

**ENGLISH STUDIES AND LANGUAGE
TEACHING: EPISTEMOLOGICAL ACCESS
AND DISCURSIVE CRITIQUE IN
SOUTH AFRICA**

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ACCESS AND DISCURSIVE CRITIQUE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0343/06D

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the following project:

“English studies and language teaching: Language acquisition and discursive critique”

Yours faithfully

.....
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→ cc. Faculty Research Officer (Derek Buchler)
cc. Supervisor (Prof. Balfour)

DECLARATION

This study represents original work by the author and has not been submitted in any form to another university. Where use has been made of the work of others, this has been duly acknowledged in the text.

E. M. Mgqwashu

EMMANUEL MFANAFUTHI MGQWASHU

ABSTRACT

This study investigates ways in which English Studies at Rhodes University, the University of the Witwatersrand, the University of Natal, and the University of Sydney responded to linguistic and academic literacy needs of entrance level students. Both qualitative and quantitative data from these research sites are integrated with an autobiographical narrative based on my own personal experiences of learning English and in English at secondary and tertiary levels in South Africa. Dealing with data this way made it possible for my study to examine strategies through which different English departments negotiate the challenge of enabling students to access the discourse of the Discipline. I relied on the principles underpinning Genre Theory and Grounded Theory to engage critically with participants' responses to interview questions and documentary evidence from research sites. It appears from the study that modules designed to develop students' linguistic and/or academic literacy skills need not maintain a pedagogic practice that is either grammatical rules or academic writing and critique based, without an attempt to integrate the two. This separation is seen as artificial, and reflects pedagogic practices that tend to mystify the discourse of the Discipline of English Studies. Given the fact that not all students possess relevant cultural capital to negotiate meanings successfully within this discourse, many of them are excluded during lectures. Literature and research findings in this study indicate that this exclusion manifests itself when such students fail to choose grammatical structures according to the purpose for which they construct texts, both in speaking and in writing. Within this context, there is a need for an alternative model to inform theory, module design, and pedagogic practices in entrance level modules.

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I will always love you, MOTHER.

Part I

**The Politics of English in Formal
Education
in South Africa**

Chapter 1

The Problem Focused

Introduction

In 2000, the Dean of the Faculty of Human Sciences in the former University of Natal, Professor Chapman, circulated a cautionary Memorandum addressed to Programme Directors of different disciplines in the Faculty¹. In this Memorandum the Dean re-articulated concerns expressed by the University executive leadership about students' language competencies. The Memorandum clearly illustrates that the issue of low levels of competence in (English) language has lasting negative effects, not just on students', but, crucially, on the University's image as an institution of higher learning. In the Memorandum, Professor Chapman reports, rather frankly, that:

An increasing difficulty for the University executive has been to encounter the perception of the employment market that graduates of this university are not necessarily proficient in the spoken and written language of the professional workplace (Chapman, *Internal Memorandum*: July, 2000: 9).

A Memorandum of this nature about an English-medium, Historically White University (HWU) is embarrassing, to say the least, and certainly raises serious questions and concerns about the extent to which different disciplines' pedagogic approaches raise students' awareness of the relationship between language competence and disciplinary discourses' constructedness. The Memorandum is not specific, however, about which companies are raising these concerns in the employment market, or whether or not "graduates" refers to a specific racial group of students². What is obvious in the Memorandum, nevertheless, is that companies are not satisfied with students' (across racial lines) abilities to use language ("spoken and written") in ways that take into consideration the purpose and the contextual demands ("the professional workplace") which are to be observed in the production of texts.

¹ Programme Directors are equivalent to Heads of Departments. The move from 'departments' to 'programmes' was implemented at the University of Natal in 2002, and this saw academic alliances across disciplines that once defined themselves as individual departments with their own scholarly pursuits (please see Green, 2000).

² This observation does not represent a critique of the Memorandum. It is designed to reinforce the point that for the job market in general, and all students regardless of racial categorisations, a lack of competence in the English language remains a central feature.

Within the context of this dissertation the above observations relate to ways in which English departments in four universities have responded to linguistic and academic literacy needs as a result of the changing university demography after the opening of access to students from social classes (across racial lines) who were previously barred from entering tertiary education³. In two of the South African universities studied in this dissertation English departments, owing to specific contextual limitations, forged academic alliances with applied language studies departments. Such alliances were partly due to the view held by some members of these English departments that English Studies as a field is concerned, not just with language as used in fictional, popular, and creative texts, but also with other aspects of language: its role in constructing and maintaining identities, and ways in which different disciplines use language to construct their discourses. The University of Sydney's English Department introduced a module that integrated both aspects of English Studies: language as used both in fictional, popular, and creative texts, as well as in constructing and maintaining identities, and ways in which different disciplines construct their discourses through language.

The reason for choosing to investigate these issues within English departments and not in other disciplines such as Geography, History, or even Philosophy, for instance, is that 'English' is the central focus of these departments. While it is true that most of these departments define themselves as English 'literature' departments, it is also true that proficiency in the reading of, writing and speaking about, and listening to, intellectually challenging English (fictional and popular) texts across different genres and contexts requires explicit attention to language⁴. Furthermore, given the fact that 'English' is the medium of instruction in the four universities investigated in this study, my main objective is to understand; firstly, the nature of the contribution by English departments' (the 'home' of the language used as the medium of instruction) towards developing students' language skills for epistemological access; secondly, the rationale for the type of contributions offered by English departments to develop such skills;

³ See the *National Commission on Higher Education: A Framework for Transformation Report* (1996) for more detailed reading.

⁴ This issue is explored in detail in Chapter 2.

and thirdly, the nature of contributions that arose out of academic alliances between English departments and applied language studies departments. It is from these bases that my dissertation views an investigation of the ways in which English departments contribute to students' development in the language of instruction as important, given the flawed attitude by these departments towards enabling epistemological access through developing students' language skills⁵.

The premise in this dissertation is that students whose qualifications include modules in literary studies should be able to gain access to various epistemologies across different disciplines in a university context. Success in literary studies modules requires an ability to analyse critically, amongst other things, works of fiction, and successfully engage with readings on literary criticism. It is thus unlikely for a student with an inadequate (English and disciplinary) vocabulary and an inability to construct a complex argument, both in speaking and in writing, to succeed and receive credit for literary studies modules. Where the issue of developing students' linguistic competencies for epistemological access is not (or is inadequately) addressed explicitly in English departments, the research instruments used enabled the study to identify departments whose modules draw from the field of English Studies to address these needs. This is why it was crucial for the investigation to extend into another area within the field of English Studies: applied language disciplines. The motivation was that this would make it possible for my study to understand how other disciplines (other than literary studies) under the field of English Studies ensure that students' 'access' into the university achieves more than just formal admission but, most importantly, access to the knowledge and cognitive skills necessary to succeed. Within the South African context this means meeting, as the *National Commission on Higher Education: A Framework for Transformation Report* (1996) puts it:

⁵ Chapter 2 discusses the nature of debates concerning English, both as a language discipline and a literature discipline, and the negative effects of this artificial separation in most universities' English departments.

...a socio-political demand for access for larger cohorts of school leavers, especially from population groups and social classes hitherto largely excluded from higher education, [and] a socio-economic demand for highly trained person power with wider ranges of skills and competencies....(2-3).

As one of the students who gained access into tertiary education as a result of this framework, I use my personal experiences of learning English and in English at an Historically Black University (HBU) to indicate how I managed to graduate within the official duration of a Bachelor of Pedagogics (BPaed) with two distinctions, despite my disadvantaged educational background⁶. Through this autobiographical narrative (Chapter 5), I reflect on my experiences of learning English as an Additional Language (EAL), and using English as a medium of instruction at secondary and tertiary levels of education. The data sheds further light on public perceptions of low linguistic proficiency of an HWU graduates and, on the other hand, on my educational success regardless of an appalling educational background at the beginning of my university education. These are the reasons for having my autobiographical narrative as one of the data sources in this study. This narrative is analysed together with systematic qualitative data gathered through survey interview questions with curriculum developers in HWUs English departments (Rhodes, Natal, and the Witwatersrand universities), English Language and Linguistics Department (Rhodes University), and Applied English Language Studies Department (Witwatersrand University)⁷. Because my concern is with the broad field of English Studies (to be discussed at length in Chapter 2), and there are useful historical links and academic alliances between the modules run by English departments and the ones offered by applied language disciplines at Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand, I decided to add colleagues from the English Language and Linguistics Department and the Applied English Language Studies Department as study participants⁸.

⁶ At the end of the four years of my degree I received two distinctions, one in *English Usage* and the other in *English Specialisation Methods* despite all the educational setbacks in secondary school narrated in Chapter 5.

⁷ Data from these research sites are discussed in detail in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

⁸ Due to the fact that in 2002 I managed to interview a colleague at Rhodes University's English Language and Linguistics Department only, and committed to interview another colleague at the University of the Witwatersrand whose responses to interview questions was to form a comparison with data from the English Language and Linguistics Department, confusion occurred as to whether it was appropriate to include only one set of data from an applied language studies discipline when there was another set similar to it at the university included as a research

The inclusion of an English Department from a University that is within an international context, the University of Sydney in Australia, represents an attempt to broaden the study in order to construct a counterpoint in relation to research findings within the South African context. This University is one of the leading tertiary institutions in the world in terms of research and programmes that directly address issues of language teaching for epistemological access and equity in multilingual, multicultural, and multinational contexts. Writing about research findings on language competence, literacy, and disciplinary discourses within the Australian context, Cope and Kalantzis (1993) correctly point out that,

many working-class, migrant and Aboriginal children have been systematically barred from competence with those texts, knowledges and 'genres' that enable access to social and material resources. The culprits...are not limited to traditional pedagogies that disregard children's cultural and linguistic resources...the problem is also located in progressive 'process' and 'child-centred' approaches that appear to 'value differences but in so doing leave social relations of inequity fundamentally unquestioned' (vii).

Within the South African context, most of the programmes designed for students' linguistic and academic literacy needs in English departments often draw from process and student-centred approaches (Jacobs, 2006; Balfour, 2000; Mqgqwashu, 1999; Clarence-Fincham, 1988). This is largely because of influences from the United States where "one set of ideas about teaching writing, often called 'process writing', has become so dominant" (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993: ix). Post-apartheid educational discourses and the accompanying Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) rhetoric, furthermore, construct teachers as potential oppressors that should not be allowed to interfere with students' creative abilities and independence. While OBE focuses on the discovery of learning which manifests itself in discovery-orientated group activities as a pedagogic approach, with an emphasis on outcomes rather than the experiences that lead to learning, process approaches prioritise "individualistic, discovery orientated approaches to writing that characterised learner-cantered classrooms" (Hyland, 2004: 7). The prevailing discourse in the classrooms which are under these theoretical positions is that "the teacher is no

site in this dissertation. The exclusion of data from Rhodes University seemed a plausible option. But because this decision misrepresented the situation in both contexts, I opted to interview a colleague at the University of the Witwatersrand in 2007 in order to include data collected at Rhodes University in 2002. The University of the Witwatersrand's module has remained the same since 2002 in terms of the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings, reading material, and tutorial activities (please see Chapter 8).

more than a resource assisting the student when called upon, a facilitator rather than the font of knowledge about language” (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993:5).

Given my class background and personal secondary education experiences prior to my enrolment as a student in an HBU, it is unlikely that the kind of student with whom I share a relatively common cultural background and educational history would succeed if an educator were to play the role as conceived within the 'process' approach to teaching writing, and OBE discourse. Pedagogic practices that are informed by the 'process' approach and/or OBE principles, in other words, may suit other socio-economic contexts, but not contexts similar to my educational and social backgrounds. The majority of learners with whom I share similar family and cultural orientations come from homes where orality is privileged over written language. Process approaches and/or OBE favour educational contexts in which learners come from families with an established reading culture, and where parent-child reading is an essential part of the family history. Unique socio-political, historical, educational and economic circumstances in different countries, therefore, need to inform understandings of the role of an educator at all levels of education. Given diverse historical contingencies that individual societies often have to deal with, the adoption of a common understanding of what constitutes the role of an educator is unlikely, and in fact inadvisable. Agreed upon conceptions of this role within a given society tend to be informed by pedagogic approaches preferred and embraced by educational institutions within specific contexts. And these, in turn, are often informed by race and class assumptions in the context of South Africa.

If a particular academic Department in an educational institution colludes with the idea that students need to be assimilated into the system of values upheld by mainstream culture, on the one hand, the educator is likely to be seen as an absolute source of knowledge. If, on the other hand, a particular academic Department in an institution of learning sees students as creative individuals with potential to discover knowledge independently, the educator is likely to be seen

as a facilitator and gets involved with students only when asked to do so. Within the context of this study, however, the understanding is that both conceptions need to be given equal consideration. The rationale for this position is that educators are experts in their fields and, whilst remaining in authoritative relation with their learners need still to contribute to both the development of the field and their cognitive skills. This study investigates these dynamics in terms of the way in which curriculum developers in three HWUs in South Africa, and one University in Australia responded, both in module design and pedagogic approaches, to students' changing cognitive abilities and demographic composition.

This is the reason the first type of data referred to in this study draws on my autobiographical narrative. It explores my schooling experiences to demonstrate how these did not necessarily equip me for university education, as is the case with students with whom I share common linguistic and cultural backgrounds at three HWUs investigated in this study. This particular set of data serves two purposes in the study: firstly, it is designed to indicate the nature of educational disadvantage most students bring with them in South Africa and, secondly, it represents the kinds of cognitive, linguistic, and academic literacy challenges that module design and specific pedagogic practices in an HBU's English Department (in my personal experiences) may be said to have dealt with successfully. My specific educational experiences as a result of such a module delivery present this study with valuable qualitative data as a source engaging critically with data from other research sites. This is the reason my autobiographical narrative (Chapter 5) is presented first in the sequence of Chapters (6, 7, and 8) on the examination of data.

While the autobiographical data in Chapter 5 begins by presenting a young, Black teenager from a disadvantaged educational background, with obvious educational limitations, and traces his development in an HBU's English Department until graduation with a bachelor's degree, data gathered at three HWUs (Chapters 6, 7, and 8) enables this study to identify and engage critically with strategies through which English departments at these universities attempt to address issues

of language development for epistemological access to first year students⁹. In contexts where English departments see their scholarly concerns as having to do with literature and not language, the investigation extends to other departments which offer modules drawing from disciplines that are within the field of English Studies. These modules, as Chapters 6, 7, and 8 show, came about as a result of either academic alliances between English departments and applied language disciplines, or decisions by members of staff who ‘broke away’ from English departments. In the latter case these staff formed departments whose scholarly endeavours extended beyond literary concerns to ways in which language is used to construct different disciplinary discourses and social identities¹⁰. It is on the basis of such observations that the critical questions for this study are:

- How did the English departments at the former University of Durban Westville (HBU), former University of Natal, Howard College campus, Rhodes University, and the University of Witwatersrand (HWUs), assist students with linguistic and academic literacy skills needed for academic work?
- Which learning and academic literacy theories informed the design of the modules introduced by English departments to assist students with linguistic and academic literacy skills for academic work?
- In universities where English departments see themselves as ‘literature’ departments, where has this assistance been provided for students, and which pedagogical approaches were used?
- How do all these modules fit within the broader concerns of the field of English Studies?
- How does an international context compare to research findings in the three HWUs in South Africa investigated in this study?

This Chapter begins by presenting a brief historical account of the learning of English in South Africa. The Chapter further indicates that even though English in South Africa has a longer history in formal education compared to indigenous languages, there seems to be multiple observable educational difficulties associated with it in the experience of most university

⁹ Research findings by Balfour (1995), Clarence-Fincham (1998), and Mgqwashu (1999), together with responses to interview questions by colleagues at three HWUs in South Africa reveal that programmes designed to address students' linguistic and academic literacy needs in English departments did not achieve desired results. Balfour's (2000) study reveals that the reason for this is that often the proficiency required by graduates for basic communication purposes (basic understanding of grammatical structures) tended to be developed discretely from the kind of proficiency required for academic study and for knowledge creation in the study of literature. The analysis of my autobiographical narrative in this study shows that module design and pedagogic practices in an HBU led to different results.

¹⁰ The English Language and Linguistics Department at Rhodes University and Applied English Language Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand ran modules that were designed by teaching teams that constituted members of staff from both the English departments and applied language studies departments, and by those who decided to disassociate themselves from English literature departments completely.

students (both speakers of EAL and as a first language) that warrant concerted efforts to investigate strategies to improve the teaching of, and in, this language. The Chapter then moves from these broad historical concerns with the medium of instruction in most institutions of learning in the world to a closer interrogation of the purpose of university education. The interrogation focuses on the centrality of competence in the language of instruction (English) for the fulfilment of such a purpose. This historical trajectory offers the study a sense of past and present understandings of the rationale and purpose of a university, and how English departments position themselves in ways that contribute to the purpose of university education. The Chapter concludes with a discussion of some of the limitations to the study. Here I address research methods, participants, and research sites, and identify possible alternative theoretical and practical choices for future research.

The next section offers a brief historical account of the circumstances that led to the introduction of English as a language of formal learning and teaching in South Africa. It reveals the extent to which English is, like sunrise and sunset, here to stay¹¹. The section indicates that even though the introduction of the system of Bantu Education in 1953 led to the introduction of indigenous languages in formal education, this was done to serve specific Afrikaner political interests, and did not necessarily disturb the dominance of English¹².

1.1 English and Formal Education in South Africa

1.1.1 Historical contingencies and English in formal education

Research regarding the teaching and learning of English during and after the apartheid era in South Africa cannot be meaningfully undertaken and thoroughly engaged in, without taking into account its development as a language of instruction in education. According to Reagan (1988), from 1652 to 1806 the question of the language of instruction was not an issue because the

¹¹ The notion of English being ‘here to stay’ is problematised in Chapter 2.

¹² Following the recommendations of the *Eiselen Report* (1951), Verwoerd introduced an *Act* in 1953 to remove Black Education from missionary control to that of the Native Affairs Department. This *Act* became the *Bantu Education Act (No. 47)* of 1953, and it widened the gaps in educational opportunities for different racial groups.

majority of the white population in the Cape spoke Dutch. In an attempt to preserve the *status quo*, “the original settlers following the Dutch tradition...were all strongly influenced in educational matters by the Dutch Reformed Church and...the maintenance and defence of the Dutch language became a central part of their educational struggle” (Hartshorne,1992:188). The original settlers paid no serious attention to the educational needs of the native communities and, accordingly, no indigenous language became part of formal education, either as a subject or a medium of instruction. According to Hartshorne (1992), “until 1910...little interest was shown in the education of African children [and] it was to be another thirty years before black schooling was to be taken seriously enough by Afrikaner interests...” (188). While indigenous languages occupied no position in formal education, English as a medium of instruction began to feature in education from the 1800s. Reagan (1988) records that preparations for this began as early as 1809 when General Colin proposed that English teachers be imported to ensure that the next South African generation, both Black and white, would be ‘English’.

When the British took charge of the Cape administration in 1814, General Colin’s proposal received official approval. All teachers who spoke English as an Additional Language (EAL) and were efficient in teaching it, were paid over and above what an ordinary teacher would otherwise receive as a salary (Reagan, 1988). This was done, among other things, to promote the optimum use of English throughout the country, that is, both in urban and in rural areas. In 1825 the implementation of policies that legitimized English as the South African first official language was effected, a move that sparked a sense of resentment from the Dutch speaking population in the Cape. Reagan (1988) reminds us that from the beginning English was imposed at the Cape upon an unwilling Dutch (later Afrikaans) community:

There was an attempt to make English the sole language of the law and of education, even in the overwhelmingly Dutch/Afrikaans-speaking rural areas, causing a deep resentment which is still noticeable in some Afrikaner groups today. Afrikaner hostility towards English was of course considerably hardened by the South African (or ‘Boer’) War of 1899-1902, and English became *die vyand se taal*, ‘the language of the enemy’ (34).

Five years after the end of the Anglo-Boer War, the *Smuts Education Act* was passed. This Act (1907) legitimized the teaching of English and made it obligatory, stipulating that every child had to learn English at school (McArthur, 1998). The Afrikaner communities did not approve of this government legislation, as McArthur (1998) records: “throughout the nineteenth century, Afrikaners resisted government policies aimed at the spread of the English language and racial integration, and many educated their children at home or in the churches” (12). Balfour (2000) points out that:

English had at this point a status unequalled by Afrikaans which had only been established as a language in its own right after the Act of Union in 1910. Given economic vulnerability experienced by Afrikaans whites, the presence of black educated English speakers was perceived as threatening (41).

It is no wonder then that when in 1953 the *Bantu Education Act* was instituted, “all churches (except the Gerevormde Kerk and the Nederduiste Gerevormde Kerk) condemned [it]” (Balfour, 2000: 42). While the Afrikaans-speaking South Africans demonstrated resistance against the imposition of English language, there seems to be no record of similar responses by “black educated English speakers”, as Balfour (2000) puts it. McArthur (1998) notes that even before *Smuts Education Act* of 1907, English had already been introduced in Black schools:

In the early years of the 19th century English was introduced into many black communities of the Eastern Cape (and subsequently Natal) by missionaries – who at the same time codified Xhosa, and later the other African languages. English was used as the medium of instruction in mission schools – “superior English, classical and mathematical education” being offered. By the end of the century there was an influential corps of black educators, writers, ministers, and political leaders who were fluent in English. The accomplished, elegant writings of John Tengo Jabavu, Gwayi Tyamzashe, Sol Plaatje, John Knox Bokwe, and many others, remain as proof of this (41).

Ordinary Black South Africans suddenly realized the importance of learning the English language as well. Hartshorne (1992) notes that “the economic value of knowledge of English came to be appreciated both by the black employee and those that employed him” (189). The English and the Dutch, however, were not pleased by the fact that English was taught in Black schools. This was for two contradictory and paradoxical reasons. Other sections of the later

English-speaking settlers whose primary concern was the education of their own children “were critical of both government and missions...believing that ‘it [Black schooling in English] spoilt the Natives’, gave them ideas above their ‘station’ in life, and was too ‘academic’ in its nature” (Hartshorne, 1992: 188). For the Dutch the reservations were due to the fact that “English-speaking interests dominated Black education at the expense of Afrikaner political and economic interests” (188). Indeed, learning English empowered young Black South Africans in ways that gave them opportunities for recognition as successful writers, politicians and educators, and for employment that would otherwise not have been possible. From 1815 to the 1930s English gained currency and influence, while the Afrikaans-speaking community resented the *status quo*. The Afrikaners, however, never gave up on their vision to place Afrikaans at the centre of Black education and, as a result, pursued a vision that was to be imposed and enforced in later decades.

The 1940s witnessed concerted efforts by the Afrikaans-speaking community to challenge English dominance. As elections were approaching, the National Party (NP) election campaigns focused on criticizing government policies and, as a result, were able to capitalize on the fear of racial integration in the schools to build support for its resentment towards the dominance of the English language, political ideals, and economic interests. The NP’s election victory in 1948 gave Afrikaans new standing in schools, and after that, all high-school graduates were required to be proficient in both Afrikaans and English.

1.1.2 The Bantu Education Act (1953)

Two Bantu Education architects, Eiselen and Verwoerd, had studied in Germany and had adopted many elements of National Socialist (Nazi) philosophy (Balfour, 2000). The concept of racial “purity,” in particular, provided a rationalization for keeping Black education qualitatively and materially inferior to that offered to whites. Verwoerd, then Minister of Native Affairs, said Black Africans “should be educated for their opportunities in life,” and that there was no place for them “above the level of certain forms of labour” (McAthur, 1998:11). The government also tightened its control over religious high schools by eliminating almost all financial aid, forcing

many churches to sell their schools to the government or close them entirely. Addressing the Senate on Bantu Education, Verwoed had the following to say: “I will reform it [Black education] so that Natives will be taught from childhood to realize that equality with Europeans is not for them” (McArthur, 1998: 17). He later explained to the Senate that there was ‘no place’ for Blacks outside the reserves above the level of certain forms of labour. So, “what is the use of teaching Bantu child mathematics when he cannot use it in practice?” (McArthur, 1998:17). He added, as McArthur (1998) puts it: “Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life” (13).

