to highlight the syntactic patterns that exist in English. The fact that the words were on separate cards and could be physically manipulated was an effective way to demonstrate the process of sentence construction and the relationship between parts of speech. These words and how they combined to make sentences were reinforced on a daily basis. The contained and repetitive nature of this activity possessed considerable
affective impact, reinforcing the process of sentence construction and the expanding bank of words allowed for increased complexity and creativity as the year progressed.

During Term 1, before her students had commenced work on letter/sound correspondence, Jane would either conduct a modelled writing exercise or an activity in which she and the class would jointly construct a text. Jane commented that she had reservations about free writing activities with kindergarten even if she had been able to commence work on letter/sound relationships much earlier. She explained that:

Free writing, not across the board no, only as extension work for kids with some degree of capability. It's dependent on capability. It would be a futile exercise for a lot of children. They just couldn't do it, unless you had a really skilled group. I think it would just fall in a heap. They'd probably spend most of the time just drawing the picture and become a bit ratty and go play with a toy or something else.

Instead, Jane chose to further model aspects of the writing process with her students. Her approach to modelling, however, did not simply involve students watching what she did but actively involving them in the exercise. On one such occasion during the second observation lesson, Jane and her students jointly constructed a procedural text about 'How to make a honey sandwich', effectively modelling the steps involved in constructing this textual form. Jane used the week's big book story, 'The Hungry Giant', as stimulus. After discussing the book and reading it through with the class, pointing to each word as they read through together, Jane placed four pieces of cardboard behind each other on the whiteboard at the front of the room. She explained to the class that they had to write out the steps required to make a honey sandwich for the giant. She began by asking students what they needed first. Not happy with the single word response 'bread' she asked the student who had supplied the answer to place it in a sentence and was offered the response, "get some bread" which was then repeated by the class. Jane proceeded to write this on the first card and drew a quick picture to accompany the command. Following this, she asked the class to read out the sentence, pointing to each word as they did so. This procedure was followed until the text was complete, containing four steps in all with each card held up for the class to see by students at the front. Jane then had the class read the whole text through clapping their hands as each word was read and questioning them about the number of sentences in the text. In doing this, Jane sought to concentrate on developing her students' competency in the verbal construction of text as a scaffold for more independent story writing which would occur in the next term.
Jane’s practice was interesting here because of the ways in which she foregrounded the corporeality of learning. This was evident in a number of instances, most obviously in how she has students use their bodies to differentiate words in a sentence, clapping as each word was read. It was also apparent in the constant repetition of sentences by individual students and the class overall, reinforcing the relationship between spoken and written text and a conceptual awareness of the structure of sentences, in this case imperatives. Yet it was not only the students’ bodies which were rhythmically involved in this exercise, an intercorporeality existed between Jane and her students whereby they worked together to construct the text, Jane using a ruler to guide their reading throughout and students responding by saying and finally clapping each word. Jane explained that, “everything is very layered in kindergarten” by which she meant that there is an interconnectedness between skills development in speaking and writing, listening and reading. However, the layered nature of the pedagogy at this level is not simply a function of the conceptual relatedness of the various linguistic modes, it has a bodily dimension in that the repetitive techniques which Jane employed resulted in the accumulation of affect which sedimented into habituated skills and knowledge, the foundation upon which more complex understanding is based.

Jane tended to incorporate drill into various aspects of her pedagogic practice. The term ‘drill’, however, needs some explanation. It is employed here to refer to an assemblage of techniques that through repetitive use intend the habituation of certain knowledge and skills. Progressivist pedagogies tend to deride such techniques as artificial, an imposition upon a child’s individual cognitive development. Given the appropriate stimulus within an enriched learning environment, it is assumed the requisite skills will develop without the need for such active intervention. In contrast, drill and practice is often presented as the dominant methodology of traditional pedagogy used to the point where it had a nullifying effect upon students’ understanding. What is sought here is a reconsideration of such techniques whereby they can be integrated into a teacher’s practice as a way of dealing with the routine and often foundational aspects of different subject areas. Drill as a disciplinary technique can be used to teach the mechanics of writing - handwriting, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure and eventually stylistic aspects of the writing process - so that students habituate this knowledge and can devote far more conscious attention to the creative manipulation of these resources. Drill need not necessarily be understood simplistically as a mindless procedure whereby students iteratively repeat information or perform an activity until it becomes engrained, although repetition is undoubtedly a key feature of drill techniques. The notion of drill
needs to be reconceptualised as a set of techniques which intend the embodiment of knowledge and skills through the accumulation of affect. That is, while there is a need for iteration it can be undertaken in various ways. Students can iteratively engage in a combination of related activities which target a similar skill and which over time involve greater and greater degrees of complexity, scaffolding and reinforcing students’ learning. Jane’s use of drill exemplified this process. She integrated the phonic and graphic representation of letters using an iterative and layered approach in which drill played a major role. She explained that:

We follow a particular progression of sounds not abcd. It has to do with how they’re pronounced and written. You wouldn’t do abcd, doing b and d together for instance. Also you have to have the vowels established. And kids love it. One sound a week. We name the sound and then we talk about how we write it and we trace it on the floor and they tell me things, words starting with ‘i’ for example. So everyday you’re going to have a bit of drill and we sing ‘ants in the apple aaa’. And then we colour in the picture and cut out pictures that start with the letter into a dictionary book. So all these things are cemented in. You’ve constantly revisiting, it has to be constant. The basic aim is to get them to be reading and writing and that joy of putting it all together.

Jane’s practice, therefore, utilised a quite broad conceptualisation of drill. It did not simply take the narrow form of repeating banks of information, which can be effective, but was undertaken in a serial fashion with related skills and knowledge performed repeatedly until they were inscribed within students’ bodies and minds. As a result, a greater ease of combining these elements for the purposes of reading and writing was attained: “the joy of putting it altogether”.

Once the class acquired some command of letter/sound relationships and was beginning to sound out words and incorporate them into their story writing, Jane conducted activities in which this process was modelled for students, serving as a further scaffold to their independent story writing. These activities usually took the form of a joint construction, yet unlike the example already discussed in which students offered whole words to Jane to form a text, in these activities Jane helped students to sound out each word and offered assistance with difficult spelling. In the fourth observation lesson, in which Jane conducted one of these joint construction activities, she had the class sitting on the floor in front of the blackboard which was partly covered with the butcher’s paper to be used for the activity. Jane was on her knees positioned between the board and her students. For this activity, she had decided to have students write a short ‘story’ about one of the teachers at the school who had recently had a baby. After talking about the baby, the class were asked to put some of this information into a
sentence. One student offered the sentence, “Mrs Long had a baby boy and his name is Christopher”. Jane then had students come up to the board to write the sentence on the butcher’s paper, one word at a time with the rest of the class mirroring this process with their own ‘air writing’. Prior to doing this, each word was sounded out with students clapping each of the separate sounds of simple words such as ‘had’, ‘and’, ‘his’ and, with words that posed some problem, Jane had the class listen for initial sounds and any others they could discern. Attempts were made and rules - such as adding ‘e’ to make a long vowel, the diphthong ‘ng’, ‘y’ as ‘e’ and abbreviations as in ‘Mrs’ - were all explained. When the sentence was completed, as in the honey sandwich exercise, Jane had the class clap each word as they read it out and then place a full stop at the end. This sentence was followed with a second, “She might bring the baby to school”, in which the same procedure of joint construction was used. Once again the techniques Jane utilised here seem very much attuned to the corporeality of learning. This was not simply in terms of her having her students use their bodies by clapping and air writing and being rhythmically involved in the joint construction of a text but more so in the carefully scaffolded approach she took towards developing student’s understanding of the writing process. In this activity layer upon layer of understanding of sounds, letters, words and sentences was accumulated and the regularity in which these and related activities were conducted on an individual, group and whole class basis ensured a heightening of affect such that students’ bodies and minds were invested with the skills and knowledge required to write effectively.

This did not mean that Jane did not let her students engage in story writing until they possessed this capacity; rather, she simply ensured it was a more directed activity given students had limited resources with which to work, especially in the first half of the year. Story writing in the first two terms involved students drawing and or writing generally about a set topic and then retelling their story to Jane with her transcribing their account for them in their books thus allowing them to make connections between the spoken and written work. These texts were often traced or copied by students. Jane also had the class complete short sentences whose beginnings were supplied by her: I am ..., I like to ... . The sentences composed during sight word activities, or variations upon these, were also usually written out during story writing. This did not mean that students could not experiment with text: they were simply provided with parameters in which they could work if they were unable to move beyond these. As none of the students in KP was able to write when they commenced kindergarten, few possessed the capability to work outside these parameters in the first half of the year. However, as they
became more proficient with letter/sound correspondence and their handwriting improved students were writing much longer and more complex texts.

This was the case with all three of the students whose texts were collected. As with Narelle’s class, Jane supplied work samples from three of her students: one representative of above average ability, one considered of average ability and one student of low ability. Hannah, an Anglo-Australian student, considered of above average ability by Jane, was far less capable than Reuben, Narelle’s top student. She was unable to write when she arrived at school and, as with the other students, spent most of her story writing time in the first two terms retelling, tracing and copying, samples of which are provided in Figures 2.1a and b.

This is my cousin’s house and there’s the sun and there’s me.

Figure 2.1a
In Figure 2.1c, shown below, written during week 1 of Term 3, Hannah begins to display far more confidence in her writing, independently constructing a text about holidays.
Many of the words in the text are familiar by this stage of the year - such as 'in', 'the', 'am', 'my' - but she includes the relatively new words from the sight word chart 'holidays' and 'happy' and attempts both 'because' and 'going' to produce a complex sentence. In the next sample, Figure 2.1d, written six weeks later, Hannah shows an even greater degree of confidence.

On Monday we had a Sports Carnival.
I liked the hockey game. It was hot. I had a sweaty time.

Figure 2.1d

In terms of the length of her text, she has written five sentences and attempted unfamiliar words. Five weeks later, in the final sample, Figure 2.1e, a text with the sentence beginning provided, Hannah has written seven sentences. She lacks the ability at this stage to produce more coherent text by regularly inserting conjunctions to produce compound sentences but, as is evident in Figure 2.1c and the last sentence of this text, she is displaying some capacity to do so. What is evident in the sample set overall, is Hannah's growing competence in writing as the year progressed. This was not
**Figure 2.1e**

only in terms of her story writing ability; the work samples also illustrate a greater control of handwriting throughout the year with letters becoming smaller and
better formed, a competence which allows her to write quite lengthy texts towards the year’s end and to focus on simply writing rather than also illustrating her work. This seems to suggest that the earlier pre-literate semiotic has now been ‘superseded’. She no longer requires an illustration to accompany her work; the written text is deemed sufficient.

The second set of texts was written by Matthew, an ESL student whose first language was Mandarin and whom Jane judged to be representative of an average student within KP. As with Hannah, Matthew spent much of his story writing time in Terms 1 and 2 retelling, tracing and copying. By the end of Term 1 he was showing considerable competence with his handwriting as is evident in Figure 2.2a.

Figure 2.2a

His letters are well-formed and words are regularly spaced. Halfway through Term 2 he was able to competently complete a short text of his own composition, Figure 2.2b, attempting an unfamiliar word - ‘titanic’. As with Hannah, Matthew drew most of these words from the sight word chart with ‘titanic’ either supplied by Jane or familiarised to
the extent that he could reproduce it in his writing. He has accompanied his text with a quite detailed picture of the ship, demonstrating great application to the task.

On Wednesday, I went to the funland and I got sixteen ticks and every one got a star. (And) I did not fall in.
Towards the end of Term 3, when the class was concentrating on letter/sound correspondence, Matthew began to experiment far more with his writing. In Figure 2.2c, a text with the beginning supplied by Jane, Matthew produced quite a lengthy piece of writing. His first sentence demonstrates an overuse of ‘and’, representative of a verbal construction, but he has combined a range of words from the sight word chart with several new words which he has successfully sounded out independently, - ‘sixteen’, ‘star’, hot’ - together with good attempts at ‘down’ and ‘every’, the latter, however, appear to have been completed by Jane. In the last sample, Figure 2.2d, with the sentence beginning once again supplied by Jane, Matthew produced a lengthy text comprising a complex, a compound and a simple sentence.

Figure 2.2d

He attempted a number of new words - some successfully, some unsuccessfully - but an increased degree of confidence in his composition of text is evident in his willingness to attempt unfamiliar words and the discipline to persist despite repeated mistakes.
The last sample set was written by Daniel, another Mandarin-speaking ESL student whom Jane considered representative of the lower band of students. Daniel spent much of his story writing time in Terms 1 and 2 engaged in similar activities to Hannah and Matthew but he showed far more reluctance to commence writing. In one of his first efforts of copying a sentence from the board, Figure 2.3a, written towards the beginning of Term 2, Daniel displays reasonable control of a pencil despite failing to complete the familiar word ‘the’ successfully.

![Writing Sample]

Figure 2.3a

As he was given more independence to construct text, evident in Figure 2.3b written five weeks later, his writing appears less confident as he has had to devote far more concentration to the content of his text rather than simply forming letters. The first three words while copied are not as well formed as the earlier text and although he manages to write ‘I see a’ well he has had great difficulty with ‘red rose’. He has managed to identify the sounds ‘e’ in ‘red’ and ‘r’ and ‘s’ in rose. He was also very close in his first
attempt at ‘d’ in ‘red’ initially writing the voiceless plosive ‘t’ as opposed to the voiced ‘d’. Given his command of English this is an understandable error.

Daniel’s attempts at these last two words and the text overall are interesting in a number of ways. In contrast to the texts collected from Narelle’s classroom, those from KP reveal more teacher intervention in the students’ construction of text and also a greater degree of application on the part of the students. Writing for Daniel was a difficult task, especially given English was not his first language. Despite this, he persisted with his story writing, reattempting words both with teacher assistance and without. As with both Kelly and Anne Marie in KS, Daniel had a tendency to reverse letters. This occurred at times with his writing of ‘s’ but, whereas Daniel’s work was corrected, the errors in Kelly and Anne Marie’s texts were not. Jane ticked the words Daniel could write
correctly without assistance and provided corrections where he did not, a marking procedure evident in other students' work.

There is considerable difference between Narelle and Jane's use of praise. To Narelle it functioned as the prime motivating force within the classroom. She made considerable use of stickers, as rewards throughout the day and comments on work were always positive. Jane was more sparing in her praise. She always devoted time towards praising students' efforts in her review of the previous day's work each morning when stickers were awarded. Stickers, stamps and positive comments, however, only accompanied texts that were correct or showed improvement. Jane explained that,

CHILDREN HAVE TO LEARN TO COPE WITH FAILURE. YOU HAVE TO LEARN TO COPE WITH CRITICISM. IF YOU'RE CONSTANTLY BEING TOLD EVERYTHING'S FANTASTIC AND ALL OF A SUDDEN, 'BANG' YOU HIT A WALL, WELL CHILDREN CAN'T HANDLE IT.

Together with this, the overuse of positive reinforcement can produce a nullifying effect. Narelle's tendency to do so seemed to reinforce poor habits rather than provide encouragement for improved effort. This appeared to be the case with Kelly and Anne Marie. The affective impact of positive reinforcement seems to be overstated in education. While positive comments can generate a feeling of pride that can act as a motivating force, criticism may not necessarily produce negative affects. The affective impact of criticism, producing degrees of shame, may equally function as a motivating force, encouraging students to apply themselves far more to a task. When coupled with a disciplinary apparatus within a classroom that encourages a disposition for learning, as in Jane's classroom, constructive criticism can possess immense pedagogic affect particularly if genuine effort is rewarded with praise. Through such a process, students embody a true sense of self-worth grounded in demonstrated achievement.

Jane's measured use of praise is seen in Daniel's final two texts. In Figure 2.3c, shown below, produced towards the end of Term 3, Jane was not overly complimentary but her ticks are an indication to Daniel that his work is improving and the smiley face she draws acts as additional reinforcement. Daniel still displayed problems with some of his letters, such as at times continuing to reverse his 's' but, despite difficulties and numerous mistakes, he persists with the task, self-correcting and reattempting several words. In Figure 2.3d, written at the beginning of Term 4, Daniel finally appeared to have corrected his problem of reversing 's' and while he still displayed difficulty with his handwriting, there was a marked improvement from the previous text.
In the day time we went to the park with my sister and with my mum. We played in another park.

Figure 2.3c

That night my mum read a story. I had a high fever. My sister was a baby, my sister was sick because she wanted to play a computer game and a story.

Sad because

Figure 2.3d
His story writing displays a greater confidence not only drawing on words from the sight word chart but also sounding out words such as ‘todei’ and ‘stri’. Although there is still room for improvement Daniel made considerable progress throughout the year, particularly given his poor command of English and lack of familiarity with an alphabetic script.

Concluding Remarks
Although similarities existed, Jane and Narelle’s approaches to teaching kindergarten how to write differed markedly. To Jane, learning to write, and learning in general, required not simply the acquisition of particular knowledge and skills but the formation of a disposition for learning. This disposition was premised on bodily control, the ability to sit still and listen for prolonged periods of time which then seemed to equip students with the concentration and diligence necessary to persist with the difficult task of learning to write. Jane’s pedagogy exhibited a sensitivity towards the corporeality of learning. This was not just evident in the disciplinary techniques she employed to predispose her students towards the demands of academic labour, reflected most obviously in her classroom’s panoptic design and its regimen of quiet and control, but in her repetitive and carefully scaffolded approach towards curriculum implementation. In teaching her students to write, Jane aimed to have them habituate the phonic and graphic representation of letters to ensure they could then devote a far greater cognitive load towards the complexities of composition. To do this Jane used a range of ‘drill’ techniques from simple repetitive exercises to a variety of staged and related activities performed on an iterative basis. The process of constructing text particularly at this early stage, is an arduous one requiring considerable support. Jane therefore repeatedly modelled the process for her students by working with them as a class to gauge the letters necessary to then form words and sentences. The corporate nature of this approach seemed to heighten its pedagogic affect. Students’ learning was consistently supported as they achieved planes of relative independence signifying the incremental embodiment of the skills involved in learning to write. The affective impact of Jane’s practice was heightened by the degree of teacher directedness she employed. It was only through the emphasis she placed on this pedagogic mode that she was able to utilise the strategies she did. It also ensured students were kept on task acquiring the skills, knowledge and discipline necessary to work effectively when unassisted.
This degree of teacher directedness was not evident in Narelle's practice. Although she often conducted short teacher-directed activities, such as the daily phonics drill, she tended to favour self-directed and group-based tasks, particularly in teaching writing. The disciplinary force generated by these latter pedagogic modes was far less intense than that which existed in Jane's classroom. Students in KS tended to exhibit more relaxed bodily postures, an effect compounded by Narelle's diffused arrangement of the pedagogic space and her classroom regimen of movement and talk. These learning postures lacked the control necessary for effective literate practice and the rigours of academic work. This did not prove problematic for some students as they had entered kindergarten with the appropriate embodied capital to engage in activities with relatively little assistance, at least at this stage of their learning. For the majority, however, who were not in this category, the lack of disciplinary force tended to simply reinforce an existing habitus that did not predispose them to the complex process of learning to write. Coupled with this, Narelle's pedagogy did not give emphasis to the habituation of the mechanics of handwriting and the construction of text. In kindergarten, students still possess a reasonably plastic habitus; dispositions are tentative rather than engrained. It is at this formative stage of pedagogic embodiment that students, as supple bodies, need to acquire a disposition for learning and also the foundational skills involved in literate practice. Without these, learning to write becomes an even more difficult process and students flounder as they engage in the increasingly demanding aspects of writing in the years following kindergarten.
Chapter 5 - Transitional Bodies – Learning to Write in Year 3

With some kids you can’t [cultivate a desire to learn], because they just don’t want to learn.
Year 3 Teacher Westville Public School

I’m responsible for their learning. I think a lot of people think well I’ve taught them, it’s up to them to learn. But they’re only eight years old. It’s up to me to make sure that they’ve achieved something.
Year 3 Teacher Northside Public School

In this chapter the focus moves from kindergarten to Year 3. By this stage of their learning students have experienced three years of the school system. Dispositions within their habitus are more ingrained, but by no means fixed. The dispositions that guide practice are always only provisional yet over time they tend to ossify and become more resistant to change. In a sense, Year 3 students are in a transitional phase. They are still at a formative stage but no longer possess the malleability of their first year of school and have generally embodied the routines of school life, including a particular disposition for learning that may, or may not, be conducive to academic work. As was evident in the previous chapter this is due in no small part to the pedagogy that teachers employ which can instil in students the discipline necessary for effective literate practice. This discipline ensures students habituate foundational writing skills and equips them with the diligence to apply themselves to the process of learning to write. To many students who lack this discipline, writing proves to be a more complex task. Also, the affective impact of repeated difficulties with writing can lead to a deadening of the desire to write. This appears to be the case with some of the students in Year 3 at Westville PS: as their teacher remarks, “they just don’t want to learn”. Such a comment raises issues about the nature of pedagogic desire, the role of bodily affect in its cultivation and the degree to which a teacher is responsible for its production. The Year 3 teacher at Northside PS, for example, views her students’ achievements as not simply a function of their own desire to learn but very much related to her interventions in their learning. In the analysis of these teachers’ practice that follows, emphasis is given to the disciplinary techniques they employ and the extent to which these endow their students with the capacity to write effectively. In doing this, consideration is given to the relationship between disciplinary force and a student’s desire to learn; the latter being conceived here as very much premised on the corporeal affects generated by the pedagogic process.
Westville Public School – The Year 3 Teacher

Sally Brown, the Year 3 teacher at Westville PS, was in her eighth year of teaching at the time of the study. On completing her teacher training she was unable to find a full-time teaching position and spent her first five years as a casual teacher, generally in year-long teaching blocks at Westville and other local primary schools. During this time she taught a range of different year groups. As a permanent teacher at Westville PS she had spent two years teaching kindergarten prior to taking on the Year 3 class that was involved in the study. In terms of her knowledge of grammar, Sally explained there was little explicit treatment of language in her education and pre-service training. She pointed out that, “I learnt more from teachers of language in a classroom that I’d go to in my practical but even then it felt like I didn’t learn enough about how to teach it”. She commented that this was also the case with handwriting. Most of what she had learnt about this area of the curriculum was through attending inservices on how to teach handwriting rather than as part of her pre-service training. In describing her overall educational philosophy, Sally expressed similar comments to her colleague Narelle, placing emphasis on the need to be positive:

I try to be as positive as I can and let them know that I make mistakes too and that I’m not perfect. We’re a partnership, you know, we’re working together.

Sally placed a premium on her students developing a sense of security within the learning environment:

I also like to have a class where everyone is happy, that’s really important. I like to have a brightly coloured room with work everywhere so that the children come in and they feel happy and they’re enthusiastic to work because they know their work’s going to be appreciated.

As mentioned earlier, Sally had to take leave during most of Term 3 due to illness. When she returned to Westville it was not as 3B’s fulltime classroom teacher. As she realised towards the end of Term 1 that she would be absent for a lengthy period later in the year, empirical data was mainly collected during the first two terms.

Westville Public School – The Year 3 Class

3B, Sally’s class at Westville, had 32 students. This was a large class given that the
recommended class size is 30 for this year group. Thirty-five percent of the class were from a non-English speaking background with students from Tonga, Samoa, the Phillipines and Sri Lanka. There was also one Aboriginal student in the class. Sally described 3B as having “a big mix of children” in terms of their range of ability. She pointed out that, “Five are above average and about fifteen are average and the rest would be below average”. She considered her class to be the most difficult of the Year 3 classes and explained that this was because of:

the problems that each child has. I’ve got a boy with dyspraxia and an ADHD child and another student that is borderline IM. There’s one girl that can hardly read and some children just have really poor fine motor skills and there’s just so many of them with problems in all different areas and such big gaps in their knowledge that it’s a task teaching them.

3B were a challenging class with many students experiencing serious difficulties with various aspects of the curriculum, in particular their ability to write.

Organising the Pedagogic Space

Although not as large as the double classrooms used for kindergarten, Sally’s classroom, Figure 2.1, was still quite a good size, 8 metres x 7.5 metres, allowing for considerable ease of movement around the room and adequate space for a floor-based teaching area positioned in front of the blackboard. Sally’s room was adjoined on two sides by other classrooms and one wall had full-length glass panels and doors offering a view to a grassed area outside. The room had its own storeroom and bag storage area. In line with the current trend in classroom design, desks were organised in groups seating six or seven students and arranged in such a way that each had a good view of the board. Sally’s desk was located in the front left-hand corner of the room with a chair also positioned in front of the blackboard from where she conducted floor-based teacher-directed activities. In addition, there was a computer desk in the back right-hand corner that was sometimes used by students during group-based activities and a spare desk on the other side of the room where troublesome students were moved for periods during the day. Unlike the two kindergarten rooms discussed in the previous chapter, the spatial design of Sally’s classroom less obviously reflected a particular teaching philosophy. It possessed spatial elements representative of both traditional and progressivist
pedagogies. In terms of the former, this was evident in the positioning of Sally’s desk and the chair she used for floor-based, teacher-directed activities. Ostensibly, vectors within the classroom were directed towards the front, not only given the location of Sally’s desk and chair but the arrangement of students’ desks, grouped in such a way that they could easily view the board. This latter point, however, needs qualification. Students’ gaze was not automatically directed towards the front. The fact that students’ desks were grouped together and that most faced each other attests to a competing spatial dynamic more associated with the student-centredness underpinning progressivism. The regulative power generated by the serial arrangement of a traditional classroom was not apparent here. Instead, Sally’s classroom operated as an eclectic space with its affective impact upon students’ bodies more dependent upon the regimen that Sally imposed. Space in itself rarely possesses the potency to function as the determining factor in relation to practice, yet the contrast between the two kindergarten classrooms suggests spatial design can exert differing intensities of disciplinary force.
In many respects Sally’s classroom was similar in design to Jane’s, the kindergarten teacher at Northside PS. Like Jane, Sally positioned her chair at the front of the room. In fact Sally’s presence was even more marked as she had her desk located alongside it. The students’ desks in Sally’s room were also arranged in a similar fashion to Jane’s with a teaching floor space located in front of the board. One notable difference between the two rooms was their size. Although Sally did have more students, her room was larger than Jane’s, affording 3B more space to move around. The restrictions placed upon movement within Jane’s classroom were partially a product of the limited space available. In Sally’s classroom there was therefore a greater imperative upon the teacher to impose boundaries through the particular regimen that was established. The space itself, despite its institutional framing, possessed a limited regulative dynamic. This was not only the case with the classroom as a whole but with the particular learning sites within the room. The floor space, which Sally made considerable use of throughout the day, was much larger than the narrow strip in Jane’s room. Also, despite its size, Sally did not clearly define the space, as did Narelle. Although enclosed by desks, the area functioned as a reasonably fluid space exerting limited disciplinary force upon students’ bodies. Many often leaned against chairs with their legs outstretched and found it difficult to remain still. To some extent this is understandable given their age group. Students’ growing bodies are far less comfortable on the floor by this stage of schooling than in their first years at school and many students in 3B had clearly not embodied the discipline to sit still and concentrate during floor-based work. These more relaxed postures may not have presented a problem if students were focused on the lesson. During Sally’s floor-based, teacher-directed activities there appeared to be gradations of attentiveness within this space. Those students sitting closest to Sally were sitting up straight and listening. The greater the distance away from Sally, particularly on the margins, the more likely students were to be stretched out and interacting with other students, giving little attention to what Sally was saying. In many schools floor-based activities are a rarity by Year 3. Most lessons are conducted with students seated at a desk. Sally, however, pointed out that,

I do things on the floor mainly because I suppose I’m still a very infants-oriented person. Maybe it comes from there, but while they’re on the floor, I’ve got better eye contact with them, they can see me better, it’s more personal and I can really have good discussions with them and interact more with them than having a desk sitting in front of them.
In some respects this was the case, though certainly not with all students. Sally’s use of the floor was related to her own distinctive teaching style. She explained,

I suppose it’s my own personal thing. I don’t have a loud voice, so I don’t like to stand up there and thunder it out. I like to have them close and attentive that way.

By Year 3, however, students are doing far more written work than in the infants years. Their greater competence in writing brings an increased independence and the ability to work without the same degree of teacher support that was needed in the first years of school. The frequency with which Sally used the floor therefore had an unsettling influence upon students. Not only was it a less regulated space than that found in Jane’s room but, where Jane tended to limit movement in her room (so students stayed seated on the floor for sustained periods of teacher-directed time), in Sally’s classroom students made repeated shifts between their desks and the floor in any one session, as is evident in the Observation Overview. This was particularly the case during the morning sessions where on one occasion students changed their seating location seven times within a period of two hours.