Christian National Education (CNE) supported the Nationalist Party programme of apartheid by calling on educators to reinforce cultural diversity and to rely on mother-tongue instruction as the means to achieve this government’s separatist philosophy¹³. This philosophy also espoused the idea that a person’s social responsibilities and political opportunities are defined, in large part, by that person’s ethnic identity and the language he/she speaks (McArthur, 1998). It is precisely this philosophy that young Black people were encouraged by political parties and community organisations to destroy during the 1970s and 1980s (Jansen, 1991). Hartshorne (1992) reports: “following on the stormy years from 1976 to mid-1980 the period to the end of 1983 was to prove to be a strange interlude in the history of education in South Africa” (149). Student strikes, vandalism, and violence were part of the attempts to undermine the ability of Bantu schools to function, *although* this had negative long-term employability effects on the majority of learners from such schools. According to Hartshorne (1992),

From about 1974 there had been a growing awareness in the commercial and industrial sectors that the education systems were failing to cope with the economic and developmental needs of South Africa. This had tended to find expression in statements centered on manpower needs, skills training and the realization that the white sector was not going to be able to supply these. It was beginning to be realized that economic growth and productivity could not be maintained if blacks did not play a greater role in commerce and industry, both as skilled workers and consumers....(150).

¹³According to Balfour (2000), “CNE was conceived in moral terms, and therefore is best evaluated by retaining the distinction drawn by MacIntyre (1966) between ethics and morality. Ethics are, according to MacIntyre, understood to be principles used to evaluate issues in order to make a moral choice. Njoroge and Bennars (1986) define ‘normative ethics’ as “the study of conduct in terms of accepted moral codes” (174). Both definitions are appropriate in the case of CNE” (44).

By the early 1990s, shortages of qualified teachers, classrooms, and educational facilities had taken a huge toll on education, and Black education in particular. South Africa's industrial economy, on the other hand, with its strong reliance on capital-intensive development, provided relatively few prospects for employment for those who had only minimal educational credentials or none at all. According to the Human Science Research Council's Report of 1999, this was because nationwide literacy was less than 60% throughout the 1980s, and an estimated 500,000 unskilled and uneducated young Black South Africans faced unemployment by the end of the decade. At the same time, job openings for highly skilled workers and managers were higher than the number of qualified applicants (McArthur, 1998). These problems were being addressed in the political reforms of the 1990s, but the legacies of apartheid, the insufficient education of the majority of the Black population, and the backlog of deficiencies in the school system, with regard to the teaching of English in particular, promised to challenge future governments for decades, or perhaps generations (Hartshorne, 1992).

Research, some of which was conducted by colleagues in and about the former University of Natal (Balfour, 1995, Clarence-Fincham, 1998, Mgqwashu, 1999; Balfour, 2000; Sarinjeive and Balfour, 2001) has shown that the teaching and learning of English in Black schools in South Africa still, and for some time, will remain a formidable challenge for the present and future governments. While Mgqwashu's (1999) study shows the adverse impact the system of Bantu Education has had on the linguistic competence of students entering university education, Balfour's (2000) research demonstrates the extent to which the use of English literature in the teaching of English language can be an effective strategy to undo the negative results of apartheid schooling. Sarinjeivi and Balfour (2002) offer "an indication of the process which brought English as a discipline and language to a point where...the language and its associated critical reading, writing, and discursive strategies are more necessary than ever" (xv). Bangeni, and Kapp's (2005) work, furthermore, reveals that writing academically is especially difficult for students from schools which were under the system of Bantu Education since the "emphasis [in

writing] is placed on documenting as much factual evidence as possible” (116), and no critical engagement with such information is encouraged. In her *A description of the language experiences of second language students entering the academic discourse communities of Rhodes University* (1997), Reynolds describes the experiences of three students who came from schools under the system of Bantu Education. Her MA’s focus is on “the literacies that these students brought with them to university and the [negative] effect these literacies had on their attempts to enter academic discourse communities of the university” (Reynolds, 1997: iv). All these studies point to the fact that the majority of our first-entry students who have Bantu Education as a background have never received thorough or effective tuition in English (Clarence-Fincham, 1998).

During my secondary education in the mid 1980s (as narrated later in Chapter 5), for instance, the problem of English language teaching and learning in Bantu Education schools was intensified by the teachers’ lack of familiarity with English. This was partly because prior to the introduction of Bantu Education, many of the teachers on the mission schools were first-language speakers of English and because of this, Black pupils had reasonably sufficient contact with first language speakers. As a consequence of the implementation of apartheid legislation in 1948, as mentioned earlier, missionary schools were shut down and racial segregation in schools was implemented. Prospective teachers were then taught by second-language speakers of English who were the last generation to have sustained contact with first-language speakers of English. By the 1970s, pupils in Black schools were taught by a second generation of second-language speakers. These teachers did not themselves have the linguistic resources or the confidence to take the pupils beyond what the textbook had to say (Clarence-Fincham, 1998).

1.1.3 The impact of Bantu Education on higher education: language challenges

It is precisely because of this historical background that the dissertation presents my learning of, and learning through, English experiences, not just at university, but also at secondary

educational level, as part of the qualitative data in this study. This represents an attempt to illustrate the nature of educational disadvantage within the context of South Africa. Due to this type of disadvantage, higher education has had to respond to pressure by educational authorities and market forces. The growing exposure of tertiary education to market forces pressures institutions of higher learning into placing more emphasis on the development of modules that are seen as economically viable and useful because of their vocational specificity. Sarinjeivi and Balfour (2002) note: “at present more specifically the area of study has to prove its worth in skill-based, purpose-focussed programmes that empower for employment” (x). The effect of this on some English departments in the Southern African context is to raise the profile of the previously minor place (at English medium universities) of English language teaching. English departments at these institutions have historically focussed on literary concerns. In its more current form, this has meant a concentration upon a broader discursive (including social and cultural) critique. Those English departments that want to accommodate the increased need for language teaching wish to do this while resisting being reduced to providing a service function for other disciplines or the professions. This remains a challenge for, as Sarinjeivi and Balfour (2002) note:

The study of literature along with critical reading and writing of the kind striven for hitherto would appear in the present climate to be of very little direct account...empowerment is reduced to the basically functional and instrumental, at the very least referential English language skills (xi).

The English Department, now in the School of Literary Studies, Media and Creative Arts, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (former University of Natal), Howard College campus, introduced in 2001 a semester long first-level module called *An Integrated English Language Course* (with a view to offering language-modulated expressive training up to fourth level in future). As the study will show, the University of the Witwatersrand and Rhodes University English departments, in an attempt to address language related needs of their students, introduced Academic Development Programmes that were seen, and generally defined, as 'not language modules'. The discussion of data in chapters 6, 7, and 8 will indicate that because both of these English departments saw their modules as 'not language modules', the English Language and

Linguistics Department at Rhodes University and the Applied English Language Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand designed modules that were to redress some of the limitations inherent in English departments' initiatives. While the English Language and Linguistics Department worked together with the English Department at Rhodes University to mount the module that addressed more than what the latter's initiative attempted to accomplish, relations between the Applied English Language Studies Department and the English Department led to the incorporation of literary concerns in the module designed by the former. Using responses to interview questions by five colleagues who coordinate the modules offered by the English departments of these institutions, and a colleague from the University of Sydney's English Department, my dissertation intends to understand curriculum developers' theorisations of what constitutes linguistic and/or academic literacy competence through an evaluative assessment of their narrative type responses to interviews and the modules they have designed and/or taught.

The trend in most English departments where language related modules are introduced is that such initiatives tend to divorce themselves from the fundamental disciplinary concerns of English literature such as critical thinking, techniques in argument construction, introduction to the tradition of inquiry about language use, critical awareness and understanding of the process of knowledge construction, contestation, and dissemination through language. Instead of designing language modules that integrate these language and cognitive skills and discipline-specific modes of engagement, English departments have either focused on English grammar or academic literacy development. The teaching of language skills within the context of understanding language as integral in the construction and contestation of knowledge central to the English literature discipline is usually shifted to academic literacy modules outside the English departments.

My dissertation will argue that this trend is caused by, on the one hand, an erroneous perception of competence in formal grammar, as Bock (1998) puts it: “an end in itself” (59) and, on the other hand, the fact that newly developed modules in universities in general are pressured to service the vocational aspect of different professions. Sarinjeivi (2002) notes with concern that: “the attraction of the new courses lies in their names or parts of their names, communication and business, giving the impression of being specially focussed and career oriented which students believe will ease their way into employment opportunities” (44).

As a consequence of these perceptions, many newly designed language-related modules derive character and scope from students’ secondary education backgrounds, or from the dictates of the market. It is thus not surprising that the ability to string together a few acceptable sentences and the transferability of skills into work places have become a measure in the process of ascertaining the ‘success’ of such modules. The danger here is that measures of this sort have the potential to transform institutions of higher learning into glorified high schools, or schools of industry, thereby leading to the proliferation of modules characterized by remedial training or, even worse, by a skills emphasis with a technological and entrepreneurial focus¹⁴. These are emphasised at the expense of “intellectual” substance, and this, ironically, may have detrimental effects on the country’s economic advancement.

South Africa and Australia needs a workforce (teachers, accountants, managers, lawyers, for instance) with the knowledge that would provide it with generic competencies to solve educational, economic, organisational, legal and social problems. My dissertation intends to argue that the field of English Studies has more to offer in this context than merely the teaching of expressive competence or narrowly defined language skills. In combining language teaching with discursive, social and cultural critique, the field of English Studies might take itself beyond mere service provision to other knowledge areas, such as to enable graduates to utilise language

¹⁴ This focus is not necessarily negative in itself, but detrimental if it is over-emphasised and is at the expense of cultivating the tradition of critical inquiry into knowledge and its construction.

for purposes ranging from the writing of business letters and reports to solving complex problems and generating ideas. Because not all graduates leave the university properly equipped with these skills, it is important to interrogate reasons for this and, furthermore, to think of ways in which pedagogic practice in language-related modules can be re-visited and ultimately transformed along the needs specific to our country's institutions of higher learning. Writing about ways to understand the challenge, Angelill-Carter (1998) points out that,

the problem lies not simply in the educational under-preparedness and the linguistic needs of a minority of students. There is recognition that racial or linguistic categorisation are no longer adequate indicators of need, and the system as a whole has to adjust to deal with students who are heterogeneous in a growing number of ways (1).

Heterogeneity in the context of my study means the student body that comprises both English mother tongue and EAL speakers who have had varying amounts of instruction in formal grammar of English language during their primary and secondary education. It also means students who (regardless of educational background) do not possess academic language skills to cope with university education. These demographic changes in the student body, in addition to transforming university education from being an elitist enterprise to be less elitist, has inevitably shifted lecturers' responsibilities from merely imparting knowledge to, as Ramsden (1992) puts it, "mak[ing] student-learning possible" (5). Laurillard (1993) points out that "[imparting knowledge] used to be the prevailing view of university teaching, which is why academics are appointed on the basis of qualifications in subject matter knowledge" (13). If *making student-learning possible* has become the main challenge for university lecturers, it is crucial to revisit ways in which language pedagogy (means to learn) in tertiary institutions have been structured and carried out, and Chapter 2 engages with this subject in detail.

1.2 University Education and (English) Language Teaching

This section begins with a brief examination of the reasons for the existence of a university, firstly in general terms and, secondly, within the African context. The focus then shifts to arguing for the centrality of students' proficiency in the language of instruction; the means for

“making students’ learning possible” (Ramsden, 1992: 5). The section argues that this is key if the reasons for the existence of a university are to be realised. I argue that the approach to language pedagogy in universities has to be largely informed by broader philosophical bases for university education. As access to higher education is now open to every citizen regardless of class and/or race, there is an urgent need for English departments to re-think the position of language teaching, and ways in which language teaching and learning can be informed by broader aims of university education in general. This section concludes by arguing that the acquisition of high level competencies to be developed by university education demands a particular level of proficiency in (English) language¹⁵. Without such a level, it is unlikely for any student to be flexible and original in thinking. University education has the potential, as Turner (1996) argues, to “transform the immature into the mature, the unformed into the formed, the unreflective into the reflective, and the youth into adult” (283).

Related to this understanding of the role university education is to play is Laurillard’s (1993) assertion that knowledge produced in such institutions enables students “to transcend the particular, and thereby abstract from the physical and social context, precisely in order that the knowledge may be transformed into something more generalisable” (16). Acquiring the abilities which Laurillard (1993) refers to depends on a student’s ability to think critically and to use language (written and spoken) to convey thoughts and ideas in ways that are accessible to others. Universities have a challenge therefore, to train students, not only “to transcend the particular”, but also to equip them with the linguistic skills necessary to formulate sound and carefully constructed ideas, and be able to speak and write about them successfully.

1.2.1 The rationale for university education

According to Ziembski (1997), university education has traditionally been associated with the advancement and transmission of learning in its highest forms, and the dispensing of

¹⁵ Competencies to be developed by university education include, but not limited to, independent thinking, critical inquiry, the ability to apply knowledge about particular contexts to general ones (Ramsden, 1992).

qualifications governing access to the learned professions. But this is not Newman's (1891) sense of a university:

I am asked what is the end of University Education, and of the Liberal or Philosophical Knowledge which I conceive it to impart: I answer, that...it has a very tangible, real, and sufficient end, though the end cannot be divided from that knowledge itself. Knowledge is capable of being its own end. Such is the constitution of the human mind that any kind of knowledge, if it be really such, is its own reward (78).

According to Turner (1996), Newman's conception of a university goes beyond simple diffusion or imparting knowledge for students to receive qualifications, as Ziembinski (1997) attempts to persuade us. For him, a university "is a place of teaching universal *knowledge*¹⁶. This implies that its object is intellectual, not moral; that it is the diffusion and extension of knowledge rather than advancement" (Turner, 1996:3). The idea of a university with its object as moral dates back to the 15th and 16th centuries when university institutions in the West and Europe were intimately connected with religion and the constraints imposed by it (Mazrui, 1978). Writing on the relationship between university education and religion in his *The Idea of a University (1891)*, Newman has the following to say:

The educated mind may be said to be in a certain sense religious; that is, it has what may be considered a religion of its own, independent of Catholicism, partly cooperating with it, partly thwarting it; at once a defence yet a disturbance to the Church in Catholic countries...at one time in open warfare with her, at another in defensive alliance...Right Reason, that is, Reason rightly exercised, leads the mind to the Catholic Faith, and plants it there, and teaches it in all its religious speculations to act under its guidance (127-128).

Within this context, scholarship in the physical sciences, for example, had to be managed in ways that were perceived to be in accordance with the 'will' of God, otherwise it could be charged of heresy. During this period academics in the sciences and the arts, as Mazrui (1978) puts it, "were deeply religious themselves, and shrank from lines of thought which appeared to lead towards irreligious conclusions" (235-236). The Copernican revolution in the second half of the 16th century, however, caused tensions between a complete focus on science on the one hand, and considerations of inherited religion, on the other, to enter a new era. Writing about

¹⁶ My emphasis.

factors that led to this tension, Mazrui (1978) takes us back to Copernicus' discoveries regarding the planets:

Copernicus, a native of Prussian Poland and himself a canon of Frauenburg, propounded the theory that the planets, including the earth, moved in orbits around the sun which was at the centre. His theory was in opposition to the older theory more popular with the church...that the sun and the planets moved around the earth (236).

According to Christian religious belief during the second half of the 16th century, since a creature made in the image of God himself inhabits the earth, it was sensible to regard the planet earth as central to the universe, and thus central to the divine scheme of things. At the time, as Mazrui (1978) reminds us: "there was a feeling that the Earth had to be central to creation as a whole" (236). Copernicus' discovery was thus seen as a form of disregard for God's purposes about the earth. Galileo's insistence on Copernicus' theory in the 17th century, and his own (at the time), rather unconventional discoveries with regard to Jupiter's satellites, among other things, coincided with Martin Luther's Reformation ideals and the Renaissance, both of which marked an important moment in the history of freedom of thought. According to Mazrui (1978), the arts were being liberated from religion, and "science had no longer to spend all its time proving that it was not satan in disguise" (237).

The influence that came through Reformation principles as referred to above caused the Royal Society in England to become overwhelmingly Protestant, which was not surprising in the 17th century (Mazrui, 1978). Both social and physical scientists became non-conformists, and this became a feature in the United States as well. The source of this influence "came through Cambridge University, which was described in that period as the *alma mater* of the Puritans" (Mazrui, 1978:237). In many senses therefore, the idea of a university became, as Ziembinski's formulation captures it: "a community of scholars, who look for truth, inform each other of the acquired knowledge, and teach the methods through which such knowledge can be acquired" (in Horn, 1999:84).

This brief discussion indicates that the function of a university in the Western world evolved into places for investigating knowledge and the teaching of (in Ziembinski's terms above) the "methods through-which such knowledge can be acquired", but that is certainly not the function universities evolved to serve in colonial and postcolonial Africa. A clear understanding of the distinction between the functions of a university for an imperialist regime and a colonised country is crucial to this study because of one main reason: this dissertation is about the field of English Studies, and ways in which language pedagogy in different disciplines under this field facilitate epistemological access in South Africa¹⁷. It is thus relevant for this study to present a particular understanding of why and how universities evolved in Africa if the dissertation is to suggest any alternative theorisation of language pedagogy for epistemological access within a postcolonial context.

Mazrui (1978) reminds us, for instance, that "almost all African universities in the colonies started as overseas extensions of metropolitan institutions in Europe" (285). In many senses, then, just like *commercial* multinational corporations in Africa, universities had to be part of the colonial enterprise in order to sell *cultural* goods to a new African clientele. In order to ensure that this broader agenda became a reality, Britain, France, and Belgium dominated decisions with regard to strategies that were to be implemented for socio-economic and educational developments that were to be achieved through universities established in the colonies. Firstly, the progress achieved by these universities had to improve indigenous people's standards of life in terms of relevant local needs, values and norms. Even though this remained a goal, it was to occur only according to the ways in which the coloniser chose to construct and understand the colonised people. In *Orientalism* (1978), Said illustrates the power possessed by the coloniser

¹⁷ South Africa is one of the African countries that were affected negatively by resolutions made during the 1884 Berlin conference. Please see Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Decolonising the Mind* (1986) for a more detailed discussion of the 1884 Berlin conference. Ngugi's central argument is that the negative effects of the resolution by European powers to subdivide Africa among themselves is a major cause of many socio-economic and educational challenges facing (South) Africa today. I use Australia in my study to construct comparisons between local and international experiences in order to recommend alternative pedagogic practices drawn from borders beyond South Africa.

over the colonised as a result of how the former chooses to construct the latter by referring to Prime Minister Arthur Balfour's justification of Britain's invasion of Egypt in 1910:

We know the civilisation of Europe better than we know any other country...To have such knowledge of such a thing [as Egypt] is to dominate it, to have authority over it...since we know it and it exists, in a sense, as we know it...England knows Egypt; Egypt is what England knows; England knows that Egypt cannot have self-government; England confirms that by occupying Egypt; for the Egyptians, Egypt is what England has occupied and now governs; foreign occupation therefore becomes the very basis of contemporary Egyptian civilisation (32 and 34).

This historical record concerning the relationship between Egypt and Britain represents what Said (1978) describes as “a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, “us”) and the strange (Orient, the East, “them”)” (43). According to Ashcroft and Ahluwalia (1999), in the late eighteenth century the study of members of the population native to regions other than Europe (“us”), the Orient (“them”), by the Occident (“us”), led to the establishment of an academic discipline called Orientalism. They point out that as a discourse, Orientalism had certain:

...unwritten (and sometimes unconscious) rules that define what can and cannot be said...[and] operated within the area of convention, habit, expectation and assumption. In an attempt to gain knowledge about the world, *what* is known is overwhelmingly determined by the *way* it is known; the rules of the discipline determine the kind of knowledge that can be gained from it, and strength, and sometimes unspoken nature, of these rules show an academic discipline to be a prototypical form of discourse (60).

Newman's sense of civilisation, for instance, seems to be reinforcing the Orientalist discourse of representation of the world as it does not extend, nor take into consideration, the existence of other nations and cultures beyond the Mediterranean world (Turner, 1996). Ashcroft and Ahluwalia (1999) argue that such tendencies are a consequence of scholarship involving:

detailed examinations of Oriental languages, histories and cultures...carried out in a context in which the supremacy and importance of European civilisation was unquestioned. Such was the vigour of the discourse that myth, opinion, hearsay and prejudice generated by influential scholars quickly assumed the status of received truth (58).

Writing about Newman's attitude regarding the role of university education, furthermore, Turner (1996) notes that: “along with others of his generation, he unhesitatingly embraced the

metaphors of imperialism, proudly portrayed the university itself as vast imperial intellect likening it to an empire” (Turner, 1996:284). As places for knowledge construction, universities in Europe facilitated the civilising enterprise by colonial powers through the process of objectification of the Orient and their world. Said’s (1978) analysis of the colonial administrators’ language whenever they spoke about native populations of invaded countries, presents the discursive coherence of Orientalism in the process of constructing the Orient as objects:

In Cromer’s and Balfour’s language the Oriental is depicted as something one judges (as in a court of law), something one studies and depicts (as in a curriculum), something one disciplines (as in a school or prison), something one illustrates (as in a zoological manual). The point is that in each case the Oriental is *contained* and *represented* by dominating frameworks (40).

Writing about skills inculcated in universities influenced by the discourse of Orientalism, particularly in relation to Africa, Mazrui (1978) maintains that: “skills were transferred without adequate consideration for value in Africa; other skills were withheld because they did not conform to the world criteria of ‘excellence’ as defined by the present body” (285). The educated manpower produced by African universities during the colonial period largely benefited the economies and peoples of the colonial powers:

In the very process of producing educated manpower...universities were virtually defined as institutions for western civilization, at least *de facto*. The institutions below university level were different stages of the same grand process (Mazrui, 1978: 307).

For the “grand” colonial project to be successful, educational institutions, especially universities, had to be mere reflections of the parent bodies in Europe, a process by which “the Occident...define[s] itself and strengthen[s] its own identity” (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 1999:69). Just like the commercial multinational corporations, universities in Africa showed a faithful response to external decisions-makers in the home countries. Even though they did respond to the local environment, this was done within the boundaries permitted by the broader policies of the metropole (Mazrui, 1978).

This created an inevitable cultural and economic dependency by Africa on Europe, a state of affairs that provoked African scholars and political leaders such as Nkrumah (1956); Mazrui (1978), Nyerere (1995); Mazrui *et al* (1998); and, recently; Makgoba (2002), to argue for a re-thinking of the place and function of a university in Africa. Their critical responses to colonial, cultural, and economic alienation inflicted upon Africa through universities, among other educational institutions, were due to the observation that a university in Africa could not be a ‘true university’ at that time if it did not service the colonial regimes. Turner (1996) argues that to a large extent it is Newman’s work that “established the style and the essential mode of discourse with which to speak [think] and write of [university] life” (283).

As a challenge to the *status quo* that favoured colonizing forces, though not without its own problems, Nkrumah (1957) had the following to say regarding principles that were to guide a ‘true African university’: “We must, in the development of our universities, bear in mind that once [they have] been planted in the African soil [they] must take root amidst African traditions and cultures” (in Makgoba, 2002:7). Nkrumah’s insistence need not be read as implying a dogmatic function at odds with the discourse of critique, nor, as Makgoba (2002) puts it, “an insular or parochial entity” (7) with a desire to re-invent a romantic, unadulterated past. It is rather a university with a well-established and entrenched consciousness of an African identity as a multifaceted and dynamic entity which takes into consideration the influences from the Greek, Arab, and European worlds to give rise to a hybridised phenomenon (Wade, 1999). On the characteristics of an American university, for instance, a former Harvard President once said:

A university must grow from seed. It cannot be transplanted from England or Germany in full leaf and bearing. When the American university appears, it will not be a copy of foreign institutions, but the slow and natural growth of American social and political habits (in Makgoba, 2002: 8-9).

One cannot speak of a university then, without taking into consideration its relevance and role (as defined by local community needs) in the lives of its citizens in a more direct way. Yesufu (1973) puts this more eloquently with reference to the purpose of a university in any country

with a history of colonialism, racial oppression and discrimination, as in the case of most countries in Africa:

An African university must not only pursue knowledge for its own sake, but **also** for the...amelioration of conditions of life and work, of the ordinary man and woman. It must be fully committed to active participation in the social transformation,...and the...upgrading of the total human resources of the nation (in Makgoba, 2002:8).

Within the context of this dissertation, “the...amelioration of conditions of life” through university education in South Africa can only be a reality if students whose mother tongues are not used as media of instruction are afforded opportunities to learn English, not as a sequence of grammatical items, but a tool to construct and contests knowledge and identities.

1.2.2 The role of language in university education

Since universities are institutions that offer formal education, one of their major tasks is to develop students’ cognitive abilities. Kembo (2000) defines these abilities as “[students’] memory, their ability to generalize, to grasp relationships such as cause and effect, to predict the consequences of events, to grasp the essential message of a speech or a book, and to evaluate situations” (in Webb and Sure: 289). Kembo (2000) further points out that formal education is meant to develop affective skills, by which she means “...attitudes to work and study...tolerance for people who may differ from them [learners]...learners’ social skills... their ability to work together with other people, to communicate with them, and to support those who need assistance” (in Webb and Sure: 289).

Taking Kembo’s explications into consideration, I want to argue that unless language pedagogic practices in the university are carefully and deliberately monitored in accordance with the broader philosophical bases for university education, universities will be bound to fail, not only their students, but also the society at large. The skills Kembo refers to above are desperately needed in South Africa. The successful development of these skills in our students so that they are better positioned to contribute to the country’s development requires a

sophisticated understanding of the nature of language, and, for the purposes of this dissertation, the English language. In South Africa (as is the case in most parts of the world), proficiency in English is a prerequisite for success in a university and for securing employment¹⁸.

In his Inaugural Lecture, Noyes (1999) refers to a collection of skills that employers look for when selecting prospective employees in their companies: “employers mention flexibility and originality of thought, critical thinking and the ability to express oneself and communicate as central reasons for the value of a [university] degree” (210). The acquisition of these skills through university education is bound to remain an ideal if a particular level of proficiency in the language of instruction is not properly developed. Flexibility and originality in thinking, in other words, depends entirely on high levels of competence in the language of instruction. Within the South African context where linguistic categorizations have traditionally been used as indicators of language proficiency, it is pertinent for language practitioners to re-conceptualise this notion and to adapt pedagogic practices. If it is the university’s premise that it is through the successful manipulation of language that students’ critical thinking skills are developed, then the relationship between knowledge production and language learning has to be made explicit. Different sections in this dissertation explore in detail ways in which such an enterprise may be accomplished, and the next section presents the order in which different sections are organised.

1.3 The structure of the dissertation

Research about English as a discipline or field of study is conventionally expected to be concerned with fictional texts, poetry, or popular culture. My dissertation explores the relationship between this conventional sense of what the field of English Studies is concerned with, and the role and place of language education within this field. Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8, however, suggest that since the English departments, both locally and internationally, have decided to offer language modules to facilitate epistemological access for students, my subject

¹⁸ Chapter 2 discusses ways in which English dominance has been challenged and denaturalized.

can no longer be regarded as a concern located beyond or external to English departments. English, after all, is the medium of instruction in many universities in the world where the languages of the population are not English. It is for this reason I have chosen to investigate ways in which *English* departments contribute (or do not contribute) to programmes designed to enhance students' access to knowledge that is constructed, contested, and disseminated in the English language. My investigation of programmes designed to address students' linguistic and/or academic literacy skills for epistemological access in four English departments represents attempts in this direction.

As the Chapters on data will show, in contexts where English departments' programmes fail to achieve the desired goals (that is, to enhance opportunities for epistemological access), academic collaborations with Applied English Language Studies departments seem to have produced desired outcomes. As shown in, and suggested by, the last four Chapters of this dissertation, there have to be concerted efforts by English departments to re-visit the tendency to prioritise literature and popular culture, and the resultant marginalisation (and sometimes total exclusion) of language in their scholarly endeavours as a discipline¹⁹. These represent key recommendation in this dissertation.

The dissertation is divided into three parts because it is arranged according to three themes. Part 1 addresses issues concerning the politics of English in formal education in South Africa. These issues are discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. Chapter 1 has already presented a discussion of the history of English in South African education. Chapter 2 begins an examination of the literature with regard to the history of English literary critique and language teaching at universities. It reviews literature concerned with debates about the centrality of competence in English if the goals of university education, as discussed in Chapter 1, are to be attained. First, the review begins by discussing literature that concerns itself with the history of literary studies

¹⁹ Chapter 2 discusses English and presents it as an adjective for language, literature, culture, and argues that the English departments' exclusion of language in its disciplinary endeavors is artificial and ideological.

and the extent to which such history has influenced English literary studies in a South African university. Second, the discussion extends to the interrogation of arguments against the artificial separation of the teaching of English language and English literature common in most English curricula in South Africa. After this, the Chapter reviews literature concerned with arguments that modules focussing on the development of linguistic and/or academic literacy should not maintain a pedagogic practice that is either grammatical rules or academic writing and critique based. Instead, there have to be attempts to integrate the two. If a pedagogic approach that separates the two persists, students are unlikely to learn to choose grammatical structures according to the purpose for which they construct texts, both in speaking and in writing. Finally, the Chapter concludes with a discussion on the nature of pedagogy, both in universities in general, and in English departments in particular.

Part 2 moves to a discussion and an examination of the theory and methodologies for research and data collection. Issues under this theme are discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework through which the study engages with its subject matter. Such a theoretical framework draws from a systemic functional approach to the analysis of language, and reviews literature concerned with Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) that is relevant to this dissertation. The Chapter further describes language theories and pedagogic approaches that have developed out of SFL and indicates the extent to which such theories have contributed to the genre approach to the development of linguistic and literacy skills. This theory is seen as appropriate to the teaching of EAL within the context of developing reading and writing competencies in ways that are encouraged and valued within a university context, and is used in the analysis and conceptualisation of data in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

Chapter 4 then begins with a discussion of Grounded Theory (GT) and explains reasons for its appropriateness as a conceptual framework used to analyse and evaluate data in this study. The first section of the Chapter identifies GT as a useful theoretical approach to the

conceptualisation of data if the purpose of the study is to promote understanding of the nature of teaching and learning as a process that requires conscious reflection, as well as the articulation and development of explanations for practitioners' own choices. The second section of the Chapter explains the kind of data of interest to the study. Two types of data are described: first, qualitative data and, second, quantitative data. The relevance of both types of data is discussed in this section. The third section of the Chapter describes a methodological design for a survey that captures my rationale for identifying specific research sites; the survey mode used; and the sample. Given the fact that a qualitative survey methodology is used, this section clarifies the reasons for utilising this methodology in the four research sites in this study. The fourth section of the Chapter introduces and discusses the design of, as well as rationale for, the use of certain research instruments chosen for the study. The fifth section of the Chapter explains how data are organised in the light of insights offered by GT as a means of generating a theoretical account of the impact of practitioners' worlds and experiences on curriculum design and literacy practices.

One aspect of the research design as outlined above which may be seen as a limitation in this study is the absence of data (both qualitative and quantitative) about students from the research sites. The study relies largely on language practitioners' responses to interviews, and module outlines and contents, without corroborating such data with students' written work, lesson observations, or interviews. Most of the claims made by research participants relating to students are not compared with quantitative data from students' written work or qualitative data in the form of interviews. Indeed data drawn directly from, and about, students would have strengthened my study. The theory used to conceptualise data in this study (Grounded Theory), and my focus on practitioners' worlds, however, made it possible for my study to be more concerned with language practitioners' literacy practices, and how these inform their choices in the design and delivery of modules for entrance level students. While the inclusion of data about students would have presented the reader with a great variety of data, the data yielded by

language practitioners in the narrative Recounts seem to me to be adequate within the context of the purposes of this study²⁰.

Finally, Part 3 concerns itself with English module design, pedagogy, and practices for epistemological access in the four research sites investigated in this dissertation. Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 deal with these issues in detail. Chapter 5 introduces the first type of data in this study and, in the process, introduces me both as a subject and as the researcher in this dissertation. This is achieved through an autobiographical narrative that reflects on my experiences of learning English, and in English, first during my secondary education under the system of Bantu Education, and second as a teacher-trainee majoring in English at an HBU. By means of this narrative the study investigates and engages critically with reasons for my educational success regardless of my appalling educational circumstances when first entering an HBU. This investigation and critical engagement offer significant clues in the process of understanding data collected from three South African HWUs and one international University in Australia. The experiences narrated in this Chapter, furthermore, served as necessary motivation to investigate ways in which pedagogic approaches in disciplines within the broad field of English Studies can raise students' awareness of the importance of understanding the relationship between grammatical choices and purpose in the construction of (both spoken and written) texts.

The qualitative data concerning my experiences of learning English, and in English, at the University of Durban-Westville (UDW) in Chapter 5 is drawn from my understanding (as a school learner and a university student of English) of specific educational experiences. This opportunity was not afforded to students from other contexts. While students from other contexts are spoken for by research participants, language practitioners at UDW were not interviewed, and data about them is mediated through my student's voice. This may seem to be a

²⁰ "Recount" is written in capital letter throughout the dissertation. This is because the broader theoretical framework used to engage with data draws on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) perspective to genre (Martin, 1981). "Recount" within this perspective is written in capital "R" because it is seen as one of the genres (please see Chapter 3, section 3.3).

limitation and ‘inconsistency’ in the manner in which data has been handled. The inclusion of data yielded through my autobiographical narrative, however, is useful and relevant for three related reasons:

- it represents a portrait of educational disadvantage;
- it indicates the pedagogic value in individualised, one-to-one, mentoring-type tuition and;
- it indicates the way in which pedagogic practices in *English Usage* (1994) developed my ability to draw from theory to understand rhetorical choices in line with the purpose for which I constructed texts (spoken and written).

On the basis of these three factors, I argue that the inclusion of this form of data enabled my study to illustrate the theorisation of the pedagogic practice presented in this study.

Chapter 6 presents an evaluative assessment of the qualitative data gathered at three HWUs in South Africa. Data from the international context, the University of Sydney, is not discussed in this Chapter because the Chapter focuses largely on the South African context, and is designed to present the reader with a detailed comparison between three English departments and two Applied English Language Studies departments within South Africa: the University of the Witwatersrand, the University of Natal, and Rhodes University. This data creates useful comparisons and contrasts across three research sites. The first section of this Chapter deals with data in the light of the language practitioners’ understanding(s) of the reasons for the introduction of linguistic and/or academic literacy modules. The second section discusses data within the context of the language practitioners’ perceived theoretical persuasions that underpinned their departments’ literacy practices in linguistic and/or academic literacy modules. Chapter 7 concerns itself with data that relates to the language practitioners’ conceptions of the relationship between their literacy practices in language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules and the central concerns of the broader field of English Studies. It focuses broadly on ways in which data from Rhodes University, the University of the Witwatersrand, the University of Natal, and the University of Sydney, suggest ways in which participants’ literacy practices draw from, or are related to, the broader concerns of the field of English Studies with language.

The first section examines interview data from Rhodes University. Contrary to the first section, the second section describes data based on a formal module offered to entrance-level students by the English Language and Linguistics at Rhodes University. After this section, the third section concerns itself with the English Department's module offered to students who would otherwise not be admitted in the University of the Witwatersrand. This module is designed to introduce students to the study of literature. The fourth section, however, presents data concerning a module that attempts to address some of the limitations identified in the English Department's module offered by the Applied English Language Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand. The fifth section concerns itself with data gathered from the University of Natal. While data from Rhodes and Witwatersrand universities' English departments appear not to be addressing the teaching of grammar explicitly, the module from the University of Natal has this aspect as its exclusive focus. The final section of the Chapter addresses data from an international context, the University of Sydney.

Chapter 8 takes further the theme that underpins engagement with data in Chapter 7, but within the context of curriculum design and pedagogy, and draws from documentary evidence to accomplish this engagement. Documentary evidence which takes the form of module outlines and module contents, is evaluated in order to ascertain the extent to which the design and teaching of linguistic and/ or academic literacy modules incorporate the broader concerns of the field of English Studies (as discussed in the previous chapters)²¹. This Chapter examines documentary evidence from Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand. The second section addresses documentary evidence from the University of Natal. The data show that although the modules under investigation were designed for students from diverse disciplines, there are aspects of the modules that draw from the concerns of the field of English Studies, especially at Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand. The final

²¹ While it is true that each module's purposes (as spelt out in module outlines) may not refer explicitly to addressing the central concerns of the field of English Studies, the fact that they are developed and introduced by departments concerned with English warrants an expectation from an 'outsider' that the field's scholarly pursuits and concerns will (or must) be addressed in a first year, foundation-type offering.

section discusses documentary evidence from an international context, in this case the University of Sydney. The English Department at this University designed a module that addressed educational needs of students from diverse disciplines and faculties, and this is contrary to English departments' responses within the South African context.

It has to be pointed out that it was not my intentions to have an Historically Black University as one of the research sites within the South African context, although my personal educational experiences narrated in Chapter 5 occurred in an English Department of the ex-University of Durban-Westville. This University had to deal with the kinds of challenges investigated in this dissertation long before the Historically White Universities (HWUs) were confronted by them. It is only in the middle of the 1980s that the latter had to negotiate challenges brought about as a result of the opening of access to racial groups previously excluded from these universities (Moulder, 1991). It therefore would have not been appropriate to include an HBU among HWUs in my study because curriculum design and pedagogic practice in the former already acknowledged the fact that the majority of students were from ex-DET schools, and spoke EAL. Such institutions had already adapted to these sets of circumstances, and responded accordingly. Add-on type modules in HWUs, on the contrary, suggested (at least initially) a sense that little change to the pedagogic practice and design of mainstream curricular in English departments was necessary (Van-Wyk Smith, 1990). Since my study is concerned with such assumptions, it would not have made sense to include HBUs, although this should not be read as a suggestion that there were no problems in these universities.

Finally, Chapter 9 concerns itself with the implications of my study regarding the theoretical underpinnings for module design and pedagogy in modules designed to develop students' linguistic and/or academic literacy skills for epistemological access in English language. It begins with critical reflections arising from the dissertation's Chapters. This reflection is designed to identify the implications of research on language pedagogy within the domain of

knowledge of English Studies. The Chapter also evaluates and assesses aspects of the study that render new knowledge in the field of language pedagogy and academic literacy in universities. This section engages critically with Jacobs' (2006) and Balfour's (2000) studies, and Martin and Rose's (2003) theories that represent recent critical engagements with the subject of this dissertation. The Chapter concludes with a discussion on further areas of research as suggested by my study. This concluding section indicates that further research on the subject of developing students' linguistic and/or academic literacy skills for epistemological access in English language is as important in the 21st century as it was in the 19th century.

Conclusion

It is clear from this Chapter that even though English in South Africa has a longer history in formal education compared to indigenous languages, there are educational difficulties associated with it in the experience of most university students (both speakers of EAL and as a first language). Engagement with these issues in this Chapter suggests that this state of affairs warrants concerted efforts to investigate strategies to improve the teaching of, and in, this language, and this dissertation represents attempts towards this direction. The discussion in this Chapter about the purpose of university education identifies the direct link between language competence and epistemological access. The explanation of the relationship between the purpose of university education and language presented in this Chapter suggests that the centrality of competence in the language of instruction (English) for the fulfilment of such a purpose cannot be overemphasised. The Chapter's identification of the limitations to my study and the discussion of reasons for the adoption of seemingly questionable decisions indicate that some decisions were made as a result of contingent, unavoidable factors at the time of the study.

CHAPTER 2

Literary Criticism and Language Teaching

Introduction

This Chapter reviews literature relevant to this study and, in the process, presents a theoretical framework that informs the perspective adopted to engage with issues investigated in later chapters in this dissertation. The review begins, firstly, by discussing literature that concerns itself with the history of literary studies and the extent to which such history has influenced the broader field of English Studies in South Africa²². Secondly, the Chapter engages critically with literature that presents debates about the institutional separation of English literature departments and English language departments, a common feature in most universities nationally and internationally. Thirdly, the Chapter proceeds to review academic development literature arguing that within the context of a society marked by decades of past racial (and present economic) inequalities, modules that focus on the development of linguistic and academic literacy skills offered in English departments need not maintain a pedagogic practice that is either based on grammatical rules or academic writing and criticism, without an attempt to integrate the two. Fourthly, the Chapter argues that if this separation persists, and unless English departments in universities reclaim English language as part of their scholarly engagement, students' development in literate English will be compromised²³. Finally, the Chapter concludes with a discussion of the nature of pedagogic practices, both in universities in general, and in English departments in particular. This discussion draws from literature that indicates the negative implications brought about as a consequence of the mystification of the English literature disciplinary discourse.

²²English Studies as a field includes more disciplinary tracks than simply literature. It includes such disciplines as language, media (newspapers, film, advertising, popular culture), translation, oral texts. For more details please read Dimitriu (2002), Green (2000), Pope (1998), and Greenblatt and Gunn (1992).

²³ Wallace (2003) describes 'literate English' as "language which is not spontaneous but planned. It is more elaborated than informal speech, makes explicit its grounds and provides useful bridge into expository written language" (93).

2.1 English Studies and literature

Writing about the study of English literature, Horn (1999) maintains that the knowledge sought for is “knowledge about ourselves, about our ways of thinking and speaking, about individual existence which is also and always a social existence” (81). The centrality of language in the approach to, and the focus on, the study of literature (as Horn understands it) cannot be overemphasised. This centrality is in terms, firstly, of our understanding and critical engagement with this knowledge (“about ourselves, about our ways of thinking and speaking...”, as Horn, puts it), secondly, the construction of alternative knowledge(s) other than knowledge presented by mainstream cultures and, thirdly, thinking about ways in which such knowledge may be disseminated. Successful engagement with English literary texts, within this context, depends entirely on a certain level of competence in the language of instruction and, without such a level, it is unlikely that students will attain the kind of knowledge with which the study of English literature is concerned. The relevant level of competence in the language of instruction in order for students to engage with literary studies as expected in English departments can only be acquired if language is taught, and understood as a medium that is able, as Halliday and Matthiesen (1999) put it:

to create meaning because...it is related to our material being in three distinct ways. In the first place, it is a part of the material world...In the second place, it is the theory about the material world...In the third place, it is a metaphor for the material world... (602).

The above assertion seems to suggest that given the fact that literary texts use language about physical space and time, language in literature needs to be understood as a theory about our physical existence and experiences, and is thus able to capture the natural and social processes in the environment. According to Green (2000), this understanding brings about the level of awareness with regard to the nature of language that the discipline of English literary studies attempts to inculcate into students' thinking. English literary studies does this through the analysis of ways in which language in literary, oral, and visual texts, as well as in media and popular culture, is used to construct meanings about individual and group identities. In the

context of my study this is the basis upon which pedagogic practices in English departments can introduce innovative ways of teaching language akin to the broader field of English Studies:

- the relationship between purpose of a text and how such a purpose informs the author's grammatical stylistic choices;
- our ways of thinking, writing, and speaking about individual existence as presented in literary texts and other forms of communicating experience, which is also, and always, a social existence;
- distinction between knowledge *of* and *about* language, and knowledge *of* and *about* discourse communities;
- to transcend the particular and abstract from the physical and social context in order that the knowledge from literary texts, media, visual and written texts, may be transformed into something more generalisable;
- the ability to generalize, to grasp relationships such as cause and effect, to predict the consequences of events, to grasp the essential message of a speech, novel, a written text, and to evaluate situations through writing and;
- to examine ideological presences and pressures, typical writing practices in a given situation or discipline, and common or expected methods of inquiry.

Within the context of South Africa, literary studies have not pursued entirely all the concerns of the broader field of English Studies. Instead, literary studies have followed theoretical developments in the United Kingdom (Balfour, 2000). On the one hand, there were the advocates of great literature, classical languages, maths, geography and rhetoric as a means of attaining equality for colonised people, whilst on the other hand, other scholars saw “the teaching of English [as providing] the clearest case of how English Studies served colonial purposes by alienating students from their national language[s] and culture[s]” (Miller, 1997: 282). Eagleton (1983) reminds us that,

Chris Baldick has pointed to the importance of the admission of English literature to the Civil Service examinations in the Victorian period: armed with this conveniently packaged version of their cultural treasures, the servants of British imperialism could sally forth overseas secure in a sense of their national identity, and able to display that cultural superiority to their envying colonial peoples (29).

It is for this reason, as Balfour (2000) puts it, that: “other scholars argued for less access to European culture, on the basis that it de-valued indigenous cultural forms” (78). Pennycook (1994) draws our attention to similar sentiments in India, where financial resources were spent on English education, “producing too many English-educated Indians to take up the limited

number of jobs available in the colonial administration, and...insufficient time and money being devoted to education in the vernacular” (87). In contexts where the trend was reversed, that is, more support given to vernacular languages than English, however, the coloniser still benefited more than the colonised. Chapter 1 indicates that the significance of Orientalism is in its construction of the colonised ‘Other’ which often manifests in education policies. In relation to this issue, Pennycook (1994) observes that

much of the primitive Malay education that continued to be supplied by the British Government was in no small degree due to [its] attempt to preserve the Malay as a Malay, a son of the soil in the most literal sense possible...these views led to the continued championing of Malay vernacular education...and strong emphasis on a ‘vocational’ element in Malay education, including an almost fanatical devotion to basket-weaving (90).

This is education for the preservation of the *status quo*, “to prevent students from entertaining any ambitions above their humble stations in life, and to encourage them to feel thankful rather than resentful towards their colonisers” (Pennycook, 1994: 88). The few indigenous people’s access to English became a form of colonial patronage, and

an English-educated boy [drew] a far higher salary than a boy who only [knew] his only language, and [had] an opening for advancement which is closed to the other, the principal aims of education in Malaya were to improve the bulk of the people and to make the son of the fisherman or peasant a more intelligent fisherman or peasant than his father had been” (Pennycook, 1994: 89).

It is on the basis of these sentiments that both Orientalism and Anglicism, as discussed in Chapter 1, may be seen as complementary discourses of colonialism which, while they worked both to marginalise and to divide the colonised, functioned to ‘domesticate’ (or lull) indigenous peoples’ resentment against invasion. Culler (2000) points out that English literature in the colonies of the British Empire, as a subject of instruction, “was charged with giving the natives an appreciation of the greatness of England...in a historic civilising enterprise” (36). Reddy (1995), a South African literary critic and educationist, has observed the following about the relationship between traditional approaches to English and Apartheid ideology:

In importing the metropolitan norm, especially the “Great Tradition” to South Africa, its proponents assimilated it into the Apartheid system. The irony is that Leavis did not advocate academic traditionalism at the expense of social privilege. When his theories were implemented as part of the Apartheid curriculum, their importation into this country served the specific ideological purposes (despite protestations to the contrary by liberal-humanists of the time) of foisting a particular cultural heritage which ignored the cultural hybridity of the nation (6).