This propensity for movement within Sally’s classroom is discussed in detail in relation to classroom regimen. Here the focus is more the utility of the space itself in terms of the stage of learning of Sally’s students. As mentioned, by Year 3, students are generally spending more time at their desks, a reflection of their increased writing skill. The ability to sit at a desk and work for sustained periods, although probably a more comfortable option than the floor at this stage, is still a learned capacity. In favouring the floor for teacher-directed activities, Sally was providing less training in the process of having her students acquire the postures of scholarly labour. These are not simply an imposition of institutionalised schooling but a form of bodily composure which predispose individuals to literate practice, an activity involving a particular physiology. Continuing to delay the point at which students make the transition to a predominantly desk-based lesson format may inadequately prepare them for more senior years in which an increased emphasis on writing necessitates a greater use of the desk. Many of the students in 3B were yet to acquire the discipline necessary to work for sustained periods. It was not simply Sally’s organisation and use of the pedagogic space which seemed to contribute to this; the classroom regimen that she established similarly appeared to lack the affective impact to produce the self-governance many students needed to be able to learn effectively.
Establishing a Classroom Regimen

The high degree of movement evident in Sally’s classroom was also a pervasive feature of 3B’s routine. Students appeared to spend very little time in one spot. They alternated with considerable regularity between the desk and the floor-space, often because Sally preferred to give instructions and have discussion with the class when they were seated on the floor. Even within an activity, students were often only seated for short periods. This was very much related to Sally’s use of group work, the pedagogic mode which dominated her practice. She explained that,

I’ve got used to teaching that way. I teach in groups and I’ve always taught in groups, so it’s easy for me to have a different activity at each table that has varying degrees of difficulty and be able to rotate around and set it to the children’s limits. I don’t find it hard.

An example of how Sally conducted rotational group-based activities was provided in the first observation lesson held in Week 10, Term 1, during the morning session. By the time this activity commenced, students had already made six seating changes. Sally had students seated in the floor space area to explain the different tasks involved in the group-based activity and then each group was assigned one of the six tasks, five of which were undertaken at the desks and one on the floor. Each of these tasks related to either a specific language or cognitive skill and was designed as a group-based game. There was a word concentration game, word snap, a visual classification game, a nursery rhyme sequencing task, a picture-matching exercise and alphabet concentration. The effectiveness of these tasks will be discussed in more detail in relation to curriculum implementation. Of concern here is the way the activity was conducted and the amount of time devoted to each task. During the twenty-two minutes in which the activity was undertaken, with an additional five minutes to pack up, groups only managed to engage in three of the six tasks and each of these for a period of only seven to eight minutes. As all the tasks involved sets of cards, when students moved on to a new activity they had to spend a short amount of time setting up the task and orienting themselves to what was involved. This cut into the amount of time allocated to each group game, none of which seemed particularly challenging to students. As Sally explained, she used rotational group-based activities on a regular basis. While the way they were conducted may have varied, what was characteristic of this approach was the degree of movement involved. Although these tasks did not probably demand it, which is an issue in itself, students did not devote sustained periods of time to what they were doing. The affective impact of the tasks was therefore limited with the frequency of rotation to other groups promoting a regimen of restlessness within the classroom. This propensity for
movement was not only evident in Sally’s use of rotational group work and the regularity with which students changed their seating arrangements throughout the day, but also in the use of Taskforce, a school-devised literacy program which involved all students at Westville PS with the exception of kindergarten. Taskforce, which placed emphasis on improving students’ reading ability, was conducted throughout the school on four out of five days a week for thirty minutes during the morning session. Students, divided into groups on the basis of their reading ability, either moved off to other classrooms or stayed in their home room to complete group-based reading tasks designed for their ability level. The merits of this program will be discussed more in relation to its application at a Year 5 level; here the focus is the extent to which it contributed to what appeared to be an unsettling classroom routine for 3B. Approximately half of the students in the class moved off to other classrooms with about the same number of students from other Year 3 classes transferring to Sally’s room to participate in activities conducted there. Given that these students had to pack up and take materials with them, both in going to another room and on returning, this process cut into valuable work time. However, more problematic was the move itself. Taskforce was conducted 45 minutes into the morning session with the potential to disrupt lessons that had already commenced. If this was not the case, then it could mean that teachers simply organised shorter lessons to cater for this thirty-minute time slot within their teaching program. Little time therefore was made available for sustained work. Either way, the disruption generated by the program taking place mid-way through the morning session, only seemed to add to the movement which characterised the regimen within Sally’s classroom.

Given the degree of movement which pervaded 3B’s routine, it was understandable that students were restless. Many found it difficult to sit still when they were required to work independently on a task. They leaned back on their chairs and rocked, fidgeted with equipment or simply got out of their seats and moved around the room to sharpen a pencil, borrow an eraser or retrieve something from their bag. The frequency with which various students in the class left their desks did not seem to perturb Sally and she at times contributed to the level of this activity through her practice of allowing students to come out to her desk to have their work checked or ask questions. While not
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SESSION OVERVIEW - SALTY BROWNE 3B
problem in itself, the regularity with which students did this often resulted in a line of students not only talking and disrupting others but wasting time in which they could have been more productively engaged if Sally had instead gone to them or simply progressed around the room checking work. Many students clearly used this opportunity to take a break from their work as they did not all require immediate assistance. As much of this activity was needless, it seemed to indicate that many students in 3B found it difficult to sit still at their desks and independently complete a task. This suggests that many had acquired a form of embodiment, up to this point of their schooling, which was not conducive to academic endeavour. The practice of sitting and concentrating on tasks, in particular those requiring a written response, was far too difficult for many and so they punctuated the time that was allotted to do so with the various disruptive activities mentioned above. The regimen within the classroom seemed to generally reinforce this behaviour with students habituating restlessness as they engaged in various tasks.

It is interesting, therefore, that Sally made the remarked that some of her students “just don’t want to learn”. The desires of many students in 3B were certainly directed elsewhere when undertaking activities within the class. They exhibited little interest in school work but their lack of interest could in many respects be attributed to a bodily incapacity for academic work. If learning desire - that is, what drives individual students within the education process - can be conceived as being derived from embodied affect, as opposed to emanating from an individual’s essence, it is understandable why many students in 3B didn’t want to learn. The particular composition of the dispositions within their habitus was not compelling them to do so and the pedagogic practices which impacted upon them, both in and outside school, may have simply reproduced these tendencies.

The regimen of restlessness that prevailed in 3B’s classroom was also a product of Sally’s leniency in relation to talk. Although students were reasonably quiet during teacher-directed activities, in particular the regular handwriting lessons, at other times there was a constant murmur within the room which regularly developed into loud chatter before subsiding following a reprimand from Sally. This was exacerbated by the frequent use of group-based activities, the short duration of lesson segments and the disruption resulting from Taskforce. There did not appear to be any sustained periods of time during lessons in which students were required to work quietly and avoid interaction with other students. Noise, therefore, was a constant backdrop to work within the room.
that only concerned Sally if it became very loud. An important issue for Sally was the degree of collegiality among students. Given the problems that existed in the class, in particular the students with learning and behavioural disorders, Sally was keen to cultivate a certain sociality within the class whereby students forged good relations with their classmates. To do this she moved students around the room to sit at different desks on a reasonably regular basis. She explained that,

I set my classroom up in groups, table groups but for developing social relations I would pull their name out of a hat and sit them randomly because I wanted them to learn to get on with someone that they hadn’t met before. If we all got on really well we could pick out another lucky dip and you might sit near someone different.

There was definitely a warm and friendly atmosphere within the class, with no obvious tension between students. Sally’s practice of desk lotto to organise seating arrangements did generate a considerable amount of talk, with students often engaging in conversation not only during group work sessions but also at times devoted to independent work. The aim of fostering good social relations among students by encouraging talk also needs to be considered in terms of its impact upon students’ disposition for learning and their work habits in general. Many students in 3B found it difficult to apply themselves to classwork. This was not only the case with the ADHD student and others with specific learning and behavioural problems. The class as a whole appeared to lack the kind of corporate discipline that encourages students to apply themselves to their work. The constant chatter in 3B contributed to the already relaxed disciplinary codes framing the regimen within the classroom reinforcing the irregular work habits of many students and proving particularly unsettling for those with behavioural problems who really required a more calming and directed learning environment.

**Curriculum Implementation: The Body of Writing**

Sally seemed to favour quite short lesson segments in teaching 3B. With the exception of a 45-minute activity during the fifth observation lesson, on average lessons were approximately 30 minutes long. Given their brief duration, there often appeared to be only a surface treatment of the knowledge and skills being targeted with little connection made with previous work and students’ overall program of study. Possibly, because they were so well-suited to this short lesson format, Sally made considerable use of competitions and games in her teaching. This was how much of the first observation
session was conducted and while these activities were not specifically concerned with writing they are discussed here given that they deal with aspects of language and reveal much about Sally's overall teaching methodology.

After roll call, Sally commenced the day with a spelling competition. All the students stood behind their desks and, as words were written on the board, they were required to avert their eyes and one at a time spell a word provided by Sally from the previous week's list. If students were unable to do this they had to sit down and the next student attempted the word. This procedure was followed until the list was completed. The students left standing, who had successfully spelt a word, were the winners scoring points for their house. This highly motivating activity signalled the end of the time devoted to this set of words. A new set was then written on the board by Sally to be learned and used in another competition in the following week. As the lesson occurred near Easter many of the words in the list related to the celebrations and events which happen at this time of the year and so following the spelling competition Sally had students pair up with a classmate to devise a find-a-word using these and any other words associated with Easter. Although these two activities were related, with the find-a-word seemingly reinforcing students' familiarity with the words in the spelling list, the effectiveness of this latter activity is questionable. Find-a-words are generally considered filler tasks undertaken at the end of the day, as a fun activity during the last day of term or as homework. With the spelling words provided, and assistance given by a classmate, it was not a very challenging exercise. It seemed an unusual activity to use at the beginning of the first session of the day when time was available, particularly as this was not a Taskforce day, to devote to a more complex aspect of the curriculum. Students also seemed to treat it as a mere fun activity. Although working in pairs involves collaborative talk, there was a lot of unnecessary chatter and at the end of the allotted time many groups had neither finished their work nor especially incorporated the spelling list words in the find-a-word that they had devised.

Following this activity, students then moved on to some rotational group-based language games. This activity has already been referred to in relation to the amount of time allotted to each task and the impact of this upon classroom regimen. The brevity of these sets of tasks is also an issue here, however, as it is the effectiveness of the tasks themselves and the pedagogic mode that Sally employed that are of key concern. Each of the six tasks were generally targeting skills associated with Early Stage 1; that is the normative ability range of students in kindergarten and Year 1. Sally pointed out that,
a lot of my class is still down in Stage 1 and need a lot more reading and word attack skills. They still need to work on phonemic awareness and things like that.

While the tasks Sally chose were well-suited to a rotational, group-based format, they did not appear to deal with these specific reading and writing skills nor did they appear very challenging for students. This pedagogic mode also seemed to place far too much responsibility on the students for their own learning with the assumption being that in playing the game they would acquire the requisite skills. Given that many had difficulty applying themselves to the tasks and had a relatively limited skill base from which to work, the activity seemed ineffectual in addressing the quite pressing needs of these students. Its affective impact therefore was minimised by a combination of factors: the short amount of time devoted to each task, the students’ undirected application and the simplistic and unfocused nature of the tasks themselves. As so many students were experiencing difficulties with rudimentary literacy skills it seemed unusual that Sally chose to address this using a group-based format. A far greater impact could have been made using a teacher-directed activity that targeted a specific skill. This way, rather than undertaking three short tasks geared towards loosely related aspects of language and cognition, students could have spent a more sustained period of time working on a single task which more specifically addressed their learning needs.

Spending sustained amounts of time engaged in a task on a regular basis can intensify its pedagogic affect. As previously mentioned it promotes a kind of somatic familiarity that assists cognition. Affect is also maximised through the more constant support and direction provided by the teacher who, if targeting a specific skill on a corporate basis, can more appropriately scaffold students’ learning with the class as a whole working towards a common goal. There is very much a connection here with Vygotsky’s notion of the zone of proximal development in that the teacher directedness referred to here assists students achieve a level of development beyond what is generally attainable when working unassisted, as was the case with students engaged in the rotational group-based activity.

A rationale often given for group-based learning is its ability to more specifically cater for the range of ability levels within a class. This was Sally’s opinion as she pointed out that, “it’s just so easy to group them in abilities of what they can and can’t do”. Two points need to be considered in relation to this, however. Firstly, if this type of group-
based learning predominates within a classroom, it becomes a form of internal streaming which therefore runs counter to the contemporary educational practice of mixed ability grouping. If students are to be grouped into ability levels in this way within a class on a regular basis, this does not seem far removed from organising whole classes in terms of ability. Streaming, however, particularly at a primary level, is generally considered problematic (Barker Lunn, 1970; Kelly 1978; Jones and Tucker, 1990). Mixed ability classes are viewed as having social and psychological benefits as, unlike streaming, it is felt that they do not label children, thereby confirming their ability through the self-fulfilling prophesy of "once a low achiever always a low achiever". However, if the mixed ability grouping of classes tends to promote the predominance of group-based learning over a more teacher-directed pedagogy, these social and psychological benefits may be somewhat thwarted in that students' achievement levels may remain low through a lack of teacher direction. The critique of group-based learning presented here is not intended to deride the approach in its various formats, either task-specific or ability-based, but rather its inappropriate use within a classroom. In many schools it seems to be the dominant pedagogic mode. As the kindergarten teacher at Northside PS pointed out, there was an expectation that her class should have been working in groups throughout the day. She refrained from doing this as she felt it would have led to a reduction in her guidance to students since they would only receive periodic attention rather than the constant direction achieved when teaching the class as a whole. Group work is probably best used to allow students to consolidate knowledge and skills rather than as a methodology with which to teach foundational aspects of literacy as was the case in Sally's classroom.

The second point which needs to be considered in relation to the rationale that group-based learning more specifically caters for the range of ability levels within a class, is that while there may be great variation of ability within classes, students at any one time are all still working towards a common set of outcomes. There is a common bank of information and skills that each student must acquire. They may not all achieve the same level of competency but if they are learning similar work there is no real imperative for it to be undertaken within a group-based format. What is of key concern is the effectiveness of the pedagogy a teacher employs within a classroom. The more diffused nature of the pedagogic affect generated through group-based learning, as opposed to a more teacher-directed pedagogy, impacts upon a student's ability to learn in a two-fold way. The tendency for there to be a reduction in a student's sustained application to a task when engaged in group-based activities not only has the obvious
cognitive effect of impeding learning, it also impacts upon cognition in a less apparent way. The more relaxed disciplinary codes that frame group-based learning are less effective in promoting the bodily control which is necessary for concentration. Without this corporeal capacity the formation of a mindful body, predisposed to academic endeavour, is less likely to occur. Students therefore find it doubly difficult to learn, not because they don’t want to but because their body is not accustomed to do so.

To some extent this is evident in the final activity undertaken in the first observation lesson. To conclude the morning session Sally had 3B practise their handwriting. This quite sedentary task was preceded by the language games activity in which students made two seating changes and actively engaged in both task-specific and unrelated chatter. As Sally explained, “Language games are noisy because we do lots of talking”. Students, therefore, were very unsettled when they returned to their desks to commence handwriting. Talk continued at a fairly high level and students rocked back and forth on their chairs and moved around the room to borrow erasers and rulers or to sharpen pencils. To curb this activity and to prepare students for their handwriting task, Sally used a quick body break that involved students reciting a little rhyme about the appropriate posture for handwriting. Although saying the rhyme, most students gave little attention to its content. Their posture generally remained slumped, although both their talking and restlessness were reduced. This reduction in movement and chatter could be largely attributable to the teacher-directedness of the lesson. To complete the activity students had to copy the letters and patterns that Sally was writing on the board which provided a model of the cursive variation of the NSW foundation script. Students needed to pay close attention to what Sally was doing to be able to reproduce the letter shapes in their own books. Together with this, the regulative control of students was intensified by Sally’s central position within the room. This heightening of attentiveness and reduction in movement and talk, however, was short-lived. Once they became aware of how to reproduce the letters Sally was writing on the board, and as her back was turned most of the time, many students raced ahead to complete the activity at a more rapid pace than Sally and then recommenced their chatter disturbing other students.

Sally devoted quite a bit of time to handwriting within her teaching program, conducting lessons of 15-30 minutes, two or three times a week. Given that students by this stage of their learning would have already habituated a personal writing style this amount of time seems excessive and probably more appropriate for a kindergarten level.
Sally explained that many of her students had quite poor fine motor skills and this was probably her way of addressing this. By Year 3, however, it would be difficult to reverse what would now be a fairly habituated response. It is not only time and iterative practice that is required at this point but a student's conscious awareness of the need to alter their poor handwriting style for a correction to occur. Sally explained that,

I'm really fussy about them being neat and tidy and having the correct posture and holding the pen properly because to me they should be using that all the time in all their books.

Despite expressing these views, students' posture remained largely unchanged and there was definitely no overflow of improvement in terms of their composure when engaged in other activities. The handwriting students produced during specific handwriting lessons was quite well formed and neat, but this did not seem to impact upon their writing overall, a point Sally raised herself:

I find looking at their books when I go back in there now, a lot of them have gone backwards in my expectations of them.

It must be remembered that for most of the second half of the year Sally was not 3B's full-time classroom teacher. The observations she makes about the students' poor handwriting, however, are also applicable to the students' efforts in the first half of the year as is evident from the samples of work discussed below. What was interesting about Sally's approach to handwriting was the pedagogy she employed and its affective impact. Although not sustained for the full 30 minutes of the lesson, which seems a long time to devote to a handwriting lesson in Year 3, for a good portion of the time students exhibited a greater degree of quiet and control than was evident at other times. As a result of this, the class was more focused on what they were doing and generally produced good examples of the style of writing required. Students, however, were unable to maintain this level of application. Sally's use of a more teacher-directed pedagogy may have proved effective for a short period of time but given it was not her preferred pedagogic mode and as the regimen which generally existed in the classroom did not encourage quiet and control, its effect was overshadowed by competing forces. Students were not predisposed to persist with this degree of attentiveness. It was fleeting and so it did not affect their work at other times of the day, especially, it would seem, when involved in more taxing activities such as composing, as opposed to merely reproducing, text.
Although Sally tended to favour group-based learning it was not only during handwriting lessons that she employed a more teacher-directed pedagogy. This particular methodology was also used to some extent to teach other aspects of the curriculum such as the different textual forms referred to in the K-6 English Syllabus. The stated outcome relating to this area of the curriculum for students at an Early Stage 2 level - that is, the outcome generally corresponding to Year 3 students - is that,

Students will be provided with opportunities to jointly and independently construct a range of text types, eg, narrative, procedure, response, recount, description and information report.
(BOARD OF STUDIES NEW SOUTH WALES, 1998: 56)

The guideline that “Students will be provided with opportunities”, written more as a teaching objective than a student outcome in this case, suggests the teacher’s role is to facilitate rather than to instruct, reflecting the underlying progressivism which still pervades syllabus documents. There are no specific guidelines with regard to pedagogic practice. The focus is more an itemisation of intended student outcomes. The methodology a teacher employs to achieve these is generally left to them and so with the paradigmatic dominance of progressivism it would seem that a more student-centred pedagogy probably prevails in the majority of classrooms; a teaching practice which tends to ignore the corporeality of learning. There are aspects of traditional teaching practice, such as its teacher-directedness, which are far more inclusive of the body as an object of pedagogic concern. The problem with using categories such as ‘progressivism’ and ‘traditionalism’, however, is that despite their heuristic value, they tend to mask the intricate meshing of the range of practices which constitute a teacher’s pedagogy. Sally’s methodology is far more influenced by progressivism than by traditional teaching practice. At times when she does employ a more teacher-directed approach, it does not in itself guarantee that she is giving any greater emphasis to the bodily aspects of the learning process, at least in any sustained way. During her handwriting lessons there was a short-lived intensification of discipline but this quickly dissipated with students’ existing behaviour patterns of restlessness, entrenched within their habitus, tending to dominate. This was also the case in other lessons in which Sally used a predominantly teacher-directed approach. To exemplify this point an analysis is provided of the methodology that she used to teach 3B how to write a recount.

As indicated in the Observation Overview, this lesson was conducted during the mid-morning session in the second week of Term 2. This lesson, in which students were
required to write a recount of their school’s ANZAC ceremony, occurred on a Tuesday following the ANZAC Day public holiday the day before. All schools in Australia celebrate this national day. The ANZAC ceremony at Westville PS had taken place on the Friday before the long weekend. When 3B had returned to class after attending the ceremony on this day, Sally discussed it with them and together they had compiled a sequenced list of what had occurred on the board where it remained until Tuesday’s lesson. In the intervening period Sally had added an introductory sentence and a short evaluative comment for students to complete to conclude the recount. The outline as it appeared to students on the Tuesday was:

ANZAC CEREMONY
On Friday 23rd April, 3B went to our schools Anzac Ceremony.
• Precision of important people
• Welcome by School Captains
• School song
• School Captain’s speech
• Reef Laying Ceremony
• Listened to the colonial speak
• Looked west for the last post
• The Ode
• One minutes silence
• Reveille
• Anthem
During the Anzac Ceremony I felt because.

The spelling and punctuation errors in the text were not intentional. Sally did not insert them as part of an editing exercise. They were errors that Sally had made herself and which were reproduced in students’ drafts and also their final copies that were displayed in the classroom. Sally often made spelling and punctuation errors on the board, a reflection of the lack of attention given to these aspects of writing within her own education, which should have been addressed in her pre-service training or by her school supervisor. At no time during the course of writing the recount did either Sally or the students consult a dictionary to check these or other words, despite a class set of dictionaries being available on a bookshelf at the back of the room. Sally’s poor spelling and punctuation skills are a matter of real concern but there are broader issues related to her practice overall which are the focus of the following analysis.

Although there was a three-day interval between the ANZAC ceremony and when students next discussed the sequence of events, Sally chose to conduct this lesson in the mid-morning session. Before recess the class had spent 35 minutes writing their new
spelling list into their books, 35 minutes involved in Taskforce activities and another 35 minutes engaged in a handwriting lesson, similar to the one discussed above. When 3B returned to class after recess they spent another 15 minutes on handwriting before finally commencing the work on the ANZAC ceremony recount. In other words, a considerable amount of time had passed and a range of other activities had been undertaken between the time that they had first discussed the ceremony and when they began the lesson on writing a recount about what had occurred. Despite this, Sally only devoted seven minutes to discussion before students commenced writing their recount. This discussion took place with students sitting on the floor. It involved Sally reading through the introductory sentence and then pointing to the sequence of events on the board and having nominated students reading one at a time, supplying additional information if they could. Following this, Sally asked 3B how they felt about the ceremony and had some students give examples to complete the evaluative comment written on the board. Sally then quickly provided her own verbal recount of the ceremony using the outline. The discussion concluded with Sally asking students about any ‘joining words’ that they could use to link the points on the board. Students offered the following which Sally wrote next to the sequence of events: than (sic), when, we had to, I felt, and, because, next. Apart from another spelling mistake -the word ‘than’ should have read ‘then’ - the words display some students’ confusion with what is actually meant by a ‘joining word’, referred to in the syllabus as a conjunction or connective. Some students provided correct examples but no distinction was made between different types of conjunctions: temporal, additive and causal. As Sally required students to sequence the events that were written on the board, it was mainly temporal conjunctions that should have been the focus. All suggestions were simply recorded on the board and then Sally asked the class to commence writing their own recount using the model provided. This was the only reference to any of the grammatical features of a recount, which are outlined in syllabus support materials. Also, although the sequence of events itself provided a structure, there was no discussion of the generic staging of a recount. This was despite the fact that posters outlining the structural features of this text type and others were displayed above the blackboard.

Although Sally’s knowledge of grammar and text was clearly lacking, it is not this obvious problem with curriculum content that is the only concern here. Equally problematic is Sally’s approach to implementing this curriculum. Despite the difficulties many students in 3B were experiencing with reading and writing, Sally only devoted seven minutes of lesson time to discussing how to write a recount. This may in part be a
result of her limited knowledge of grammar and textual form but, as the extract from her teaching program (Figure 2.2) reveals, a document discussed in advance of implementation with her Year level supervisor, all text types were treated with similar brevity. As her supervisor had approved this program of study, and as Sally explained that, “So far since I’ve been here I’ve been given all my units”, it can be assumed that Sally’s approach here was relatively uniform across the Year 3 classes at Westville. As is evident from this document, the approach taken to teaching students how to write a recount of the ANZAC ceremony focused primarily on content, that is, what ANZAC Day commemorates, people’s reactions to it and the sequence of events which the school ceremony comprised. While this is important information, the process involved in writing the text is taken for granted. There is no reference to the grammatical features of this particular text type, such as the use of past tense and temporal conjunctions. Sally’s general reference to the latter in the lesson, however, provides some insight as to how she approaches teaching grammar. Rather than seeing it as being integral to the writing process, it is dealt with in an incidental fashion. There’s an assumption that, with some knowledge of the content, a mere outline of the structure and reference to a grammatical feature will suffice for students to be able to produce the required textual form.

The issue here is not simply Sally’s lack of grammatical knowledge but the pedagogy required to teach it and to teach writing overall. For students to be able to write effectively they need to be able to harness a range of resources and then apply these to the content under consideration. These resources do not simply comprise handwriting, spelling and punctuation skills but also syntactic and generic textual understanding. The complexity of this process necessitates the habituation of much of this technology. Without a reasonable degree of automaticity in applying these skills and understanding, students will find writing very difficult. The implications for pedagogy are that sustained periods of time need to be devoted towards students acquiring these skills and that they need to be iteratively performed to ensure they are habituated as bodily capacity. The one to two weeks that Sally devoted to each textual form within her teaching program, which in teaching time would probably translate into between five and ten, 30 minute lessons if undertaken on a daily basis, is insufficient. Weaving together content knowledge and the skills involved in writing a particular textual form requires considerably more time. In the case of writing a recount, one of the most elementary textual forms, students would need to be familiarised with its structure through activities such as reading various recounts and discussing their structure, completing sequencing exercises, writing sample introductions and concluding
statements. Together with this, they would need to focus on the specific textual grammar involved in writing this text type such as: looking at different tense forms, completing cloze exercises on the use of past tense in recounts, compiling lists of temporal conjunctions and writing short sentences commencing with this cohesive device. Once students have some familiarity with these structural and grammatical features, the class could then jointly construct a text or write their own and peer edit each other’s work before finally attempting a recount on their own.

Whatever procedure is used the objective should be the maximisation of pedagogic affect whereby students acquire the facility to apply these resources with relative ease. 3B, however, were only given fleeting treatment of each textual form. In the case of the recount discussed above this amounted to two lessons on content and writing a draft, and another to produce the final draft. From Sally’s perspective, she probably felt that she had allowed her students to meet the outcome as specified in the syllabus. She has provided 3B with ‘opportunities to jointly and independently construct the text type’. Sally and the class did jointly compile the sequence of events, the body of a recount, on the board, although this was in point form. Students did then independently construct the text. It must be said that the syllabus does provide far more detail in terms of what teachers need to do for students to achieve this outcome. In doing so, however, it tends to rely on directives such as “draw students attention to”, “talk about”, “make explicit” (1998: 57) all of which could be understood as simply pointing out an aspect of a textual form. Nowhere is there a focus on the pedagogy involved in ensuring students acquire the outcomes specified for each stage. Nowhere is the corporeality of learning, once signified in the use of the term ‘habit’, given any mention. Syllabus documents instead place emphasis on intended student outcomes and fail to espouse the pedagogy required to achieve these.

As is evident from the evaluation of the lessons on writing a recount that is contained in her teaching program (Figure 2.2) Sally was quite happy with what her students had accomplished. Apart from referring to one student who experienced difficulties, she commented that “Everyones (sic) work was fantastic”. As with the kindergarten teachers discussed in the previous chapter, Sally also provided samples of her students’ work, representative of an above average, average and below average standard. The following
<table>
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<th>WRITING TERM 2</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1-2</strong> To write a recount about the events of the Anzac Assembly and how they felt during and after the assembly.</td>
<td><strong>ANZAC ASSEMBLY</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Discuss with the children what Anzac Day is and what it means to many Australians.&lt;br&gt;- Conduct a mini assembly.&lt;br&gt;- Have children recount the events of the assembly and discuss what each section symbolised eg. the trumpet playing.&lt;br&gt;- Have children express how they felt at the time.&lt;br&gt;- Publish in writing books. - Discussion: middle of reef</td>
<td><strong>Expression of feelings</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Competitively reflected in writing.&lt;br&gt;- Can remember most of the events from the assembly.&lt;br&gt;- Everyone's work was fantastic.&lt;br&gt;- Som. A had trouble so she sequenced events differently. Written comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> To create their own advertisement for a product making sure that they use a lot of descriptive words.</td>
<td><strong>ADVERTISING</strong>&lt;br&gt;- The children look through magazines and pick out one advertisement.&lt;br&gt;- As a class list all of the descriptive words that you find in the advertisement.&lt;br&gt;- Discuss with the children whether they would buy the product or not.&lt;br&gt;- Why is the advertisement so appealing? List ideas eg. colourful.&lt;br&gt;- Using some ideas from the Writing with Mums book children make their own advertisements on art paper and display around the room.</td>
<td><strong>Creativity</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Had trouble picking out describing words.&lt;br&gt;- Posters had some very original ideas.</td>
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| **4** To watch a news report and then write a recount about the major events reported in the news. | **NEWSREEL/RECOUNT**<br>- What is the news? During this time the children can take down notations from the presenter on the news.<br>- Children are taught to write a recount of the events presented. They are discussing what happened, who said what, when it happened, and somebody's appearance. They also need to say if they think the event was important as well as the importance of each piece of news. | **Ability to interpret and record facts**<br>- Found it is hard to understand what he's saying, broke down into simple events. | 207
texts are the first drafts of these students’ recounts of the ANZAC ceremony discussed samples, students then rewrote their texts for ‘publication’; that is they were displayed around a class wreath at the back of the room. The first of these texts (Figure 3.1) demonstrating an above average standard, was written by Nicole. As with the other two students whose texts were provided for analysis, Nicole was an Anglo-Australian student. For a first draft Nicole’s work is pleasing. She has completed the task as required commencing with the statement supplied by Sally, made reference to the eleven events that comprised the ceremony and concluded with the evaluative comment modelled on the board. The only changes Nicole made to this text, however, before rewriting her final copy were those provided by Sally which are shown on the text, yet there was considerably more work which needed to be undertaken. Given Nicole’s work was regarded as above average, the syntactic and textual problems in this text were probably replicated in less able students’ efforts. Kimberley’s and Craig’s texts, discussed below, demonstrate that this was the case. Students, for example, needed far more time devoted to ‘joining words’ both prior to and after writing their first draft. A single mention of some examples did not demonstrate their use nor focus on problems that can occur if they are overused, as in Nicole’s text. While she has included a range of temporal conjunctions, ‘First’, ‘Next’, ‘Then’, ‘After’ and ‘During’ in her writing, the text reads like a list of points. This is partly a result of the ceremony comprising so many steps but, if a more concentrated period of time had been devoted to this grammatical feature, particularly using students’ own texts to demonstrate the problem, this may have been corrected in the editing process before students wrote their final draft. It would have led students to consider other options to improve their texts such as writing compound or complex sentences instead of a string of simple sentences or including descriptive information to break up the sequence. Sally seemed to be aware of this problem in her assessment of Nicole’s work as she crossed out the conjunction ‘Next’ towards the end of the page and changed the full stop to a comma to produce one complex sentence. Sally’s other rationale for doing his may have been to correct Nicole’s syntax given she has used a dependent clause - ‘After the colonial said his speech’ - as a simple sentence. As there is no comment explaining this, Sally’s intention is unclear. Nicole was simply left to rewrite her text and include Sally’s corrections to complete the work on writing a recount. Given Sally’s concluding comment of “Excellent work” and three achievement stamps, Nicole was no doubt satisfied with her result, unaware of the problems discussed here and the additional difficulties she demonstrates with tense, reference, sentence construction, spelling and punctuation. Many of these have not been
corrected by Sally, leaving the text flawed. The omission of 'for' in the last sentence, for example, places a different slant on the ANZAC ceremony.

The point here is not to provide a detailed analysis of Nicole's work but rather to highlight the procedure that Sally used to teach the complex process of learning to write. One aspect of the problem that exists here is that Sally did not make the grammatical features, and other aspects of writing, explicit. However, there is a more fundamental

27-4-99 ANZAC Ceremony.

On Friday the 23rd April, 3R were to our School's Anzac Ceremony.

First we had the important people came to the stage. Those important people were Mr. Coh, Mrs. Cornell, the captains, the colonial and the trumpet player.

After that, the captains welcomed us to the assembly. Then we sang the school song. Next, the captain said their speeches what they think Anzac Day meant. Then Dylan and Danielle helped to carry our reef to the stage. After the colonial said his speech, almost everyone faced the west. And listened to the last post. The ode was said and after it was said we all
pedagogic issue: Nicole did not simply need to be more aware of what features were required to write a recount, she needed to practise them in an appropriately scaffolded and systematic manner until she was able to incorporate them into her writing to produce the required textual form and to be able to effectively edit her work. Much of this process is reliant upon her having already habituated the necessary handwriting, spelling and punctuation skills in addition to possessing the requisite syntactic understanding.

Despite these problems Nicole’s work is an example of one of the better recounts written by 3B students. Kimberley’s text (Figure 3.2) is far less competent but was judged by Sally to be representative of the average standard of work within the class. Kimberley’s text demonstrates that she has generally followed Sally’s instructions. She has begun with the opening sentence provided on the board, referred to each of the points, with the exception of the Reveille, and has concluded with the evaluative comment, though she does not include an explanation. In Kimberley’s text, however, there is even less
On Friday 23rd April, 3R went to our school's Anzac Ceremony. The precision of important people came to the stage. The Vice Captains and Prefects Viskasas and Peter Welcomed us to assembly. Then we had to sing the school song. Then the Captain said their speech. Dylan and Daniel put down the wreath our class made. Then we listened to the colonial speak. And then we had to look west for the last bass then they said the ode then we had one minute silence. Then the Anthem. During the Anzac ceremony I felt sad because of all the people in the army dying. Very Good!
elaboration of events than in Nicole’s recount. Also, Kimberley displays far less skill
than Nicole in her use of temporal conjunctions, repeatedly using ‘then’, a problem that
Sally does not point out. Apart from the other numerous difficulties that Kimberley has
in writing a recount, which are similar to but more pronounced than Nicole’s, there is
the more fundamental problem she exhibits with spelling, punctuation and syntax; a
bank of skills which by this stage of her learning should be presenting far less difficulty
than that which is evident in this text. Kimberley has spelt most simple words correctly
but she clearly has problems with certain spelling patterns such as ‘ng’, ‘ain’, ‘ee’. Her
difficulties with spelling may in fact discourage her from writing longer texts and also
experimenting with more complex vocabulary.

Despite Kimberley’s weakness in this area, a problem experienced by many other
students in 3B, the dictionaries remained in the bookshelf at the back of the room rather
than being used as an aid for learning. 3B were not encouraged to use the dictionaries
and many would probably have had difficulties if they had tried. The class as a whole
displayed very little independence in relation to their own learning and the failure to
make use of the dictionaries exemplifies two key points. Firstly, many students in 3B
had not habituated the requisite skills. They would have had difficulty locating words as
a result of poor alphabetic and phonemic awareness skills. Secondly, they may simply
have not persisted despite these difficulties, or even tried to consult the dictionaries in
the first place because they were not predisposed to do so. Dictionary use was not a part
of 3B’s routine classroom practice and so students were unlikely to refer to them if they
were unsure how to spell a word. Many of the difficulties Kimberley experienced in
writing this recount, or indeed probably any text, relate to similar factors. She had as yet
not habituated adequate spelling, punctuation and syntactic competence to write with
the requisite ease to allow her to devote a greater degree of concentration to either the
text’s content or the stylistic demands of this particular text. Together with this, she did
not display any real desire to develop and refine her skills and there was little
encouragement to do so, given her work had been praised by Sally as “Very Good”
despite the problems. The affective impact of both these factors is evident in Kimberley’s
text overall but is most obvious towards the end of the recount with the line “then the
anthem”’. Here, it is not only Kimberley’s poor syntactic ability that is apparent but also a
general lack of interest in writing. It is no doubt that she found constructing this text a
difficult process and simply mentioned this last point with the necessary ‘joining word’
because she could not be bothered to write a sentence and was simply keen to finish
what she was doing.
27.4.19  Anzac Ceremony

On Friday 23rd April, 3R went to our school's Anzac Ceremony.

The precision of important people went up on the stage. We were welcomed by school captains. Then, after singing the school song, we listened to the school captain's speech. Then, Dylan and Danielle got the feet on the pedestal. Then, we listened to the Colonial speech. We looked west to the last post. They tall grew not old as we that are bent and minutes grew. We then had gone into silence, then we sang the anthem during the Anzac Ceremony. I felt sorry for the people who went into the war.

Figure 3.3
The third recount (Figure 3.3) was written by a boy called Craig who was considered by Sally to be typical of her lowest ability range within the class. Craig managed to follow the model provided on the board quite well only omitting reference to the Ode and Reveille. Interestingly, he did attempt to refer to the Ode by writing it out: "They all grow not old as we that are left and grow old". However, he was not satisfied with this and rather than reattempting to include this information in his text put a line through it and omits it altogether. As with both Nicole and Kimberley, Craig also had problems using 'joining words'. He tends to overuse the word 'then' and Sally’s corrections only confirm this problem. In places where a conjunction is required, but where Craig fails to include one, Sally has simply inserted another ‘then’. In addition to this, Craig’s text also reveals he has problems with tense and prepositions as well as having considerable difficulties with spelling, punctuation and sentence construction. Unlike Nicole’s and Kimberley’s work, however, Sally has not included a stamp or comment. She simply corrected aspects of his work, which constitutes the only feedback he received before writing his final draft. On the occasions Sally did conference with students on an individual basis about their work, comments tended to be quite general as her written corrections were deemed to be self-explanatory.

The analysis of these three texts reveals that while these writers possess different ability levels they display common problems with their writing. These do not simply relate specifically to the textuality of recounts but are far more general, suggesting they experience difficulty with writing overall. What is poignant about the problems they have in writing a recount is that this textual type closely resembles a verbal construction and is one of the first formalised text types that they would have met at school. Students would have begun to write simple versions in kindergarten yet appear to have made little progress. Recounts lack the complexity of the other textual types they were required to write during the year. In addition to writing a recount, Sally’s program (Figure 2.2) reveals that during Term 2, 3B was also required to write an advertisement, a news recount, a TV review, a survey and a newspaper article. The evaluation that Sally provided in her program was limited but she did point out that 3B had difficulty with most of the other text types following the recount, even though one was in fact a variant of the recount they had already written. It seems unusual therefore that she didn’t devote far more time to each one before commencing new work. Whether conducting group-based or teacher-directed activities in the process of teaching her students to write, Sally did not provide sufficient time or attention to the skills involved. This was not only a result of her limited knowledge of curriculum content but the pedagogy she
employed to teach it. The pedagogic effect of her practice was minimal as students had little possibility of accumulating the necessary affect that would impact upon their learning. The result of this is that there was little improvement in students' skill base and, as writing was such a chore, they displayed little desire to engage in the process and persist with improving their work.

Northside Public School – The Year 3 Teacher
The Year 3 teacher at Northside PS was Julie Costa. At the time of the study she was in her twelfth year of teaching. Northside PS was her second teaching position and she was in her seventh year at the school. In her previous years of teaching Julie had only ever taught in the infants years and mainly at a kindergarten level. She was new to primary and so 3C was her first Year 3 class. She pointed out that in her pre-service training she had completed specialised courses on teaching at a pre-school and infants level, not so much because she wanted to focus on infants teaching, but because these courses gave emphasis to the teaching of reading which she thought was important for all teachers to know. Despite possessing a good grasp of how to teach reading, Julie explained she felt less proficient with regard to teaching writing, particularly in the primary years when there is more of a focus on grammar and textual form. She had not been taught grammar at either school or university and commented that,

I think people my age struggle a bit with it. It really should be addressed early on. I don’t know if I’m teaching it correctly because I’ve never been taught.

There was a similar lack of emphasis on handwriting in Julie’s pre-service training. She remarked that,

It was here (at Northside) that I really learnt about it. A teacher here had written several books about handwriting and he was forever inservicing us, but not at Uni really.

When asked to describe her overall approach to teaching, Julie commented that,

What I think is important is getting the best out of what children have. At the end of the year I like to see a progression and I know that you really have to drag it out of them, they’re not going to give it to you willingly.

Julie tended to favour a teacher-directed methodology and considered herself, “a bit of a traditionalist”. In commenting upon what she viewed as one of the key ingredients for effective teaching she was quite adamant that,
Discipline is number one. If you don’t keep them on track, they just do nothing.

Northside Public School – The Year 3 Class
Julie’s class, 3C, had 32 students, 24 of whom were from a non-English speaking background. The ethnic groupings represented in the class were Korean, Sri Lankan, Indian and Chinese, with the latter being by far the largest. Julie considered her class to be on a par with the other Year 3 classes at Northside:

The classes are evenly matched. When we compared the Basic Skills Test results we had similar amounts in each band.

Julie believed that her class worked relatively well although she felt some of the boys lacked self-discipline:

Actually, once you set them a task they work quite well and quite quickly, but they need a lot of input. They can’t do things independently, but I wouldn’t really expect them to.

Organising the Pedagogic Space
Julie’s classroom was located on the second floor of one of the three main two-storey brick buildings on the Northside site. Although she had more space than her colleague

Figure 2.2

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Jane, teaching in one of the smaller demountable buildings at the school, being 7 metres x 8 metres, Julie’s room was not as large as Sally’s at Westville PS. Julie’s classroom had no bag room; instead students hung their bags on hooks in the hallway and placed their equipment in storage slings positioned on the back of their chairs. The nearest storeroom was located at the end of the hallway. Bookshelves and storage cupboards were located along three of the walls. A large wall display, depicting the theme of the current class novel or unit of work and samples of students’ writing and craft, decorated the back wall. There were large, old windows along one sidewall with a relatively busy road outside and glass panels along the top of the opposite wall that adjoined the hallway. A disconnected computer was also located in the back corner of the room that was not used during any of the observation sessions.

For five of the six observation sessions, Julie’s room was organised using the seating arrangement shown in Figure 2.2. During the third observation session desks were reorganised into the arrangement shown in Figure 2.3. Both of these configurations, but particularly the latter, are representative of a traditional classroom design, indicative of the teaching methodology with which Julie identified. The first and more frequently used arrangement had students facing each other, rather than directly fronting the board. Given vectors within the room tend to be centred on the front of the classroom
where Julie’s desk and the board were located, students’ gaze tended to be similarly orientated in this direction. Although competing spatial dynamics were evident, as students were facing one another, they were less pronounced than in Sally’s classroom at Westville. While Sally’s students also faced one another rather than fronting the board, they were seated in smaller groups dispersed around the room weakening the vectorial pull that directed their gaze towards the front of the classroom. The organisation of desks in Sally’s room seemed to prioritise the group over the whole. In Julie’s room, the column type arrangement of desks leading up to the blackboard, was not in itself a group-based format. It was far more corporate in design, strengthening the vectors drawing students’ gaze towards the front of the room.

As mentioned previously, the competing dynamics that existed in Sally’s classroom meant it functioned as an eclectic space. Disciplinary force within the room tended to be more reliant upon the regimen Sally imposed than on the spatiality itself. This was less obviously the case in Julie’s classroom where a more homogenous spatiality prevailed. This was not only a result of the more traditional seating arrangements that Julie used, but because of the limited space within the classroom. Unlike Sally’s classroom at Westville, Julie had no space for a floor-based teaching area. As a result 3C spent all their time in class seated at their desks. They did not move back and forth between the floor and their desks, as did 3B at Westville, so movement within the classroom was considerably reduced. Once seated, Julie’s students tended to remain so, unless asked to distribute books or other equipment. The spatiality itself therefore contributed to the desk-based learning format that operated within Julie’s classroom. The prolonged periods students spent sitting at their desks promoted a learning posture that, in a sense, served to induct them into the practices of scholarly labour. Julie’s class therefore were making a speedier transition from an infants style learning format in which a substantial part of the school day is spent sitting on the floor, to one in which lessons are primarily conducted with students at their desks.

Establishing a Classroom Regimen
Constraints upon the pedagogic space and Julie’s organisation of seating within it had some impact on the regimen of quiet and control which prevailed within the classroom. A range of other factors, related specifically to the pedagogy that Julie employed, was also instrumental in achieving this. Movement within the room was not only limited by
spatial factors but by Julie's preference for a teacher-directed approach to learning that resulted in more sustained periods of time being devoted to each lesson in which students remained in their seats. As indicated in the Observation Overview, Julie tended to break the morning session into two main segments, the first and larger segment dealing with writing or other language-based work, the second with Maths. In the first segment, time tended to be allocated to teacher input, followed by independent work and feedback. There were two exceptions to this. Firstly, the fourth observation session in which the lesson alternated between teacher-direction and independent work and the sixth observation session in which students engaged in a group-based activity. These different parts of the lesson are itemised separately on the Overview to provide a more detailed account of what occurred, but in each of these segments of the morning session there was generally only a single focus such as writing a particular textual form or examining an aspect of grammar. They did not deal with separate and discrete aspects of the English curriculum as tended to be the case in Sally's classroom. As a result, 3C at Northside generally spent their morning session engaged in one long desk-based lesson followed by a shorter maths lesson. The former was on average, 75 minutes in length and, depending on the lesson format, comprised approximately 45 minutes of teacher input followed by 30 minutes of writing time. This is in stark contrast to the class at Westville.

This disparity between the number and duration of activities in Julie and Sally's classes has major implications in terms of the effectiveness of each teacher's curriculum implementation, an issue discussed below. Here, the key concern is its impact upon classroom regimen. Most of Julie's students, in contrast to Year 3 at Westville, only made one move during the morning session and this was when Maths groups took place. With the exception of the OC classes, students at Northside were streamed for Maths classes across each year group and either remained in their own room or moved to another classroom to receive tuition which more specifically catered for their ability level. In some respects this was like a Maths version of the Taskforce program at Westville, but students in the different Maths groups at Northside tended to receive teacher instruction rather than engage in group or self-directed activities as was the case with Taskforce. Another major difference between the two programs was how they were timetabled. Taskforce occurred four out of five days a week mid-way through the morning session which, as discussed, created considerable disruption to classroom routine. At Northside, students moved off to their Maths Group each day 30 minutes before recess, resulting in far less movement during the morning session and allowing for a longer period of
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**LESSON OUTLINE**

- **Lesson 1:**
  - **Activity:** MABs Groups
  - **Location:** Classroom

- **Lesson 2:**
  - **Activity:** Reading Comprehension continued
  - **Location:** Classroom

- **Lesson 3:**
  - **Activity:** Reading Comprehension continued
  - **Location:** Classroom

- **Lesson 4:**
  - **Activity:** Reading Comprehension continued
  - **Location:** Classroom

- **Lesson 5:**
  - **Activity:** Reading Comprehension continued
  - **Location:** Classroom

- **Lesson 6:**
  - **Activity:** Reading Comprehension continued
  - **Location:** Classroom

**Session:**

- **Week 1:** Morning
- **Week 2:** Morning
- **Week 3:** Morning
- **Week 4:** Morning
- **Week 5:** Morning

**Term:**

- **Term 1:**
- **Term 2:**
- **Term 3:**
- **Term 4:**
- **Term 5:**
uninterrupted lesson time. Julie’s class at Northside, therefore, was far more sedentary during the morning session than the Year 3 class at Westville PS. Students’ bodies were disciplined to sit still and concentrate for prolonged periods during this time resulting in a docility which was enabling rather than disempowering, predisposing their bodies and minds to the regimen required to be able to write effectively; a docility which represented a willingness to learn, rather than simply the capacity to be instructed. This did not mean that 3C maintained this degree of composure throughout the day but, they were able to do so when required, in particular during the work intensive morning session and to some degree between recess and lunch. As is common practice in primary schools, Julie generally scheduled craft, sport and less taxing activities for the afternoon. It was at these times that a more relaxed regimen prevailed with students therefore acquiring a specific corporeality for the different activities that their learning comprised.

Together with limiting movement within the room, Julie also strove to keep noise to a minimum, particularly when students were engaged in independent writing tasks:

Writing is too complicated to just sit there and blab about it to your friends. I mean you really have to be focused in on what you’re doing. So I do tend to try and make them not talk because I don’t think you can get anything of any quality unless they’re thinking about what they’re doing.

Julie here seems to draw the same correlation between a form of bodily composure and the ability to think and write effectively as does Jane, the kindergarten teacher at Northside. While Jane was more concerned with posture and Julie with silence, they both reflect the belief that concentration is premised on some form of bodily control. The regimen Julie established within her classroom was designed to discipline students to avoid talking when they were writing and engaged in any other self-directed tasks to habituate a scholarly disposition towards their work. This did not mean that talk was never a part of the writing process. As Julie pointed out,

It depends on the sort of writing they’re doing. Sometimes it’s okay when they’re working collaboratively but they have to know how much they’re allowed to talk.

During group-based activities, such as in the last observation session, there was plenty of talk. However, it was relatively task-specific. Students were focused on what they were required to do in the allotted time and did not engage in unrelated chatter. Although allowing for talk at these times, Julie still kept a check upon students, monitoring noise levels so the class did not become unruly and could participate
effectively in the group venture. Talk was also kept to a minimum, or strictly regulated, as a result of Julie’s preference for teacher-directed learning. As a considerable portion of the morning session generally involved Julie explaining and discussing an aspect of work with the class, talk at this time typically involved a question/answer format, interspersed with explanation and elaboration provided by Julie and supplemented by students. The dominance of this particular pedagogic mode within Julie’s practice and the parameters it placed upon talk within the classroom instilled within students an understanding of the role and appropriateness of talk within their classroom routine. This understanding, while initially conscious, had from early in the year been embodied by students as a logic of practice which guided the way they approached their work, especially their application to writing.

Julie also organised students’ seating within the room to help maintain this level of quiet and order. It was not a static model, however. As she explained, “I’m constantly moving them, looking for a productive space”. She pointed out that,

I’ve always tried to allow children to sit next to someone that they like, because sitting next to someone you can’t bear, you clam up and you’re not happy.

Yet qualified this by adding that, “Having them sit next to someone they’re too comfortable with [however] is very fraught”.

The rationale underpinning her approach to positioning students within the room, seemed primarily concerned with the extent to which they applied themselves to their work. This is in contrast to the reasons governing the seating arrangements in Sally’s room at Westville where emphasis was given to the pastoral needs of students with Sally determining that these would be best met by encouraging a social atmosphere. Sally had a more difficult class than Julie in terms of the number of students with both learning and behavioural problems. It is not clear, however, that these were being addressed by privileging the social over the academic in the seating arrangements and overall regimen. Julie, on the other hand, gave priority to the academic in terms of how she positioned students within her room, but she was also aware of how the pastoral needs of her students impacted upon their learning and so she sought to meet these whenever students were repositioned. While she encouraged a good working relationship between students she did not want over-familiarity to impede learning. To Julie the ability to learn was dependent upon self-discipline and she saw herself as being responsible for
Instilling this capacity within students through an emphasis on quiet and control within the classroom. It was Julie’s preference for teacher-directed learning that largely contributed to her being able to establish this classroom regimen. Julie was generally positioned at the front of the room for a large portion of each lesson and students’ attention was drawn towards her. Given this pedagogic mode and the arrangement of desks within the room, Julie was focused upon students, constantly monitoring their contribution to and involvement in the lesson. Unlike group-based learning with a more dispersed arrangement of desks, where the teacher tends to focus on one group or one individual at a time, the teacher-directed methodology which dominated Julie’s practice allowed her to maintain a more constant supervision of the class. Together with the particular spatiality of the room, Julie’s pedagogy cast a panoptic veil over students, instilling within them a disposition for concentration and application to work. When students were required to work independently and Julie moved around the room to provide assistance, the residual effect of this methodology was apparent, as students were quiet and composed, generally giving their full attention to the task at hand. Disciplinary force, therefore, functioned as a phenomenon which in capacitating students’ bodies for learning was directly contributing to their desire to engage in work.

Curriculum Implementation: The Body of Writing

One of the features of Julie’s approach to implementing the curriculum was the amount of time she devoted to topics, in particular the extent to which she concentrated on the structural and grammatical features of different text types. Julie tended to spend a whole term on one unit of work. These units were theme-based, such as ‘Early Explorers’ and ‘Australian Reptiles,’ and would incorporate outcomes from different curriculum areas. Each of these units had a focus text type and so a term would be spent, generally on a daily basis, working on both theme-based content and aspects of writing the focus text type. The intention was that by the end of a term students would have a good command of content knowledge and be proficient in writing a specific textual form. Julie also taught a concurrent novel-based unit. Apart from reading and discussing the novel as a class, the text was used as the stimulus to teach literary aspects of language and to focus on spelling, punctuation and syntax. As is evident from the Observation Overview, Julie spent concentrated periods of time on a regular basis teaching students how to write. She explained that,
If you treat something one day, don’t think, ‘Yeh, I’ve done that so I don’t have to do that again’. You have to revisit everything all the time whenever you can. Consistency, just keep going over and over things until they get it. Never assume just because you’ve taught it, that it has actually gone in.

As with Sally, Julie had a limited knowledge of grammar and textual form and was new to teaching Year 3 after having spent most of her previous years teaching in the infants school. Despite these similarities, the two teachers differed markedly in their approach to teaching writing. Julie had applied herself far more in terms of expanding her knowledge of the new curriculum, but more significant was how she approached teaching it. As Julie’s comments reveal, she gave repetitive treatment to the knowledge and skills she was targeting within a unit of work. Her methodology utilised a form of drill and practice not as merely simplistic repetition, but in a similar way to Jane, the kindergarten teacher at Northside, wherein knowledge and skills were approached in a staged and appropriately scaffolded manner.

Julie’s practice seemed to be guided by this principle and so while she did not display any great expertise with regard to her understanding of language, what she did know was effectively taught. As mentioned, Julie tended to teach one main unit of work each term. During Term 1 the focus was Early Explorers and the text type she was targeting was recounts. Julie actually delayed commencing this unit because she was not happy with her students’ skill-base when they entered her class:

When I got my kids at the beginning of the year I didn’t think they had the skills that they should have had at the end of Year 2 and I really had to go backwards and make sure they got those skills and then we could go onto the Year 3 aspects of learning.

This explains why the unit on Early Explorers carried over into Term 2. During the first part of Term 1 Julie was surveying the ability levels of her students and assessing their expertise in writing different text types, hence her focus on narrative in the first observation session. By the second observation session, 3C had commenced the unit on Early Explorers, which was concerned with the first European explorers to visit Australia. Students studied the backgrounds of Hartog, Dampier, Janz and Tasman and the routes each took to Australia. They concluded the unit by examining Cook, his travels in the Pacific and his claiming of Australia for the British. The class spent time recounting these explorers’ lives and their famous journeys, simultaneously focusing on how to write a recount.
In the second observation session, students were working on a reading comprehension exercise about Dirk Hartog. After roll call Julie commenced the lesson, as she did with most of the other observation sessions, by referring to the previous day’s work which had involved an investigation of Hartog’s journey to Australia. Information had been recorded on the board and linked to stages of what was referred to as a factual recount. There was a poster beside the board detailing the structure of this text type, and the lesson content had been written down on the board to equate with the different stages specified on the poster. The aim of the comprehension exercise students were about to undertake was to provide additional content for writing a recount in a future lesson. Julie’s recap on the previous day’s work therefore provided a link between these related aspects of the unit. By using this process of association students came to perceive lessons as part of a whole, an ongoing course of study with a specific objective rather than a series of discrete lessons involving separate content and skills.

With Julie spending sustained periods of time on a topic and establishing links between individual lessons, she was not only reinforcing the content knowledge on which the class was working but also the sequential textuality of recounts. The associating technique she employed at the beginning of each day served to compound the affective impact of what she was teaching. Iterative reference to what the class was working towards and the role the content and skills they were learning had in achieving this served to produce the somatic familiarity on which consciousness relies. This association of ideas was the cognitive manifestation of the accumulation of pedagogic affect.

After providing a link with the previous day’s work, Julie then commenced the comprehension exercise with the class. The information that students were given about Dirk Hartog contained some difficult vocabulary. Julie, therefore, employed a three-stage approach to reading the text, beginning with students’ own silent reading, followed by her reading the passage to the class and finally having the class as a whole reading the passage out aloud. During the first reading Julie asked students to circle any words in the text that they did not understand. Following the third reading, these words were discussed, with Julie asking students to see if the text itself provided any clues as to what these words might mean. With students able to arrive at definitions without needing to consult a dictionary, Julie then proceeded to model the process involved in answering the comprehension questions. She had a student read out the first of the nine questions and asked the class where in the passage they might find the answer. Her
intention was to provide students with a strategy to better access the text, making them aware that questions are generally organised so that they first relate to information at the beginning of a passage and then progress in a relatively orderly fashion. Another reading strategy Julie discussed with the class was to identify key words in a question and to then locate where these were found in the text, a useful scanning technique to assist in the answering of questions. Students used both these strategies to answer the first question, which was 'What did Dutch sailors come to Indonesia to buy?' Julie, however, was not satisfied with the response - 'spices' - and explained to students that all answers had to be written in full sentences. She asked the class to provide an example of a full sentence response to this question and wrote it on the board - 'Dutch sailors came to Indonesia to buy spices' - pointing out how part of the question was used in the answer. Julie then asked the class about the tense of the passage and the sentence she had just written, drawing their attention to the use of past tense in recounts, a point referred to in previous lessons. After this short explanation, students then copied the sentence into their book under a heading for the comprehension and continued answering the remaining questions independently with Julie moving around the room monitoring their progress.