A number of assumptions about literature and literary studies in English are also associated with the canonical approach, an approach that emerged through Matthew Arnold (1876), I.A. Richards (1929), and F.R. Leavis (1948). According to Arnold (1876), an influential cultural historian and critic, literature was central to civilisation because “great men of culture are those who have had a passion for...carrying from one end to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of the time...to humanise it” (70). This view influenced the choice of texts to be studied. Drawing from Arnold’s view, the selection of texts for study in institutions of learning required an accompanying pedagogy emphasising the authority of the text and teacher. In the 1920s ‘New Criticism’ pioneered by I.A. Richards, invested the teacher with authority, thereby glossing over a definitive interpretation of the text. Young (1987) provides an insight into the actual practical implications of this view in classroom practice: “The teacher would become the explicator of the text’s meanings or would offer a powerful role model to pupils...learning the technique of unlocking textual meanings and internalising the canons of literary judgement and taste” (in Corcoran and Evans, 1979:11). Leavis (1984) further developed Richard’s (1929) notion of teacher and text by advocating that the critic and reader should achieve “unmediated community with his text and with his presumed audience” (Mulhern, 1979:166). For Mulhern, Leavis’ legacy on English Studies can be described as having three elements: “A critical-historical canon defining the major traditions of English literature; a loosely formulated methodology of critical practice; and a cluster of ideas concerning the nature of literature and its place in social life” (1979:328).

The Leavisite approach to reading and text was not without criticism. Arguing against Leavis, Moon (1990) points out the fact that “traditional reading practices assume literary texts to

be ‘perfectly’ complete and unified” (34). It was apparent to Moon and Mulhern (1981) that Arnold, Richards, and Leavis represented a continuum in English Studies because they all, in different respects, adhered to a notion of the text as a source of authority. Eagleton (1983), a British literary critic writing almost a century later than Arnold, suggested that English Studies during this period: “was an arena in which the most fundamental questions of human existence—what it meant to be a person, to engage in significant relationship with others, to live from the centre of most essential values were...made the object of the most intensive scrutiny” (31). This understanding of the nature of English Studies shared a utilitarian view of learners as empty pitchers into which knowledge was to be poured, and this made the study of literature an intellectual exercise meant to produce knowledge as an end in itself.

In the 21st century, however, the “universality of the dollar, the English language, and the Internet” have brought about a major shift in the study of English literature as an academic (intellectual) discipline because “educators are faced with the challenge of continuing education for the advancement of skills to cope with technological developments” (Sarinjeivi and Balfour, 2002: ix). This is not a suggestion, however, that English is the only language with potential, and perhaps better positioned than other languages, to bring about the advancement of skills to cope with technological advancements of the 21st century. Roy-Campbell (1998), for instance, draws on the works of Diop (1974, 1991) to point out that the achievements of Africans during the age of antiquity in mathematics, architecture, chemistry, astronomy, and medicine were accomplished in African languages²⁴. It is important to point out that all these areas required technical vocabulary and conceptual frameworks, all of which was made possible in African languages. Brock-Utne (2000) asserts that:

Walter Rodney (1976) has described the process by which Europe underdeveloped Africa, technologically and scientifically deskillling Africans. The accounts of both Cheik Anta Diop and Walter Rodney are a statement to the vast capabilities of African peoples realised through the indigenous African languages. One of the forms of written language in the world-Ge’ez was found in Africa, in the area currently known as Ethiopia. But European mythology about Africa, which came to be accepted as the early history of Africa, did not recognise the achievements of African societies in pre-

²⁴Cheik Anta Diop (1974, 1991) has written extensively on the African past.

colonial times. From the perspective of these Europeans, the activities worth recording began with their contact with this 'dark continent'. Africa was presented as comprising peoples speaking a multitude of tongues which did not have written forms. Roy-Campbell points to written African languages dating to 3000 BC that are still used today (143).

As part of the educational initiatives that wished to draw from these profound research findings, Brock-Utne (2000) reminds us of the Phelps-Stokes Fund which set up the Education Commission for Africa. It is this fund which assisted in the establishment of a segregated educational system for Black Americans and "had subsequently been requested by the British to organise a similar system for their colonies. Its 1922 Report makes a strong argument for the use of African languages as instructional languages in school" (Brock-Utne, 2000:146). Despite attempts of this nature, African countries resisted attempts to implement ideas in the Report. Brock-Utne (2000) reports that:

The Africans felt... that most of the colonial language policies suggesting that Africans use their vernaculars in school were inspired by racial prejudices regarding the supposedly intellectual inferiority of Africans, a factor making them incapable of benefiting from a Western education. The Africans suspected that the language policies were designed to keep them in their social ghettos in the same way black Americans had been disadvantaged by their education in separate institutions which were inferior to the ones the white children attended (146-147).

This attitude is similar to sentiments referred to earlier with regard to the use of Malay in educating indigenous people of Malaysia. These same sentiments prevailed even after independence in most African countries where the languages of the colonisers remained the main languages of instruction in education. Wright (2002) associates the persistence of this attitude among younger speakers of indigenous languages with the drastic decrease in students' enrolment in African languages departments in most universities of this country.

We are all familiar with the alarming decline in registrations at African languages departments in South African universities. The most astonishing figures are those published in relation to UNISA (South Africa's major distance-learning university) and reported in the *Sunday Times*: According to UNISA, the only institution that offers tuition in all African languages, the number of undergraduate students registered for these courses has dropped from 25 000 in 1997 to 3 000 this year [the year 2000]. The number of postgraduate students has also decreased, from 511 to 53 in the same period. Other institutions confirmed an annual decline of 50% (*Sunday Times*, 4 March 2000, in Wright, 2000:4).

Among other things, this decrease means there is no guarantee for the availability of future expertise in indigenous languages for their development, codification, and standardisation. This is crucial if indigenous languages are to thrive and compete successfully in a country where capitalist ambitions and knowledge of English influence decisions in the most important spheres of society (Crystal, 1998). It is partly because of these factors, furthermore, that, as Sarinjeivi (2002) notes: “courses such as English Language Studies, Reading and Interpretation, Knowledge and Production, Literary Studies and Cultural and Media Studies, to name a few innovations, began making an appearance in university curricula” (36). These new directions reflect, among other things, Eagleton’s (1983) old questions about what constitutes literary studies, as he asks:

If there is such a thing as literary theory, then it would seem obvious that there is something called literature which it is the theory of. We can begin, then, by raising the question: what is literature?...a distinction between fact and fiction seem unlikely to get us very far...our own opposition between ‘historical’ and ‘artistic’ truth does not apply to the early Icelandic sagas. Novels and news reports were neither clearly factual nor clearly fictional...What about jokes, football chants and slogans, newspaper headlines, advertisements, which are verbally flamboyant but not generally classified as literature (5-6).

Most recently, Pope (1998), drawing from Evans (1992:184), points out that “the point about ‘English’ as the name of a subject is that it is an adjective made to serve as a noun. So ‘English’ is always pointing towards an absence – the noun. Is the subject English literature, language, society, culture, people?” (16). In writing about the study of English in the university, Green (2000) refers to ways in which the English Department within his context has observed, and in some senses transcended Eagleton and Pope’s observations above. Writing about the research interests of his colleagues in the English Department which is “still a defining characteristic of university as opposed to other forms of tertiary-level teaching”, Green (2000) notes that

‘English’ in our context is not only a whole variety of literatures in a variety of englishes,...but also (to choose examples from our own teaching at the University of Natal) woman’s magazines, shopping malls, the beach, legal documents, medical texts, historical discourse, journalism, visual images, popular fiction, detective fiction, graphic fiction, oral performance, rap music, publishing, creative writing, or – to really test the fundamental definition of ‘English’ as an adjective – just about any of the above in translation (3).

All these developments point to the extent to which English literary studies has evolved, and will continue to take new directions, as a discipline. Regardless of these developments, however, meaningful and successful engagement with content still depends entirely on sophistication, firstly with the discourse characteristic of the discipline of literary studies and, secondly, the language of instruction through which knowledge and skills are constructed and transmitted. Throughout this study I argue that successful access to both, that is, the discourse of the discipline of literary studies and the language of instruction, can be made easier when taught within the context of one module. For the purposes of the subject of this dissertation, I would focus on two aspects in the field of English Studies: English language and English literature. Unlike Modern Languages Studies such as Italian, Dutch (or even Afrikaans and isiZulu in South Africa), where both language and literature concerns have successfully co-existed in single academic departments, this has often not been the case for English Studies, both in national and international contexts.

2.2 The study of English language and literature

The teaching of English language and English literature within one academic Department at most universities remains, as Janks (1990) puts it: “a contested terrain”. This contestation is both in terms of English as a colonial language and also as a discipline that is understood differently by its practitioners: literature or language. In most contexts English departments focus on cultural and literary texts, not language. As a rationale for this arrangement, Bateson (1971) presents ‘language’ and ‘literature’ as different specialisations in the field of English Studies. He describes the former as

always headed towards total description – a detached, objective, universally available discipline...‘language’...has its ineradicable subjective core...grammar, for one thing, is essentially logical in its linguistic presuppositions, and as such it is governed by the principles of non-contradiction; literary criticism, on the other hand, assumes in the verbal material criticised the presence of opposite and discordant qualities whose provisional balance and reconciliation the common reader will agree under certain circumstances to accept...The function of style is to unify...literature’s disparate parts. As such it is the exact opposite of grammar, whose function is not primarily to unite but to divide (57).

As a consequence of this logic, Titlestad (1998) observes that “too many English departments at universities have for too long regarded themselves as mainly departments of English literature” (34). In his *Literature and Linguistics* (1971), Fowler points to the hostility between language and literature as something that has “marred English Studies”. Such hostility manifests itself in the writings of literary critics such as Vendler (1966). Her main reservation against the formation of academic alliances between the study of English literature and English language is that “linguistics has given us no critics comparable in literary subtlety to certain men like Richards, Spitzer, Burke, Blackmur, Empson, and others, whose sense of linguistic patterning is formidably acute” (Fowler, 1971: 43). As a response to the criticism, Fowler (1971) points out that Vendler (1966) fails to acknowledge the fact that “the corpus of linguistic writings on literature is as yet minuscule and could hardly be expected to yield riches on this scale. Inevitably in the very first years of any new ‘movement’ there will be uncertainty, infelicity, and changes of method” (43). Fowler’s (1971) response suggests that Vendler’s (1966) criticism is premature, ill-informed, and entirely inappropriate. Individual disciplines and various perspectives in relation to questions relating to the subject matter evolve over time, and are continually in a state of flux. English literary studies itself underwent similar instabilities and uncertainties at its initial stages but, because of constant inquiry and research, it has evolved until its current stage (Eagleton, 1983). As one of the disciplines under the broader field of English Studies, literary studies’ scholars over the years have laboured to maintain the literary territory. Vendler’s (1966) charge against the discipline of English language (one of the disciplines within the field of English Studies) as presented above is typical of attempts by literary scholars to ‘preserve’ what they consider to be a literary territory. Fowler (1971) points out that:

The hostility in Mrs Vendler’s voice is depressingly familiar to those of us who have suffered from an unnecessary schism between ‘language’ and ‘literature’ which has so long marred English Studies. Her tone betrays the fear, common among teachers of literature although less so among the great critics, that linguistics may invade and ravage precious literary territory (43).

Within this “literary territory” it is important to understand what is studied, and what then is this ‘language’ that must be stopped from the act of ravaging the ‘literary’. Fowler (1971) asserts that:

Literary study comprises historical, stylistic or openly technical investigation: genre description, stylistic test of authorship, metrical analysis, for example. For some reason ‘interpretation’ (an exceedingly difficult term) and ‘evaluation’ have come to be regarded as the only activities which are worth doing and which are actually done (46).

The approach to literary study and criticism that focuses simply on interpretation and evaluation to the exclusion of such aspects as genre description and its linguistic manifestation in literary works, for instance, arises from a very particular understanding of literature. Bateson’s (1971) definition of literature illustrates this point:

A work of literature is successful linguistically, the best words in the best order, when appropriate stylistic devices co-operate to unify humane value-judgements, implicit or explicit, on some aspects of life as it is lived in the writer’s own society. As for the reader of such a work, he will only be successful if he registers, consciously or at least semi-consciously, the unifying stylistic devices that enable him to respond to the human situation available to him in it. In a word, the role played by grammar in description is *comparable* to that of style in evaluation. But if comparable they are also mutually incompatible, because grammar is primarily analytic in its methods and premises, whereas style is essentially synthetic (58).

The need to shift the analysis of literature away from the language-free analysis of many of the New Critics, towards a more methodically and linguistically aware analysis is an idea that has been shared by Birch (1989), the notion that “literature is language”. Writing about what he calls an Empsonian approach applied by Nowotny (1962) in her analysis of literary works, Birch (1989) notes that:

Her approach is Empsonian, using a close *explication de texte* method of reading that marks her out as someone who believed firmly that there needed to be recognition *within* intrinsic criticism that linguistic analysis of literary text was a necessary and not simply an obstructivist aberration. Her theorising of language and style never moves beyond a concentration on the supremacy of words; she believes firmly that these words somehow ‘contain’ meanings, and she argues for maintaining a formalist distinction between poetic and non-poetic language as a means of defining literature. Style...is effectively language manipulated in ways that signal it as different from ‘ordinary’ language (100).

For Van Wyk-Smith (1990), this is precisely what defines the field of English Studies: its concerns with ways in which texts (written and spoken) use and manipulate language to represent instances of life as lived in different contexts. Birch's (1989) representation of Nowotny's concern as having to do with *how* literature works as opposed to approaching literature from an intrinsic critical tradition signals Nowotny "as someone on the language side of English Studies, rather than on the literature side – a powerful system of classification in the politics of university English departments" (Birch, 1989:100). This is the reason Van Wyk-Smith (1990) encourages a focus on language features in addition to studying literature in English departments:

unless language studies are centrally concerned to show why it is important to know how complex discourse works, and literary studies return to their linguistic base, we simply end up teaching two distinct subjects under one roof (9).

The reason for "teaching two subjects under one roof", as Van Wyk-Smith (1990) puts it, is that whenever English departments attempt to teach 'language', such programmes focus either on grammar teaching or on academic development. Both attempts fail to draw from the field of English Studies' concerns with the role of language in constructing and contesting different subject positions, identities, and knowledge as discussed above. This is because the artificial separation of language studies and literature studies in English departments usually results in pedagogic practices that leave students, either understanding texts and able to discuss them orally, or with the ability to regurgitate what they have copied during lectures and draw from memory. The consequence under these circumstances is that students are left with an inability to construct complex and persuasive arguments in writing and failure to engage critically with detail. Writing about the correlation between mastering conceptual and linguistic knowledge for students with EAL, Clayton (1994) correctly points out that,

The problem of language proficiency in relation to academic achievement in second language students becomes even more acute if we realise that those same students may not reveal any language barriers in conversational settings and hence appear to be able to articulate their ideas adequately (30).

Clayton's (1994) observations above compare with a study (Mgqwashu, 1999) conducted at the University of Natal where, according to one of the study's participants: "students' verbal responses do not match their writing abilities" (66). Balfour's Foreword in the module pack for *An Integrated English Language Course* (2001), a module offered by the University of Natal's English Department, represents attempts to respond to such challenges. It spells out clearly the undisputable dominance of the English language over the globe, and therefore an urgent need for the teaching and learning of it. As though to alert his readers about (and therefore prepare them for) one of the future inevitabilities with regard to this language, Balfour (2001) asserts that:

The 21st century will be characterized by the accelerated growth of already established 'global' languages. English is only one such language. Yet it is neither more nor less helpful in expressing meaning than any other language. English is not an inherently superior language. Nonetheless, it is true that the language occupies an anomalous position in South Africa. While English is the language of education, the media, the economy and politics, it is not the native language of the majority of South Africans. Though this is no accident, the educational opportunities to learn in and through English, for you the learner, are considerable (i).

Balfour's observations remind us of the priority that needs to be accorded to English language teaching by institutions of higher learning in South Africa. This, as the Foreword clarifies, is not a suggestion that other languages are inferior to English, or that universities should not pay attention to them. It is rather an attempt to point out that English is a global language, the language of wider communication, and already a dominant language in most institutions of higher learning and crucial employment institutions in South Africa. This is the reason why, although the Foreword is addressed to students, the corollary in it is that university practitioners are themselves challenged to take seriously, and put concerted efforts into, the teaching of English language if students' success in *and beyond university education* is to be a reality. Sarinjeivi (2002) alludes to the fact that:

Given the inadequate preparation for tertiary education and language difficulties experienced by...students to whom English is a second or third language, focussing on language skills, in the English Department, would appear to be the most practical and realistic way to begin to meet urgent needs (42).

The flip-side of Sarinjeivi's postulation above is that the skills in critical engagement with, and analysis of, literary and cultural texts that English departments have traditionally attempted to develop in students may not necessarily be what most students need (at least in the earlier years of their university education). In the study she conducted at the Sebokeng campus of Vista University, Sarinjeivi (2002) found out that "most students wanted to learn English to speak, read and write well, be familiar with rules of grammar, think, analyse concepts, solve problems and increase vocabulary" (42-43).

Introducing modules to address these needs, however, is the manifestation of an inherently common-sense idea that the difficulties experienced by students as they engage with tertiary study are attributable to issues related to 'language', and not to their failure to master a secondary (academic) discourse. Such initiatives reveal, furthermore, what Jacobs (2006) defines as "an understanding of language as an instrument of communication rather than as a means for making meaning...a typical institutional response to language and content integration" (182). Jacob's (2006) understanding of strategies of this nature as part of attempts to address students' linguistic and/or academic literacy needs suggests that despite research findings in Sarinjeivi's (2002) study, the issue of whether meeting these needs may be achieved through initiatives integrated within the disciplinary discourses or through modules outside mainstream offerings remains unresolved. Gee (1990) defines a discourse as:

...a socially accepted association among ways of using language, thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network' or to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful 'role' (143).

His definition of literacy is pertinent to this study. For Gee (1990), literacy means "mastery or fluent control over a secondary discourse" (153). Within this context, students' educational problems in an institution of higher learning, a university in the context of this dissertation, are rooted in their status as outsiders to academic discourses and in their lack of familiarity with the literacy or 'deep rules of [academic] culture' (Bougey, 2005). An understanding that students

are experiencing difficulties with academic literacy, and not with language (grammar) *per se*, calls into question many of the language intervention programmes which have been established on the assumption that what students need is tuition in the structures and vocabulary of English, the additional language which is the medium of instruction at many tertiary institutions. Balfour's (1995) study about one of the modules that adopted this line of thinking (students' difficulties are with academic literacy) in an English Department reveals that the new programme:

assumed (inaccurately) a degree of linguistic competence already in place. Teachers became aware that the new approach was evidently not compatible with the approach adopted in schools where language and literature continued to be taught separately (or language not at all) (96).

The programme Balfour (1995) refers to was an attempt to socialise first-year students into the 'academic discourse' of literary studies by way of introducing a syllabus which "used discourse analysis for the teaching and explication of texts, with a view to encouraging the acquisition of critical literary skills" (94). Jacobs (2006) argues that programmes of this nature are "related to the framing of students, particularly second language speakers of English, in a deficit mode...these discourses...tended to reinforce notions of academic literacies as autonomous generic skills, which in turn led to...add-on, generic academic literacy skills-based courses" (184-185). While Balfour (1995) associates the failure of these programmes with students' lack of grammatical competence, Jacobs (2006) argues that the failure has more to do with the fact that lecturers got subjected to "discourses [that] exonerated them from the need to reflect on how they were or *were not* making explicit for their students the rhetorical nature of their disciplines" (185).

Several studies (Balfour, 2000, 1995, Clarence-Fincham, 1998), which have attempted to investigate issues of language and learning in the context of the University of Natal (Howard College and Pietermaritzburg campuses) all regard English language proficiency as an enabling and/or disabling vehicle for tackling university education. Balfour's (1995) study, after identifying grammatical competence as a necessary prerequisite for studying literature,

concluded that the teaching of grammar *ought to carry the same weight as discourse analysis in its literary form* in English Studies. On the other hand, Clarence-Fincham's (1998) study concerned itself with the theory of critical language awareness, arguing the need for modules that will teach students to be aware of power relations implicit in the language we use as an effective way of facilitating language acquisition. This is language teaching with a view to developing students' academic literacy rather than a narrow focus on grammatical competence. Balfour's (2000) work extends his earlier work by suggesting that language teaching using literary material is an effective method, for it develops students' rhetorical features awareness as used within the context of literary works.

I share Balfour's (2000, 1995) ideas about the place of language teaching having to be accorded the same status as the study of literature in English departments, *albeit* with two fundamental differences. On the one hand, I am persuaded that language teaching by English departments needs to raise students' awareness of how complex discourse works within the discursive, cultural, and social critique. On the other hand, language used in literary texts is often a product of a 'slavish' observation of specific 'imposed' literary conventions alien to ways in which we use language under ordinary circumstances and/or when producing texts (spoken and written) within the scope of different academic genres valued within the university. The adoption of Balfour's approach, it may be argued, could lead to a situation where students may learn to string correct sentences and construct proper paragraphs, but not be developed in what Cummins (1984) calls Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). The attainment of this level of language competence requires more than just the teaching of, for instance, types of sentences, parts of speech and tenses as identified in a novel or a short story, and giving students exercises to either label such sentences in an extended text or writing short paragraphs using two or more types of sentences. On the contrary, it seems to me that it is through raising students' awareness and understanding of different genres relevant to the discipline of English literary

studies' language conventions, and how grammatical choices are largely a result of discipline specific discourses, and the purpose for which texts are produced to make meaning.

2.3 Teaching English literature for epistemological access

I now wish to turn to a brief examination of the process of learning and teaching, and the resulting nature of a relationship between lecturers and students in the teaching of English literature. Although the focus of the discussion relates to the discipline of literary studies, what I wish to discuss is arguably true of other disciplines in university education in general. I argue that there is a mystification of the disciplinary discourse by English literature practitioners, and this has detrimental cognitive effects on most students, particularly those who come from either illiterate and/or oral culture backgrounds, and have EAL²⁵. Writing about the teaching of literature, for instance, Bateson (1971) points out that as a literary practitioner he is “concerned with a native speaker of the language of its literature. For a foreigner the situation is, of course, much different, the reading of the new literature being a natural part of the process of learning the new language” (54). Given the fact that the teaching of literature often involves speakers of EAL, strategies to facilitate easy access into the discourse of the literary studies through introducing a self-reflexive pedagogic practice need to be introduced. Writing about the discourse of the discipline of literary studies, Bateson (1971) notes that a student of literature should be concerned with recognising that

the words with which the reader is confronted are (or are not) *really*, in their context, approximately the best words in the best order. In the case of the author a style precedes the words. He knows more or less what he wants to say and how he proposes to say it *before* the final verbal formulation on paper. The reader, on the other hand, finds the process reversed, beginning with the specific individual words and working his way through them, as it were, to reach the style. And it is only via the style that he becomes capable of a proper literary response to what he is reading...in literature language is for the reader a mere preliminary to style – as style itself is a preliminary to the literary response in its fullest sense...(79).

²⁵ Please see Chapter 5 which is a record of the autobiographical data on my experiences of learning and teaching in English Department.

Within English literary studies, academics, in the process of constructing specific disciplinary knowledge(s), tend not to make explicit what Bateson (1971) explains. Instead, they employ certain linguistic codes (constructs) “with”, as Bourdieu (1986) puts it, “all the objectivity of disciplinary ‘facts’” (76)²⁶. Stacey’s *Exploring the Development of Voice in Student Writing in a Literature Course at Foundation Level* (2001) reveals that

Students identified the following problems: in lectures and seminars they did not hear lecturers because they spoke too fast...the significance of examples or illustrations was often missed; there was lack of background knowledge and uncertainty about how to integrate lecture knowledge with reading or own knowledge. Some of the basic problems students had in studying and interpreting literature were their view of literature as narrative only, and their difficulty in identifying literary techniques or how they worked. As a result of the difficulties students had with the amount of independent reading required many texts were unread or unfinished so much of the significance of what was discussed in class was lost (15).

Much of the lecture and seminar discussions that get lost is a consequence of students’ unfamiliarity with the linguistic codes, what Stacey (2001) calls “literary techniques [and] how they work”. It is what gets lost that becomes the criteria in terms of which students are assessed. Often what goes on in lecture halls exposes an assumption that students already possess the relevant disciplinary expertise and cognitive sophistication to grasp abstract meanings intrinsic in what Bateson (1971) calls “style” in literary fiction. Balfour’s (1996) reference to a response by one of his research participants in an English Department is a classical example of this assumption at work: “...students do not seem to see that interpretation is the process of questioning and weighing what they already have an innate awareness of. They also do not seem to realise that this is what we are rewarding” (23)²⁷. As pointed out earlier, Fowler (1971) sees “‘interpretation’ [as] an exceedingly difficult term” (46) owing to the nature of the activity itself (subjective, draws from different and sometimes contradictory discourses, and with which most students are not familiar). Chapter 5, for example, reveals that, firstly, I was not aware of what interpretation meant within the English literary study; secondly, I did not know what the

²⁶ This assertion is made mainly on the basis of my experiences of being a student in the English Department in 1994 as narrated in Chapter 5, and one of the recent studies (Stacey, 2001) indicates that things have changed to remain the same in most of these departments.

²⁷ The title of the Report is *An Inquiry into Pedagogy and Syllabus Implementation in the Department of English at the University of Durban-Westville* (1996).

discipline was rewarding or not. These aspects of the discipline were not made explicit to me along the lines presented by Bateson (1971) above. I relied entirely on my limited Bantu Education secondary school learning experiences. Lecturers, on the other hand, simply assumed that I knew these intricate disciplinary dynamics which, as will be argued throughout this dissertation, are only accessible to individuals who have conscious control over the employment of the discourse of literary studies.

According to Reppen (1995), learning to have conscious control over the employment of any discourse requires “direct instruction in certain text features [in that discourse] such as text organisation [and] sentence structure” (35). While students experience a sense of loss of control over the employment organisation of the discourse of literary studies, lecturers still evaluate students “by their control of these features” (35), as exemplified by Stacey’s (2001) and Balfour’s (1996) studies above. Reppen’s main concern, as exemplified through Balfour’s (1996) study in particular, is that students are expected to manipulate language academically, a skill which presupposes a constellation of acquired abilities. These abilities, it may be argued, can only be learned if interaction between students and lecturers is underpinned by principles of reflexive pedagogy, that is, an explicit teaching practice driven by a view that pedagogic communication needs to signal the discourse’s constructedness (Bourdieu, 1994). Reppen (1995) defines this as the teaching practice that “brings forms and patterns of language use to conscious awareness:” (35). This is pertinent within pedagogical communication, as Ellsworth (1989) asserts:

[T]here is no communication without disturbing background effects, and this ‘static’ is likely to be greatest in the pedagogical communication between one who knows and one who is to learn...Communication can only be regarded as pedagogical when every effort is made to eliminate the faulty ‘signals inherent in an incomplete knowledge of the code and to transmit the code in the most efficient way (89).

What Ellsworth asserts involves developing students’ awareness of the fact that, as Pecheux (1985) puts it: “meaning [is] a function, not of particular words or wordings, but rather of the discursive formation in which...expressions occur” (in Montgomery *et al* (1992:7). When

language is in use (whether in writing or in speaking), the discursive formation functions as a set of regulative principles that underlie actual discourses. Within this context, meaning becomes an effect upon the human subject, but not a stable property of the subject (Bourdieu, 1994). This is the level of sophistication that reflexive pedagogy can expose students to.

Pedagogic practice in most universities, however, does not lend itself to principles underpinning this kind of pedagogy. The latter is seen by most academics as too elementary, and is therefore rejected because it clashes with their pedagogical philosophy that students are favoured by lecturers' expertise. What this philosophy ignores is the fact that learning implies acquiring both knowledge itself, and the code of transmission used to convey a particular body of knowledge. One of the lecturers in Balfour's (1996) study insists that "...I expect students to have done prior reading and also to have at least considered the questions I posed to them at the end of the previous tutorial. I assume that my students learn from each other" (33). Assuming that students will understand the academic discourse as they read set works and secondary readings, without explicitly reflecting on these texts' constructedness, is to ignore the fact that language is not just a collection of words, but provides us with "a system of transposable mental dispositions" (Bourdieu, 1994:11). Given the demographic changes experienced by universities in particular, and changes our country has undergone in the last decade in general, it would be inadvisable for English departments to maintain a teaching practice that is essentially content-centred, and relies on unverified assumptions about students' linguistic and/or academic literacy abilities.

Disciplines under the broader field of English Studies are supposed to teach students to be creative and critical in their engagement with broader societal changes on the one hand, and the accompanying challenges on the other. For this to occur, the adoption of reflexive pedagogy as a teaching methodology so that we can be able to present our students with opportunities that will develop critical grounding in the fundamentals of their respective disciplines, that is, the

disciplines' constructedness, is a necessity. In the case of teaching English literature, this entails making students aware, through pedagogical practices, that "the study of literature [and other modes of communicating experience] is about our ways of thinking and speaking about individual existence, which is also, and always, a social existence" (Culler, 2000:67).

By choosing to mystify the language which includes academics as members of the disciplinary group, while ignoring the fact that they themselves are not 'authors' of such a language, (but are simply "interpellated" (to use Althusser's term), by specific discursive formations), academics "conceal the contradictory character of their discourses to both themselves and to students" (Montgomery *et al*, 1992:5). It is not surprising that the subtle social meanings posited in the teaching of English literature are quite hard for native speakers of English from outside the (academic) group to acquire, and are particularly difficult for speakers of EAL²⁸. This breakdown in the teaching relationship is largely the consequence of the nature of disciplinary language and the manner in which it is applied. Because of this, pedagogy loses meaning, for, it does not reflect the intention to communicate self-reflexively, and thus to establish true communication between lecturers and students.

Reflexive pedagogy should not be seen as a practice with potential to 'water down' the 'noble' aims of university education (that is, production of "knowledge in its highest forms" (Zimbienski, in Horn, 1999), but as one that allows its practitioners methodically and continuously to reduce to a minimum the misunderstanding arising from the use of an unfamiliar code. Such misunderstanding is usually evidenced by the kinds of essays students produce. Stacey's (2001) account of the nature of the essays produced by students in one of the English literature modules illustrates this point:

Vague and unsubstantiated discussion and minimal analysis in essays resulted from students' avoidance of any close examination of the language of the texts because...[their] concerns about essays were all to do with content - understanding what they were required to discuss and finding enough to say...concern with content (15)

²⁸ Please see Chapter 5.

Essays written under these circumstances often display poor mastery of language as students seek to reproduce the academic discourse. It is common to hear lecturers making comments about students such as “another problem with students...is expression ...evident in the essays” (Balfour, 1996:33). Ironically, while this is the kind of attitude most lecturers have towards students, the former still expect the latter to manipulate language academically. This expectation betrays a rather flawed image of students by institutions of higher learning. They are seen as a socially homogeneous group who differ only according to individual talent and merit. Because of this image, comprehension and manipulation of language in writing are the first points on which students’ knowledge is judged. This is the reason Rose (2005) insists that:

Many of us are working on writing, but the function of writing at school and university courses is primarily to demonstrate what we have learnt from reading. So I’m going to suggest that if we wish to explicitly address the learning needs of our students, then we need to make a significant shift in our teaching practices at all levels of education (1).

Drawing on this theoretical understanding of the role of reading in the construction of knowledge, pedagogic practices in the field of English Studies will assist academics to identify, recognise, and deal with the factors that separate them from students. According to Delpit (1988), such separation is a consequence of the fact that “members of any culture transmit information implicitly to co-members. However, when implicit codes are attempted across cultures, communication frequently breaks down” (283). The identification and critical engagement with these classroom dynamics lead to an acknowledgement of the centrality of students’ knowledge of the nature of the code of communication, and the dependence of this knowledge on factors such as social origin and school background.

Writing about strategies that could be deployed to make the code of communication accessible to all students, Delpit (1988) points out that for those who “are not already participant[s] in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier” (282). In his *Class, Codes and Control* (1971), Bernstein (1971) points

out that “people learn their place in the world by virtue of the language codes they employ” (178). He distinguishes between what he calls “restricted code and elaborated code”:

The restricted code works...for situations in which there is a great deal of shared and taken-for-granted knowledge in the group of speakers. It is economical and rich, conveying a vast amount of meaning with a few words, each of which has a complex set of connotations and acts like an index, pointing the hearer to a lot more information which remains unsaid...The elaborated code spells everything out, not because it is better, but because it is necessary so that everyone can understand it. It has to elaborate because the circumstances do not allow the speaker to condense (135).

The implications in terms of the use of an elaborated code is that its effectiveness can be experienced, as it is the case in first year university modules explored in this study, in situations where there is no prior or shared understanding and knowledge of academic discourses. Such circumstances require more thorough explanation for students’ learning to be meaningful, for, academics introduce new concepts and ideas to individuals (students) they have never met before. It is thus through an explicit teaching practice, with the use of elaborated code as a matter of principle, that students may begin to cope with the study of literature, and be in a position to expand the boundaries of the discipline. And so it is important to be innovative and creative in our pedagogic practices in order to redress the colonial legacy inherent in the history of literary studies in South Africa.

Conclusion

This Chapter discusses literature that concerns itself with the history of literary studies, and the extent to which such history has influenced English Studies in South Africa. The Chapter extends to the discussion of arguments against the artificial separation between the teaching of English as a language and as a subject, a common feature in most English departments, both nationally and internationally. After this, the Chapter proceeds to literature which wishes to persuade the reader that modules with a focus on the development of linguistic and academic literacy skills need not maintain a pedagogic practice based on either grammatical rules or academic writing and critique. The Chapter concludes that if this pedagogic approach persists and unless English Studies in universities identifies the teaching and learning of English as its

responsibility, students would not choose grammatical structures according to the purpose for which they construct texts. The final section discusses the nature of pedagogic practices in universities. This discussion draws from literature that indicates the negative implications brought about as a consequence of the mystification of disciplinary discourses in various disciplines in universities, and English Studies in particular. Chapter 3 examines Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the theory of language that conceptualises it as a system of categories used to create meaning. Akin to this theory is the Genre-based approach to understanding language and disciplinary rhetorical features.

CHAPTER 3

Towards an Understanding of Systemic Functional Linguistics

Introduction

This Chapter elaborates the literature review introduced in Chapter 2. It introduces, firstly, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the theory of language that informs the approach to language pedagogy theorised in this study. Secondly, the Chapter identifies and discusses different orientations to genre: firstly, that which is influenced by SFL, secondly, The New Rhetoric, and thirdly, English for Specific Purposes. At different degrees, all the three orientations to genre take the relationship between purpose of genre and linguistic choices as fundamental to understanding how texts work. Within the South African educational context (primary, secondary and tertiary) the relationship between linguistic choices and the purpose for constructing texts is important because many learners and educators are novice writers, and the majority are speakers of the dominant language in education as an additional language. This is the reason why, even though all the three orientations to genre are discussed, the SFL approach to understanding genres is discussed in greater detail than the other two. As will be shown in this Chapter, the genre-based approach to pedagogy, as influenced by SFL, advocates that the teaching of reading and writing should be done in ways that explicitly address grammar and its role in the construction of academic discourses. This Chapter, accordingly, reviews the SFL literature appropriate to this dissertation. The relevance of SFL to my study lies in the following: the theory that informs the design and teaching of language module proposed in this dissertation draws on the understanding of language as presented by this approach and data presented is analysed through some of the aspects of the SFL theory.

The first section of this Chapter provides background information to Halliday's (1967) understanding of SFL and traces its genesis in terms of when, why, and how it became one of the

most influential theories of language. The second section introduces the basic concepts of metafunction and stratification, the tools developed within SFL for reasoning about language and meaning. It also introduces a model of language as a stratified semiotic system. The third section describes the concepts of register and genre, which are tools for reasoning about the situational and cultural contexts in which language is used. This section also introduces some useful concepts for reasoning about genres (generic structure potential and macro-genre), as well as some conventions for describing genres. The fourth section introduces Genre-theory and discusses three different orientations to the genre approach. Even though The New Rhetoric and English for Specific Purposes orientations to genre are discussed, this is done in brief compared to the discussion on the approach to genre influenced by SFL.

3.1 A brief history of Systemic Functional Linguistics

My study explores ways in which different universities teach English language for epistemological access, and the focus is disciplines within the field of English Studies, and the English literature discipline in particular. English literary studies concern itself with the discursive nature of language in (spoken, written, and visual) texts, and social identities as represented through textuality. This focus warrants the question: if language is such an important unit in literary studies, how do English departments teach language for students to access epistemologies within the university context? In order to answer this question, my study draws on SFL theory. In terms of this theory, the question of function draws our attention to the purposes for which language is used in different social contexts (“How is language used?”), whilst a systemic approach seeks to reveal language in terms of the choices it makes available to those who use it (“How is language structured for use?”). In the context of this dissertation, these key SFL questions render this theory as relevant in terms of the purposes of the study.

According to Berry (1975), SFL developed from scale-and-category linguistics, a kind of linguistics that was practised by such scholars as Saussure (1916), Firth (1957) and Halliday

(1967). While Firth's interest in sociology accounts for SFL's firm belief in the importance of the sociological aspect of language, Saussure's distinction between what he termed *langue* and what he termed *parole* was equally recognized as important in thinking about language. In offering an explanation for what Saussure meant by each concept, Berry (1975) maintains that Saussure likened

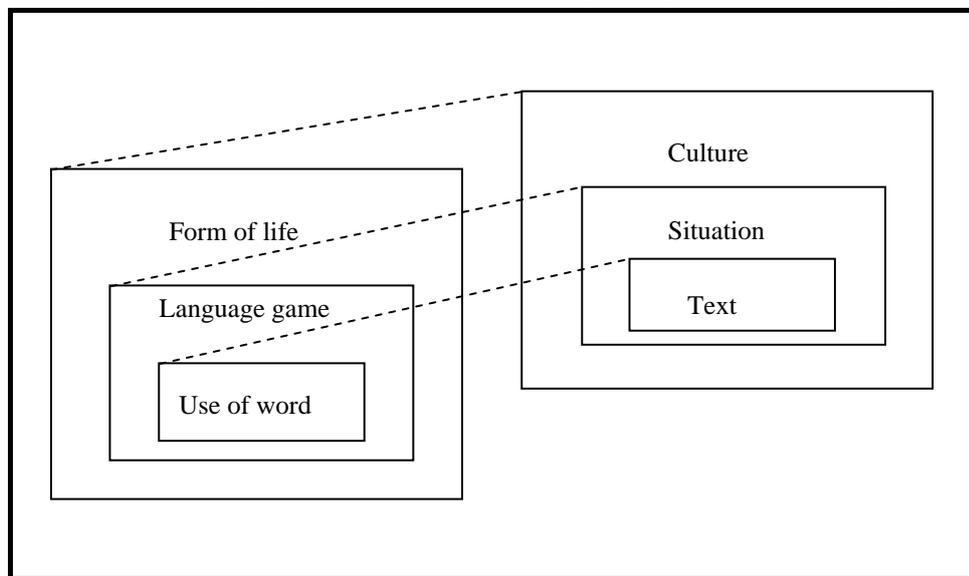
langue to a piece of music and *parole* to performance of that piece of music. Performances of a given piece of music can differ very markedly and yet underlying all of them is something constant, the piece of music itself. The *langue* of a language is the constant structure of the language underlying the *parole*, the actual utterances of that language made on particular occasions (24).

Saussure's linguistic theory further introduced the idea that words need to be understood not so much as labels we attach to things in the world, but rather as a complex system of differences. His term for the "content" of a word was *the signified*, and his term for the "expression" (the sound or written symbol that represents that sound) was *the signifier*, and together they fused into a *sign*. Saussure argued that the relationship between the two elements of a sign was arbitrary or conventional, as is the relationship between the colours of traffic lights and their meanings. In this context, Saussure's notion of the *sign* (the signifier and the signified) defines the organisation of language as solely consisting of rules for linking sound and referential meaning. Bateson's (1971) take on Saussure's notions of the *langue and parole*, however, suggests that the terms miss very important aspects of the nature of language and the extra-linguistic dynamics involved in the process of communication among people in general. His argument is that:

Saussure's point of departure was *le circuit de la parole*, in which a man he calls 'A' communicates a concept to a man he calls 'B'. A and B belong to the same speech-community and so employ the same *langue*. But, as Saussure... seems [not] fully to realize, *parole* (actual conversations between a real A and a real B) is always logically prior to *langue*. Some incentive to communicate - sexual, paternal or maternal, co-operation in the hunt, group defence - against a common enemy - is presupposed in the origins of language...why Old English - an inflected language with a complicated system of case-endings and genders, the adjectives 'agreeing' with the nouns, etc - became obsolete and was superseded by the early form of modern English that philology has christened 'Middle English'. The root cause was extra-linguistic historical events - the settlement of large areas of northern and eastern England by Scandinavian invaders and the subsequent Norman Conquest. Because of these political events *le circuit de la parole* took place in a new human context and as a result a new or modified *langue* gradually came into general use to reflect and express it...In [these] circumstances *parole*...reconstructs *langue*...(78-79)

Although Figure 3.1 presents a schema proposed by Sugeno (2001), which relates genre to the “linguistic turn” in 20th century philosophy, it is also a relevant attempt to illustrate the point about ways in which different historical periods affect ways in which we use language²⁹.

Figure 3.1: Theory of genre related to a 20th century philosophy of language (Sugeno, 2001)



These observations account for SFL’s commitment to take into consideration sociocultural contexts in an attempt to analyse and understand texts, both spoken and written. According to Berry (1975), a development of both Firth’s (1957) study of language in anthropology, the influence of ethnography on Halliday (1967), and Saussurian (1916) linguistics, SFL adapted Saussure’s *parole* to mean *actual linguistic behaviour* and *langue* to refer to *linguistic behaviour potential*. He describes the latter as “the range of options from which a person’s language and the culture to which he belongs allow him to select the range of things that he can do linguistically” (Berry, 1975:24). To explain briefly, the systemic view of *langue* as possibilities for doing and the attempt to define behaviour potential in relation to a context of culture are part of the systemic interest in the sociological aspects of language. In terms of SFL theory, the identification and explanation of the elements of metafunction and stratification of language are key exercises in the process of tracing sociological aspects in the process of spoken or written textual construction and production.

²⁹The term ‘text’ here is used in the same sense as ‘genre’.

3.2 The elements: metafunction and stratification

As the name suggests, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) refers to language in terms of both function and system. The question of function draws our attention to the purposes for which language is used in different social contexts (“How is language used?”), whilst a systemic approach seeks to reveal language in terms of the choices it makes available to those who use it (“How is language structured for use?”). Halliday (1978) points out that “in order to understand linguistic structures in functional terms, we have to proceed from the outside inwards, interpreting language by reference to its place in the social process” (4). Within such a conceptual framework, meaning making becomes a located practice within much broader social discursive practices, and thus will always remain unstable - “an instance of social meaning in a particular context of situation” (Halliday and Hasan, 1989:11). In their *Language Arts: Content and Teaching Strategies* (1987), Hoskisson and Tompkins refer to the language arts curriculum as suggested by Halliday. They observe that: “M.A.K. Halliday has identified three components of a language arts curriculum: (a) learning language; (b) learning through language; and (c) learning about language” (47). As mentioned in the introduction of this Chapter, this dissertation shares some sentiments with Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) theory. As is the case with this study, SFL has a strong commitment to the view that language study should focus on meaning and on the way people exercise choices in order to make meaning within specific social contexts. Referring to SFL’s focus, Unsworth asserts that “[it] is concerned [with describ[ing] ‘meaning potential’”, by which he means “the linguistic choices that are available to construct meanings in particular contexts” (2000: 2). With respect to function, the theory posits three “metafunctions”: the *ideational*, the *interpersonal*, and the *textual*.

3.2.1 Metafunction

The first function of language (the ideational) encompasses experiential and logical meaning, by means of which language represents our experience of the world (Unsworth, 2000). As is the case with Jordens (2002) study, throughout this dissertation the term ‘construal’, as opposed to

'representation', will be used³⁰. The purpose for which we use language is to accomplish certain things and, because of this, we are constantly enacting social roles and relationships by means of it, and language remains a form of *interaction*. This is a second and equally important metafunction of language (the interpersonal) which can be illustrated with reference to speech functions. When we use language to interact, we engage in an activity of exchange through either giving or demanding different "commodities" (either information or goods and services). This gives rise to the four basic speech functions: statements, questions, offers, and commands (Jordens, 2000, Martin, 1989, 1996).

When we use language to mean, it is not usually possible to make all the meanings we need to make simultaneously. The textual metafunction refers us to the "unfolding" of the act of meaning, that is, to the organisation of ideational and interpersonal meanings as language unfolds in time. Furthermore, not only can language "represent" or refer to a reality outside of itself, but it can also refer to the semiotic reality that it creates as it unfolds. Thus the textual metafunction also accounts for the important ability of language to organise itself. Martin (1989) offers an accessible summary of the three metafunctions: "Interpersonal meaning negotiates social relationships, ideational meaning construes the picture of the world around us we see as natural, and textual meaning phases these together into consumable packages of information" (21).