This process of reading and discussing the text, and explaining how to answer the questions, was quite involved, comprising 45 minutes of lesson time. Julie carefully scaffolded the exercise to ensure students were able to complete the activity relatively independently. She explained that,

I always model everything. I never, ever say to them, 'Here's a comprehension, do it', because I don't think that's going to inspire them. You have to draw them into the text and talk about words you don't know the meaning of, 'Okay, let's look those words up, What do they mean? How do they work? If you didn't have a dictionary, how would you work it out?' Always making the text come alive to them.

It is interesting here how Julie feels a responsibility to inspire her students. She sees their desire to learn as being premised on her ability to cultivate their interest. This interest, was viewed as being grounded in the extent to which students had acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to engage in activities. This desire, therefore, is derived from the dispositions that each student possesses and which are largely instilled by the pedagogic processes that act upon them.

Julie allowed students a considerable amount of time to complete the exercise. Although all questions required students to locate information in the text, some demanded
extrapolation and far more than a simple one-sentence response. At times if Julie thought a question was posing difficulty she discussed it with the class as a whole and then allowed them to return to their work. As students completed the task, they placed their opened books on Julie’s desk and then continued on with one of the range of extension exercises she had in a folder at the side of the room or read a book of their own or their current class novel. Even with students finishing at different intervals there was little noise. Students were self-directed and, due to the regimen that existed within the room and the discipline which it instilled, they routinely settled into the procedure they were required to follow on completing work without disturbing the students who were still working. Julie called a halt to the activity after students had spent an additional 30 minutes writing after recess. Most students had completed the exercise but Julie pointed out,

There are always three, four or five who still don’t get it done in that time. Friday afternoon’s our catch-up afternoon. I hand out all the work that isn’t completed and make them do it and children who’ve finished, they get rewarded and have free time.

This practice provided an additional incentive to students to complete their work, not only because they would be rewarded if they did so, but that there was an expectation that work had to be completed and completed well. Julie was adamant about this last point:

Whatever you expect of them, that’s what they’ll give you, I think. That’s why I say ‘No, go back and do your full stops, go back and fill in the capital letters. Your spelling is just atrocious, go back and fix it up’.

3C therefore could not simply complete a task in any way; there was a requirement that it should demonstrate effort and application. Praise was not forthcoming unless this was evident, an issue returned to below in relation to Julie’s comments on students’ writing.

Although the comprehension exercise in this second observation session did not focus specifically on writing a recount, it provides some insight into how Julie approached teaching the content which would form the basis of the text students would write in a future lesson. Her detailed and carefully staged approach to teaching content knowledge and relating it to a textual form was also demonstrated in the fifth observation session undertaken during Term 3. The unit of work 3C was studying at this time was *Australian Reptiles* and the focus text type was an information report. Over the course of the term, the class investigated reptiles as a class and then focused on three different types of
reptiles - squamata, crocodilians and testudines - studying Australian examples from each of these categories. In doing this, students focused on the appearance, habitat and behaviour of reptiles such as lizards, snakes, crocodiles and turtles, a course of study which lent itself to a descriptive textual form such as an information report. By the fifth observation session the class had already spent four weeks on this unit of work. They had read and written a number of information reports and were familiar with their generic structure. During this session, the class was investigating goannas. After reviewing the previous day's work, Julie commenced the lesson by distributing an information sheet to the class which listed ten key facts about goannas and underneath this had six empty boxes with the headings: general statement, appearance, habitat, food, movement and other facts. Before referring to this sheet, Julie revised the structural features of an information report with the class, such as how it might start and the categories of information that might form the separate paragraphs in this type of text. Julie then nominated students to read through the key facts on the sheet, one at a time, and to decide the category of information to which each fact belonged. This process was conducted verbally with no writing at this stage. When the class had finished categorising each point, a procedure that had also included discussion of difficult vocabulary, Julie asked students to write these facts into their appropriate boxes.

When the class had finished this task, Julie explained how they would now be using this information to write an information report about goannas with each of the boxes representing a separate paragraph. As the facts were written in point form rather than sentences, Julie helped the class to construct sentences from these points and to draw on any other information that might be relevant from their own reading or from previous lessons to include in their report. As Julie had a limited understanding of grammar, particularly sentence level grammar and terminology such as subject, object and rules of subject/verb agreement, the procedure she employed to demonstrate the move from point form to sentence relied on modelling correct form rather than referring explicitly to the components of a sentence. With the first key point, - *members of monitor family of lizards* - which formed part of the general statement, the classification and introductory information in the text, Julie simply nominated a student to place this information in what she thought was a 'proper sentence'. The response was, 'Goannas are members of monitor family of lizards'. Julie explained that this was almost correct but that there was a word missing. Another student then volunteered the response, 'Goannas are members of the monitor family of lizards. While Julie acknowledged that this was correct and it was important to include *the* to make the sentence complete, there was no naming of
this word as an article or its specific role in the sentence. Julie instead wrote the sentence on the board and then proceeded to discuss what other information could be added to this point such as how the word 'goanna' was an Australian Aboriginal word.

She also asked the class to look through the list of key facts to see if there was any other information that they could add to the sentence that was written on the board. Students focused on the word 'meat-eater' in their list of points and Julie asked them if they knew the technical name for this term. Students responded with the word 'carnivorous' and Julie then explained how students could add this to the general statement they would write in their own report. She also encouraged students to use other technical terms rather than to simply rely on what was provided in the facts listed on the sheet: 'limbs' rather than 'legs' being another example. This discussion continued with suggestions of sentences for the next paragraph. Finally, after a reminder about the need to indent their paragraphs, 3C set about writing their own report on goannas, a task to which Julie allotted 40 minutes. During this time she moved around the room assisting students with their work, asking a couple to start again when she felt their first attempt was not adequate. During this time students consulted dictionaries which were on their desks. At one point Julie looked up the word 'carnivorous' with the class as students had difficulty locating it without assistance. While students were writing, Julie insisted on absolute quiet, which was generally the case. At one point, however, when a couple of students engaged in quiet chatter, they were reprimanded with the comment, "Work doesn't happen with noise". When students began to finish their reports they left their books on their desks and, in the same manner as when students had completed the reading comprehension exercise, proceeded to read or commence other activities. As Julie became aware that students had completed their work she read through their finished product offering advice and having them make corrections if necessary.

In this single observation session, Julie had devoted 75 minutes to a lesson on writing a report; 35 minutes of this time was spent on teacher explanation and 40 minutes on students writing, a period during which Julie monitored students’ progress, maintaining strict control over noise in the room and 3C’s application to the task. A real ethos of work pervaded the room with students focusing on their own writing and completing the report as it had been explained. This, however, was only one of a number of reports that 3C wrote on reptiles during the term. To reinforce the generic structure and language of this textual form, Julie had the class write reports on at least four different reptiles and to assist this process she had students complete activities such as

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categorisation exercises, library research tasks, investigating and labelling diagrams and defining new vocabulary.

As with the other teachers in the study, Julie also supplied samples of some of her students’ writing. The texts examined below are the first drafts of reports which 3C wrote during Week 4 of Term 3, a week prior to the observation session discussed above and relatively early in the class’s investigation of reptiles and report writing. The first of these texts (Figure 4.1) was a report on crocodiles written by Hannah, an Anglo-Australian girl Julie considered to be performing at an above-average level. Students wrote these drafts after having completed a range of the exercises on this reptile mentioned above and with a similar scaffolded approach to writing a report as detailed in the fifth observation session. Hannah commenced her report appropriately with a classificatory statement. Although this introduction to her text is quite short, an aspect of report writing that Julie was working on improving in the fifth observation session, she has effectively organised information into paragraphs about appearance, habitat and behaviour, a point Julie remarks upon in her assessment of Hannah’s work. Despite one error in the second paragraph, which may simply be a capitalisation problem with ‘Whereas’, her sentences are well formed, including a number of complex constructions. There are a couple of simple sentences that could have been combined into compound constructions but, generally, it is a well-written text. In the third paragraph, however, Hannah lapses into spoken language with the use of ‘like’ and the second person pronoun ‘you’, errors that Julie has not acknowledged. Given this is something of an aberration and given that Hannah read and wrote a number of other reports in the remainder of the term, this stylistic feature may have been corrected through her own approximation of correct form. Julie also neglected to point out Hannah’s referencing problem at the start of the second paragraph with the overuse of ‘Crocodile’ as sentence theme. There is one spelling error in this paragraph with ‘to’ that was not noted in Julie’s corrections. Overall, however, it is clear that Hannah has put a great deal of effort into writing this report. There are few mechanical errors. By this stage of her learning she has already habituated effective handwriting skills and a more than satisfactory command of spelling and punctuation, all of which allow her to focus with considerable attention on not only the content of the report but the specific textuality of this style of writing. Julie acknowledged Hannah’s efforts in her comments at the end of the report. While
Crocodiles

Crocodiles are cold-blooded reptiles. Crocodiles have narrow heads and jaws.

Crocodiles have a very large fourth tooth which sticks out when its jaw is not open. Alligators and Crocodiles are different. The Crocodile has a tooth which sticks out whereas the Alligator's tooth is invisible. Crocodiles have rough leathery skin. They have four legs. Two of them are hind legs and the other two are forelegs.

Crocodiles live in like swamps, rivers and creeks. You usually find them on top of the water.

Crocodiles are good hunters. They will eat almost anything. When female crocodile lays their eggs, they lay them in the sand or in the grass. They are good swimmers.

Good paragraphing Hannah. You have used the information from the report well but you have also used prior knowledge. You probably did not need to write so much about alligators as the report was about Crocodiles.

An excellent effort. Keep up the great work.

10/8
complimenting Hannah, Julie's praise is quite measured with her intention being, it would seem, to supply feedback on what Hannah has and hasn't achieved rather than simply congratulating her efforts.

The second text in this sample from 3C (Figure 4.2) was written by Mark, another Anglo-Australian student whose work Julie felt was representative of an average standard within the class. Mark's text is much shorter than Hannah's and not as well organised. He has commenced his report with a short classificatory statement but his paragraphs do not group the different categories of information effectively, with the second paragraph moving between information about appearance and habitat. His sentence structure also lacks the complexity of Hannah's text. He tends to favour simple and compound structures, with one example of the latter in the second paragraph demonstrating an overuse of the conjunction 'and' and an unnecessary repetition of the subject. Mark only makes three spelling errors in his text, two of which are corrected by Julie: the incorrect plural of dingo, however, is not noted. There are no punctuation errors in Mark's work.

Judging from her comments, Julie's focus in correcting both Hannah and Mark's work is the organisation of the text into paragraphs. Given this text on crocodiles was written at an early stage of 3C's work on report writing, it is understandable that Mark was experiencing difficulty with this aspect of his work. To ensure improvement in the future, Julie outlines these problems in her remarks at the end of Mark's text and, as with Hannah, pinpoints what has and hasn't been achieved. Julie's comments, therefore, provide constructive criticism assigning praise only where it is due. It appears to be utilised more for diagnostic purposes than simply as a form of encouragement in her assessment of students' work. While Mark has some problems with the organisation of his text it is worthwhile to note that, as with Hannah, he has effective spelling and punctuation skills. With these aspects of his work causing little difficulty he would be able to give a greater focus to the paragraphing problems that Julie has pinpointed in future lessons.
CROCODILES

Crocodiles are Australian reptiles. ✅
Crocodiles have tough skin and they have a big, long tail and four legs like most other reptiles. Crocodiles live in Asia, Australia, Africa and other hot places.

Freshwater crocodile has a longer snout than the saltwater crocodile.

Crocodiles eat many animals like birds, fish, and sometimes dingos.

Crocodiles can stay underwater for at least an hour.

Mark:
You have a good understanding of the report but you have not organised your ideas as well as you could.

You have done the title and classification statement. Well done. Then you began with appearance went on to write about habitat back to appearance.

Then you began a new paragraph for behaviour (good!) Try to keep all the information about appearance together. 10/8
The work representative of a below average standard in 3C was written by another Anglo-Australian student named Ben whose report (Figure 4.3) is a far less cohesive text than those written by his two classmates.

Crocodile
Crocodiles are cold blooded reptiles.
Crocodiles have rough skin. They have strong jaws. The eyes are on top of the head.
Crocodiles live in hot places they are found in Asia and Australia. They like to live on sand banks.
Crocodiles are meat eating.
Crocodiles close their nostriles when they are in the water to help them stay underwater.
Crocodiles warm up when they warm up with mouth. When they get hot they close their nostriles.

A good effort Ben.
You needed just a little help to complete this.
You tried hard to re-write the report into your own words
You still are forgetting capital letters to begin a new sentence and you are experimenting with paragraphing.

10/8

Figure 4.3
Although students could draw on prior knowledge to write their report on crocodiles, the main source of information was a set of key facts, similar in some ways to the information students used in writing their report on goannas in the fifth observation session. Ben, however, has relied too heavily on this stimulus and as a result his text reads like a list of points rather than a report. This is most obviously the case in his overuse of the word ‘crocodile’ as sentence theme rather than using pronouns or trying, within the narrow range appropriate for report writing, to vary his sentence beginnings. Ben also makes a number of spelling mistakes, most of which have been corrected by Julie, and he repeatedly neglects to use capital letters to begin sentences which is both corrected in the text and commented upon by Julie at the end of the report. Unlike Hannah and Mark, Ben is yet to habituate these mechanical aspects of the writing process which no doubt impacts upon his ability to focus on the content of what he is writing and the text’s particular stylistic features. He also displays less control with his handwriting than that exhibited by his two classmates. Julie, however, devoted far less time to this aspect of the curriculum than did Sally. She explained that,

I try to do it once a week. Some weeks it’s just not possible, but if I can, it’s either in the context of copying poetry or a specific handwriting lesson where I teach them how to join letters.

For Ben this is clearly not enough, yet as Jane the kindergarten teacher at Northside explained, handwriting is a skill which needs to be habituated by the end of kindergarten as after this point the curriculum becomes crowded with other aspects of the writing process. It is also the case that after kindergarten students simply spend far more time writing and in doing so they are developing their own distinctive style. Ben’s handwriting was clearly neglected in earlier years. He has habituated a poor writing style which while legible is not particularly fluid and detracts from his work. What is more problematic is that it may impede his ability to write. Julie, however, felt she could not devote more time to handwriting and, in Ben’s case, as he has already acquired this particular style, the process of correcting it would be quite time consuming. Despite these difficulties with the more mechanical aspects of writing, as Julie points out in her comments on his work, Ben has applied himself to the task. His writing may be still very much like spoken language, as in the final paragraph, but he has organised his work relatively well, especially given this is quite early in the work on report writing that 3C undertook.
Concluding Remarks

There are marked differences between Julie and Sally’s approaches to teaching their students how to write. The contrast in their teaching practice, however, was most pronounced in terms of the amount of time and detail that they devoted towards teaching aspects of the curriculum and particularly the different styles of writing outlined in the syllabus. Sally’s lessons tended to be short and she may have only spent time on one or two days focusing on teaching a particular textual form before moving on to new work. Julie, however, devoted a whole term to teaching students how to write a text type, integrating a treatment of its generic form and, to some degree, its grammar with the content of the unit on which the class was working. The brevity with which Sally approached teaching different styles of writing was to some extent a function of her limited understanding of textual form and grammar, the focus of the curriculum. Julie, however, also lacked experience and expertise in this area and while she may have applied herself far more than Sally in acquiring a knowledge of the curriculum, the time and detail which she gave to teaching it is more a product of her pedagogic approach than simply her grasp of the curriculum content. A feature of Julie’s teaching methodology was her iterative treatment of content knowledge and skills. There was an elaborated drill component to her teaching practice whereby she carefully scaffolded the concepts and skills she introduced to the class, having students repeatedly perform a range of tasks in which these were the focus. In doing this, pedagogic affect was maximised with students acquiring familiarity with what was taught, which was as much corporeal as it was cognitive. Central to Julie’s approach was the emphasis she placed on teacher direction. A substantial proportion of Julie’s lessons were devoted to teacher explanation whereby a Vygotskyian principle of supporting students’ learning to assist them achieve independence was evident. 3C, therefore, tended to display a keen desire to write. Even students such as Ben, who was experiencing difficulties with writing, applied themselves to their work. This was not only because Julie had appropriately scaffolded the steps involved in completing a task, but also because her students had been invested with a discipline for scholarly labour through the regimen that she had established within the classroom. Her insistence on quiet and the need to complete work well ensured students undertook tasks in a diligent manner.

In Sally’s classroom a different ethos prevailed. There was not the same compulsion for students to apply themselves to their writing. Sally was more lenient about talk and movement within her classroom and students generally displayed a restlessness and
inability to concentrate when required to focus on a task for any length of time. They seemed to lack the necessary bodily disposition for literate practice which Sally’s pedagogy failed to rectify. In tending to favour group-based and self-directed learning over a more teacher-directed pedagogy, Sally placed a great deal of responsibility upon students for their own learning. At this stage of their education, however, they not only lacked the skills necessary for more independent inquiry but also the discipline for academic endeavour. Without these capacities it is understandable that many students in the class simply lacked any real desire to engage in the writing process. Their desires were often directed elsewhere, as their habitus was not predisposed to the practice of writing or scholarly labour in general. 3B, therefore, were far less prepared than 3C to make the transition into upper primary and beyond at which point any interventions to alter their existing work practices and competence in writing would need to be considerable to impact upon the dispositions already formed in their first four years at school.

Notes

1 The terminology used here, as in temporal conjunctions, is drawn from Systemic Functional Grammar.
Chapter 6 - Habituated Bodies – Learning to Write in Year 5

There are children who have already given up before they come to you and you don’t know at what stage the shutters have come down and getting a shutter up that’s come down is really hard.
Year 5 Teacher Westville Public School

I find in an OC class, in this group in particular, the average child is more diligent - not brighter, not more analytical but more diligent. They’re willing to listen to what you have to say and more willing to ask for help.
Year 5 Teacher Northside Public School

In Year 5 students commence the final stage of their primary school education. They have reached the penultimate year before high school and it is assumed they have acquired considerable mastery of the writing process in preparation for the more complex engagement with disciplinary knowledge at a secondary level. In addition to acquiring a particular competence in relation to the various skills involved in learning to write, students have also embodied certain dispositions towards learning, which by this stage of their schooling are quite firmly entrenched. This is evident in the remarks made by the two Year 5 teachers involved in the study, yet the learning dispositions of the students in each of these teacher’s classes are quite different. At Westville PS there were children in the Year 5 class who seemed to lack any real desire for learning. As their teacher pointed out, they “have already given up before they come to you”. In the Year 5 class at Northside PS, however, students seemed to exhibit a keen desire to learn. Being in an Opportunity Class (OC) these children were recognised as intellectually gifted students, but it is interesting that their teacher saw them as “not brighter, not more analytical, but more diligent” [emphasis added]. They applied themselves to their work with what appeared to be a ‘will’ to succeed. Apart from the considerable difference in ability between these two Year 5 classes there was also significant variation in the socio-economic status and the ethnicity of students. While these variables obviously impacted upon students’ approaches to learning, what is of concern here is the extent to which the pedagogic processes they experienced within the classroom affected their already quite firmly habituated bodies in the ongoing process of learning to write. This is the focus of the following analysis, wherein the pedagogy of these two Year 5 teachers is considered in terms of its impact upon their students’ bodily capacity for scholarly labour and their ability and desire to write.
Westville Public School – The Year 5 Teacher

Margaret Davies, the Year 5 teacher at Westville Public School, was in her tenth year of teaching at the time of the study. As with the Year 3 teacher at Westville, Margaret had found it difficult to obtain a full-time teaching position on completing her teacher training and had spent her first five years as a teacher working as a casual, generally on a day-to-day basis, with a couple of term blocks. During this period, Margaret had taught a range of year groups from kindergarten to Year 6 but in her five years as a permanent teacher at Westville she had only taught Year 5 or 6 which, she explained, were the years with which she felt most comfortable. Margaret had not commenced teacher training immediately following school. She was fifty-one and, having left school early, had worked as a legal secretary and then run her own business while raising a family. When her children were older she decided to complete her Higher School Certificate at a TAFE college and then gained entry to university to train as a teacher. She had commenced a Masters degree in Education focusing on psychology and school counselling but, on securing a full-time position at Westville, she found the combined workload of full-time teaching and study too difficult to manage and withdrew from the course.

In terms of her knowledge of grammar and text, Margaret explained how she had learnt grammar “pretty much by rote”. She pointed out that,

I don’t remember the rules any more, but I apply them and I can read somebody else’s work and say ‘No, the punctuation’s wrong’, but it would be hard for me to explain exactly why it’s wrong.

Her knowledge of language was mainly drawn from this early period of her education. She commented that there was very little treatment of language and how to teach it in her pre-service training and so while she felt that she wrote well herself, she did not feel confident in teaching aspects of grammar and text. With regard to her overall approach to teaching she explained that,

I’m not heavily into books full of work, or the presentation being excellent. I think I do believe in the process more so than the product but I do believe they should come out with something at the end. Even if it’s just one fact that’s a hinge fact later on in life.

Margaret emphasised the pastoral aspect of teaching in discussing her educational philosophy. She remarked that,
I think the personal relationship between the teacher and the student in primary school is critical because that diminishes as they go into high school. So I like to think of the class as a family type of thing, that we’re together for a year and during that time we support each other and they support me in the same way that I support them. And some of the kids have got that empathy.

Westville Public School – The Year 5 Class

5D, Margaret’s class at Westville, had 32 students. Just over 50% of the class were from a non-English speaking background with the main ethnic groupings being Filipino and South Pacific Islander, that is Tongan and Samoan. There was also one Mainland Chinese and one Fijian Indian student and six Aboriginal children. As far as the ability level of students was concerned, Margaret remarked that,

Well, average is a kind way of putting it. When the classes were drawn up at the end of last year, because there were going to be several composite classes, the children who were going into those composites were selected with care to be independent workers, which meant the children in the remaining two very full classes were kind of the lower end ability wise ... also it’s a little top heavy with behaviour problems.

Of the latter group of students with behaviour problems, one was classified borderline IM and there were two Acquired Deficiency Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) students, both boys, who were treated for this condition with the drug Ritalin. With reference to these two students, Margaret commented that, “one’s very bouncy. The other one is talkative and chatty”. Overall 5D was quite a difficult class.

Organising the Pedagogic Space

Margaret’s classroom was located on the second level of a two-storey building on the Westville site. There was no separate store or bag room, although storage space was provided in cupboards behind the sliding blackboards at the front of the room. While there were bag hooks in the hallway outside the room, students chose to bring their school bags into class placing them under their desks. Margaret’s room was slightly larger than Sally’s, the Year 3 teacher at Westville, being 8.5 by 7.5 metres. For five of the six observation sessions, students’ desks were organised in three long rows (Figure 5.1) seating approximately ten or eleven students in each. This design ensured students were all positioned in a central position within the room, facing the blackboard. Open space within the room was located on the margins but for most of the year there was considerable clutter on the perimeter of the classroom with boxes of books and
other resources taking up much of the space. Movement within the room was, therefore, reasonably restricted. Students spent most of their time seated at their desks. During Taskforce, however, students worked predominantly in groups and a small proportion of the class used what floor space was available to complete their work. This arrangement of desks not only restricted students' movement within the room, it also meant that Margaret had difficulty moving freely between these rows. As this program required students to work both collaboratively and independently, with the teacher moving around the room to provide assistance, it seemed unusual that Margaret opted for this classroom design over the group arrangement of desks (Figure 5.2). This latter design, only used during one of the observation lessons, was far more suited to a group work format, yet Margaret tended to favour the row arrangement throughout most of the year. Her organisation of the pedagogic space would suggest she favoured a more traditional teaching style. It does seem, however, that she tended to use group work during Taskforce while at other times teacher-directed lessons dominated her practice. Despite this, she was quite critical of traditional teaching practice. She explained that,

If you deliver your lesson in a traditional teacher way to 32 kids, some of them will pick it up straight away, some of them will need constant reviewing and others it will still be a mystery way after. So, I mean it may seem that there's a lot of redundancy in going around to 30 odd different kids at different times teaching the same thing, but for the children I think it's more effective.

This comment is interesting to consider in relation to curriculum implementation and will be returned to below, particularly as it pertains to the Taskforce program. Here, however, this comment shows Margaret's attitude towards traditional pedagogy and what appears to be an incongruence between the more progressivist teaching methodology with which she identifies and her organisation of the pedagogic space. While Margaret may have favoured individual and group-based learning, her classroom design was not really conducive to this teaching style. Rather than encouraging a more collaborative learning environment by using a group-based format, the seating arrangement she favoured directed vectors within the room towards the front where the blackboard was located, and where an overhead projector was usually positioned on a trolley for use in the other lessons Margaret conducted outside Taskforce time. Margaret's desk was also located in the front right-hand corner of the room, though she tended to use it more for storage space. She generally marked the roll and conducted teacher-directed lessons from the overhead projector trolley.
To some extent the organisation of Margaret’s classroom would suggest that its spatiality exerted considerable disciplinary force upon students’ bodies. There were other aspects of this pedagogic space, however, which seemed to counter this, minimising the regulative intensity of the spatial design. These features were also very much related to the classroom regimen that Margaret had established and certain, in particular, to the ambience within the room. In the back corner of the classroom there was a budgie in a cage, the class pet. Throughout lessons it would chirp softly and play with a bell. Alongside the budgie was a computer desk. During each of the observation sessions the computer was switched on. When students were not using it a musical screen saver periodically emitted an electronic melody. Students seemed unperturbed by these noises which contributed to a relaxed and homely atmosphere within the room, a situation discussed in more detail below. While Margaret may have used a traditional seating arrangement, disciplinary force within the room seemed minimal with the spatiality generally producing a limited effect upon students’ bodies. What proved more significant was the regimen within the room.

Establishing a Classroom Regimen

The relaxed and homely ambience within Margaret’s classroom was not only a result of the sounds of the budgie and the computer but students’ conduct within the room and how they utilised the space overall. Together with much of the perimeter of the room being lined with boxes of resources, students’ desks were covered with a range of personal items. These generally consisted of novelty stationery items with various gadgets attached: multi-coloured erasers, connector pens, sharpeners with puzzle compartments and so on. These often served as a distraction during lesson time as many students played with these objects and compared them to their neighbour’s trinkets. One student, with part of his arm in a cast, sat through most of the first observation session playing with his connector pens, arranging them in different patterns and bothering his neighbours. He gave little attention to the series of ‘mini tests’ Margaret was conducting, answering a question only periodically. His lack of involvement did not seem to bother Margaret yet, if his cast made it difficult for him to complete the test, he would probably have been better served undertaking alternate work which would have occupied him more productively. In addition to this collection of trinkets, many students also had water bottles on their desks that they sipped from throughout lessons. These were not only prevalent during summer but winter as well, and proved to be another accessory occupying students’ desks. Rather than simply being used to provide refreshment,
which seems needless on such a regular basis, these bottles appeared to function as something of a status symbol, much in the same way as the trinkets, with many bottles brandishing fashionable sports logos signifying a student’s degree of sophistication. Despite the traditional seating arrangement, with this accumulation of items on students’ desks and the homely atmosphere evoked by the class pet and the beep and hum of the computer, Margaret’s classroom seemed to exude comfort.

This, it would seem, was intentional on Margaret’s part. Given the difficult nature of the class, the number of students with behavioural problems and learning difficulties, Margaret sought to achieve an environment in which students felt at ease. As she had remarked earlier, she liked to think of the class as “a family”. The regimen she had established within the classroom was designed to encourage this with the emphasis clearly on the pastoral needs of students. In relation to this, she explained,

I’ve been into some classrooms where the atmosphere is quite repressive and I think if you have a repressive atmosphere the other thing that happens is if the kids then move on into a freer environment the next year or the next day or whatever, they tend to really break out. So I give a fair amount of leash management-wise.

There was a relaxed disciplinary code, therefore, governing conduct within the room. This was not only evident in Margaret’s leniency with regard to desk clutter, but her acceptance of students using the floor to work, most often during Taskforce activities. She commented that, “I’ve got quite a few who much prefer to spend all their time on their bellies on the floor doing their work”. Although she expressed misgivings about this she explained that,

It’s hard to make a judgment on it. I don’t think they do their best work that way because the posture is not right. But it’s probably the posture that they use when they’re watching television at home or a video or something like that. I think as long as the work is reasonably neat, it’s OK.