An important point to note in relation to the three metafunctions of language is that all three occur simultaneously when we use language to mean. In other words, language functions simultaneously to construe experience, to enact social relations and (because it unfolds in time) compose itself in a particular way. This means we can analyse language alternately from the standpoint of each metafunction, but each perspective on any given linguistic act of meaning is

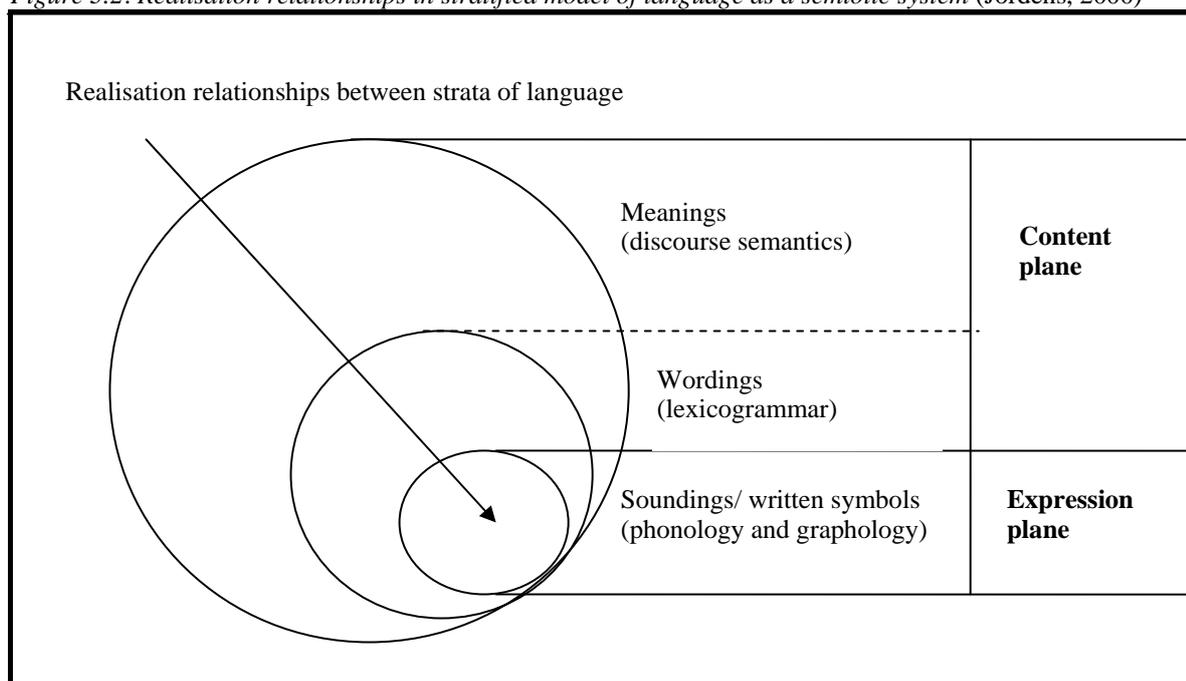
³⁰ For instance, we *construe our experience through language*. 'Construe' encompasses both the "ability of language to represent something other than itself, and also its active role in the construction of meaning" (Jordens, 2002: 54). The latter nuance may not be conveyed by the term 'representation'. It is sometimes referred to as the "world-making" quality of language (Whorf, 1956), and SFL is a constructivist theory insofar as "it accommodates this aspect of language" (Halliday and Matthiessen, 1999: 17).

always possible. Within the context of this dissertation, this aspect of SFL theory allows me to engage critically with, and if possible expose, specific linguistic acts that may have been influenced by hidden dynamics other than the ones available to the researcher during the time of the interviews. This is crucial if the study has to offer any directions for future linguistic and/or academic literacy programmes in higher education institutions in South Africa.

3.2.2 Stratification

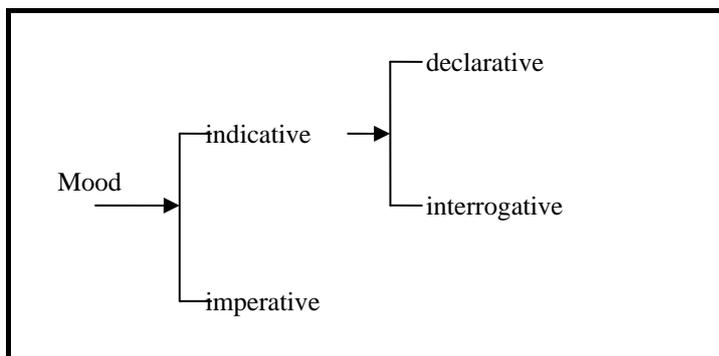
As mentioned in section 3.1, SFL adapted Saussure’s concepts of *langue* and *parole*, a move that contributed greatly to linguistics. Hjelmslev (1961), for instance, clarified Saussure’s (1916) insight by pointing out that language is not strictly speaking a system of signs, but a stratified system involving content and expression “planes”. The relationship between these planes is one of realisation. This is to say that when we use language to mean, the meanings we make are realised by, or encoded in, wordings, and these wordings are in turn realised by, or encoded in, soundings or written symbols. The realisation relationships between the different strata of language are represented by the downward pointing arrow in Figure 3.2, which summarises SFL’s model of language as a stratified semiotic system.

Figure 3.2: Realisation relationships in stratified model of language as a semiotic system (Jordens, 2000)



The need to stratify the content plane of language into two different levels (of meanings and wordings) can be illustrated by a simple example using the speech functions referred to in section 3.2.1. Making a statement, making an offer, asking a question or issuing a command are different acts of *meaning*, and are therefore distinctions that belong within discourse semantics. They are typically realised by different wordings, which are captured by the mood system in English, as shown in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3: Mood system in English (adapted from Jordens, 2002)



The nature of the relationship between speech functions and the mood system are as follows: statements are typically realised in the declarative mood, questions in the interrogative mood, offers in the modal interrogative, and commands in the imperative mood, as shown in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4: Typical (congruent) realisations of speech functions in the mood system (Jordens, 2002)

Speech function (meaning)	Typical wording/realisation in Mood system	Example
Statement	declarative	<i>It's cold in here.</i>
Question	interrogative	<i>Are you cold?</i>
Offer	modal interrogative	<i>Would you like me to close the window?</i>
Command	imperative	<i>Wear a jumper!</i>

It is not uncommon, however, to find statements worded or realised in the typical form of a question, commands realised in the typical form of a statement, questions realised in the typical form of a statement, and offers realised in the typical form of a command (and so on). Some examples are given in Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5: Atypical (incongruent) realisations of speech functions in the mood system (adapted from Jordens, 2002)

Speech function (meaning)	Wording/realisation in mood system	Example
Statement	interrogative	<i>Are you stupid or something?</i>
Question	declarative	<i>So you're Jay's little brother?</i>
Offer	declarative	<i>You look like you could use a beer.</i>
Command	declarative	<i>I was wondering if you could close the window.</i>

To summarise the idea of the division of the *content plane into meanings and wordings* as presented above, SFL models the system of language using different sets of tools. Wordings are modelled by focussing on the clause using the basic lexicogrammatical systems of mood, transitivity, and theme. Discourse semantics, on the other hand, models meaning at the level of whole texts. The next section explores further the implications Figure 3.5 offers to us in terms of discourse semantics.

3.3 Context of situation (register) and context of culture (genre)

The examples given in Figure 3.5 raise an interesting question. How do we know when an utterance that is worded as a statement really has the meaning of a command? We must draw on more than our natural grasp of systems of wordings. Jordens (2002) notes that:

As the examples show, wording as a statement may or may not mean that information is being given. The answer is that we discern the meaning from other information that is given by the context. The context refers us to meanings that precede or follow the utterance: **Speaker A:** I was wondering if you could close the window. **Speaker B:** Sure (56).

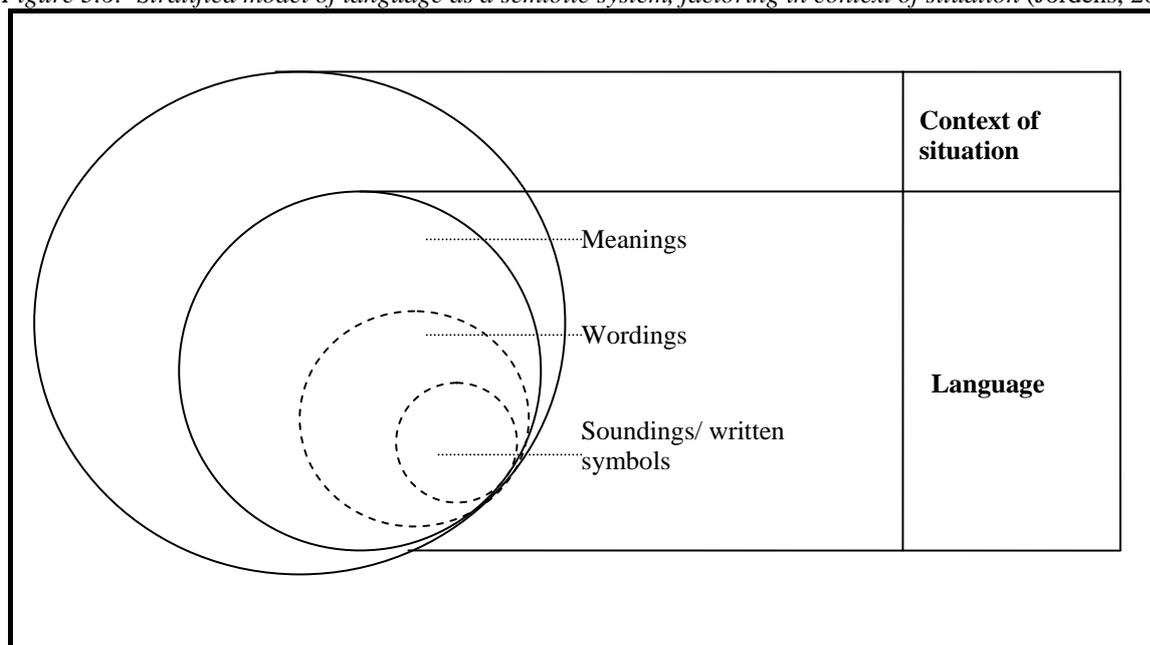
The context refers us to the social situation in which the utterance unfolds. It is possible to imagine a situation in which the utterance *I was wondering if you could close the window* actually carried the meaning of statement. Jordens (2002) illustrates this:

Imagine you were visiting a friend in hospital who was recovering from a debilitating physical injury, and she got up and closed the window. You might then utter that statement and mean it as a statement. In this scenario, the interaction might unfold as follows: **Speaker A:** I was wondering if you could close the window. **Speaker B:** Yes, the physiotherapy is doing me a lot of good (57).

The first utterance in the above examples, for instance, is much more likely to occur, however, as a command. That is, the speaker is telling (commanding) the listener to close the window, but doing so in a polite and “indirect” way. This “indirectness” is realised as *incongruence* between the level of meaning (in this case, a command) and its realisation in wording (in this case, a statement). The form of a statement *symbolises* the meaning of a command; it is therefore metaphorical. It would not be possible to understand and access these types of meanings if the analysis never took into consideration extra textual aspects beyond the texts. Throughout this dissertation, especially in the data assessment and evaluation section where I discuss the data of my autobiographical narrative and research participants’ responses to Narrative-style interviews, the discussion on grammaticality and meaning(s) passed on always occurs with reference, on the one hand, to the *context of situation* (register) in which sentences are being used and, on the other hand, to *the context of culture* (genre) within which texts are constructed. This is a useful way of engaging with linguistic constructions as it allows room for describing “varieties of language which depend on social situation: registers and social dialects” (Berry, 1975: 23).

The preceding discussion has invoked a further important distinction in SFL, the one between language and social context. If we expand the model of language illustrated in Figure 3.3 to include the context of situation, we end up with the model in Figure 3.6.

Figure 3.6: Stratified model of language as a semiotic system, factoring in context of situation (Jordens, 2002)



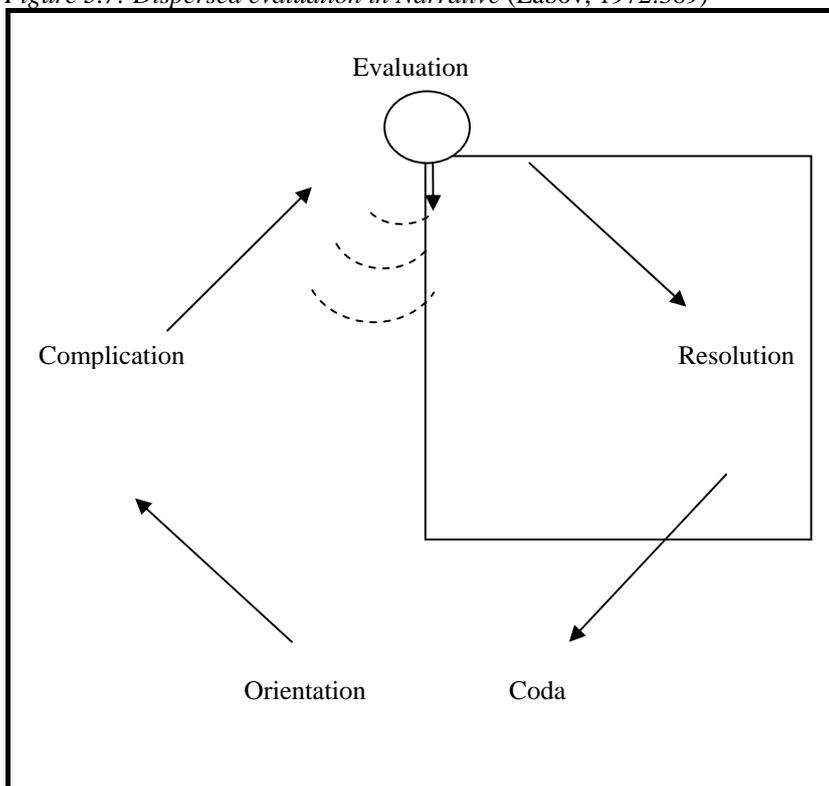
There are three basic situational variables (or register variables) in SFL to characterise the context of situation, that is, *field*, *tenor*, and *mode*. The field encompasses what is going on in the situation (the activity that is unfolding) and also what the language is about (Jordens, 2002). In the data analysed for this study, for example, what transpires in the situation is spoken interaction between a researcher and research participants, but the narratives construct events and experiences about specific contexts in the past. This distinction is often cast in terms of the *first order field* (what is going on in the situation) and the *second order field* (what is being talked about). The tenor of the situation encompasses the role relations between the participants, the nature of their relationships in terms of status (power), contact (frequent or infrequent), and affective or emotional involvement. The mode refers us to both the “channel of communication” (telephone, face-to-face communication, email and so on) and therefore the physical proximity between the interactants, and also to the role language is playing in the situation. Spoken language during the interviews in the context of this study unfolded in a form of story genres and non-story genres. This is the reason, in addition to discussing research in the study of written genres (section 3.4), research in genre theory as it has been applied to the study of spoken narratives is examined in this dissertation (Johns, 2000, Hyland, 1998, Martin, 1996).

Narratives of personal experience, for instance, are described by Halliday (1970) as “normally” unfolding in five basic stages³¹. According to Halliday (1970), narratives of personal experiences have:

an *Orientation* that introduces the story’s setting and characters; a stage of *Complicating Action* that forms the backbone of the story (hereafter referred to simply as *Complication*); a stage of *Evaluation* that makes explicit how the events in the story affected the narrator, and which typically suspends the action for dramatic effect; and a *Resolution* to the story; a *Coda* that returns the audience to the here-and-now (deictic present). (121)

The other important outcome of Halliday’s (1970) study was a problem concerning evaluative meanings posited in personal narratives. As set out above, the staging of the genre models Evaluation as a discrete stage between Complicating Action and Resolution. Labov (1972) later revised this model in order to deal with the dispersal of evaluative meanings throughout the text, and his revision proposed the *non-discrete* realisation of evaluation as the norm (Labov 1972: 9 and 366-370). He offered a useful diagram to illustrate the revision in Figure 3.7 below:

Figure 3.7: *Dispersed evaluation in Narrative* (Labov, 1972:369)



³¹ This understanding of personal narratives by Halliday (1970) is applied in the analysis of the autobiographical data presented in Chapter 5.

The problem of evaluative meaning was taken up in later studies by Plum (1988) which, drawing on both SFL and Labovian variation theory, proposed what amounts to a system of five spoken story genres. One of these was the Narrative which Labov (1972) describes as a narration of personal experiences in which the narrator is confronted with formidable odds which he ultimately overcomes and reach the stable, equilibrium state of affairs. Another was a genre called 'Recount' proposed by Martin (1981) in order to account for stories that, unlike Labov's (1972) narrative, "Recount personal experience in an unproblematical way" (Martin, 1996:24). The remaining three were proposed by Plum (1988) both on the basis of his analysis of the texts he collected, and also on the basis of a criticism levelled at Labov for prompting Resolutions to stories when they apparently terminated at the stage of Evaluation:

Evidence will be presented in this study that the "omission" of a resolution in a narrative-type text is no accident, in fact that a distinct type of narrative texts is best posited to account for those texts which rely on the "withholding" of a Resolution in order to achieve maximum effect in a context where the hearer can infer the resolution of the complicating events. Such an interpretation entails reinterpretation of ... the role of the evaluation in narrative (Plum, 1988:68).

Plum went on to propose three distinct, "non-resolving" genres: the Anecdote, the Exemplum and the Observation. Each of these terminates in an Evaluative stage, and they are differentiated according to the "point" of the story: the "point" of an Anecdote is to share a reaction with the audience; the "point" of an Exemplum is to share a moral judgement, and the "point" of an Observation is to share a personal response to things or events. The structure of each of the five story-type genres in the resulting system is shown in Figure 3.8.

Figure 3.8: Story-type genres (Martin, 1996)³²

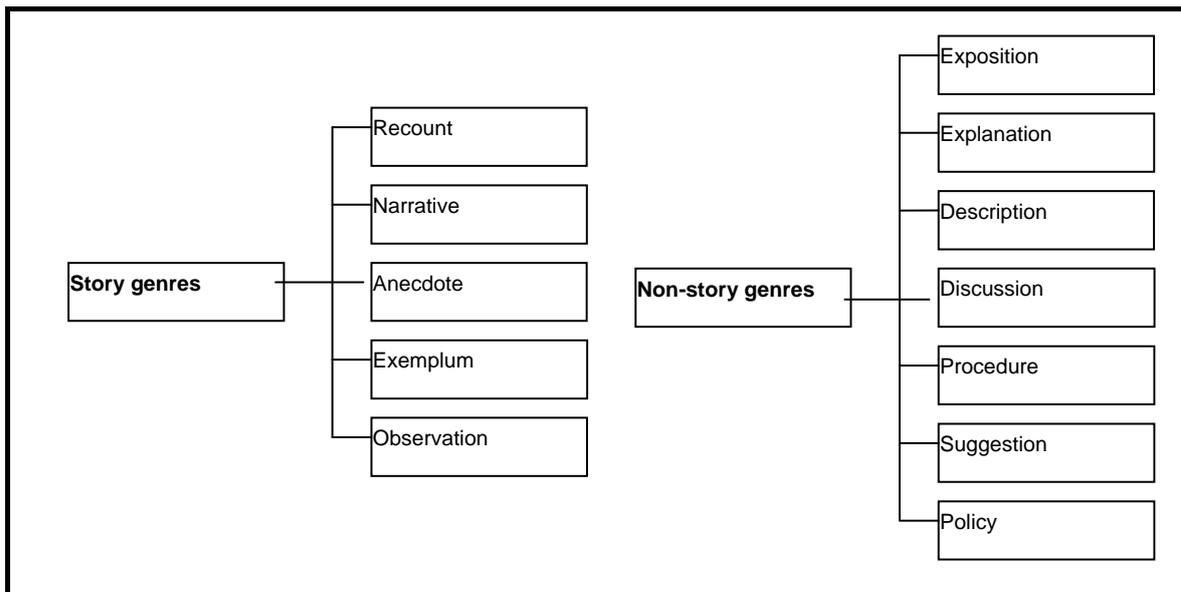
Genre	<i>Beginning</i>	<i>Middle</i>	<i>ending</i>
Recount	(Abstract) ^ Orientation	^ Record of Events	^ Reorientation ^ (Coda)
Narrative	(Abstract) ^ Orientation	^ Complication ^ Evaluation	^ Resolution ^ (Coda)
Anecdote	(Abstract) ^ Orientation	^ Remarkable Event	^ Reaction ^ (Coda)
Exemplum	(Abstract) ^ Orientation	^ Incident	^ Interpretation ^ (Coda)
Observation	(Abstract) ^ Orientation	^ Event Description	^ Comment ^ (Coda)

Three things can be noted in the way the five genres are presented: first, they are differentiated according to their middle and final stages, secondly, any of these spoken genres may be prefaced by an optional (indicated by () sign in Figure 3.8) abstract which summarises the “point” of telling the story in advance and, thirdly, any may also be rounded off by an optional Coda which functions to recontextualise the story within ongoing discourse. The relevance of this understanding of spoken genres to my study is revealed in the data Chapters that present the analysis of research participants’ responses to Narrative-style interviews. As it will be evident in Chapters 6 and 7, given the fact that the Narrative-style interviews were used during the data collection, responses contain several of these five genres. Data analysis in this study further reveals the importance of identifying another important distinction that needs to be made clear by researchers in the analysis and evaluation of spoken and written texts: that which is between *genre* and *macro-genre*. Many dominant genres in education such as Expositions, Descriptions, Explanations and Procedures are in some sense “elemental”, and occur in larger texts such as university handbooks which can also be described in generic terms (Eggins, 1994). University handbooks are instances of macro-genres in that they combine more elemental spoken and written genres in new ways to achieve a particular purpose. As will be obvious in Chapters 6 and 7, longer, narrative-like responses (*macro-genre*) to Narrative-style questions by most participants in this study, for instance, tended to have two or more “elemental” genres within them, and this enables data assessment and evaluation to identify more than one micro-genre

³² While the “()” sign represents aspects of the text that are optional in a particular genre, the “^” sign indicates the fact that sometimes a particular aspect (an abstract, for example) within a genre may be preceded or come after another (an orientation, for example) aspect in a genre.

within a broad response. Some research participants, for example, gave responses in the form of a narrative genre, yet within such a genre there were elemental genres such as an explanation, policy, or exposition. It is on the basis of these research findings that in order to analyse spoken responses to Narrative-style interviews in my study, separate ‘tree nodes’ were created for story genres and non-story genres, as show in Figure 3.9 below.

Figure 3.9: “Tree nodes” used to code interviews for spoken genres (adapted from Jordens, 2002)



According to Jordens (2002):

Expositions are more characteristic of formal discourse than story genres. Their purpose is to defend an argument, and their structure has been described by Martin and Rothery (1981) as Thesis, Argument, and Conclusion³³. The Arguments function as *evidence* in support of a Thesis, and in spoken discourse, the Conclusion is usually a simple reiteration of the Thesis. Recount and Narrative are the genres of choice, followed by a phase of Reflection, during which Exempla and Observations are the genres of choice (110)³⁴.

The inclusion in the Figure of non-story genres is a result of the fact that in some instances during the interviews research participants tended to go beyond simple story genres. During the interview, both research participants at Rhodes University, for instance, often shifted from story genres such as Narrative, Recount, and Observation to one specific non-story genre: the Policy genre. At the University of Sydney, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the University of

³³ Expositions thereby differ from Discussions, which function to explore both sides of an argument.

³⁴ Just like “Recount”, “Thesis” within the SFL’s perspective to genre is regarded as one of the genres and is written in capital throughout the data analysis Chapters in this dissertation.

Natal, on the other hand, research participants often shifted between these story genres to non-story genres such as Explanation, Discussion, Suggestion, and Exposition. The significance of register variables vary from situation to situation, and these shifts from story genres to non-story genres reliably and predictably have a direct effect on, and will be reflected, encoded or realised in, the language choices of the participants. Thus the relationship between context of situation and language is one of realisation. In other words, social context (different universities) is realised in the language that unfolds within it, and language construes this social context³⁵. The relationship is not so much one of cause and effect, rather that context of situation and language are, to a large extent, mutually defining. In an attempt to correlate the elements of SFL that have been introduced so far, Figure 3.10. is useful.