While Margaret would have preferred her students to work at their desks she was quite prepared to make allowances for those students who felt more comfortable on the floor. However, as Margaret recognised, they were not able to do their best work in this position. To write effectively for any sustained period, students need to sit at a desk. For those students in 5D who regularly opted for the floor, their bodies were clearly not accustomed to this more restrictive position, or they simply lacked the discipline to apply themselves to their work in a studious fashion. By Year 5, it seemed that they had still not acquired the requisite embodiment for scholarly labour. They had simply transferred their domestic habitus to the classroom environment with the ostensible
constraints of this academic milieu having minimal impact upon their bodies. There
seemed little imperative for greater corporeal discipline and, without this, students were
not predisposed towards applying themselves to their work, particularly during
activities which required them to write. It was not only the students working on the
floor who did not seem to possess the bodily capacity for literate practice. Many of the
students who remained seated at their desks were constantly rocking back and forth on
their chairs and playing with the paraphernalia on their desks They seemed unable to
concentrate on their work for any sustained period. Short bursts of activity in which they
appeared focused on their work were interspersed with longer periods of talk and/or
fidgeting.

Talk, however, did not appear to concern Margaret greatly. When she was addressing
the class, students generally focused on her and there was minimal chatter. She did
explain that at times it took the class a while to settle down. Rather than raise her voice,
she pointed out that, “I do a lot of waiting quietly”. She felt this technique was far more
effective than shouting:

It may take a little longer to get attention but I think it makes for a happier environment.

When students were working on an individual task or group activity there was always a
hum in the room that could become quite loud. Margaret’s tolerance for this level of
noise seemed related to her desire to foster a friendly and relaxed atmosphere within the
room, a factor which also influenced her approach to seating. As with Sally, the Year 3
teacher at Westville, Margaret used a seat lotto system:

We ran a seat lotto where the names were drawn at random and that was one once a week
so that the children sat with a variety of other children. It got a bit boring by the end of the
second term so now we do it slightly differently. I go through the roll either from top to
bottom or bottom to top and everybody in the room is allowed to swap with somebody
else in the room.

Margaret’s rationale for arranging seating was to encourage students to form friendships
and to promote a sense of ‘familial empathy’. She viewed talk as playing an important
role in allowing these bonds to develop. As she explained,

It’s not just positioning in the classroom that’s the benefit, it’s the socialising. It’s learning
to be a good sport if you end up somewhere where you prefer not to be.

This latter point is interesting, as there would have been times when students were not
comfortable sitting next to certain class members and this may have affected their work.
The positioning of students, though, was neither completely random nor simply left up to the students to determine. Margaret did intervene at times, albeit reluctantly. She pointed out that,

I sometimes have to move several children into better positions, but I try not to do it. I just hope the swaps they do are going to plant them in the right spots. I've never, ever made a prescriptive, 'you have to sit here and you have to sit there'. There's always been a bit of freedom.

As with Sally, Margaret tended to privilege the pastoral over the academic in terms of positioning students. The impact of this upon classroom regimen was considerable with sociality rather than scholarship shaping students' behaviour.

This pattern of behaviour was particularly characteristic of work during Taskforce. 5D engaged in Taskforce activities for 45 minutes each morning from Monday to Thursday. Rather than being scheduled part-way through the morning session, as was the case with Year 3, at a Year 5 level Taskforce commenced immediately following roll call when approximately half of 5D moved off to another classroom to engage in activities said to be designed for their ability level. As was the case with Year 3, this did not mean that there was only one set of activities being conducted in each room. In Margaret's class during Taskforce students were working on five different sets of tasks designed for the lower spectrum of the year. These tasks were set out on study guide sheets (Figures 5.1 a-e) that students pasted into their books and worked through at their own pace either independently or in groups. While students were working through their study guides, Margaret progressed around the room assisting students.

The effectiveness of these tasks will be discussed below in relation to curriculum implementation. What is of concern here is the impact of this pedagogic mode upon classroom regimen. During a considerable proportion of the time devoted to Taskforce students worked without teacher support and with minimal supervision. Margaret even commented that, given that the program occurred after roll call and there were often administration matters such as absentee notes to deal with, “There are occasions when the children are soloing for 15-20 minutes before I actually start to do my rounds”. In general, Margaret would spend a couple of minutes with each student during the 45-minute session, but this was not always the case. In the four Taskforce sessions that were observed, there were times when several students did not receive any personal tuition. There was an assumption that students would simply continue working through their
## Lesson Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Area</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 1</strong></td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>9:00am</td>
<td>Pledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 2</strong></td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>9:15am</td>
<td>Work on assignment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 3</strong></td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>9:30am</td>
<td>Group Work</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 4</strong></td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>9:45am</td>
<td>Group Work</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Session 5</strong></td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>10:00am</td>
<td>Group Work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 6</strong></td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>10:15am</td>
<td>Group Work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- All sessions are conducted in the classroom.
- Group Work activities involve collaborative learning tasks.
- The Pledge is followed by a brief introduction to the day's lesson.
- Work on assignment involves completing a specific task assigned for the day.

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**Observation Overview - Margaret Davies 5D**
study guide and receive assistance in the next session. However, without constant teacher supervision and given many lacked the necessary discipline to work independently, little work was completed. What was attempted seemed to be of a poor standard, not simply as a result of the students’ lack of ability but because they were often distracted and only intermittently applied themselves. This was the case during each of the Taskforce sessions that were observed. At times students were reminded by Margaret to keep on task and to lessen the noise. These reprimands had minimal impact with one group of four boys sitting towards the back of the room during the third observation session maintaining an ongoing conversation about football throughout most of Taskforce and failing to complete even one of the questions on their study guide.

In the fourth observation session students seemed particularly distracted. Over the 45-minute period only six students in the class were observed doing any sustained work – one girl and a group of five boys – all of whom were sitting towards the front of the room. Despite this obvious lack of application, Margaret felt Taskforce was of benefit to her students, in particular the time she spent with them ‘one-on-one’ discussing their work. She explained,

You’ve got to spend a lot of individual time with them if you can because they’re the sort of kids that when your back’s turned they’ll stop work.

Margaret’s comment here attests to her students’ lack of ability to work independently and so it seems unusual that she opted for a pedagogic mode during Taskforce that required students to exercise these skills. The ‘one-on-one’ time she spent with her students was overshadowed by the greater proportion of time allocated to students ‘soloing’, working without guidance through their study guide, time in which Margaret was unable to oversee the rest of the class as she was concentrating on assisting students on an individual basis. The panoptic force generated by this practice was minimal contributing to the relaxed regimen within the room. Students felt little compulsion to engage in work with any degree of rigour, not as an act of disobedience, but because this was the regular mode of practice within the room. Students commenced their day this way four out of the five days a week and had simply become accustomed to working at this pace, combining work with regular breaks and chatter. Most seemed to find it difficult to work independently or simply did not bother as there was no requirement to do so. Margaret did not prohibit interaction between students despite the fact that much of the talk that occurred within the class was not work-related. She explained,
The kids are very comfortable working in groups of two or three and that’s because it is comfortable. Often two children working on the same book will work side by side and interrelate and that’s fine.

Margaret did, however, express misgivings about students’ reliance on their peers. She added,

But then, when you put them on the spot and give them an exam, they haven’t got the support of their peers any more and that’s hard.

The affective impact of these particular work practices upon students’ bodies within 5D seemed to either cultivate or simply confirm a habitus that was not predisposed towards independent academic endeavour. Students generally lacked the bodily capacity to work for sustained periods of time on a task. For those children who Margaret viewed as having “already given up”, the relaxed regimen within the classroom may have made them feel comfortable, but it seemed to have had little effect on “getting [the] shutter up” in terms of their desire to write.

Curriculum Implementation: The Body of Writing

A considerable amount of the time in which 5D learnt to write was undertaken within the framework of the Taskforce program. While the focus was intended to be general literacy skills, most of the students’ study guide activities involved some form of writing, albeit at times simply one-word responses. Although Margaret did consider the program of benefit, she had some reservations:

One of the downsides of Taskforce is that because it’s three-quarters of an hour, four days a week it cuts into language time with the rest of the class because it’s a mixed class that I give the Taskforce to in the morning. Some are mine, some are Jill’s and it’s the lower group.

Margaret’s key concern here seems to be the amount of time she lost in teaching language skills to her own class but the main rationale of the program was to stream students into ability groups so that their specific literacy needs could be more effectively addressed, targeting particular skills in each Taskforce group. Despite this intended aim and the relative cohesiveness of ability of each group, students did not undertake similar work on a corporate basis at these times. Instead they were divided into groups, yet again, and completed one of five different study guides which involved a number of tasks requiring a range of diverse skills. The sheets (Figures 5.1 a-e shown below) reveal the five different study guides that Taskforce groups were working on in Margaret’s
room during Term 4. Each study guide was based upon a specific text. These were entitled, Donkey, School Days, William’s Version, Nails and Imagination, three of which were literary texts and two factual. Students were required to read either part or all of their assigned text and then proceed through the tasks listed on their relevant study guide. A quite generous period of approximately ten weeks was allotted for students to complete these tasks which, together with the texts, were of differing complexity. So, although Taskforce groups were already organised in terms of ability, Margaret felt a further gradation was required with texts and tasks designed to match each child’s specific literacy level.

Even though students were working on different texts and tasks, there was some commonality in terms of the types of tasks in the five study guides. Each included comprehension questions requiring students to locate information and, in some cases, extrapolate and / or infer. There were also vocabulary tasks in three of the five study guides that asked students to provide meanings for words and to then write them in a sentence. There is no instruction in these tasks to make use of a dictionary. Students were to simply “work out” what these words meant. It seemed the emphasis was on using contextual clues to determine meaning rather than on providing practise in dictionary use, even to confirm a definition. Three of the study guides also included research questions. To complete these tasks students were required to use the school library and were allowed to do so during Taskforce time in groups of no more than four students. The instructions concerning this research and the way it was to be compiled were very general. In the Donkey study guide, students were simply asked to “Find out some facts about donkeys and present these facts nicely. Draw a donkey and label the parts”. The types of facts were not specified nor was the form of presentation this information should take. The only instruction apart from drawing a picture and labelling it was that the information should be presented “nicely”. To students, this could simply mean that their writing needed to be neat. It does not specify that their response needs to be written in sentences and paragraphs and it does not indicate a particular textual form. As there is an expectation that students will describe donkeys, this could entail them writing an information report, one of the text types with which students were required to be proficient in writing by this stage of their learning.

Students completing this study guide, the least able within Taskforce, were given no guidelines with regard to producing this type of text. This was also the case with the research tasks in the other study guides which similarly asked students to ‘find out’
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Read and enjoy the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>This story is not written about a family in Australia. What clues do you get that the story is written in a different country?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Find these words in the story: tethered, rump, mane, bray, coin. Work out what they mean, then write a new sentence using these words. (Five sentences altogether!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Have a good look at the illustrations. What do you think the artist used to draw and colour the pictures?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Find the name of the boy in the story!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Could this possibly be a true story? Tell me why, or why not. Give the best reasons you can.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Often we wish for things that we can’t have. Write about something you really, really want and what makes it hard or impossible to get. (Secret: I always wanted a horse!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The boy’s mother gets really, really upset when she discovers the donkey in the house. Why do mothers do this? After all, it’s only one, little donkey. Do you think it really was filthy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Find out some facts about donkeys and present these facts nicely. Draw a donkey and label the parts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The old man who owns the donkey thinks the boy looked after the donkey for him and gives him a reward. There is a sentence in the story which shows the boy knows he was doing the wrong thing. Find this sentence and write it in your book.</td>
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**SCHOOL DAYS**

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Skim through the book. Read any pages which particularly interest you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Imagine a world where nobody goes to school! Write about this world, the good things <em>and</em> the bad things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Find these words on pages 18 and 19 &quot;Chamber of Horrors:&quot; stocks, misdemeanour, dunce, yoke, deportment. Work out what they mean, then write a new sentence using these words. (Five sentences altogether!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hunt through the book and list the various materials with which children through the ages have written their lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>On pages 22 to 27 some games are described. Select a different game which is played in our playground. Include the following information: General description of the game, rules, how to play, equipment, picture or diagram.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>On pages 14 and 15 there are five paragraphs. If you write the most important or &quot;topic&quot; sentence from each one, you will have a good summary of the page. You might need to get together with your group and teacher for this activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>On pages 20 and 21 there are &quot;Rules for Teachers 1915.&quot; Invent some &quot;Rules for Teachers 2000.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>A noun is a person, place or thing. On pages 10 and 11, list 20 nouns. Test if a word is a noun by asking yourself &quot;is it a person, place or thing?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>On pages 16 and 17, find words with similar meanings to: distant, cross, thought, drawing, tests, discovered, the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Extras for experts: see your teacher for extra worksheets.</td>
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### WILLIAM’S VERSION

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Read and enjoy the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>How old do you think William is? Why do you think so?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Find these words in the story: prosrate, tricycle, fracture, cemetery, cautiously, conductor, angora, diversion, innovation, negotiation, cascade. Work out what they mean, then write a new sentence using these words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adjectives are words which give us more information about a noun, for example: angry, excited, green. What type of person is William? What type of person is Granny? Write a paragraph about William and one about Granny using lots of adjectives. (Not just what they look like either!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Find a copy of the proper story “The Three Little Pigs.” Make a list in your book of the things in the story that William and his Granny changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Can William read? Why do you think he can or cannot read?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>This story is almost all conversation. Select about 15 lines of conversation, find a partner and perform the conversation as a play. Write the dialogue in your book.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Use another well-known story, for example, Goldilocks and rewrite it as if you are William.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>William interrupts the story a few times. Find two examples of William’s changing the subject and write them down briefly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Don’t little brothers and sisters drive you crazy, and boy, don’t they argue with you? Tell me about a silly argument you’ve had with someone.</td>
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Figure 5.1c
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Read the story. Do a title page for homework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What other books and stories have you read by Paul Jennings? Is this story different? Tell me why or why not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Paul Jennings uses some interesting language. For example: “his face was as wild as the storm,” “and a blast of wind broke into the hut like a violent burglar.” Find other examples like these in the story OR make some up. (They are called “similes.”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Why do you think Lehman’s father refused to tell Lehman about his mother? Write the missing part of the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What was Lehman’s father trying to do when he went to the beach each day?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The illustrations are very important in this story. Discuss the illustrator’s use of colour and her choice of materials (media).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Find a copy of the REAL story “The Little Mermaid” and read it. How is this story different to the Walt Disney movie?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>In this story Lehman’s father dies, and Lehman has to make some very grown-up decisions about what to do about his father’s body. Write the steps, in order, that Lehman took to bury his father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Are mermaids and mermen real? Find out what you can in the library about them and write up as a mini-project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>You’re fishing and catch a mermaid. Write a newspaper report about it.</td>
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Figure 5.1d
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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Skim through the book. A title page is your homework. Read anything which particularly interests you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Do the puzzles on pages 13 and 15 and write your answers in your book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Who’s a daydreamer? Do you imagine what it would be like to be kidnapped by aliens? Write down some of your very best daydreams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Think about the toys, games and entertainments at your house. Make two lists in your book, one list showing those activities which encourage your imagination, the other list showing the less imaginative activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>What does the book suggest television viewing does for our imagination? What will we do about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Find out more about one of the scientists or artists in this book and present it as a mini-project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>Read pages 14 and 15 which talk about the left and right brain. Do you think this works the same for left and right-handed people? Find the answer to this question in the library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td>Keep a “dream diary” near your bed for a couple of weeks and write down your dreams as soon as you wake up. Write up the best dream in your task force book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td>There’s a fun diagram on the front cover showing what goes on in the boy’s brain. Draw a similar diagram showing what is going on in your brain. USE YOUR IMAGINATION!!!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>Make up a completely new idea. It may be a new invention; it may be an alien character for a new Star Wars adventure.</td>
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information about their topic. This research had to be presented as a "mini-project", a
textual label generally eliciting a descriptive response and so was similar to what was
required in the Donkey research task. No more guidance was provided as to the form of
the responses. Students simply commenced the activity and, apart from collaborating
with their neighbours, waited for Margaret to provide assistance as she moved around
the room offering advice.

Margaret was assisted in this process on most days by a member of the school’s support
staff who was not a teacher. As Margaret explained,

She’s actually employed as the school community liaison, but I don’t know what her
education background is.

Margaret found this woman helpful but in the observation lessons in which she
provided support it was generally to monitor behaviour and to ensure students were
kept on task. Apart from the fact that her efforts seemed to have no sustained effect, she
clearly did not have the expertise to advise students on their writing beyond correcting a
spelling or punctuation error and encouraging neat work. 5D did not only have the
assistance of support staff during Taskforce; there were a number of parent helpers who
would regularly assist Margaret in the classroom, none of whom had teaching
qualifications or relevant training. While Margaret appreciated their involvement in the
school she expressed some concerns about parent helpers, remarking that,

I have one lady who comes in on Monday who’s excellent and another lady who’s just
come in on a Thursday and they’re quite literate, which is great because I’ve actually been
in the situation where I’ve seen parents who are not highly literate trying to teach literacy
skills and it doesn’t work.

The use of parent helpers in primary schools, particularly in the infants’ years to assist
with reading, is a common practice in NSW schools. Parent helpers generally participate
in a short training session before commencing work with a class providing support to
the teacher. Although this form of assistance can be useful, particularly in terms of the
time-consuming process of listening to students reading, these helpers are not trained
teachers and do not possess the expertise to teach writing, particularly in the higher
grades. Even with training, most educationalists would consider that, it is the teacher
rather than a parent helper who needs to be guiding students in the complex process of
learning to write. The pedagogic mode that was employed during Taskforce, however,
necessitated teacher support as the bulk of the class were required to work
independently while Margaret gave students individual assistance. Given 5D’s poor literacy skills and difficulty in applying themselves, parent helpers, while relatively ineffectual, at least ensured there was increased supervision and a greater possibility of students attending to their work. Margaret made use of one-on-one tuition during Taskforce because she felt this approach allowed her to target each student’s literacy needs. This was also the rationale for the division of her Taskforce class into more finely demarcated ability groups. However, while each student may have been experiencing specific difficulties, as mentioned there was considerable commonality in the tasks she assigned each group and the knowledge and skills required to complete them. This was evident in the research tasks in three of the five study guides where students were required to describe different phenomena. In the two remaining study guides there were also tasks, which, while not requiring students to write a lengthy descriptive text, either demanded a descriptive response or examined an aspect of descriptive language. This was the case with the School Days study guide, task 2, part of 5 and to some extent 8 and in the William’s Version study guide, task 4. The ability to describe, therefore, was a skill being targeted in various ways in each study guide. Rather than giving students different texts and tasks the class as a whole could have embarked upon a unit of work which targeted the genre of describing, emphasising either the literary or scientific variations of this style of writing or perhaps considering both and making a comparison between the differences in language use. Students would then be undertaking the same program of study and, rather than having them work independently, as they clearly lacked the discipline to do so, lessons could be teacher-directed and more appropriately scaffolded. This form of instruction does not preclude one-on-one tuition for students who require it; rather, this is provided as a supplement to the teacher guidance that is supplied en masse, a technique Julie Costa used effectively with her Year 3 at Northside.

In undertaking work in this manner pedagogic affect could be heightened in a number of ways. The use of a greater teacher-directed pedagogy would ensure students were provided with more sustained assistance. More constant teacher direction would also generate a far greater degree of disciplinary force. Teacher surveillance would increase and students would therefore be more inclined to remain on task, a process which, if consistent, could instil a docility in students which would allow them to attend to their work more productively than if easily distracted. Pedagogic affect would also be augmented in that, rather than students spending time on a range of different tasks, targeting different skills, as was the case in Taskforce, a teacher could give concentrated time to a specific area of need and develop students’ competency before moving onto
tasks involving greater complexity. In each of the five study guides, however, despite some commonality, there was an eclectic mix of tasks that involved different literacy skills. The only common thread between tasks within a particular study guide was that they were based on the same stimulus. There was no scaffolded approach to skills acquisition underpinning each set of ten tasks with Margaret’s guidelines for implementation stating that, “The study guides provide a variety of activities which do not necessarily have to be done in order”.

Consequently, with minimal treatment of each skill and a variety being targeted at any one time, these aspects of writing did not receive concentrated examination. Also, some students may have simply missed out on examining certain skills during Taskforce altogether. There was little possibility, therefore, of affect accumulating and students learning in an effective manner. It was not only that students did not engage in any sustained and iterative treatment of these various skills, which would have eventually allowed them to automatically apply this information in their writing, but as they were introduced through a study guide format, students did not attain the same level of initial conscious awareness of these skills as if a teacher-directed approach had been used. Key conceptual information regarding aspects of text and grammar was embedded within the study guides. Margaret may have referred to this in her one-on-one discussions but, given the short amount of time she spent with each student, it could not have been examined in any depth and so was largely left to students to work through.

Each of the study guides, for example, required students to write a range of different texts. In the Donkey study guide, students were expected to write a narrative (Task 7) and an information report (Task 9). In the Schools Days study guide there were questions that demanded a description (Task 2) and two sets of instructions (Task 5) and (Task 7). In the William’s Version study guide students were required to write a description of two characters (Task 4), a fairytale (Task 8) and a recount (Task 10). The Nails study guide had tasks that demanded an interpretative explanation (Task 6), a set of instructions (Task 8), an information report (Task 9) and a newspaper report (Task 10). Finally, in the Imagination study guide students were asked to write two recounts, (Tasks 3 and 8), an information report (Task 6) and a description (Task 10). Considerable variation was evident not only within a study guide but also between them. There were no guidelines about how to write these texts and in many cases the textual form that was required was not named. Their different structural and grammatical features remained implicit with little acknowledgment of textual variation. It seems that in simply undertaking these
tasks there was an assumption that students were also learning about how to write these
different texts and therefore there was no need for explicit instruction. To these students,
however, writing was simply the means by which they answered their study guide
questions. Their focus was not the form of their writing; rather they were concerned
with the content needed to complete a task. Also, the literacy skills of this Taskforce class
were particularly poor. Margaret stated that her goals with regard to their written work
were,

very basic sentence and paragraph construction. The ability to recognise where a sentence
should begin and end. I mean some of the kids just write and write and write. It’s all one
sentence - recognising where it should be chopped up, very basic punctuation.

Without even possessing the fundamentals of sentence construction it seems unlikely
that these students would have been able to produce the range of texts that were
required in their study guide, particularly as they received very little assistance to do so.
It seems unusual, therefore, that Margaret persisted with these types of activities within
a study guide format throughout the year and that the lower order syntactic and
punctuation skills, to which she refers, were not specifically addressed.

Grammar was only given marginal attention in Taskforce. In the fifty study guide
questions, only two dealt with an aspect of grammar. Task 8 in the School Days study
guide asked students to identify twenty nouns and Task 3 in the William’s Version study
guide asked students to write descriptions using “lots of adjectives”. There was also a
question in the Nails study guide that explained a simile and asked students to find
examples in the text or write their own. Both this question and the one concerning
nouns, however, were simply identification tasks. There was no examination of how
grammar operates at a sentence level in terms of the syntactic components of simple,
compound and complex sentences or how aspects of grammar can be harnessed to serve
different textual purposes. The task on using adjectives to describe did make some
attempt to do this but it relied on students to make the connections themselves and it
was only one isolated task in one study guide. Margaret’s treatment of grammar was
generally limited to naming certain parts of speech:

I would say as far as I go is nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives, but I’m even cautious
with my particular class to mention adverbs. I figure if I push adjectives this year,
somebody else can worry about adverbs next year. I mean I don’t ignore it completely, but
I don’t push it. I don’t use words like conjunctions or subject or predicate. I do talk about
sentences needing to have a noun and a verb or a noun group and a verb group, which is
supporting the syllabus. If I had a class that was a bit more forward, I would probably give
them grammar that was more forward. So I temper the grammar. I teach to the level they’re at.

This last point about teaching to the level where students “are at” does not only guide Margaret’s teaching of grammar it seems to underpin her overall approach to Taskforce. It was the principle behind organising students into ability-based groups and having them work relatively independently on different activities.

In some respects this seems like a sound pedagogic practice but there is a major difference between teaching to the level where students are at and teaching from that level. In the former, activities are designed to meet students’ existing level of competence. In the latter, students’ ability levels are merely a starting point with teaching geared towards moving beyond this. In Taskforce the former prevailed and groups did not appear to make much progress. This was not so much because activities were designed to match students’ specific ability levels, as in many respects they did not really cater for them at all. Students’ lack of improvement throughout the year was more a product of the pedagogy the program employed that involved students, who had a poor skill base, working at their own pace. The Taskforce class did not make much progress because the impetus to do so was dependent, to a large extent, upon students themselves. There was little teacher direction scaffolding their learning to ensure they moved beyond their existing level of achievement and students were not predisposed to apply themselves to their work. Without the appropriate habitus and with the combined forces of a pedagogy and classroom regimen that failed to correct this, it is understandable that students’ achievement levels were so low as is evident in the students’ texts below.

Although a considerable amount of the time devoted to activities in which 5D learnt to write were undertaken during Taskforce, Margaret also conducted lessons outside this time in which students would write different texts. In three of the six observation sessions, 5D engaged in activities in which they were required to write a narrative. Each of these was a one-off lesson. They were not part of a unit of work. Margaret did teach in units of work which were of approximately ten-weeks duration but they tended to be in the areas of Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE), a social studies subject, or science and technology, with the focus on the content of each unit. Writing was merely the mechanism by which the content knowledge was processed rather than being an object of study itself, much in the same way as writing was approached within Taskforce.
where the focus was the stimulus text. There was no staging of the skills involved in
writing a text coinciding with the study of the content the students were investigating.
Despite the emphasis given in the syllabus to teaching a range of different text types,
Margaret did not feel any need to give them any concentrated attention:

Well, if it's one of those things that's got a heading and a name I'll introduce it and go
through the stages and probably do an example.

This was done as a complement to the way the teaching of text was approached in
Taskforce and, to Margaret, this more than satisfied the requirements of the Syllabus. In
the three observation sessions in which 5D wrote narratives there was no reference to
their structural features. The first of these sessions involved 5D writing a set of 'class
narratives'. To do this Margaret conducted a 'Pass-the-Paper' activity. She commenced
by writing the sentence "It was a dark and stormy night" on the board. Each student
was supplied with a blank piece of paper and was asked to write this sentence at the top
of their page. Next, Margaret explained how each student had to write another sentence
following on from this and then pass the paper to their neighbour who would in turn
write a sentence. This procedure was followed until the pages were complete. In all, the
pages were passed ten times. Each of the narratives, therefore, comprised twelve
sentences commencing with the sentence supplied by Margaret. The only discussion
prior to beginning this activity involved Margaret giving a verbal model of what
students might write in the first four or five sentences and to point out that their writing
had to be punctuated correctly. There was no discussion of the type of story students
could write, such as the way in which the first sentence suggested it would be a
suspense or horror story and the type of language such a narrative might employ.
Neither was there any reference to the generic stages of this textual form which would
have provided a scaffold for students in writing the text, particularly as each narrative
was a product of eleven different students' efforts. Instead, students simply read the
previous students' sentences and then continued the story with another of their own.

Although the class generally found this fun, many students appeared confused about
what they had to write, making comments such as, "I don't understand this" and "This
doesn't make sense". This was often the case because there were so many spelling,
punctuation and syntactic errors. Students found it difficult to make sense of what their
classmates had written which made it difficult for them to then write their own sentence.
Throughout this exercise Margaret offered advice about punctuation such as speech

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marks if students included dialogue in their sentence. Approaching the ninth sentence Margaret instructed students to start winding up the story and, then, with the twelfth sentence, to draw it to a close. Following this, stories were returned to the first writer of each text to read through and edit, a process which was beyond most students as many had difficulties reading their classmates’ writing. Despite this, Margaret continued with this form of peer editing and then selected four students to read out their texts to the class. Each of these examples was a rambling set of often-unconnected sentences. As they were read out students giggled and called out, asking who had written certain sentences. Margaret, however, still had positive comments to make such as “That’s a good ending” and “There’s some good handwriting there” but did not give any attention to the considerable number of problems which were evident. Instead, Margaret only provided positive reinforcement not wanting to detract from the fun nature of the activity.

As with both the kindergarten and Year 3 teachers at Westville, Margaret also used fun and game activities to motivate her students to write. The form of desire created by doing this, however, did not seem directed towards the writing itself encouraging students to attend to the style, correctness and effectiveness of what they were writing. Rather than fun being simply the motivation behind the activity, fun seemed an end in itself. Students were not particularly interested in writing but in having a good time. Margaret seemed to view the entertaining atmosphere resulting from this activity as an effective stimulus for learning but it merely added to the already relaxed regimen within the room which did not encourage students to apply themselves to their work.