Figure 3.10: Stratified model of language as a semiotic system, factoring in register and metafunction (adapted from Jordens, 2002)

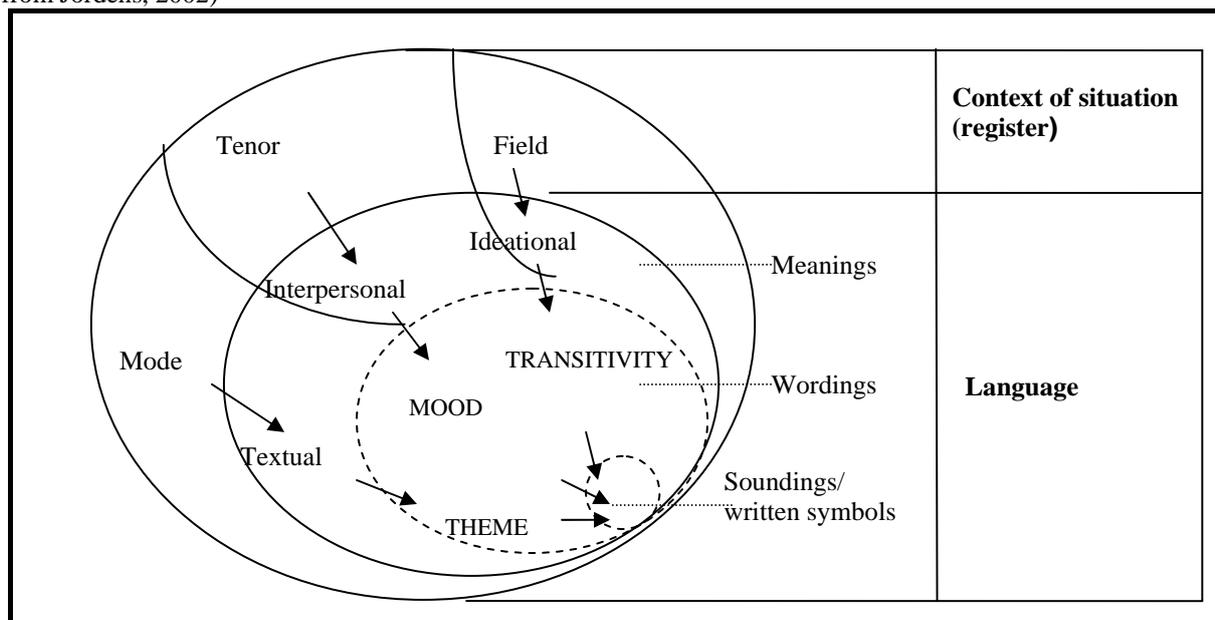


Figure 3.10 represents the relationships between context of situation and language, as well as the relationships between the different strata of language, factoring in the metafunctional organisation of language. In explaining the elements represented in this Figure, Jordens (2002) maintains that:

³⁵ In the interviews discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, spoken language plays a major role and the core activity going (Halliday, 1978 and Martin, 1992a).

The field of discourse is associated with the ideational meaning, which is realised in the clause by the lexicogrammatical system of transitivity; the mode of discourse is associated with textual meaning, which is realised in the clause by the lexicogrammatical system of theme; and the tenor of discourse is associated with interpersonal meaning, which is realised in the clause through the lexicogrammatic system of mood (26).

Drawing from this understanding, it is easier to engage critically with texts, both spoken and written. It is on the basis of these theorisations, furthermore, that the next section discusses research on written genres. Ideas that emerge out of the discussion of written genres in the next section are applied in the analysis of module contents and module outlines (Chapter 8) at the four universities studied in this dissertation.

3.4 Understanding Genre Theory

As pointed out in the introduction of this Chapter, the approach to genre influenced by SFL is seen in this dissertation as, to use Hyland's (2004) words, "the most clearly articulated and pedagogically successful orientation" (25) to analysing written and spoken genres. Other orientations to genre include New Rhetoric, which sees genre as situated action, and English for Specific Purposes, which conceptualises genre as professional competence, however, are also discussed in this section. I begin with the discussion of genre as influenced by SFL. This is the orientation most relevant to the purposes of this study.

3.4.1 Genre as social purpose: SFL orientation

According to Hyland (2004),

Known in the United States as the Sydney School, this model of genre emerged from linguists and teachers working to create a genre-based pedagogy consistent with the theoretical work of Michael Halliday (Halliday, 1994; Halliday and Hasan, 1989). Halliday's conception of linguistics as a set of systems for creating meanings in social contexts is far wider than most linguistic theories as it is concerned with the ways we use language as a resource for communication rather than with rules for ordering grammatical forms (25).

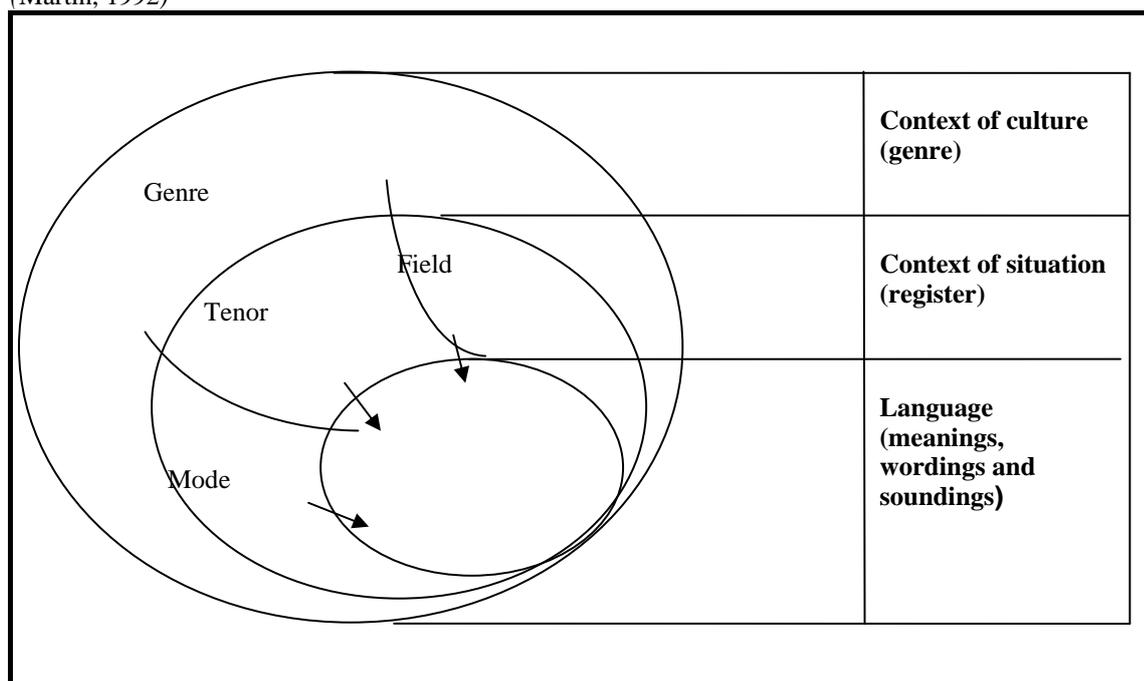
Within the context of SFL genre is seen as: "staged, goal-oriented social process: social because we participate in genres with other people; goal-oriented because we use genres to get things

done; staged because it usually takes us a few steps to reach our goals” (Martin and Rose, 2003: 7-8). Drawing from this conception, the linguistic theory of genre as influenced by SFL allows us to materialise what Wittgenstein (1974) calls *language games*, or the tacit conventions of everyday speech. The concept of *language games* is illustrated clearly in Martin and Rose’s *Working with Discourse: Meaning Beyond the Clause* (2003). Their work provides succinct definition of genre and, in the process, indicates how Wittgenstein’s term is suitable for an understanding of genre:

We use the term genre in this book to refer to different types of texts that are in various types of social contexts. As children, we learn to recognise and distinguish the typical genres of our culture, by attending to consistent patterns of meaning as we interact with others in various situations. Since patterns of meaning are relatively consistent for each genre, we can learn to predict how each situation is likely to unfold, and learn how to interact in it (7).

Martin (1984), Martin (1992b), Cope and Kalantzis (1993) and Kress (1993) provide elaborate discussions that indicate the extent of SFL influence on their understanding of genre. There is a further level of context beyond that of situation, that is, the context of culture. Figure 3.11 factors in the context of culture in relation to the context of situation and language.

Figure 3.11: Stratified model of language in relation to context of situation and context of culture (Martin, 1992)



While Martin (1992) sees genre as both a theory of situations and a theory of culture, Cope and Kalantzis (1993) understand it as “a category that describes the relation of the social purpose of text to language structure” (2). Kress (1993), on the other hand, “argues for a concept of genre in which grammar makes meanings of social and cultural significance” (in Cope and Kalantzis (1993:22). Kress (1993) further maintains that genre “is a device to analyse the conventionalised nature of linguistic interactions and the way in which language both reflects and constructs certain relations of power and authority” (22). In this way, genre accounts for the organisation of register (or situational) variables into typical configurations that recur and, over time, are thereby institutionalised within a given culture. Thus a culture can be characterised from a systemic perspective in terms of its *genre potential*, that is, as Eggins (1994) puts it: “all the linguistically-achieved activity types recognised as meaningful (appropriate) in [that] culture” (35). According to this view, culture is a system of genres realised in specific situations through which we enact community. By the same logic, the genre potential of an individual would describe the repertoire of genres she could use within her own and other cultures. The process of acculturation can thus be described in generic terms as the development of this repertoire over time. Iedema (1994) offers the following insight with regard to this issue:

Not every social situation is unique. If it were, it would be impossible for us to predict what was to happen next, and to learn how to act as a situation unfolds. In any culture there is a range of typical situations that unfold in ways we learn to expect. Each of these typical situations has a verbal realisation, which unfolds as a text. The type of situation and its verbal realisation are together known as a genre (57).

The point about text is crucial in my dissertation because generic analysis informs both the approach to data assessment and evaluation and an approach to the analysis of language modules discussed in Chapters 6, 7, and 8. The positive aspect of the genre analysis is that it orients one to choice of text rather than choice of word, which is to say that word choice is considered only pursuant to the question “What type of text (genre) is unfolding here?” This is why the understanding of genre as influenced by SFL is seen in this dissertation as most relevant to pedagogy at all levels of education.

As pointed out earlier, the SFL approach to genre has been motivated by linguists and teachers with a commitment to language and literacy education, “helping teachers to view linguistics as a practical tool that they can use in their classrooms” (28). Within the context of this approach a methodology that has been developed by Rothery (1994) and Rose (2005) for the teaching of content subjects for primary and secondary schools learners in Australia has facilitated epistemological access to socially valued genres both for learners who speak English as a first language and those who speak it as an additional language. Hyland (2004) points out that:

genre pedagogy in Australia, in fact, began with the study of writing by primary school students (Rothery, 1994) and later expanded to include secondary school subject classes, adult migrant programs, academic disciplines, and professional work places (see Feez, 2002) (28).

The pedagogy in these programs drew on the work of Vygotsky (1978), particularly on his argument that learning occurs in the area between what learners can do independently and what they can do with the assistance of an educator. In this context, learning to read, write, listen, and speak, that is, abilities to access conscious control over the most valuable and powerful genres in society depends on interacting with a person with expert knowledge in such genres. Within the context of the institution of learning, whether primary, secondary, or tertiary level, this means, as Hyland (2004) puts it:

Contextualising the genre through activities such as prediction tasks, problem-solving activities, site visits...that reveal the purpose of a genre and the situations in which it is found, modelling appropriate rhetorical patterns of the genre to reveal its stages and their functions...providing guided practice in writing the genre through role plays, information-gap tasks, group construction...withdrawing to allow students to write independently (planning, drafting, and editing texts, peer critiques) in realistic contexts (34).

These activities represent a process that facilitates what Eggins (1994) calls “bringing...unconscious cultural knowledge to consciousness by describing how we use language to do things” (46). Jordens (2002) argues that in order to get answers to this question we need to conduct what he calls a generic description. For him, this process requires three things: a name for the genre, a list of the stages or phases that constitute it, and a statement of its

purpose. These investigative questions about generic characteristics of a text are used as tools within the SFL orientation to genre, not in the New Rhetoric orientation.

3.4.2 Genre as situated action: The New Rhetoric orientation

The New Rhetoric (NR) orientation to genre differs significantly from the SFL perspective. In addition to offering a different definition of the term genre, NR presents deep-seated scepticism about the possibility of teaching genre in a classroom. Even though both the SFL and the NR perspectives identify contextual and the social aspects in the understanding of genre as important, the latter sees genre as “flexible, plastic, and free” (Bakhtin, 1981:79). The NR sees genres as,

Stabilised-for-now forms of action that are open to change and subject to negotiation. In sum, genre is seen as a form of social action that is centred not on the substance or the form of the discourse but on the action it is used to accomplish (Hyland, 2004:35).

Hyland’s definition of genre indicates clearly a complete divorce from linguistics and, instead, draws from “postmodern social and literary theories (especially Bakhtin, 1981) and North American research into L1 rhetoric and composition” (Hyland, 2004: 36). Within the NR orientation of understanding genre, social, cultural, and institutional contexts are as important as describing lexico-grammatical forms and rhetorical patterns. The NR perspective to genre sees a closer analysis of institutional contexts where creativity is employed in writing as a strategy to gain access to understanding how circumstances such as culture and community influence the negotiation of meanings. Although textual regularities are not ignored, responses to routine situations are seen as dictates that differ by culture and by community. For a context where the teaching of reading and writing is directed to speakers of languages other than the one used as a medium of instruction, or to novice writers, the NR perspective to genre seems to have very little to offer. Hyland (2004) points out that,

Because NR sees genre as guiding frameworks or rhetorical strategies rather than as recurring linguistic structures, there is a perceived instability about genres that makes some NR theorists skeptical about their pedagogic possibilities...classroom genres differ from those elicited in real-world contexts in terms of the goals, roles, learning methods, and types of

evaluation they engender. More broadly, NR assumes that genres can only be taught if they are static, as it would make no sense to teach flexible entities that are perpetually subject to change and reshaping by individual users. Thus, genres cannot be transferred to the classroom because this seeks to make solid what is actually shifting and variable (38-39)

This view of genre seems to suggest that genre flexibility is in fact a constraint in teaching. This flexibility of genres is understood mainly by those who already possess a plethora of expertise and have an informed and deeper insight into their nature. For a context like South Africa, the novice writers and/or speakers of the dominant language of instruction in educational institutions, lack of knowledge about such flexibility disadvantages them even further. The extent to which speakers of EAL were more comfortable when they knew which structures were accurate and expected in their writing, Hyland (2004) notes that “[they], for example, found that their L2 graduates writing students exhibited “a palpable sense of unease” with the use of informal features of academic writing such as the use of first-person pronouns, questions, and the sentence-initial *but*” (40-41). Hyland (2004) further clarifies the complexity involved in being able to access and understand the flexibility of genres which the NR sees as a constraint in teaching them:

When writers manipulate established forms, this is usually a subtle redrawing of a genre, confined within the boundaries of what is recognized as conventional practices. It also involves a good grasp of the resources for creating meanings and the confidence to depart from the conventional. As Bakhtin (1986:80) has suggested, writers must be able to control the genres they use before they can creatively exploit them (40-41).

To suggest that genres need not be taught in classroom contexts because they are flexible and cannot be fixed, fails to see full knowledge of genre as a precursor for identifying and understanding this flexibility. The types of research interests by the NR theorists reveal the origins of such a suggestion. Hyland’s (2004) survey of NR research reveals that the focus has exclusively been on how experts in their fields use genres to negotiate meanings specific to their cultures and communities. He asserts that the NR’s view of

genre as a flexible instrument in the hands of expert community users has meant that the use of texts in the classroom or by novice writers has not been a major feature of NR research. Instead, publications have focused on how “expert” users exploit genres for social purposes and the ways genres are created and evolve (Hyland, 2004: 36-37).

All of these studies, it seems to me, present NR's perspective on genre as paying more attention to the attitudes and values of the communities of individuals that are already in possession of expert knowledge concerning ways to employ particular genres in particular contexts. The important dimension about the contexts out of which genres are constructed, that of power, seem to be the main contribution to understanding genre that NR offers. The NR observes the fact that intrinsic to all genres are the interests and values of particular social groups in different social institutions. These institutions often have contextual histories that use genres to reinforce particular social values, interests, identities, and roles. It is on the basis of these reasons that the NR asks teachers to raise the following critical questions when dealing with genre in the classroom:

- How do some genres become respected, and how are they granted esteem?
- In whose interest in this?
- What kinds of social organisation are created and maintained by such prestige?
- Who is excluded, and who benefits?
- Does a particular genre have negative effects beyond the immediate context?
- What representations of the world does a genre entail?

(Hyland, 2004:38)

These questions are seen by NR theorists as having the potential to subvert prestigious genres possessed by the elite. It is these genres that open access to academic success and social resources to selected individuals in society. Hyland (2004) explains that “prestigious genres often come with precedent and proper procedure means that they can be symbolic bastions of the status quo, serving to represent an elite of expertise and power” (37). SFL orientation to genre's attempts to facilitate access to prestigious genres as discussed in the previous section, ironically, is seen by the NR as perpetuating, and not challenging, dominant social discourses and genres.

Hyland (2004) presents this argument more clearly:

New Rhetoric theorists argue that the SFL agenda of extending access to valued genres is fatally flawed. Teachers who facilitate such access may believe they are improving the life chances of their students, but they are not changing the system because they do not subvert the power of such genres. Genres, in other words, function to empower some people while oppressing others, and if writing teachers ignore this dimension of genres, they simply reproduce power inequalities in their classrooms (37).

The irony for me lies in the fact that while a New Rhetoric perspective to genre identifies genres as having intrinsic values and interests that serve to perpetuate dominant groups' interests in social institutions, it resists attempts to facilitate access to such genres to those who are not members of the communities that use such dominant genres. Whether or not facilitating access to dominant genres is carried out, their societal status never changes, that is, they still remain dominant. This is not to suggest that teachers need not raise learners' awareness of the power dynamics embedded in dominant genres. My contention is that we need to attempt to make them accessible to people outside dominant groups as a precondition for a productive and informed critique of dominant genres. How can students learn to subvert genres they do not even have a full understanding of? After all, as Christie (1988) argues: "learning the genres of one's culture is both part of entering into it with understanding, and part of developing the necessary ability to change it" (30).

3.4.3 Genre as professional competence: English for Specific Purposes

The ability to critique dominant genres in order to change them is the most important skills to succeed in industrial and technologically-driven societies like South Africa, and institutions of formal learning are increasingly challenged to prepare students for work places and professional contexts. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) orientation to genre represents attempts to meet these demands. Similar to SFL and NR orientations to genre, the ESP perspective identifies linguistic analysis and contextual relevance to understanding texts and construction. An additional aspect that is missing in both SFL and NR perspectives on genre, however, is the ESP's focus on teaching and research on local needs as far as possible, as Hyland (2004) explains:

Researchers in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) are interested in genre as a tool for understanding and teaching the kinds of writing required of non-native English speakers in academic and professional contexts. The ability to function competently in a range of written genres is often a central concern for ESL learners as it can determine their access to career opportunities, positive identities, and life choices (43).

Some of the researchers in the ESP perspective on genre, however, draw from both SFL and NR to theorise their engagement with texts. Swales's (1990) work on linguistic rhetorical features of academic genres and the description of the contexts in which these genres occur, respectively, indicates ways in which he draws from the other two perspectives to understand genre. All the ESP theorists agree on one matter, that is, "genre as a class of structured communicative events employed by specific discourse communities whose members share broad social purposes" (Hyland, 2004: 44). Community and social purpose, in terms of this understanding, remain the core characteristics of ESP perspective to genre, with more emphasis on the linguistic aspects missing in NR, and more focus on the role of social communities which is absent in SFL.

Focussed on the communicative needs of particular academic and professional groups, ESP regards genres as the property of the communities that use them, and as such sees educational institutions as having the task to make these accessible to those 'outside' these communities. Swales' (1990) description of the relationship between genres and their communities is worth quoting here:

Discourse communities evolve their own conventions and traditions for such diverse verbal activities as running meetings, producing reports, and publicising their activities. These recurrent classes of communicative events are the genres that orchestrate verbal life. These genres link the past and the present, and so balance forces for tradition and innovation. They structure the roles of individuals within wider frameworks, and further assist those individuals with the actualisation of their communicative plans and purposes (20).

In order to facilitate entry into discourse communities, Swales (1990) argues that 'outsiders' need to be taught what he calls "schematic structure", what SFL describes as "stages". Facilitating this entry involves identifying a range of texts representative of the types a discourse community uses, and begin a close analysis of moves that make up the genre.

Each move is a distinctive communicative act designed to achieve one main communicative function and can be further subdivided into several "steps". Both moves and steps may be optional, embedded in others, repeated, and have constraints on the sequence in which they generally occur (Hyland, 2004: 47).

Within the context of teaching speakers of EAL, this pedagogic approach enables students to see how particular aspects of the real communicative world work in order to translate these understandings into the classroom. Explicit teaching of rhetorical devices, furthermore, offers students metalinguistic awareness that improves their ability to read and write texts that are otherwise complicated and out of reach for individuals outside a discourse community.

3.4.4 Criticisms of genre theory

Section 3.4.2 has already dealt with one of the main criticisms against genre theory, the criticism that the genre approach perpetuates the *status quo* by teaching learners to master dominant genres instead of subverting them. The response to that criticism was that while it is true that teachers need not simply facilitate the internalisation of dominant discourses, it is impossible for learners to subvert something of which they possess no knowledge.

One other criticism is that genre theory fails because teaching occurs in the classrooms and not in the real-world context where genres are used. I argue that genre theory provides learners with the confidence and skills they will need to participate more efficiently in the ‘real’ world. The ESP perspective, for instance, provides “apprenticeship contexts by short-cutting the long processes of natural, situated acquisition” (Hyland, 2004:18).

The most controversial criticism is that genre teaching stifles learners’ creativity. With regard to this criticism, Hyland (2004) notes that:

A group of language teachers from a variety of countries surveyed by Kay and Dudley-Evans (1998), for example, expressed the view that genre-based pedagogies carried the danger of prescriptivism and the possibility that students might expect to be told exactly how to write certain types of texts, rather than learning for themselves (19).

While it is true that in some instances learners, especially those who speak EAL, and have several insecurities as a consequence, may turn genre-based pedagogy into recipes for producing written texts, this depends entirely on the experience of the teacher concerned and the types of

texts used. It is always useful for learners to know what is expected of them, and the genre-pedagogy provides them with opportunities to see what the target discourse looks like. Is the teaching of parts of speech, tenses, and sentence and paragraph construction in the writing process less prescriptive than providing learners with moves and stages characteristic of certain genres? I argue in this dissertation that far from disempowering learners, genre-pedagogy presents them with opportunities to gain understanding and awareness of the fact that purpose, context, and the social domain influence language choices in the process of constructing texts. Hyland (2004) puts it differently:

Once we accept that our social and rhetorical goals are best achieved by, say, writing a postcard, a lab report, a five-paragraph essay, then our writing will occur within certain expected patterns. The genre does not dictate that we write in a certain way or determine what we write; it enables choices to be made and facilitate expression, but our choices are made in a context of powerful incentives where choices have communicative and social consequences. Genre pedagogies make both constraints and choices more apparent to students, giving them the opportunities to recognise and make choices, and for many learners, this awareness of regularity and structure is not only facilitating but also reassuring (20).

Conclusion

This Chapter introduces a systemic functional approach to language, reviews some of the literature concerned with this approach, and provides a rationale why this approach might be useful for my research project. The three most important reasons are: firstly, SFL draws from the aspects of traditional and progressive approaches to engage critically with issues in language within the context of genres. Secondly, SFL identifies the relationship between social purpose and grammatical choices as key to language teaching. Thirdly, given the fact that most data in this study are transcriptions of spoken responses by participants, the use of selected concepts associated with SFL offer insights that would otherwise not arise as a consequence of close or surface reading of interviewees texts. This Chapter also attempted to show that in many senses SFL became an elaboration of both Saussurian linguistics and the study of language in anthropology (Berry, 1975). In summary, SFL asks two questions: “how is language used?” and “how is language structured for use?” Answers to these questions, according to the SFL

approach, need to draw from the context (of culture) within which the language is used (both in writing and in speaking). It has to be pointed out; however, that SFL is not included in my dissertation as a theory to inform a proposal for a particular ‘model’ module. Instead, it is included because it informs the way in which issues investigated in this study are conceptualised and analysed. The way I understand and evaluate my educational experience as presented in Chapter 5, for instance, is largely informed by Genre Theory which arises out of SFL as a theory of language as discussed in this Chapter. In addition to the SFL perspectives on genre, the Chapter discussed two other orientations towards genre: New Rhetoric (NR) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The concluding section on criticisms of genre-pedagogy indicates that even though there are valid criticisms, genre-theory seems to have sufficient benefits for speakers of EAL, and so cannot be discarded as entirely unhelpful. Chapter 4 details the research methodology and research instruments used to collect qualitative and quantitative data for this study. This Chapter further indicates the important role I wish SFL to play in the process of engaging with the data yielded through my autobiographical narrative and the narrative interview at research sites.