5D also engaged in a narrative writing activity during the fifth and sixth observation sessions. On both occasions, Margaret used a technique she called “Grow-a-story” to help students write. This involved her writing two simple sentences on the board that established a kind of tension on which the story would be based. In the first of these two sessions the sentences were, “Mark hated music. He wanted to play sport”. Margaret then questioned students, who were all seated on the floor in the limited amount of space at the front of the classroom, about how they might develop a story from this. Margaret wrote students’ suggestions on the board and used a five-stage model whereby extra information was added to the story at each step:

1. **Grow-a-Story**
   Mark hated music. He wanted to play sport.
2. Mark wanted to play sport but he wasn't good at sport. Mark's parents didn't want him to play sport because he might have got hurt.

3. Mark hated music. His parents got him a music instructor. His music instructor taught him all different types of music and he didn't like all the different types of music because he wanted to play sport.

4. Mark was my best friend. We used to go to school together but when we broke-up we didn’t go together anymore. We broke-up because I loved music and I hated sport and Mark hated music and loved sport. Mark was always playing sport but he wasn't very good. Whenever Mark talked to me he would always talk about sport even though he wasn't very good at sport.

5. Today my friend Mark told me about the football on the TV last night so he decided to play football. When he got home he decided to tell his mum the good news but his mum didn't want him to play because she wanted him to have music lessons. He had to play football but in a game he broke his leg so he decided to go to music lessons. When he went back to the music lessons he wanted to play a different instrument. Mark kept on changing instruments because he wasn't very good at any so they wanted to put him in the choir but he was off-key. He couldn't quit the football because there wasn't enough people if he quit. His mum booked him music lessons on the night of the grand final so he had to sneak away. He asked his dad if he could play football and his dad said yes.

Margaret tended not to alter students' suggestions but merely acted as a scribe recording their responses on the board. As the text above demonstrates, this resulted in problems with cohesion. The repetition of words such as "sport" in Stage 2 and "music" in Stage 3 meant the text was very stilted. Margaret did not use the activity to model different referencing techniques such as using a pronoun or an alternate phrase, or any other devices that would have improved upon suggestions made by students. Rather, the focus of the "Grow-a-story" task simply seemed to be the text's length. There was little growth in terms of style, character and plot. These elements, and how they could be developed, did not really feature in the discussion. Margaret also did not make any reference to the structural features as outlined in the syllabus, such as orientation, complication and resolution which could have assisted students in the process of jointly constructing the story. Not sure about what they had to do, students eventually became tired of this process. They showed little interest in the story, which is evident from the limited nature of the responses they offered. Before long they had become quite disruptive, a situation exacerbated by the cramped seating, and Margaret moved three students to desks and sent one to another classroom. After persisting with the activity for a short time, Margaret then wound it up and moved on to a music appreciation task which involved students returning to their desks to listen to and discuss some recorded music. Students did not undertake this "Grow-a-story" activity on an individual basis following the joint construction. Margaret felt the class were far too disruptive to
continue. It was simply a self-contained lesson much in the same way as the “Pass-the-paper” activity. It was not part of an ongoing unit of work examining how to write narrative, which Margaret would return to the next day. It was simply a narrative writing strategy that Margaret liked to use at times.

In the sixth observation session, a term later, Margaret made use of this “Grow-a-story” technique again. She conducted the activity in a similar way starting with two sentences that, through a process of joint construction, were expanded upon to ‘grow’ a story. On this occasion students were all seated at their desks. Despite this, and the teacher-directedness of the lesson, students were once again restless. As with the “Grow-a-story” activity in the fifth observation session, 5D commenced the lesson immediately following Taskforce. The class, therefore, were unsettled as a result of some students’ movement between classrooms at the completion of Taskforce. Also, as Margaret did not tend to use this time for work that was part of an ongoing unit of study, no routine had been established whereby students could organise themselves in anticipation of the work that would follow. Although students were quite restless, on completing the joint construction in this session, Margaret had students attempt their own story using this strategy. Throughout the time set aside for them to do this students talked continually. The noise only subsided after reprimands from Margaret but soon returned to a high level. After twenty minutes of writing time Margaret drew the activity to a close, asking students to complete their work as a spare-time activity or for homework. Once again there was no follow up, instead Margaret switched to a different area of the curriculum with students moving out into the playground to participate in a fitness training exercise.

As with the other teachers in this study, Margaret provided samples of three students’ writing. The texts examined below are examples of three students’ attempts to write a narrative using the “Grow-a-story” technique. Of these texts, all written by Anglo-Australian students in the class, only two were written during the sixth observation session. The third, and first to be discussed, was written by a student named Cassie six weeks prior to this time. There was no record of any writing from this session in Cassie’s book with the assumption being that she was absent on this day. Margaret considered Cassie to be one of the more able students in 5D. In her text (Figure 5.2a) she tried to use
the same process modelled by Margaret to write a story in which she is the subject. She produced four stages of the story and began a fifth but didn’t finish. Cassie, however, does not develop her story by using the same technique that Margaret modelled in class. Rather than repeating aspects of the story and building upon them, as in Margaret’s model, Cassie’s five stages represent five separate paragraphs of an ongoing narrative with the fifth stage acting as a resolution. Cassie either didn’t find Margaret’s “Grow-a-story” technique useful or didn’t understand and simply numbered her paragraphs to represent the model Margaret used. There are no comments at the end of the story explaining this or pointing out problems with her text. Any comments or corrections made by Margaret in her students’ books only appeared on an irregular basis. Also,
there was no evidence in either students' books or within classroom practice of 5D regularly drafting, editing and then rewriting their texts. Figure 5.2a was Cassie's final copy. Rather than giving concentrated attention to refining a text over a number of lessons, Margaret seemed to follow a practice of having her students 'learning by doing' assuming that they would become proficient writers by simply engaging in the process of writing, with little need for teacher intervention. By this stage of her learning, however, Cassie had still not mastered elementary aspects of the writing process. Her story reads like a transcription of a conversation. This is not through any conscious mimicking of this particular narrative style. She has simply not progressed to using a more mature written form and is still employing spoken-like constructions in her writing. More importantly, her story contains many spelling, punctuation and syntactic errors, none of which have been corrected. Cassie, therefore, probably replicated these mistakes in future writing, further entrenching, rather than correcting, the significant difficulties she experienced.

These problems are also evident in the second student's work. The text (Figure 5.2b) was written by Jamie whom Margaret judged to be representative of the average range of ability within 5D. As with Cassie's narrative, Jamie's text was written using the "Grow-a-story" technique. Unlike Cassie, however, Jamie has followed Margaret's model repeating and then adding information to develop her story. Jamie's text was written approximately ten weeks after Cassie's during the sixth observation session discussed above. Although following Margaret's model far more closely than did Cassie, Jamie's story is in a sense less of a narrative. Jamie has instead focused on description with little plot development. These different responses suggest the actual aim of "Grow-a-story" was not clear to students. The strategy did not involve any explicit reference to the structural features of a classic narrative and so each student's staging of their text was dependent upon how they interpreted Margaret's modelling, a process that was not guided by any objective set of requirements made explicit to students but simply the vicissitudes of the responses students offered to Margaret and which she recorded on the board. Although the activity was used a number of times, 5D did not demonstrate any real progress in writing narrative. Rather than simply experiencing problems with this textual form, it is evident that Jamie has significant problems with writing in general. As with Cassie, Jamie also makes numerous punctuation and grammatical errors. She has far less difficulty with spelling, than Cassie, but like her classmate she
Jamie loves horses

There was a 10 year old girl who lived on a farm and loved horses.

There was a smart 10 year old girl. Her name was Jamie. Her dad and mom were divorced and Jamie and her dad lived on a farm and had 2 horses. Jamie loved horses.

There was a very smart girl who was good in school. She went to visit her father every weekend. Jamie's Mum and dad were divorced but Jamie was ok with it and lived happily at her mum's house. Her dad was a farmer who had to

horses. Jamie always bathed, groomed, exercised, and most of all, fed her horse and rode it. She rode her horse up and down the mountain. Jamie's father always said to people, 'Jamie loves horses.'
has still not mastered simple punctuation, only using full stops at the end of a paragraph and so failing to demarcate sentence breaks. Another problem with Jamie’s writing is the inconsistent use of tense. In her first sentence she switches between past and present tense, an error she interestingly rectifies in the second paragraph. The word *loves* - which she corrects to *loved* - is a word that she has used in each of the three stages of her story, yet it is only in the second paragraph that she corrects the inappropriate tense. Jamie was aware that it was incorrect but failed to alter mistakes in the first and third stages of her text. Instead of displaying a lack of knowledge, Jamie’s failure to correct her text seems more indicative of a lack of desire to do so. This is evident elsewhere in her text such as in her incorrect use of pronominal reference in the second paragraph. Jamie uses the pronoun ‘he’ to refer to a ‘10-year-old girl’. While this may be just a slip, a momentary lapse of concentration, it demonstrates that Jamie does not routinely edit her work as she writes.

The practice of correcting one’s writing, reading and refining the text during the process of construction, is not simply a mechanical procedure, it is linked to one’s desire to write. The greater the desire, the more writers apply themselves to perfecting their text, both correcting errors and manipulating words for effect. Jamie leaves her text largely uncorrected. Given that no routine practice of editing had been established within the class and that Margaret rarely checked students’ work outside Taskforce, this is understandable. There was nothing compelling Jamie to improve upon this first attempt. Also, Jamie clearly lacked the skills to do this. She may have been aware of some errors in tense but she did not possess the necessary resources to undertake a thorough edit of her text, even if it had been encouraged. Her apparent lack of interest, therefore, did not simply stem from a set of classroom practices that did not provide the necessary stimulus for her to engage more actively in the writing process. She had also not acquired the requisite skills and knowledge to allow her to do so. Consequently, when given the opportunity, Jamie did not complete her text during spare time or for homework. She simply left her work as it was, incomplete and largely uncorrected.

The third work sample from 5D was written by a boy named Jason who Margaret considered to be one of the least able students in the class. Figure 5.2c shows his attempt to write a narrative using the technique that Margaret modelled during the sixth observation session. Students were familiar with the technique by this stage having
written stories using this strategy on a number of occasions. However, as with Cassie, Jason seemed to ignore the process of repeating information and then expanding upon it. He simply commenced his story and continued writing. One of the problematic aspects of Margaret’s strategy he has employed is the repetitive use of the subject, in this case Jason, and another key word, goughn (sic). Like Margaret, instead of using pronouns or other alternatives he has simply repeated these words resulting in poor referencing and a stilted text. Jason has spelt most words correctly but, as with his two classmates, his text contains numerous punctuation and grammatical errors. The most noticeable aspect of Jason’s text, however, is its length. In the twenty minutes devoted to writing the text Jason managed little more than seven, sparsely written lines. As with Jamie, he made no attempt to expand upon this outside class. His work not only reflects an even greater lack of interest than does Jamie’s; his writing also demonstrates even
less command of the skills and knowledge on which cultivating a desire to write depends.

Cassie, Jamie and Jason all experienced difficulties with writing which neither Taskforce nor lessons with 5D as a whole seemed to have had much impact upon. Although Margaret varied her teaching style, alternating between the approach favoured within Taskforce and a more teacher-directed methodology, her pedagogy overall tended to lack affective impact. While there are clearly problems with her neglect of aspects of the curriculum, especially her limited treatment of sentence-level grammar, there are also certain features of her pedagogic practice which are of equal, if not greater, concern. These relate, in particular, to her surface examination of aspects of writing, glossing over concepts that require iterative and sustained treatment, no matter what the form of delivery. There is no evidence within her practice of a concentrated exploration of textual form, even at the most basic level. Without this there is little possibility of affect accumulating and students embodying the skills necessary to write effectively. An additional aspect of Margaret’s practice, which tends to exacerbate this, is her reliance on students to work independently and for them to shoulder much of the responsibility for their learning. In a classroom governed by such a relaxed disciplinary code and given students were generally not predisposed to apply themselves to their writing, there were neither external nor internal forces compelling them to work in such a judicious manner. Students, therefore, demonstrated very little desire for writing and made negligible progress over the course of the year.

Northside Public School – The Year 5 Teacher

Merilee Oldham, the Year 5 teacher at Northside PS, was in her tenth year of teaching and had been at Northside for five years. This was her second appointment since graduating. Prior to Northside she had taught at one other school. In this previous appointment, which was a DSP school with a high ESL population of recently arrived migrants, Merilee worked as an ESL teacher. On moving to Northside she opted for a mainstream position and this was her third year teaching an Opportunity Class. She explained that while she had learnt a lot during her years as an ESL teacher, she had made the transfer to Northside because she “wanted a classroom”. On first she was assigned a Year 2 class but this was the only time she had taught outside the senior primary years. As with Margaret at Westville PS, Merilee started teaching later in life.
She was the same age as Margaret and had not commenced her teacher training until her late 30s when her children were at school. Unlike Margaret, Merilee had completed a university degree after matriculating from high school and only needed a Diploma of Education (Dip.Ed.) to secure her teaching qualification. After gaining this she completed a Masters in Applied Linguistics. Although she had a good grounding in grammar from her school education she wanted to increase her knowledge of language to better prepare her for ESL teaching. She felt that there had not been enough emphasis on teaching language in her Dip. Ed. and remarked,

To me language is extremely important and I honestly don’t believe you should be teaching in a primary school unless you are competent in language.

She was critical of her teacher training, commenting that, “I mean they didn’t teach you how to teach. The Dip. Ed. prepared me for absolutely nothing”.

One of the main reasons Merilee gave for wanting to be a teacher was that she considered that her own children weren’t “taught properly” and she felt that she could do better. This dissatisfaction affected her philosophy of education and she held quite firm views about what she saw as her role in the classroom:

My philosophy is that children come to school to learn. It’s my role to teach them, teach them a particular structure and not to work in an airy-fairy way, to introduce as much as I can and to repeat it and repeat it and repeat it.

Northside Public School – The Year 5 Class

5O, Merilee’s class at Northside, was an OC class comprised of thirty students from local schools who had achieved the best results in special placement tests designed for the selection of OC students within the NSW state system. Twenty-three of the thirty students in 5O came from a non-English speaking background with Mainland Chinese, Hong Kong Chinese and Sri Lankan being the main ethnic groups in the class. Although clearly able students, many still had problems with their written expression. There was no written component in their placement exam. It was a multiple-choice test that assessed students’ English, Maths and general ability. Merilee was very disappointed with her students’ writing at the beginning of the year and found their knowledge of grammar to be “extremely poor”. As she pointed out, “most children didn’t know the difference between a verb and a noun”.

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Despite these problems Merilee found her students to be hard working and from the beginning of the year she set about expanding their metalinguistic knowledge and improving their writing ability.

Organising the Pedagogic Space

Figure 6.1

Merilee’s classroom was located on the second level of one of the three two-storey buildings at Northside, just along from Julie Costa’s Year 3 classroom. As was the case with Julie’s room, Merilee’s had limited space. There was no storeroom or bag room attached to the classroom. Students hung their school bags on hooks in the hallway outside the classroom and stored writing implements and other equipment in storage sleeves on the backs of their chairs. Although Merilee often changed the arrangement of desks in her room, they were always organised in a group format. During four of the six observation sessions they were arranged in the format (Figure 6.1). In the two remaining sessions Merilee placed students’ desks into sets of four and six. This preference for arranging desks in groups would suggest that Merilee made considerable use of group-based learning within her classroom but she clearly favoured a more teacher-directed pedagogy and when the class did work in groups they were no larger than three.
tudents. She explained, “I find if there’s four you have too many arguments. I found
with my last class that three worked and I choose the groups as well”.

While students sat in groups they tended not to work that way. Merilee’s reason for
sitting a group arrangement of desks was to afford her greater access to students. After
setting the class a task, Merilee would move around the room checking students’ work
and offering advice, a practice that would have been hindered if she had organised
students’ desks in rows. In each of the group formats, students had a clear view of the
board. Despite the group arrangement of desks, vectors within the room were still
directed towards the front. This could have been a function of a number of factors but, in
particular, seemed to relate to the size of the room. The separate groups of desks were
still reasonably close to one another. They did not really operate as separate units and
so, despite the group format, there was still very much a sense of the different sets of
desks functioning as a corporate body, predominantly orientated towards the front.
There was no sense of there being a dispersed spatiality within the room.

Merilee also occasionally changed the position of her desk. At different times it was
located in the front left-hand corner, in a back corner or, despite the limited space, on the
side of the classroom. As with most of the other teachers in the study, Merilee spent little
time at her desk, which was mainly used for storage of resources. Merilee spent most of
her time at the front of the room when conducting lessons and when students where
working she moved around the room. It was her body, rather than her desk, that
marked her position within the pedagogic space and, with the emphasis she placed on
teacher-directed learning and her frequent use of the board, the students’ gaze was
predominantly drawn to this location at the front of the room. As well as using the
board Merilee would often attach sheets of butchers’ paper to an old artist’s easel and
use these as additional board space. This easel was mainly located at the front left-hand
corner of the room but was moved around depending on the lesson. Another reason
why students’ gaze was drawn towards the front of the room was that Merilee often set
time limits for students to complete work. She had placed a wall clock in a central
position above the board so that students could monitor the amount of time they were
spending on their work.

Merilee’s classroom evoked a sense of being a functional work space. Although there
was limited storage, the room was not cluttered with resource material. Students’
workbooks were stored in containers on shelves, along with reading materials and

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folders of photocopied sheets. In a commanding position in the front right-hand corner of the room was a large bookcase. It held sets of class dictionaries, thesauruses and other reference material. Although students made use of these, Merilee encouraged students to buy and use their own. There were some displays of students’ art work at the back and sides of the room but what dominated the display area were the sheets of butchers’ paper with information that had been recorded during lessons. These contained a range of different types of information such as banks of words arranged in different grammatical categories or lists of points which pertained to 5O’s current unit of work. These sheets functioned as teaching resources and students made use of the information they contained in their writing. They were replaced on a regular basis as the class progressed onto new work. In a prominent position on the left-hand side of the room, Merilee also displayed a set of posters detailing the structural features of the key text types referred to in the syllabus. As well as being a functional work space, the various displays of lists of words and the sets of reference books gave the room a distinctive scholarly feel with the space itself seemingly placing an imperative upon academic endeavour.

Establishing a Classroom Regimen

One of the most noticeable features of Merilee’s classroom was the degree of quiet and concentration that was evident when students were working. Being an OC class there was an expectation that students would already possess a certain diligence towards their work without the need for much encouragement. This may have been the case, but the regimen that Merilee established within the classroom also seemed to instil this work ethic as a result of the teacher-directed pedagogy she employed. Merilee pointed out that,

To teach properly you really have to teach. You have to be a teacher out the front. I mean I still believe that, I really do. That’s the one thing I’m a great believer in and really going around to kids on the spot.

By teaching this way Merilee maintained a strong presence in the room, directing students’ learning. The class was never set a task to complete independently without having first received a considerable degree of teacher input. Often independent work was also interspersed with additional advice from Merilee with her scaffolding students’ learning so that they were not only appropriately prepared, but, also consistently supported, when undertaking a task. As her comments reveal, she did not simply “teach
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**OBSERVATION OVERVIEW - MERITTE OLDHAM**
out the front” and direct her attention to the class as a whole; when students were engaged in an activity she would circulate around the room to check their work and ensure they were completing a task as required. This methodology has implications in terms of curriculum implementation; here, however, it is significant due to its impact upon classroom regimen. Although 5O were capable students Merilee provided plenty of direction: “I very rarely get them to do anything from scratch”.

The class was always assisted in their learning to the extent that when they were required to work independently they could do so as each step had been carefully explained. Lessons were generally structured around a format of teacher input and class discussion. This was followed by a period of independent writing, concluding with a feedback session in which students would read out their work and Merilee would comment upon their efforts and offer advice. In the second and third observation lessons, these feedback sessions were a lengthy forty minutes, during which every student in the class read out the passage they had just written. While this feedback process was not always so detailed, it was clearly a regular practice. There was an expectation that at least some students in the class would be called upon to read out their work at the completion of the time allocated for writing. As a result, students did not waste time. They applied themselves to their work, as they knew Merilee could ask them to read out what they had done. As she explained,

> Well, they have to understand that you want the task finished. For effective learning to take place this must occur and this will only occur if everybody’s on task, if everybody’s focused at the same time.

Given this, students did not only aim to complete their work in the allotted time but they made every effort to do it well. Merilee did not only expect work to be completed, she wanted students to demonstrate effort and would comment upon this and the overall effectiveness of students’ writing after they had finished reading out their work. Her remarks at these times were based purely upon students’ achievement, specifically targeting aspects of their work and the techniques they employed. The best examples were written on the board or butchers’ paper and treated as exemplars for the rest of the class to consider modifying for use in their own writing. Some examples of Merilee’s comments from the feedback session in the second observation lesson in which students were writing a short description of a pirate for a future narrative were:
I love that. What was that about the dark eyes – dark eyes inside a world of hatred.

Bloodthirsty eyes! I like that, that’s an excellent one.

Good, some excellent physical description there, Katrina, especially this bit ... here... his hands clenched with anger. I like that phrase, excellent.

Oh. Now I like that. Now do that again. Listen to this. This is excellent the way Ruby has brought in the image of a wart. Right, go back to his hands. Listening (Student rereads section) only a wart disturbed the whiteness of his hand. Yes!

Likewise, if there was a problem with a student’s writing, Merilee would not simply gloss over it but discuss it and offer suggestions for improvement, such as in the following comment from the same session,

Good, but remember what I said about similes. There’s a couple of really good similes there but don’t use them like a shopping list as if every image needs one.

Generally, however, Merilee managed to find something positive about each student’s efforts but she did not compliment students undeservedly. Criticism was always constructive, though it was possible for Merilee to reprimand students if she considered they were not applying themselves.

This process of immediate feedback on students’ work seemed to generate a real desire to succeed. Students knew that if they put effort into their writing it was appreciated and they listened keenly to Merilee’s advice to improve upon their work. When they did receive positive comment they knew this was a result of good work. Merilee’s approach to cultivating a desire for writing was very much linked to students’ acquisition of knowledge and skills with their motivation for writing arising from the satisfaction they gained from achievement. The impact of this upon classroom regimen was that students worked in a diligent manner, eager to please Merilee and to gain recognition for their work.

Merilee’s predominant use of a teacher-directed pedagogy also heightened the degree of panoptic force within the room. Students were constantly aware of Merilee’s presence, not only when she was conducting a lesson, which generally required students to concentrate for periods of up to fifty minutes, but when she was moving around the room monitoring their progress. Students, therefore, conducted themselves appropriately and, as this was the regular mode of practice within the room, they instilled this bodily discipline acquiring a disposition for scholarly labour. The
disciplinary force generated within the room was also intensified by the corporate nature of its effect. The class as a whole acted as one, focused on a common goal of learning. Their interest in what they were doing and their commitment to ensuring they completed work was particularly evident at the end of the fifth observation session. Many of the students who had not completed writing the explanation they were working on and who did not attend the scripture lesson immediately following this asked if they could work on the task during non-scripture which was a period of supervised free time.

The regimen that existed within the room which seemed to promote such a strong work ethic was also a function of the code of behaviour that Merilee had established. She was very strict about noise and unnecessary chatter, but this did not mean that students did not talk in class. There was frequently a lot of quite lively discussion, particularly when Merilee was asking the class questions. As far as her tolerance for noise was concerned, she explained that,

"It depends on what their task is. If it’s like when they’re doing hands-on work, as long as it’s on task, it’s OK and I’ll move around the room and listen."

Merilee did constantly monitor noise levels and would reprimand students if they were just chattering and not on task, although this was not a common occurrence as most students readily applied themselves to their work. When students were working independently, however, Merilee demanded, and received, quiet. She pointed out that,

"If it’s an individual writing task there shouldn’t be any noise at all. The only noise that should happen is when they’re talking to me."

While there were long stretches during the observations sessions when students were concentrating on their writing and working quietly, the quiet was not generally broken by students talking but by Merilee drawing something to the class’s attention. She remarked that,

"In the middle of the children being quiet I might think of something I want to tell them and that disrupts the quiet, so that’s my problem not theirs. Or I’ll think of something that I know will help three or four children, so I direct those three or four and the others might stop and listen as well."

Merilee was constantly scaffolding her students’ learning. They were able to work independently but the degree of independence that they achieved in their learning was a
product of an interdependence between teacher and student, the intersubjective
dynamic underpinning the pedagogic process. Merilee’s constant support, and the
 corporal nature of her teaching, ensured that a regimen of scholarship reigned within
the room. Many of these students may have already possessed a strong commitment to
work on entering the class but the disciplinary techniques which Merilee employed
cultivated this potential effectively directing her students’ learning and confirming their
disposition for academic endeavour.

Merilee was also able to maintain this regimen through the approach she took to seating
arrangements that provided a balance between social and academic concerns. At the
beginning of the year she had let students choose where they wanted to sit, but, as the
students were from a range of different schools and most did not know many of their
classmates, Merilee would soon move them around:

I find they’re much better to get to know each other by moving them around all the time
and that’s why I move them every six or seven weeks.

Merilee pointed out, however, that her other reason for doing this was so students could
“learn different work habits from different children”. She provided a number of
examples of students who were not as focused on their learning as she would have
liked. As a result she positioned them next to quiet and diligent workers to help them
learn by example. This was the case with a student called Milly who Merilee explained
was “a wonderful child but off with the pixies”. Merilee moved Milly next to a boy
whom she described “as soldiering on no matter what. He’s so focused in his learning”.
Although it took a while, this strategy had a marked effect:

I cannot believe it and it’s only happened this term but truthfully the standard of this
child’s work and her focus and attention to tasks have improved a million percent.

Merilee also explained how she had had difficulties with another student who was
constantly trying to distract his neighbours. She decided to place this boy next to a girl
called Danielle because,

She knows him, they’ve been at school together since kindergarten and she will totally
ignore his stupid behaviour. She’s mature enough to know if he’s pushing her pen to just
forget about it because he’ll stop it after a short time.
Merilee gave consideration to sociality when organising seating arrangements within the
room but she was also greatly concerned with positioning students on the basis of the
degree to which they could work together effectively. She explained that, over time,

You learn the characteristics of the children; you learn who shouldn’t be next to who and
whatever else. It’s quite involved.

Merilee used this insight to manipulate the learning environment so a productive
pedagogic space would ensue in which students could concentrate on their work.

Curriculum Implementation – The Body of Writing

Merilee’s pedagogy was characterised by the emphasis she placed on teacher-
directedness but the other significant feature was the effort she put into linking
curriculum content with learning how to write, giving concentrated time to writing:

I think it’s very important to introduce text types according to the units of work I’m
working on rather than in isolation. So, for example, with Antarctica we were looking at
the food chain. I thought, what can I do with that? I haven’t done an explanation.

While the class completed activities involving other types of writing, over the course of
approximately a term Merilee integrated teaching the structural and grammatical
features of an explanation with content related to the study of Antarctica, devoting most
of the morning sessions and sometimes longer to this. This pattern of study, whereby
concentrated periods of time were spent teaching writing each day in the context of a
unit of work, is evident in the observation overview. In the case of the third observation
lesson, with the morning session being interrupted by 40 minutes of choir practice,
Merilee spent not only an hour after recess making up for lost time but also a short
period after lunch. This was at the early stage of teaching a unit on *Wind in the Willows*,
which will be discussed in greater detail below. In this lesson Merilee was focusing on
how to write a review, a quite complex text for students of this age. She explained that,

Anything to do with writing in the initial stages, I tend to work in blocks of learning. I
might do a couple of weeks where we do every day – 2 hours or more. So we really
concentrate on writing.

This was the case in this lesson. As it was only the second week of Term 2 Merilee had
just commenced discussing reviews with the class and wanted to make sure that they
had a good grasp of the structure and language involved in writing this textual form.
During the early stage of a unit of work other aspects of the curriculum, such as maths, would receive less treatment with time made up at a later date.

Despite this practice of initially working in blocks of learning, no matter what the stage of a unit, Merilee always spent a considerable proportion of the morning session on teaching aspects of writing, slowly developing the skills involved in producing the type of text under focus. She explained this process in relation to teaching narrative:

We learnt to write narratives by first of all doing descriptive poetry, just very simple poetry to begin with, just one stanza looking at descriptive language techniques. Then we did descriptive texts so as to build up characterisations and things like that.

While Merilee put emphasis on examining narrative structure she also considered the different techniques involved in writing narrative. This not only extended to various descriptive techniques, such as using adjectives, adverbs and figurative language, but to the impact of different sentence structures. She remarked that,

I think it's important that children understand the different sort of sentence structures. If we were trying to build-up tension would we write a complex sentence structure? No, we wouldn't, we would just write a very simple sentence and we might even break it down even further and just highlight one word and highlight it every third sentence or so.

Merilee sought to teach writing as a craft, a process involving a range of techniques that the writer could manipulate to produce different effects. Her role was to ensure that students acquired these and applied them in their own writing by employing a staged and incremental approach to learning. As Merilee pointed out, this would take, "quite a while, probably a month to write a proper narrative".

During Term 1 Merilee gave particular attention to this textual form in a unit about pirates in which she used Treasure Island as the focus text. In addition to reading this novel, Merilee set a term assignment that required students to read another two texts from a list including Lord of the Flies, Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, Robinson Crusoe, Blueback and Where the Whales Sing, all dealing with themes related to pirates or the sea. After reading two of these texts students had to select three tasks from a set of ten and complete them at home by the end of term. These tasks involved writing character studies, rewriting endings, plot maps and discussions of author intent, with work completed during class time providing models for students to undertake these tasks in their own time. Many of the books on this list could be termed 'children's classics'.
though there were also more recent novels. Merilee made a real point of encouraging students to read a selection of texts from the ‘children’s canon’, commenting that,

I don’t want them to just read Babysitters’ Club. I want them to appreciate what was written 50 years ago, 100 years ago and interact with it and just have a love for language. I do think it’s important, I really do!

Merilee aimed to have her students develop an appreciation of literature not simply by having them read a range of texts but by actively cultivating their interest through having them “interact with it”, discussing the books and considering the literary devices the writers employed. While reference was made to the books on the list, this was done primarily through an examination of the class text, using it as a model to explore different literary techniques.

During Term 1, 5O were working on writing their own narrative. They had considered the generic stages of a classic narrative, the first observation session being one of a number of occasions when this was discussed. Then, over a series of weeks, they concentrated on writing descriptions of characters to use in their own pirate story. This was the focus of the second observation session. Merilee commenced the lesson by recapping the previous week’s work, referring to a descriptive stanza the students had written about a schooner and their use of adjectives, adverbs and also similes, metaphors and alliteration. She explained that in this lesson they were going to write a description of one of the characters for their story. In examining narrative structure in previous lessons, Merilee had discussed the terms ‘protagonist’ and ‘antagonist’ with the class. In this lesson she explained how the description they were to write would focus on one of these, with the other to be completed in another lesson. When these were both finished students would then have two character descriptions to include in their story.

After discussing these terms with the class again, Merilee then asked students how they might go about describing them. Students responded by referring to physical appearance and personality traits. Merilee wrote these points on the board and then asked students how they might start their description. The class suggested they could do so by naming the character, which Merilee then added to her lists of points on the board to form a scaffold for a short description. Following this, Merilee asked students for suggestions from either their word banks, displayed on butchers’ paper, or other examples that could be used to describe the appearance and personality of either the protagonist or antagonist that they would be writing about in their story. She also reminded students that they could draw on words that might be used to describe Jim
Hawkins or Long John Silver in *Treasure Island* or characters in the other texts they were reading. Students offered an array of words relating to personality - such as, *polite, pompous, aggressive, trustworthy* and *reputable* and to the character’s actions - *savagely, viciously, cheerfully* and *respectfully*. Merilee was careful to clarify whether words where adjectives or adverbs and how they should be used. She recorded students’ suggestions on the board and then asked which referred to the protagonist and the antagonist. The class then moved on to list words describing the character’s appearance - *unkempt, gruesome, dishevelled, ragged, muscular* and *tattooed* - which she also recorded on the board. Merilee did not always accept the words that students offered. When the class found it difficult to find suitable adjectives to describe the protagonist’s appearance she rejected suggestions such as *neat* and *strong*, asking students to consult their thesauruses for more interesting examples; words that were able to create a more exacting image of a character. Together with adjectives and adverbs, Merilee pointed out how students could use *similes* and *metaphors* in their descriptions, referring to examples from previous work. Throughout this brainstorming session, Merilee did not simply act as a scribe, but encouraged students to use their imagination by offering her own examples which included the following:

> He had black eyes, a blunt nose and a torn ear. His face was scarred like the rivulets of a stream. His gnarled hands were like ...

As Merilee said these lines she took on the character of the pirate she was describing using an exaggerated tone in her voice to heighten the impact of what she was saying.

Students really responded to this performance and added to the image Merilee had created with one student calling out, “He might have a wart on his face”. Merilee replied jokingly that “Oh, yes, all antagonists have warts!” At this point the class all laughed, clearly enjoying the discussion and enthused about writing their own description which Merilee then asked them to begin. She allotted the class twenty minutes to do this and insisted they write no more than half a page. She wanted them to draw on the words recorded on the board and any others they might find suitable in their thesaurus. Students worked quietly, displaying great concentration. There was widespread use of thesauruses and dictionaries with Merilee insisting that students check the meaning of any words that they use. During this time Merilee progressed around the room offering advice. After twenty minutes Merilee asked students if they were finished and then had them read out their work. The first student to do so was a boy called Adrian whose
work Merilee had paid particular attention to when she was circulating around the room. He had written the following:

A hideous fellow walked through the door. Unkempt with black hair he was staring hard at me. His scared face, a scarred and wrinkled face, like a soldier back from battle. His clothes ragged and torn. He stank like a dead animal.

After reading this out he was met with spontaneous applause from the class and Adrian beamed.

This reaction by the class seemed a reflection of students’ own commitment to writing showing the extent to which they prised a good result. Although working individually there was a real sense of collaboration within the room, of learning from one another to achieve a common objective. Merilee’s practice of having each student read out their work and assessing their efforts, using good examples of writing as models was also an effective way of cultivating students’ desire to learn. Certain phrases from Adrian’s description were written on the board, as were others, as the feedback process progressed with Merilee asking students, or explaining herself, why particular examples were effective. In Adrian’s case she explained how using fellow as a synonym for man gave the passage a feel contemporaneous with the pirate age and also how the soldier simile emphasised the pirate’s craggy features. This examination allowed students to reflect upon their own efforts and to consider how they could revise aspects of their description when they edited their passage. There were some syntactic errors in Adrian’s work but Merilee was concentrating on his use of imagery. She pointed out how Adrian and everyone else would need to correct any mistakes in their redrafted version.

Overall the class produced some excellent descriptions. Merilee had carefully scaffolded her students’ learning, equipping them with a bank of resources for them to make use of in their writing. Over the weeks students had been working on this narrative unit they had compiled banks of words they could use to describe pirates and used them to write a range of different descriptions. They had investigated the use of figurative language in poetry and prose producing their own examples. They had read novels that would offer additional stimulus for their writing. They had become so familiar with the stylistic features of this form of writing that they were now able to produce effective descriptions in preparation for writing their narrative. Merilee has given such a concentrated and iterative treatment to the language involved in writing description that her students had
reached a point where they could apply this understanding with relative ease. She had even made a comment in relation to this herself to explain to students why she insisted upon them using thesauruses. She pointed out that when they found a new word and used it, "it becomes part of your mindset and you'll eventually use it without thinking".

Merilee's remark here is poignant. Her reference to using words "without thinking" demonstrates an awareness of the need for students to develop a form of understanding that is embodied, which can be applied without recourse to consciousness. This then enables the mind to concentrate on more complex aspects of composition providing opportunities for reflexive play with textual form. In the previous chapters dealing with learning to write in kindergarten and Year 3 this embodied understanding was considered more in terms of the mechanical aspects of writing such as handwriting, punctuation and spelling, but stylistic features of language involving vocabulary, generic structure and grammar may also become habituated and automatically retrieved for conscious attention, if need be, in the reflexive process of constructing text. This seems to be Merilee's intention with 5O. She gives repetitive and sustained treatment to different literary techniques to not only ensure that her students acquire the ability to be able to apply them "without thinking", but so they can then retrieve them, and consciously manipulate them, for creative effect.

Merilee's practice, however, does not only exhibit a concern for the embodiment of knowledge but so too for the cultivation of desire. 5O not only write imaginative descriptions because they have amassed the skills to do so, they write well because they want to, they have a keen desire to succeed. While all of the children in 5O were capable students many did not demonstrate either an aptitude or interest in writing at the beginning of the year. Merilee was able to encourage them to take an interest in writing by giving them the necessary tools and praising their achievements. Desire was fostered through the students' accumulation of knowledge and the self-gratification resulting from Merilee's acknowledgment of demonstrated effort. Together with this, individual achievement seemed very much related to 5O's collective desire to excel in writing, a force that Merilee seemed to engender with the teacher-directedness of her pedagogy. As students were undertaking the same course of study, Merilee was able to teach the class as a whole. This provided her with the pedagogic advantage of being able to channel her students' desires towards a common goal, a process intensifying the affective impact of her teaching. This was exemplified in the lesson on writing a description of a pirate as Merilee was able to arouse her students' desire to write by
drawing on their accumulated knowledge and providing them with numerous models. An additional and powerful stimulus was provided by Merilee herself. Her colourful descriptions and theatrical performance seemed to captivate the class, motivating them to produce their own descriptive passage. While Merilee projected a strong presence in the classroom, this should not be seen as domineering or abusive, the perspective often framing critiques of teacher-directed learning. Merilee’s dominant position within the classroom was premised on an intersubjective dynamic between herself and her students. She was there to not only direct but to scaffold her students’ learning using their existing skill base and understanding as a barometer by which to determine their learning goals and her teaching objectives, a process that led her students towards attaining greater degrees of control over their learning.

In teaching writing, Merilee put considerable emphasis on her students acquiring a thorough understanding of grammar. She was adept at demonstrating how it could be harnessed to produce a particular textual form, as was evident with her approach to teaching the language of describing. She displayed a similar expertise in the way she approached the teaching of sentence-level grammar, the focus of the fourth observation session. At this time, the third week of the third term, 5O were working on a unit about Antarctica. Although placing emphasis over the course of the unit on teaching her students how to write an explanation, Merilee engaged the class in a range of other language-based activities. She commenced the fourth observation session by discussing the previous day’s work, reviewing a dictagloss task they had completed, a listening skills activity used predominantly as a TESL strategy and one which Merilee found useful for her students. She followed this with a discussion of the books the class were reading which related to the unit theme of Antarctica: Jack London’s White Fang and Gary Paulsen’s Dog’s Song. These books were chosen because they offered descriptions of similarly desolate landscapes and, while 5O were focusing on writing explanations, Merilee also had them write literary and technical descriptions of the continent as complementary activities. In this lesson, however, she was using extracts from the two texts to expand students’ understanding of adverbs. She commenced the activity by reviewing the different parts of speech and their functions. After this the class read through the short extracts from the two texts. She asked students to compare the two descriptions, then to focus on the extract from the London text and to consider which grammatical category, with a descriptive function, was not often used by this writer. Students were quick to identify that in this extract London made limited use of adverbs for descriptive purposes. She explained to the class how they were going to rewrite this
short extract adding adverbs to enhance the description. Prior to this, she clarified the different functions of adverbs with the class. She asked students for their suggestion of a sentence involving a couple of action verbs. She wrote the following sentence on the board which was the result of a combined effort by a couple of students:

At first he walked slowly but soon his pace turned into a jog as he noticed he was late for school.

Merilee discussed the sentence with the class focusing on the different adverbs. She explained how adverbs modify or add extra information to verbs, adjectives or other adverbs and underlined and examined the four adverbs in the sentence pointing out how many ended with ly such as slowly and how others, as in the examples in the sentence, did not. Students then wrote the sentence into their books and Merilee asked them to identify the other words by circling each with a different colour for each grammatical category. When students had completed this parsing task, Merilee then discussed their results, taking the opportunity to reinforce additional points about the various categories, such as the difference between definite and indefinite articles and when an is used instead of a.

After this activity Merilee then returned to the extract from the London text. She asked students to underline all the verbs, which were then discussed. Following this, she asked students to add adverbs to a selection of the verbs in the passage explaining how they were to use their thesaurus to find new and interesting words and to check in their dictionaries if they were contextually appropriate. Students were given approximately twenty minutes to complete this task, a period in which they worked quietly and consistently, raising their hands at times for assistance. In the feedback session that followed, Merilee asked a selection of students for the adverbs that they had used. As these students read out the passage with their adverbs inserted, Merilee would stop them to comment upon the effectiveness of the words they had chosen using a similar procedure to that in the second observation lesson. Interesting examples such as, ‘a vast silence reigned ominously over the land’, were praised and written on the board. When students offered suggestions that lacked imagination, such as dangerously, Merilee asked them to consider other words that might be more effective. Throughout this session, Merilee actively involved herself in the feedback process using her voice to mimic the tone the different adverbs suggested about the landscape in London’s text. This
encouraged other students to offer their examples, even if they hadn’t been selected to read theirs.

On completing this activity Merilee decided to remain on the topic of adverbs referring students to a list of eight that she had written on the board. She asked students to write a paragraph of no more than four sentences using these eight adverbs. Rather than leaving the topic open she asked students for suggestions and wrote the following list on the board: Antarctica, coldness, hazards in forests, piracy, natural disasters, a haunted house and wildlife. Some suggestions such as ‘your favourite television show’, were rejected with Merilee keen to move students beyond describing aspects of their immediate experience. Students then set about the task which Merilee explained was to be written firstly in pencil and when completed given to a neighbour to peer edit, a process that she stressed would require them to use dictionaries to check spelling. When students had finished these series of steps and Merilee had discussed their results she then asked the class to rewrite their drafts in pen, concluding with the advice, “Play with your work till it works”. When the bell rang students remained at their desks busily redrafting their paragraphs. After another five minutes Merilee suggested they had better have a break and students gradually forwarded out to recess.

Merilee’s technique for teaching grammar was interesting in that she managed to integrate her examination of adverbs with the unit on Antarctica. In doing this, the focus on adverbs as a grammatical category was not lost. She used a range of strategies, firstly dealing with them in isolation, differentiating them from other grammatical categories and then relating them to the broader context of the unit of work the class were studying. Merilee pointed out that,

I don’t have any grammar textbooks that I photocopy and put up. I get the ideas out of the book myself. I mean I teach some things in isolation but I do them with the text we’re doing, so I rarely put up what I call ad hoc sentences.

The key term here seems to be “ad hoc”. Merilee’s approach to teaching grammar, and teaching in general, was to give sustained and in-depth treatment to whatever was the focus of study, be it a specific grammatical concept or the techniques involved in producing different textual effects. In this lesson, Merilee devoted two hours to examining adverbs. She did not simply have students identify them or complete exercises to reinforce their linguistic function, both of which are worthwhile tasks and ones which Merilee often set as homework activities for further reinforcement, she also
ensured students incorporated them into their writing making connections with the topic and texts they would continue to examine over the course of a term. Her pedagogy, therefore, was geared towards the maximisation of affect. This was not only achieved by the concentrated treatment Merilee gave to topics within separate lessons, but by her practice of revisiting concepts on an ongoing basis over the course of the year. Although she quite liked the Syllabus, and the emphasis it placed on student outcomes, she explained how one of her main concerns was that if a child achieved an outcome there was an implicit assumption in the document that students could always do so. She remarked that,

What I wish it would emphasise more is that if you teach something at this level you still have to keep reinforcing it. I find it doesn’t matter how often you teach, say, a text type, before they even begin to write you have to go through the structure, you have to reiterate, go over it and over it.

The samples of students’ work from 50 chosen for analysis were written during Term 2, when Merilee was teaching a unit on *Wind in the Willows*. The focus text type for this unit was a response or review text. Students also wrote a number of descriptive passages profiling the main characters, which reinforced their work on description undertaken during Term 1 and provided them with material to use in writing their review of the novel. Prior to commencing this review of the novel itself, a task undertaken later in the term, Merilee took the class to see a play based on Kenneth Grahame’s text and had them write a review of the performance. This was the focus of the third observation session and the topic of the students’ reviews discussed below. In the lesson after having seen the play, Merilee drew on the students’ experience to discuss the different elements of a review. As a class, they mapped out a plan for their text which involved providing background information on the play and its connection with the novel, a description of characters and a brief explanation of the plot, their opinion of the play and a final recommendation. This structure was written on the board and each stage was discussed in detail. Following this, Merilee jointly constructed an introductory paragraph with the class and students used this as a model to write their own. Merilee concluded the lesson with her usual feedback session. Students read out their efforts, which Merilee commented upon, offering suggestions about how they might improve upon what they had written. Over the next couple of lessons this text was completed, edited and redrafted. The following set of texts show three students’ final copies of this review which they had typed and printed out on the school’s computer lab.
The first of these texts (Figure 6.1a) was written by an Anglo-Australian student named Lucy, who Merilee judged to be one of the most capable writers in 5O. Lucy has followed the structure of a review that was discussed in class, commencing with a paragraph that links the play to the novel and provides a short account of the lead characters. She has selected two adjectives to describe each character (except Mole) which provide a concise summary of each character’s personality. Merilee had assisted Lucy to employ this journalistic technique (often found in newspaper reviews) through her practice of compiling lists of adjectives, analysing reviews from newspapers and having students write character profiles in advance of their review. Lucy proceeds to write two paragraphs dealing with the plot, the second of which concludes with a question, a rhetorical device also used in reviews to create a feeling of anticipation. This technique is also evident in the two other students’ texts as Merilee encouraged the class to try to use a question at this point in their writing after it was used so effectively by one of the students whose passage was read out during the third observation lesson. In the final paragraphs Lucy comments on aspects of the performance such as costume and set design, concluding with a recommendation in the form of the cliched, though appropriate, remark, “a most enjoyable time to be had by all”.

Lucy has written an excellent review of the play she attended with the class. The competence she displays in her writing, however, is not simply a reflection of her own ability but a product of Merilee’s carefully scaffolded pedagogy. Lucy’s text exhibits a range of strategies that Merilee discussed with the class and which students were required to experiment with in their writing. While Lucy’s style of writing is a little verbose and awkward at times, it demonstrates the degree of effort that she applied to her writing and a desire to experiment with the different techniques Merilee had discussed. There are a couple of paragraphing problems towards the end of the text and some misuse of apostrophes and commas, which Merilee does not comment upon, but generally Lucy’s text has few mechanical errors. It is because she has such a good command of the mechanics of writing that she is also able to give far more attention to style. This is not only evident in the techniques already discussed but also in the quite sophisticated syntactic structures that she employs. This, however, is not simply a result of her ability. Merilee spent considerable time in class examining sentence structure and modelling the ways in which students could change sentence beginnings or nominalise and add additional clauses to create different effects. This was evident in the third observation session when Merilee jointly constructed an introductory sentence about the
Toad of Toad Hall

Response Text

'Toad of Toad Hall' is a play adapted from the novel, "Wind in the Willows", by Kenneth Grahame, an English writer. The book was first published in 1908. The 'One Blue Shoe company, a popular corporation based at The Rocks, Sydney, produced the play, making the characters, Ratty, Mole, Toad, and Badger (all riverbankers) become 3D, acted out by humans reflecting the animals' personalities. This makes the arrogant and cunning Toad stand out from his friends; wise, administrative Badger, honest and humble Ratty, and Mole, a creature voracious for food.

Toads' crazy antics for the horse and cart lead to his encounter with a motor vehicle, which inspires him to start a new craze, the possession of an automobile. This unfortunately causes him to steal one and crash it, after a policeman tells him to slow down, as he has been driving at 70 km (over the speed limit). Toad most indignant, calls the policeman a 'fat face', which leads him to court, where he is sentenced to jail for 20 years.

He luckily escapes, with the help of a little girl and her aunt, a washer woman. He later finds out that his house has been repossessed by weasels. Will he still be able to remain 'Toad' of 'Toad Hall'?
The costumes are simple, yet effective, creating a mood between Badgers' white stripe down his head, and Toads' green lipstick and pond-coloured suit. Though Ratty and Mole look like everyday people, they still create their 'animal-like' images.

The performance is well done, including some slap-stick humour, and excellent settings/scenes, especially Badgers' house, because of the fire-place and the large arm chairs.

This extract from the text was thoroughly enjoyable, with some explicit vocabulary used from the novel. It eloquently advises you of Toads' antics and his lack of maturity.
It is the first play I have seen where you have to walk up and down stairs to see the animals' actions, a most enjoyable time to be had by all.

I rate the play

9/10

Lucy Datyner, 5Y

Figure 6.1a

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plot of the play for students which Lucy uses at the beginning of her second paragraph and which the other two students include in their texts: *Toad’s crazy antics for the horse and cart lead to his encounter with a motor vehicle, which inspires him to start a new craze, the possession of an automobile.* In the process of writing this sentence with the class Merilee steered students away from merely recounting the story by having them nominalise any actions that they mentioned, such as, *antics, encounter, craze* and *possession.* She also demonstrated how relative clauses can be inserted in a sentence to add extra information in a concise fashion, a quite complex syntactic structure for this age group, but one which Lucy mimics at the end of the same paragraph. Given this input, Lucy has been able to write an effective review refining aspects of her writing over a number of lessons.

The second text chosen for analysis was written by Orion, a student of Hong Kong Chinese background, who Merilee considered to be representative of the average range of ability within the class. In the corpus of Orion’s texts there were two typed versions of this review (Figures 6.1b and 6.1c) both of which included comments by Merilee, something which was not evident on Lucy’s text. Orion does not exhibit the same flair with language as Lucy and there is clear evidence of his ESL background in some of his syntactic errors, in particular his misuse of the indefinite article. His introduction is far less detailed than Lucy’s, simply providing a comment on the play and establishing its relationship to Kenneth Grahame’s novel. He commences the second paragraph with the sentence that was jointly constructed by the class and concludes with a question, the technique Merilee suggested students attempt to include in their text. In the third paragraph he provides a short description of Toad commenting upon the performance of the actor who played this role. In the fourth paragraph he gives a short account of the costumes and sets, then concludes with a recommendation and comment which is difficult to read given his syntactic errors.

Merilee was not satisfied with this effort as a final draft, which explains why there is a redrafted version. By the time students typed up their text on the computer they had already written several handwritten drafts. The typed version was supposed to be their final copy yet Merilee felt there were too many errors in Orion’s text to let this version suffice. She therefore corrects this text, giving attention to not only spelling, punctuation and simple syntactic errors, she also offers suggestions about other points Orion could include in his review and how he could improve his sentence structure in places.
Toad of Toad Hall

Response text

The play 'Toad of Toad Hall' is an entertaining experience, the One Blue Shoe Production Company, featuring an extract from the book 'The Wind in the Willows' by Kenneth Grahame, first published in

Toad's crazy antics for the horse and cart lead to his encounter with a motor vehicle, which inspires him to start a new craze, the possession of automobile. Numerous times of smashes and furious driving leaves his friends anxious. He steals a motor car and gets unwillingly thrown in jail. Will he ever escape?

Toad is a funny creature who always gets into mischief and gets all the pity. All his songs and poems are about the eminent 'toad.' The gentleman who played toad was very good at bringing out humour in various ways.

The costuming was kept to a minimum as all the characters were easily recognisable yet they wore ordinary clothes. The setting was very sociable with various rooms and different props. The audience wondered around the surroundings of a 1950s century sandstone building.

My recommendation is yes, if you haven't the book so you don't get a surprise.

Orion Leung

John's note: don't be added.

as it is the colour of their clothes that give th

Figure 6.1b
Toad of Toad Hall

Response text

The play ‘Toad of Toad Hall’ is a entertaining experience, the One Blue Shoe Production Company, featuring an extract from the book ‘The Wind in the Willows’ by Kenneth Grahame, first published in 1908.

Toad’s crazy antics for the horse and cart Lead to his encounter with a motor vehicle, which inspires him to start a new craze, the possession of an automobile. Numerous times of smashes and furious driving leaves his friends anxious. He steals a motor car and is unwillingly thrown in gaol. Will he ever escape?

Toad is a funny creature who always get into mischief and receives a lot of pity. All his songs and poems are about the eminent ‘toad’. The gentleman who plays toad is very good at bringing out his sense of humour in various ways.

The costuming is kept to a minimum as all the characters are easily recognisable, yet they exude ordinary clothes, as it is the colour of the clothes that give them their distinctive animal role, as well as simple use of colour. In make up, for instance Toad’s green lips, Ratty’s moustache and Badger’s white streak through the centre of his hair. The setting is very sociable through various rooms and props, as the audience wanders around the structure of a 19th century sandstone building.

My recommendation is yes, if you haven’t the book so you don’t get a surprise.

Orion Leung

She also directs him to reword his last sentence, though neglects to point out where he has failed to include full stops. In his redrafted version, Orion has corrected most of these errors. He still neglects to insert ‘by’ in the first paragraph and his second sentence in paragraph two would read better if the words “times of” were omitted, something Merilee did not point out. He also does not attempt to reword his last sentence and only inconsistently uses a capital for Toad. Merilee, however, draws his attention to these errors once again providing constant reminders about how he can improve upon his
work. Merilee felt it was important to give students reasonably rapid feedback on their work which is why feedback sessions were a regular feature of her classroom practice. This principle also governed her approach to marking students' work which she tried to complete and return as soon as possible. She explained that,

I think children like to have a purpose and an end result. They like you to mark their work, even though they mightn't like the way you mark it. I get a much better result if it's draft, mark, return, edit and publish.

In the third set of work samples, written by Juming, a student of Mainland Chinese background, there were also two copies of his review of the play (Figures 6.1d and 6.1e) both of which were corrected by Merilee. Juming was considered to be one of the least able students in the class, though his review is of a comparable standard to that written by Orion. Juming has followed the structure discussed in class to write his review. He commences with a comment about the play which is a little more detailed than Orion's, and refers to the play being an adaptation of a novel. He begins his second paragraph with the sentence the class jointly constructed but makes some errors in the version he uses. He then proceeds to provide more information about the plot and, as with Lucy and Orion, concludes this discussion with a question. In the next two paragraphs he gives some account of the performance mentioning the actor who played Toad and the costuming, before concluding with a recommendation. Juming's first typed draft is a satisfactory effort with minimal punctuation and spelling errors, some of which are not noted by Merilee. In places, however, Juming's syntax is quite awkward and it is this aspect of his writing that Merilee tends to focus on in correcting his work, showing him ways in which he can restructure his sentences, or add extra information to produce a more effective piece of writing. In his redrafted review, shown as 6.1e, Juming has corrected most of his errors and incorporated Merilee's suggestions. There are still a couple of errors, which Merilee points out, but there is an obvious improvement from the previous copy. In both versions Juming shows a considerable degree of application. He has used a number of adjectives in expressing his opinion of the play and in his initial description of Toad. Following Merilee's advice he expands upon this in describing the other characters in the second version. Overall, in each of the three student's reviews, it is clear that they have actively sought to make use of the strategies discussed and practised in class. As a result, they each produced an effective piece of writing, a quite difficult text for this stage of learning but one which Merilee assisted in refining in the other reviews that they wrote in the course of completing this unit of
Toad of Toad Hall is an exciting, entertaining and a humorous play which is an adaptation from Kenneth Grahame's "Wind in the Willows" and the production is by the "Blue Shoe Productions Company".

Toad of Toad Hall is about a toad named "Toad" who has crazy antics about a hose and cart which lead to his encounter with a motor vehicle which inspires him to start a new craze, the possession of an automobile.

Unluckily his new craze led to stealing an automobile, he then gets brought into court and is sentenced to twenty years in jail, and fortunately enough he escapes but "Toad" hears about another mishap, somebody has taken over Toadhall. Can he get it back with the help of his friends or will he have to face it alone?

The way "Toad" acts gives a clear image of his personality which tells you that he is a garrulous fellow and does what he wants to. The characters' costumes were not as succinct as I thought they would be although even a small change such as "Toad's" lips which were green or "Badger's" hair which was streaked white can make a difference.

The play Toad of Toad Hall mainly brought Kenneth Grahame's "Wind in the Willows" to life and is highly recommended if you need a little humour in your life.

By: Juming

Figure 6.1d
Toad of Toad Hall is an exciting, entertaining and a humorous play, by One Blue Shoe Productions Company, which is an adaptation from Kenneth Grahame’s novel “Wind in the Willows”.

Toad of Toad Hall is about a toad-named “Toad” who has crazy antics about a hose and cart which lead to his encounter with a motor vehicle, inspiring him to start a new craze, the possession of an automobile.

Unfortunately his new craze leads to the stealing of an automobile, he is then brought into court and sentenced to twenty years in jail, and fortunately enough he escapes; but “Toad” hears about another mishap, somebody has taken over Toad Hall. Can he get it back with the help of his friends or will he have to face it alone?

The way “Toad” acts gives a clear image of his personality which tells you that he is a garrulous fellow who does as he wishes ignoring the advice of the admirable, Badger, the affectionate Mole and the loyal Rat.

The characters costumes are not as succinct as I thought they would be, although even a small change such as “Toad’s” lips which are green and “Badger’s” hair which is streaked white can makes a difference.

The play, “Toad of Toad Hall” mainly brings Kenneth Graheme’s “Wind in the Willows” to life and I highly recommended it to bring a little humour in to your life.

By: Juming
work. The confidence that they gained in doing so was channelled back into their writing fuelling their interest in language and a desire to demonstrate their new found expertise to both Merilee and their classmates.

Concluding Remarks
Margaret and Merilee had very different approaches to teaching writing. This is, in part, a function of the type of class each had, but perhaps an even greater influence on their style of teaching was their different educational philosophies which coloured their perspective on the nature of the teacher’s role within the classroom. Margaret’s class at Westville experienced considerable difficulties with writing. Most students had problems concentrating on their work and were easily distracted by their classmates. Together with this, there were a couple of students with recognised behavioural disorders. It was not an easy class. Margaret’s method of dealing with this difficult and often volatile mix of students was to create a comfortable and relaxed environment which she felt would promote a feeling of contentment, stimulating their desire to learn. Her approach to catering for the academic needs of her students was via the pastoral. In privileging the latter she assumed her students would then engage in the learning process and apply themselves to acquiring the skills necessary to write effectively, with her role being to facilitate this process rather than to actively intervene. This approach, however, tended to bifurcate the pastoral and academic roles of teaching with desire seemingly excised from the latter and configured more as a product of psychological well-being rather than as resulting from embodied knowledge and skill. With a focus on the pastoral, Margaret did not address the corporeality of learning, the ways in which academic success is premised upon the acquisition of a scholarly habitus. Neither the regimen which existed in 5D’s classroom nor Margaret’s writing pedagogy were conducive to the formation of these bodily capacities and instead only served to entrench the inappropriate work habits many of her students had already embodied.

This failure to address the corporeality of learning was also evident in other areas of Margaret’s teaching practice; in particular, in her ad hoc treatment of grammar and textual form. This was not only the case within Taskforce, where students worked on a range of different study guide tasks; it was also evident in Margaret’s teacher-directed lessons. No matter what the pedagogic mode, there was no systematic and concentrated examination of the structural and grammatical features of different types of texts or even
syntax and the mechanics of writing, which the students in 5D still had considerable difficulty mastering. Margaret’s pedagogy, therefore, lacked affective impact. Without a sustained and iterative treatment of the knowledge and skills required to write effectively there was little possibility of students acquiring this ability and so it was little wonder that many simply closed the “shutters” on learning.

Merilee’s class at Northside was considerably different, but then, so was her teaching. 5O were a class of quite gifted students but this did not stop Merilee carefully supporting their learning and ensuring she gave concentrated attention to teaching the various skills and knowledge involved in being able to write effectively. Merilee was a strong advocate of teacher-directed learning and always maintained a strong presence within the classroom. This was not only the case in teaching classes like 5O. In her previous school, which had a DSP classification and where ESL teaching was generally organised around small ability-based groupings, Merilee lobbied to take a larger group of fifteen students and to teach them writing on a whole class basis. She explained that,

They actually got to write, they got to discuss their writing and their writing really did improve. That one year they got about 6 or 7 of these children into selective high schools. I know it’s not a beacon to go by but everything improved.

Merilee considered that a large part of her success with this class was a result of them having “a common ground for learning” and it was this principle that she applied in teaching the Opportunity Class at Northside. Students in 5O engaged in common units of work with Merilee determining the pace and direction of their learning. Working as a corporate body, she was able to give sustained treatment to aspects of textual form so students could refine their writing skills. In doing this she maximised the affective impact of her teaching. Students acquired the skills and knowledge to write effectively and the sense of achievement they attained fuelled their desire for writing. Within Merilee’s practice, desire was generated through a student’s accumulated knowledge and skill, something which was supported by the scholarly regimen that existed within the classroom. In focusing on the academic, much of the pastoral dimension of Merilee’s teaching role had also been met. While she was not confronted with the same difficulties that Margaret encountered at Westville, it is interesting to contemplate whether or not she would have approached teaching such a class any differently. Given her previous experience as an ESL teacher at a DSP school it seems Merilee would not have greatly changed her practice and, judging from her comments above, a class such as 5D at
Westville would have made far more progress with the pedagogy that she would have employed.

Notes

1 Intellectually Mild or IM is a category of intellectual disability.
Conclusion – Disparate Bodies

It is not entirely true that 'instruction' is something quite different from 'education'. An excessive emphasis on this distinction has been a serious error of idealist educationalists... For instruction to be wholly distinct from education the pupil would have to be pure passivity, a 'mechanical receiver' of abstract notions. In the school, the nexus between instruction and education can only be realised by the living work of the teacher.
A. Gramsci (1971: 35)

Teachers need to be better placed to claim the desire to teach through understanding the discursive authority at work in transmitting the notion of a desire to learn. Desire as teacher centredness or embodied self-interest, should not therefore be dismissed as the antithesis of progressivism in educational work, nor as the first symptom of potentially abusive pedagogy.
E. McWilliam (1997: 228)

The central concern of this thesis has been to examine the corporeality of learning and the ways in which different pedagogic practices contribute to students acquiring dispositions which may or may not be conducive to academic endeavour. In developing a framework adequate to the task of examining the formation of these dispositions, it has drawn on and extended the theoretical work around processes of embodiment of Bourdieu, Foucault and others outlined in the opening chapters. In particular, it has proposed a reformulation of Bourdieu's notion of habitus taking greater account of Spinoza's psychophysical parallelism. This has allowed for a theorisation of pedagogic embodiment, via the concept of a scholarly habitus, that avoids simply inverting the current emphasis given to cognition within education to instead demonstrate how learning is both a mindful and a bodily process. The role of consciousness is acknowledged, not in a Cartesian sense as a form of rationality divorced from bodily experience, but as an embodied phenomenon resulting from the accumulation of bodily affect. In relation to schooling these affects are seen as a function of the different disciplinary techniques that teachers employ. This was demonstrated in the empirical study where the capacitating effects of Foucault's conception of disciplinary force were evident.

In the analysis of the pedagogies of the kindergarten, Year 3 and Year 5 teachers at Westville and Northside Public Schools, however, a stark contrast is evident in the techniques the teachers from each school used in the process of teaching their students how to write. These differences seemed to coalesce, to a considerable extent, around the particular understandings the teachers from each school had of their role within the classroom; differing educational philosophies that in turn influenced their pedagogic practice. In many respects these differences relate very much to whether or not teachers appeared to make an implicit distinction within their practice between “instruction” and
"education"; the bifurcation of teaching and learning of which Gramsci is so critical. At Westville PS this division was clearly evident. Each of the three Westville teachers tended to favour a far less teacher-directed pedagogy than those at Northside PS. They made much greater use of group and independent learning activities, and so facilitation rather than instruction characterised their teaching methodology. Emphasis was also placed on praise and motivational strategies and, although differing in relation to the year taught, the creation of a relaxed learning environment with seemingly little restraint upon talk or movement.

At Northside PS a very different set of pedagogic practices prevailed, with each of the three teachers not simply using a far more teacher-directed approach but one in which concentrated attention was given to the knowledge and skills involved in learning how to write. In addition to this, praise at Northside was a lot less forthcoming with teachers tending towards constructive criticism of their students' work rather than an over-reliance on positive reinforcement. Each of the teachers at Northside also placed far more restrictions upon their students within the classroom. Talk and movement were closely monitored and generally prohibited altogether when students were required to work independently. In contrast to Westville PS, "education" at Northside was immanently linked to "instruction". Teachers saw their role as not simply supporting, but rather explicitly directing, their students' learning.

The impact of these different pedagogies on students' bodies was considerable. At Westville the use of quite relaxed disciplinary codes seemed to simply confirm students' existing habitus, which were generally not conducive to scholarly labour. It is quite poignant that at each stage of learning - kindergarten, Year 3 and Year 5 - teachers employed similar techniques. It seems evident, therefore, that these practices were endemic within the school and while this was not a longitudinal study, it is probable that the students in Years 3 and 5 had encountered a similar teaching practice throughout their years of schooling. As a result, they had acquired a form of embodiment that tended to lack self-regulation, inhibiting their ability for any sustained application to work. With their teachers employing a pedagogy that required students to shoulder much of the responsibility for their own learning and, lacking the bodily capacity to do so, their progress was limited. There was neither the internal nor the external provocation to fully engage in the difficult process of learning to write.
The effects of this inappropriate corporeality were of course also manifested cognitively. Unable to give concentrated attention to their work there was little possibility of affect accumulatng to the point where effective learning occurred. A considerable proportion of students in the Years 3 and 5 classes at Westville experienced great difficulty with writing. They had still not habituated the mechanics of the process. This was not simply a function of their own lack of application. The form of embodiment they had acquired did not only fail to predispose them towards the rigours of scholarly labour, it had also not equipped them with a somatic familiarity of the knowledge and skills required to write effectively. This is only attained through iterative and concentrated engagement with these aspects of writing, a process requiring the direction and guiding influence of a teacher. To the teachers at Westville, however, learning to write was seen to be accomplished through other means. It did not require a high level of teacher direction; rather it was seen to be more dependent upon a child’s psychological well-being, their desire and willingness to participate in the learning process. In an effort to cultivate this desire, teachers sought to boost their students’ self esteem through an emphasis on praise and conducting short, fun activities to try and maintain student interest. Desire was not seen to stem from the accumulation of knowledge and bodily capacity; rather the desire to learn was understood as a psychical phenomenon operating as a precursor to academic achievement. Given this, a student’s acquisition of knowledge and skills seemed less a teacher responsibility and more a matter of student motivation. The pedagogy the teachers employed seemed to focus upon encouraging this motivation with the assumption being that students would then apply themselves to the process of learning to write. The essentialised notion of desire framing this pedagogy in turn deflected attention away from the teacher, diluting their role within the classroom and refashioning the desire to teach into simply nurturing students’ desire to learn. As McWilliam explains, however, there needs to be a better understanding of “the discursive authority at work in transmitting a desire to learn”. This discursive authority involves a set of practices or disciplinary techniques that comprise the craft of teaching, capacitating students’ bodies and providing the foundation upon which a desire to learn is engendered. The pedagogy to which the students at Westville were exposed failed to do this. Their bodies were not invested with a discipline that predisposed them towards writing and so their desires were directed elsewhere. Given the habitus they had acquired, their ‘striving to be’ or conatus was not inclined towards scholarly achievement and their ongoing difficulties with learning to write simply confirmed this aspect of their sense of becoming.
At Northside the pedagogy the teachers employed exerted a far greater degree of disciplinary force upon students' bodies. There was an understanding that the ability to learn required a certain bodily composure that would then enable students to apply themselves to their work. As such, each of the three teachers at Northside utilised strategies designed to instil this discipline in their students. Central to them achieving this was the way each exercised a strong presence within their classroom which did not only impact upon their classroom management, it characterised their overall approach to teaching. This degree of teacher centredness seemed a reflection of the way each saw themselves as being responsible for their students' learning; a responsibility which was to elicit a highly scaffolded form of curriculum implementation. Students never undertook a task without first receiving a considerable amount of teacher input, a process always performed on a corporate basis and supplemented throughout a lesson at either an individual, group or whole class level. Students were not only consistently supported by their teachers when undertaking a task, the uniformity of the curriculum implementation seemed to evoke a particular ethos of learning within each class that provided an additional incentive for students to not only complete their work but to do it well. Students appeared to be invested with a desire to learn which was grounded in the attainment of knowledge and skills. This desire to learn did not function as a precursor to the learning process, it was dependent upon the process itself, the intersubjective dynamic of teaching and learning with the teachers and their expertise being integral to the momentum that was generated. The pedagogy experienced by the students at Northside did not only enable them to acquire a habitus predisposed towards literate practice, it promoted a conatus imbued with scholarship and an aspiration for academic success.

While the pedagogy practised in each school varied considerably, so too did the socio-economic background and ethnicity of students. In many respects the differential outcomes achieved by students in each school relate very much to the forms of embodiment and desires resulting from the pedagogy they encountered both prior to and outside the confines of their institutionalised education. As Bourdieu (1977/1999: 87) points out,

... the habitus acquired in the family underlies the structuring of school experiences (in particular the reception and assimilation of the specifically pedagogic message).
To Bourdieu and other reproduction theorists, however, the processes of schooling do little to alter the child's situation and, as such, simply replicate and affirm the existing social structure. At one level this thesis may also appear to simply operate as yet another perspective on the reproductive processes of schooling. Its analysis of the impact of different pedagogies on students' bodies and the extent to which they contribute to the acquisition of a scholarly disposition demonstrates the ways in which schooling can simply confirm a student's existing habitus. However, the production of these disparate bodies, disciplined in various ways by the pedagogic practices employed at the two schools, also demonstrates what is generally neglected within reproduction theory, namely, that the processes of reproduction must also be enabling. What is problematic, which is clearly evident in the contrast between Westville and Northside, is the inequitable distribution of these forms of capacitation, the enabling aspects of power to which Foucault refers but provides only limited elaboration.

It is interesting in the study of these two schools how the two sets of teachers had such vastly different perspectives on education and how a more empowering disciplinarity characterised the practice of the teachers in the more affluent and higher achieving school. The students at Northside, however, were not only better writers because of their class background, or because of a complementarity between the language and values of their home and school. In many respects this was not the case. They became better writers than most of the students at Westville largely because of the capacitating properties of the practices their teachers employed. Not only did they come to habituate the fundamental skills involved in learning to write, the ability that they acquired, together with the ethos generated by the regimen within their classroom, fuelled their desire to then creatively manipulate the technology with which they had become embodied. The reasons why the teachers at Northside were so attuned to the corporeality of learning and seemed to almost intuitively understand the parallel relation between body and mind, while the teachers at Westville embraced a far more psychological model of learning, are only very partially answered in this study. The genealogy of syllabus documents indicated a clear shift in emphasis away from the body as a matter of pedagogic concern yet the teachers at Northside, unlike those at Westville, still maintained a strong focus on disciplinary practices more characteristic of the period prior to the psychological turn within education. In some respects their disparate teaching methodologies are a function of the differences in the teachers' own class and educational background, age, expertise and training. The ways in which these different practices seemed so enmeshed within the fabric of the two schools, however, also
suggests there was a certain institutional imperative influencing the teachers’ different pedagogic approaches.

To some extent a rationale for the methodology favoured by the teachers at Westville is evident in the comments made by the school principal, who was only in her first year at the school and was herself conducting a review of the teachers’ programs and practice given the school’s continued poor performance in the annual statewide literacy and numeracy tests for Years 3 and 5. She referred to a particular ethos that she felt was apparent in DSP schools like Westville which seemed to promote the creation of a happy and welcoming environment over the notion of the school as a place of learning and academic excellence (see Introduction to Section 3). She considered that this had a major impact on teachers’ classroom practice and it was something she was keen to address. While DSP initiatives changed considerably over the course of the Program’s existence, with it funding much innovative work in the area of genre-based literacy in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Callaghan and Rothery, 1988; Metropolitan East DSP, 1989a; Metropolitan East DSP, 1989 b; Metropolitan East DSP and NSW Dept of School Education, 1990), the ethos to which the Westville principal refers is evident in much of the Program’s early documentation (P. Knapp, 1989b). From the early 1990s there does appear to be a shift in emphasis in DSP philosophy with a far greater reference to improving student outcomes. The ways in which it suggests this will be achieved, however, is primarily through raising teacher and student expectations. In one of its final discussion papers, Raising Expectations: Achieving Quality Education for All (New South Wales Department of Education and Training Student Services and Equity Programs, 1998), issued prior to the reconfiguration of the Program in 2001 into the Priority Schools Funding Program, academic achievement may have been foregrounded but it is a student’s psychological well-being that seems to be the Program’s key pedagogic concern. This is evident in the conclusion to the document:

Holding ‘high expectations’ means believing that all students are capable of learning; it means refusing to accept limits on students’ potential on the basis of ‘background’ factors such as income level or race; it means believing that schools and teachers can make a difference to the educational achievements of all students; and it means acting in ways that help students to believe in themselves.
(1998: 21)

Improved student outcomes are linked to raising students’ self-esteem with the role of the teacher largely one of bolstering students’ confidence in their learning potential. This is made quite explicit in a section of the document entitled ‘Teachers Make a Difference’
which commences with the following quote: “At the root of teachers’ faith in students’ potential is faith in their own ability to uncover and nurture that potential” (Burke 1995:6 in 1998:16). This perspective on teaching aligns very much with the pedagogy practised by the teachers at Westville. The educational ideals of the DSP, drawing heavily on a psychological model of learning, clearly underpin the approach to teaching at the school providing an institutional impetus for the methodology that the teachers employed.

Together with the DSP, structures within the school were responsible for regulating classroom practice. The teaching of literacy at Westville was largely conducted within the framework of the Taskforce program. Although there was a considerable degree of flexibility in the way the teachers could implement the initiative, it was either group-based or independent learning strategies that prevailed. These pedagogic modes were also favoured outside Taskforce time with the Program seemingly providing a model for the way teaching should be conducted at the school. These practices were so dominant at Westville that even the teaching of kindergarten, which did not participate in Taskforce, was largely undertaken in this way. From their first year at school, students were inducted into a pedagogic regime that exerted very little disciplinary force upon their bodies leaving them largely reliant upon the dispositions formed outside their school experience. This in itself had a considerable effect on the pedagogy the teachers employed, and especially their approach to classroom management. As the students at Westville seemed less amenable to the corporeality of schooling the teachers found it difficult to utilise more stringent disciplinary techniques. They sought instead to achieve a segue between their home and school environments but in so doing simply reinforced a form of embodiment that was inappropriate for scholarly labour.

At Northside the situation was quite different with other factors influencing the teachers’ pedagogic approach. Northside had an established reputation for academic excellence that led to an ethos of scholarship framing practice within the school. Teachers had high expectations for their students’ ability to learn but it was not this in itself that spurred them on to succeed, as the DSP document mentioned earlier would argue. It was the way in which this ethos of learning was embedded within the teachers’ practice that is more to the point. The teachers’ ability to imbue their students with a desire to learn was not a matter of psychical enticement arousing a will to succeed. It was dependent upon the disciplinary techniques the teachers employed which invested their students’ bodies with a capacity for sustained application and the knowledge and
skills upon which effective literate practice is based. The task of the teachers at Northside may well have been easier due to the fact that many of their students already possessed a corporeality that was far more attuned to schooling than that which the students of Westville had acquired prior to commencing kindergarten. This, however, does not diminish the capacitating properties of the Northside teachers’ pedagogic approach which was characterised by a considerable degree of teacher directedness and a form of classroom management that was designed to instil a scholarly docility in students.

In prizing this form of embodiment, and advocating a pedagogy such as that practised at Northside, the study must engage with much of the same kind of criticism as that levelled against Bernstein’s notion of restricted and elaborated codes, referred to in the introduction to this thesis. What seems to be evident here is an equivalent notion but rather than operating on the linguistic plane, the restricted and elaborated codes revealed within this thesis pertain to forms of embodiment. The inequitable distribution of embodied capital, evident within this study, demonstrates perhaps an even more insidious form of educational disadvantage given the extent to which the body is naturalised and so hidden from view. In line with his critique of Bernstein’s codes, however, it would seem that Bourdieu would also argue that this study simply fetishises a dominant form with the focus here on corporeality as opposed to language. As Bernstein (1998: 196) points out, much of Bourdieu’s accusations of fetishism relate to his notion of ‘arbitrariness’. To Bourdieu (1992: 5), “All pedagogic action is objectively symbolic violence, insofar as it is the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power”, a proposition one would assume prohibits the transformative possibilities of pedagogic action if ‘symbolic violence’ is conceived in a negative sense, as it appears to be both here and elsewhere (Bourdieu, 1994). What is more the issue is the notion of value, which is at the crux of Bourdieu’s concept of capital. In its various forms, Bourdieu sees capital as symbolic and as such arbitrary, hence his reference to the valorisation of any form of capital as fetishism. To some degree this is the case. What is assigned value in one particular field may not necessarily function as a form of capital within another. However, at the same time, there are forms of capital that are not field-specific. They may have emerged from a particular set of relations but they hold their value and possess the capacity to empower when transferred across fields. It is the contention here that this is not only the case with certain linguistic forms but particular kinds of embodiment. The acquisition of a linguistic arsenal comprising a good command of the mechanics of writing and the ability to produce and manipulate a range of generic forms
is not only powerful within the field of schooling and related academic domains, it is a form of capital which is valued in a range of occupational and domestic settings. Together with this, Vygotsky (1981) argues that literacy equips individuals with the ability to perform higher intellectual functions encouraging a propensity for abstract thought and greater reflection. This view is shared by Ong (1991) in his historical analysis of the differences between oral and literate cultures. The ability to write therefore is a skill that is crucial to participating effectively in the contemporary world.

Problems can arise, however, when the boundary divisions demarcating valued linguistic forms are made rigid and so imperious to change. It is at this point that claims of fetishism may indeed be valid, as has been made elsewhere in relation to the reification of particular textual forms within the dominant genre-based writing approach (Watkins, 1999). To some extent, therefore, it is important to acknowledge the somewhat arbitrary nature of dominant cultural forms. This can become problematic, however, particularly given the pragmatics of having to function within the cultural dominant of a globalised capitalist economy, if this is then used as justification for a complete relativisation of value. Such a position in which difference itself is valorised only serves to mask inequality. For capital to be distributed equitably, access to what is valued needs to be made available to all. In the context of schooling this does not simply mean a curriculum which deals explicitly with language and literacy. What is also required is a pedagogy with the capacity to enable students to embody these resources.

To achieve this the cognitive bias within education needs to be challenged. What is needed is an ontology that embraces the body and the mind through a parallelistic monism as envisaged by Spinoza. The pedagogic implications of such an ontology should result in a far greater understanding of the corporeality of learning and the isomorphic relation of body and mind. It is not intended here that such a position entail the imposition of a particular set of bodily forms which would simply result in the fetishisation of a singular corporeality. The central aim of this thesis is to disrupt current conceptions of pedagogy and to provoke engagement with the bodily nature of learning and the capacitating affects of certain disciplinary techniques that are generally marginalised within the current educational paradigm.

In this thesis the disciplinary techniques employed by teachers were examined in relation to three key, yet often interrelated, categories which draw upon and extend the work of Foucault: space, regimen and curriculum implementation. Within each category
it became apparent that there were certain disciplinary measures that proved more enabling than others, which could provide the basis for extrapolating a set of pedagogic principles important for redressing the neglected state of the body in pedagogic theory. In relation to space, it became apparent that it was not so much the space itself that exerted any strong disciplinary force upon students’ bodies, it was more a matter of how a space was used, often resulting in a considerable overlap in the analysis of categories dealing with space and regimen. There were exceptions to this, especially in relation to kindergarten. The considerable contrast in the size of the two kindergarten classrooms seemed to demonstrate that the larger space exerted far less disciplinary force. This had implications for the ways in which kindergarten students were initiated into the processes of schooling, particularly the carnal genres of this institutional setting which required a far greater degree of self-governance than those operating within the home environment. Also, without the restrictions imposed by the space itself, greater demands were placed upon the teacher to regulate the space and demarcate boundaries in the larger room. This often resulted in the multiple coding of space and a reduction in regulatory force. It was also evident that some spaces appeared to exert a particular ambience that projected differing degrees of disciplinary force. The ambience of each space was generally a reflection of the overriding ethos that prevailed at each school and, although there was a difference in the authority emanating from their different architectural design, these differing spatial effects seemed more a function of the use made of each space which was largely determined by the teachers and the regimen they imposed. This was most obvious in the contrast between the two Year 5 classrooms; one of which projected a sense of scholarship, the other a feeling of comfort.

Another interesting feature of the pedagogic space was the placement of students’ desks. In most classrooms they were arranged in dispersed group formations, the size of the room determining their distance apart. This type of arrangement is generally viewed as being indicative of a progressivist, student-centred pedagogy, as it tends to encourage far more collaboration amongst students. But despite this design being favoured over the more traditional serial arrangement, this was not always the case. The formation of desks within each room did not seem to have any distinctive impact. What proved more important was the pedagogic mode favoured by each teacher and the extent to which they were able to generate an authoritative presence through their classroom management style. It was these two factors which tended to modulate the degree of panoptic force within each room and so affect the management of bodies in space rather than simply the arrangement of desks.
The second category framing the analysis of the pedagogic body was regimen, a factor that proved crucial in the formation of a scholarly habitus. The degree to which teachers regulated talk, movement and individual student's seating arrangements within their classrooms had a differing affective impact on their students' bodies. In the school where these practices were more tightly controlled, students appeared to embody a far greater degree of self-governance, a form of bodily capacitation enabling them to engage in scholarly labour in an effective manner. The consistency of approach in kindergarten, Years 3 and 5 suggested this was the modus operandi with regard to classroom management at the school. Accordingly, by the completion of their primary education, students had acquired a scholarly habitus in preparation for the more demanding secondary years in which students are required to demonstrate a far greater degree of independence in their learning, particularly in relation to writing. The regimen, which existed in each of these classrooms, functioned as a form of training. As with a coach ensuring an athlete iteratively performs a task till it becomes second nature, here the teachers were fulfilling a similar role, ensuring their students were invested with the bodily discipline to learn. In the other school, however, where talk, movement and seating were far less regulated, a regimen of restlessness prevailed. Throughout their primary education very little discipline was exerted upon these students' bodies, and, as such, they failed to acquire the bodily capacity necessary for academic endeavour resulting in an inequitable distribution of this embodied capital between the two schools.

The final factor considered in the analysis of the pedagogic body was curriculum implementation. What was most pronounced here was the variable impact of the pedagogic modes favoured at the two schools. The affective impact of each teacher's pedagogic practice seemed to be dependent upon the degree of direction they provided, a finding bearing much in common with Vygotsky's notion of ZPD. Although not discussed in relation to affect, Vygotsky found that students are more capable of successfully completing a task if they firstly receive guidance. The form of guidance to which Vygotsky refers is not simply that which results from a fleeting, periodic encounter with a teacher, as was characteristic of the Taskforce program at Westville. He stressed that,
Scientific concepts evolve under the conditions of systematic cooperation between the child and the teacher. Development and maturation of the child's higher mental functions are products of this cooperation. (Vygotsky, 1996: 148)

What appeared evident in this study was how pedagogic affect was heightened by the degree of direction a teacher employed.

An additional benefit of sustained teacher direction was the corporate style of teaching it necessitated. Not only was affect heightened by the more consistent nature of the teacher support but, as a whole class was working on a single program of study, there was a common ground for learning. This appeared to be the case in the classrooms where this methodology was employed resulting in a highly productive form of collaboration most obvious in the many student-driven class discussions that were observed. The intersubjective dynamic governing these classrooms was not simply a teacher-student dyad, although this was of central importance, it was a multifarious mix of bodies with a common objective of learning. This seemed a far cry from the stereotypical passive relationship said to exist between teacher and student within a teacher-directed learning environment.

What also proved valuable in terms of intensifying pedagogic affect was the iterative treatment of knowledge and skills, a practice also reliant on a teacher-directed pedagogy. The repetitive treatment of aspects of writing was undertaken in various ways. Where it was most productive was not so much as a simplistic form of drill and practice, but through what has been referred to here as 'elaborated drill'. This term is used to represent the serial but varied and sustained engagement with a particular skill or concept to the point where this understanding becomes embodied and can be applied automatically. By the end of Year 5, without this degree of habituation of both the mechanics of writing and stylistic features such as generic structure, students will experience considerable difficulty with their writing and so be ill prepared for the level of textual complexity required in the secondary years.

Addressing the corporeality of learning is an essential aspect of effective pedagogic practice. Differing approaches to the use of space, classroom regimen and curriculum implementation can result in disparate forms of embodiment with some more conducive to learning than others. With this being the case, notions of arbitrariness and value need to be reconsidered. What this study seems to have revealed, in relation to its limited
sample, is not so much a specific corporeality valued as a cultural arbitrary but rather a form of embodiment that results in a particular type of capacitation. The formation of a scholarly habitus seems dependent upon a certain set of disciplinary techniques applied in a consistent and ongoing manner. The richness of the empirical material brought together here points to the limitations of much educational analysis (with its cognitive bias), reproduction theory (with its tendency to emphasise the oppressive dimensions of educational processes over the its enabling potential) and the current growth of analyses of embodiment (which tend to retain a mind/body dualism). Another gap in the theoretical analyses of education, that the empirical material highlights, is the examination of forms of desire and pleasure related to scholarly dispositions. This hopefully has provided some basis for developing this area for analysis. Without acquiring a scholarly habitus students have difficulty in applying themselves to their work. The desire to write, therefore, is not simply a matter of student motivation, it is predicated on this bodily capacity, which, in the context of schooling, is only attained through “the living work of the teacher”.

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