CHAPTER 4

A Methodology for Narrative Recounts and Documentary Evidence of Curriculum Change

Introduction

The purpose of this Chapter is to describe and explain the methodological choices made as part of investigating how curriculum developers in the field of English Studies responded to students' educational needs between the period 1980 and 2005³⁶. Such methodological choices are also used in this Chapter to engage critically with theories that informed, first, module design and, second, pedagogic approaches in selected English departments, English Language and Linguistics Department, and Applied English Language Studies Department. Figure 4.1 outlines the four broad purposes of the study that were used to organise and evaluate data in Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Figure 4.1: The categories used to organise data for analysis and evaluation

Purposes of the study	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to understand reasons for the introduction of the language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules by four English departments and two Applied Language Studies departments;• to understand the theoretical persuasions that underpin language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules design and classroom pedagogic practices during module delivery in four English departments and two Applied Language Studies departments;• to understand the conceptual relationship between the language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules and the central concerns of the field of English Studies and;• to theorise an alternative approach to module design and pedagogic practice akin to the central concerns of the field of English Studies.
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Within the context of these categories, this Chapter describes specific methodological choices and circumstances that facilitated the development of a perspective on English language

³⁶ Chapter 2 discusses at length the meaning of the field of English Studies in this dissertation: English literature, English language, Popular Cultural texts written in English. The period 1980 to 1990 witnessed a change of admission policies in all HWUs in South Africa, and this change challenged academic English departments to consider going beyond teaching English literature. While some accepted the challenge and introduced language modules, others continued with the 'business as usual'. Those colleagues who acknowledged the need to change either designed modules within English departments or left and joined disciplines concerned with applied language studies. I discuss these developments in more detail in Chapters 6, 7, and 8. From the 1990s to 2005, such modules had run for more than a decade, and were revised and modified in various ways. It is in the interest of this dissertation to investigate the processes and the rationale for such changes.

curriculum design and pedagogic practices. The broader concern of the study has to do with the extent to which the design and delivery of the four modules encourage students to learn, as Nyerere (1995) puts it: “to produce logical thinking based on facts, to explain these thought processes and logic, and to respond to the intellectual challenge of an opposing argument—whether this comes from within or outside their ranks” (5).

This study is therefore not about measuring competence. Rather it represents an attempt to initiate a conscious and deliberate rethinking and re-theorisation of how university language practitioners can inculcate the above skills in our first-year students. To do this, the study relies on experiential biographical data drawn from curriculum developers' experiences of involvement as module designers and/or lecturers. Using this data as it emerges from the ‘ground’, the study attempts to locate and to some extent identify approaches to developing students’ linguistic and/or academic literacy competence(s). The study also relies on documentary evidence as a further unit of analysis against which to contrast and/or corroborate data obtained from participants’ narrative Recounts. In other words, such data is collected and analysed in order to support the narrative Recounts and engage with the issues investigated in the study.

These narrative Recounts draw from experiences of involvement with the design and/or delivery of modules meant to develop linguistic and/or academic literacy competencies and from my autobiographical narrative of experiences of learning English and in English at secondary and tertiary levels. Critical engagement with these narrative Recounts enables me as researcher and participant to gain access to participants’ experiential understandings, with the intention of opening possibilities for informed and deliberate introspection on the part of university language practitioners. Such introspection is crucial when one considers the fact that in most tertiary education institutions “...the proficiency required by graduates for basic communication purposes...tends to be developed discretely from the kind of proficiency required for academic study and for knowledge creation through writing” (Mgqwashu, 2001:111). When proficiency

for basic communication is developed, students learn basic skills such as constructing (spoken or written) proper sentences, but fail to choose grammatical structures to achieve very specific purposes. This is the reason Cummins (1984) very useful distinction between what he terms Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS), and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) needs to be taken into account when English language modules for epistemological access are designed. He defines the former in terms of “the manifestation of language proficiency in everyday communicative contexts”, and the latter in terms of “the manipulation of language in decontextualised academic situations” (1984:136-137). While BICS continue to play a role in professional life, CALP is increasingly necessary, partly because of socio-political, economic, and educational changes in the country, on the one hand, and demands accompanying the globalisation process, on the other. Universities are faced with the challenge of developing students in both aspects of language proficiency. Of course there is a distinction between BICS and CALP, but a *simultaneous* development of our students in both skills seems to remain crucial to this dissertation.

The first section of the Chapter discusses Grounded Theory (GT) (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and account for its appropriateness as a conceptual framework used to analyse and evaluate data in this study. It further identifies GT as a useful means to organise data in this study, given its purpose of promoting the understanding of the nature of teaching and learning as a process that requires conscious reflection, articulation and development of explanations for practitioners’ own choices. These explanations, together with the insights offered by GT, are used as a means of generating a theoretical account of the impact of practitioners’ worlds and experiences on curriculum design. Rather than theorising teaching and learning from abstract ideas detached from actual day-to-day classroom experiences, I argue in this section that GT allows for theorisation that draws from participants’ experience and perceptions in relation to their institutional practices.

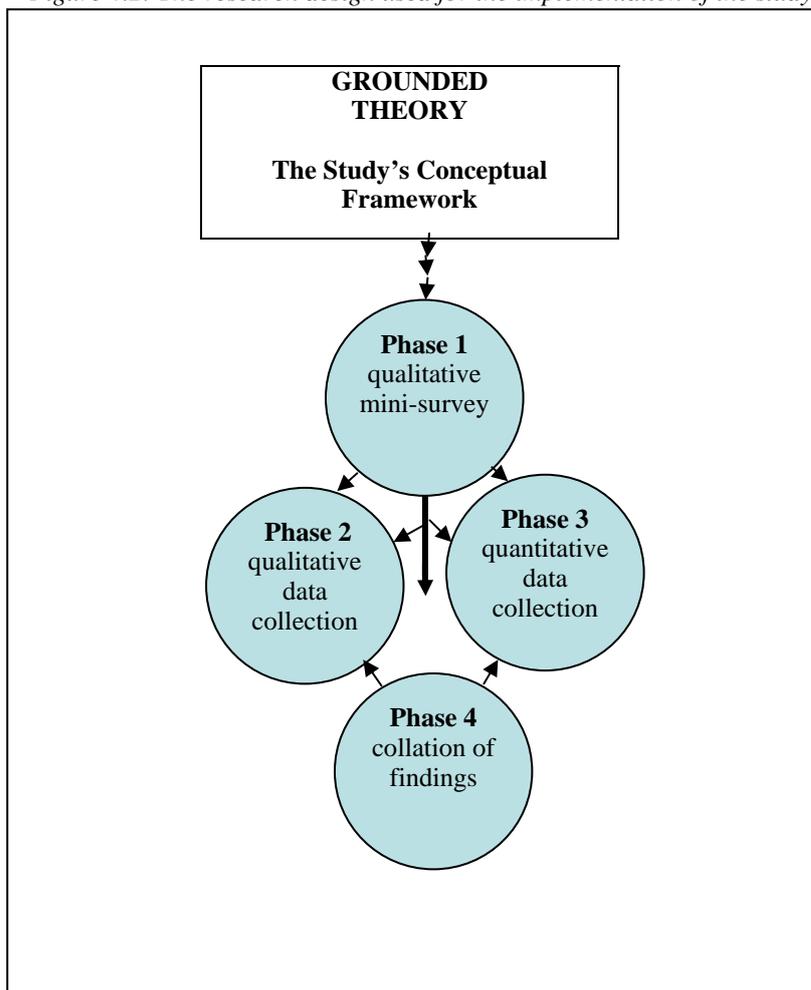
The second section of the Chapter describes the kind of data the study seeks to gather. Two types of data are described: qualitative data and quantitative data. Writing about the use of both types of data in research, Oishi (2003) points out that while qualitative data assist a researcher “to describe and interpret experience”, quantitative data “describe what proportion of a population holds a certain belief” (173). The relevance of both types of data in this study is due to two related reasons: the study relies heavily on participants’ rich description of the rationale for the design and delivery techniques of their modules and there is a need for comparing such descriptions with a number of documents such as contents and outlines of these modules. Insofar as the study relies on spoken data, that is, interviews, the study uses qualitative means to understand the contexts under study, while module contents and outlines are quantitative in the sense that a several number of them provide documentary evidence.

The third section of the Chapter describes a methodological design for a survey of selected English departments and documentary evidence that captures my rationale for identifying specific research sites, the survey mode used, and sample. Given the fact that qualitative survey methodology forms the research approach, this section clarifies the reasons for utilising this methodology at the four sites, three in South Africa and one in Australia (between 2002 and 2005). The structure of this Chapter thus plays an essential role in clarifying methodological choices that affect data analysis and evaluation as presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

The fourth section of the Chapter introduces and discusses the design and rationale for the use of certain research instruments chosen for the study. This section also clarifies how and why the qualitative interview questions were designed, piloted, and used to collect data. This section further outlines and explains the schedule of research activity anticipated from the inception of the study.

Since the inception of the study in 2002 GT has informed decisions about the collection of data, and the sequence of its analysis, and evaluation. In Figure 4.2, the design of the project is rendered graphically and GT is presented as the basic framework of, and central to, the research design and its implementation during the research activity. Each component in the graphic presentation of the research design in my study as presented in Figure 4.2 is discussed in detail under different sections of this Chapter.

Figure 4.2: The research design used for the implementation of the study



Writing about the rationale for the development of Grounded Theory, Goulding (2002) notes:

The development of grounded theory was an attempt to avoid highly abstract sociology and was part of an important growth in qualitative analysis in the 1960s and 1970s. The main thrust of this movement was to bridge the gap between theoretically ‘uninformed’ empirical research and empirically ‘uninformed’ theory by grounding theory in data (41).

Other studies of educators and language such as Prinsloo, (2002) Pithouse (2003), Bayat (2003), and Singh (2003), have also adopted the features of GT in their educational research, thus providing me with examples of how GT has been used³⁷. The positioning of GT at the top of the graphic presentation in Figure 4.2 of the research design indicates that it is an overarching orientation that informs all the phases of the study. As each circle representing each phase has an arrow pointing outward into another circle, decisions in one phase shape decisions in the next. The bold and three-barrelled arrow from GT points downwards to the circle that represents phase 1. This arrow goes further down across phase 1, and develops tributary arrows from this bolded arrow. These tributary arrows point to phases 2 and 3. The main arrow that points towards phase 4 represents the continuation of the three-barrelled arrow that represents GT. This is a graphic representation which indicates that GT impacts and informs choices made in each phase of the research design implementation. The next section presents a detailed discussion of GT and, in the process, clarifies the influence of this theory on the gathering, organisation, analysis and evaluation of data as presented in Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8.

4.1 Grounded Theory: a conceptual framework for the study

This section begins by contextualising the guiding principles of the GT within the context of qualitative research. Towards this aim, the first part discusses symbolic interactionism with respect to the major influence it has in the conceptualisation and thinking of the originators of GT, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967). I then proceed by offering a brief review of the development of GT as first presented in their book, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967). The review does not exhaust the various strands that have since emerged out of GT (Strauss and

³⁷While Pithouse's (2003) study used a personal narrative as a teacher to engage in an inquiry into a memorable curriculum experience in order to interrogate processes and factors involved in curriculum change, Bayat (2003), Singh (2003), and Prinsloo (2002) use learners' writing and qualitative data from language practitioners' perceptions of learners' source of difficulties to suggest ways in which such a gap may be closed. Though these researchers do not claim to be using GT *per se*, their analysis and evaluation of data yields potential opportunities for a re-theorisation of the process of curriculum change on the basis of data generated from the 'ground'.

Corbin, 1990; Glaser, 1978, 1992)³⁸. Instead, the review focuses on the aspects of the theory that are relevant, useful, and central to the purposes of my study. Finally, the section concludes by offering an indication of the way in which GT informed the manner in which data has been conceptualised, organised, analysed, and evaluated in my study. The next section discusses symbolic interactionism, the central theoretical orientation that influenced GT.

4.1.1 *The influence of symbolic interactionism on Grounded Theory*

According to Goulding (2002: 39),

the roots of grounded theory can be traced back to a movement known as symbolic interactionism, the origins of which lie in the work of Charles Cooley (1864 – 1929) and George Herbert Mead (1863 – 1931). The concern of these scholars was to avoid the polarities of psychologism and sociologism. Psychologism [individualism] is a view predicated on the assumption that social behaviour is explicable in genetic terms and by logical or neurological processes. Sociologism is the opposed theory which looks at personal conduct as if it were in some way programmed by societal norms (in Blumer, 1969).

In terms of the thinking that informs symbolic interactionism in understanding and conceptualising human behaviour, “individuals engage in a world which requires reflexive interaction as opposed to environmental response. They are supportive in their actions and will act and react to environmental cues, objects and others; according to the meanings these *hold for them*” (Goulding, 2002:39)³⁹. Symbolic interactionism suggests that individuals interpret their environments and contexts in reflexive ways, and make decisions that seem intelligible and meaningful in terms of their own sense of their contexts.

Within the context of conducting research in terms of qualitative research paradigm, as Cohen *et al* (2000) put it, “interactionists...focus on the world of subjective meanings and the symbols by which they are produced and presented. This means not making any prior assumptions about what is going on in an institution, and taking seriously, indeed giving priority

³⁸ Goulding (2002) notes that “researchers in disciplines...are now obliged to specify whether the Grounded Theory approach they employed is the original 1967 Glaser and Strauss version, the 1990 Strauss and Corbin rendition, or the 1978 and 1992 Glaser interpretation” (47).

³⁹ My emphasis. This is a key phrase in this study because it informs the way in which data is organised, analysed, and evaluated.

to, inmates' own accounts" (25). This implies that symbolic interactionism may also be seen as a research approach to understanding group behaviour partly as a product of contingent contextual factors "expressed through such symbols which include the most powerful of all, that of language" (Goulding, 2000:39).

Language, through the medium of participants' responses in a form of narrative Recounts during the interview process, remains a fundamental source for understanding curriculum developers' behaviour, both in terms of module design and pedagogic choices in the teaching of such modules. Participants' behaviour, as perceived within symbolic interactionism, can be understood as a reflection of the meanings they believe to be imposed by their environments. These values of symbolic interactionism guided Glaser and Strauss (1967) in developing systematic procedures for collecting and analysing qualitative data, and came to be named GT. Goulding (2000) notes that this theory was introduced "to reflect the source of the developed theory which is ultimately grounded in the behaviour, words and actions of those under study" (40).

4.1.2 The relevance of Grounded Theory to this study

As a general research method for behavioural science which, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), "does not aim for the 'truth' but to conceptualise 'what is going on' using qualitative data" (36), GT enables this study to access deep-seated theoretical underpinnings for the decisions made by language practitioners in the universities used as research sites in this study. Through GT the study is thus able to offer "a systematic generation of theory from data that contains both inductive and deductive thinking" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 31). Participants' narrative Recounts in the study, for instance, have the potential to illustrate the extent to which their pedagogic practices (and the justification thereof) were a result of continued induction into the discourses of their disciplines, as well as being a response to their students' needs. This experiential biographical data, furthermore, facilitates deductive engagement on my part as a

researcher. Drawing on my understanding of how language practitioners are inducted (and in return attempt to induct their own students) into their discipline, and their various accounts of how they went about developing students' linguistic and academic literacy competence, I was able to make analytical deductions from the data. In this study, both the inductive and the deductive processes, based on the analysis of different narrative Recounts from different participants, leads to an emergence of concepts across various contexts (four universities), and GT allows an analysis of the relationships among these concepts.

As mentioned earlier, the inductive and deductive processes that characterise GT are not meant to yield 'right answers', but to provide an alternative possible theorisation derived from the ground through engaging with data provided by people directly involved with, and in, the phenomenon. Glaser (1967) points out that "a grounded theory is never right or wrong, it just has more or less fit, relevance, workability and modifiability" (2). The purposes of this study, as outlined in the introduction of this Chapter, warrant GT as a perspective to conceptualise data because these purposes are concerned with discovering respondents' "main concern and how they continually try to resolve it. The [fundamental theme permeating through these questions...] is 'What is going on? and 'What is the main problem of the participants and how are they trying to solve it?'" (Glaser, 1967: 2).

Glaser's observations indicate that GT is appropriate and useful as a means to conceptualise data in my study. This appropriateness lies in the fact that my concern is to understand how language practitioners in four universities attempt to deal with the challenge of students' epistemological access as a result of language-related difficulties. Understanding the nature of a variety of strategies and choices in the design and teaching of linguistic and/or academic literacy modules in these contexts, is thus central to understanding the nature of, and approach to, this challenge. In the context of this study, access to this understanding is ensured by GT's insistence on conceptualising data in ways that require conscious reflection, articulation,

and development of explanations for practitioners own choices. In this way, understanding language practitioners' strategies to resolve the problems arises, not from abstract ideas detached from actual day-to-day classroom experiences, but through accessing participants' own narrative Recounts based on the ground. Writing about the generation of theory through this conceptual framework, Glaser and Strauss (1967) note that:

In a way grounded theory resembles what many researchers do when retrospectively formulating new hypotheses to fit data. However, in grounded theory the researcher does not pretend to have formulated the hypotheses in advance since pre-formed hypotheses are prohibited (1).

The broader purposes of the study, as outlined in the introduction of this Chapter, influenced the manner in which both qualitative and quantitative data are organised. The next section discusses the impact of GT on the way in which data has been organised in this study.

4.2 Data conceptualisation and organisation in this study

As mentioned in the introduction of this Chapter, the research questions in this study were designed to elicit responses that were to indicate ways in which curriculum developers in disciplines within English Studies in four universities (three in South Africa and one in Australia) responded, both in module design and pedagogic approaches, to students' linguistic and academic literacy needs. In order to organise such data, the study's four broad purposes presented in Figure 4.1 of this Chapter are used to construct four categories through which data from each participant is analysed. These categories are set out in terms of the following:

- reasons for the introduction of the language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules;
- the theoretical persuasions that underpinned language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules;
- the conceptual relationship between the language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules and the central concerns with language in the field of English Studies and;
- the theorisation behind pedagogic practice in language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules.

Figure 4.3 illustrates this categorisation.

Figure 4.3: Categories for data organisation, analysis, and evaluation

Data source	Category	Critical question
1. Rhodes University 2. Wits University 3. University of Natal 4. University of Sydney	Reasons for the introduction of the language proficiency and/or academic literacy module.	Why did you introduce the language proficiency and/or academic literacy module?
As above	The theoretical persuasions that underpinned language proficiency and/or academic literacy module.	What are the language learning theories that informed the design of your language proficiency and/or academic literacy module?
As above	The conceptual relationship between the language proficiency and/or academic literacy module and the central concerns of the field of English Studies with language.	To what extent does your language proficiency and/or academic literacy module draw from the central concerns of the field of English Studies with language?
As above	The theorisation behind pedagogic practice in language proficiency and/or academic literacy module.	What are the pedagogic principles that inform teaching practice in your language proficiency and/or academic literacy module?

At first, each critical question was used to code data from each context, and each transcript was coded line by line in order to identify how each participant understood, and conceptualised strategies to resolve the problem. This process was challenging because all the data was in the form of narrative Recounts and had to be unpacked and reorganised in order to construct concepts as they emerged across the four contexts. After this, these concepts had to be compared, merged, recoded, renamed and ultimately modified into clear, manageable and meaningful concepts. Figure 4.3 illustrates that data from each research site was organised and analysed in terms of each critical question. The goal of analysing data this way was not necessarily to verify certain hypotheses based on various conceptual ideas, but to formulate hypotheses by comparing data across different contexts. The purpose of such a comparison was to ascertain the extent to which concepts that emerged out of the qualitative data yielded through the qualitative survey interview questions fitted closely with the incidents they were representing. Writing about the purpose of interviewing in the context of qualitative survey studies, Oishi (2003) notes that it:

is to describe and interpret experience, not to test hypotheses, find statistical differences between groups, or describe what proportion of a population holds a certain belief. Whereas quantitative methods may be used to test whether a hypothesis is true, qualitative methods are often used when there is not enough known by the researcher even to propose a hypothesis (173).

The inclusion of data that draws from my autobiographical narrative of learning English and in English at secondary and tertiary educational levels serves two purposes in the study: firstly, it is designed to indicate the nature of educational disadvantage of most students who received admission into HWUs and, secondly, it represents me as both the researcher and the subject in this study. This type of data is important because it offers possibilities for a comparative analysis of different and/or similar ways in which English Studies within an HBU and three HWUs understood, and responded to, students' linguistic and academic literacy needs. Because these data is derived from an autobiographical narrative, they are organised and analysed both in terms of their generic characteristics as discussed in Chapter 4, but also in terms of the five critical questions which will yield answers that are comparable to data from four universities.

This means that the first strategy used to organise and analyse these data is a presentation of a detailed description of the functional stages or phases through which my autobiographical narrative unfolds in Chapter 6, together with statements of each stage's goal or purpose. In other words, the analysis of my autobiographical narrative begins with an identification and discussion of the generic conventions of narratives, and the extent to which these have been observed in my own study. The second strategy involves the formulation of questions designed to understand how closely concepts that emerge through the narrative fit with incidents and explanations presented through data from four universities. Figure 4.4 illustrates this methodological decision.

Figure 4.4: Categories used to organise and analyse my personal autobiographical narrative.

Stage in a narrative	Critical question
1. Orientation	How does it use language to indicate educational disadvantage?
2. Complication	How does it use language to construct the problem?
3. Evaluation	How does it use language to indicate and construct the concept: 'educational disadvantage'?
4. Resolution	How does language use lead to an emergence of certain concepts?
5. Coda	How does language use draw our attention to our current challenges?

In most personal narratives, the Orientation stage introduces the narrative's setting and characters, the Complication stage forms the backbone or central concerns of the narrative, the Evaluation stage makes explicit how the events in the narrative affected the narrator, the Resolution stage offers a solution to the narrative and, the Coda stage returns the audience to the here-and-now (Martin, 1996). After a critical engagement with data yielded through these strategies, the next stage of the analysis uses the critical questions to engage further with these data. This further analysis is for the purpose of coding the details in the narrative and in identifying concepts that emerged across the four research sites and document analysis of the modules outlines and contents, one of the types of data discussed in the next section.

4.3 Identifying data relevant to the study

The purposes of the study outlined in the introductory section of this Chapter (Figure 4.1) required a type of data with the potential to yield detailed description on how language practitioners experienced the process of curriculum restructuring and delivery to meet students' diverse language needs. Two types of data, with two sources under each type, were identified as a result: first, the qualitative data in the form of experiential autobiography (or narrative Recounts), second, quantitative data in the form of module contents and module outlines. Figure 4.5 is a representation of the type of data and the form in which they were accessed.

Figure 4.5: Types of data and forms

Qualitative data	Quantitative data
experiential autobiography	modules' contents
narrative Recounts	modules' outlines

The experiential autobiographical (Chapter 5) data and narrative Recounts afforded the study with richly textured qualitative data. This data enables the study to access participants' theoretical understandings of what constitutes literacy competencies and how to develop them. Module contents and outlines, on the other hand, presented opportunities for documentary analysis which allowed informed comparison between participants' verbal responses to interview questions and documentary evidence as presented through module material. This was meant to ascertain the claims and, by means other than narrative Recounts, interpretation of issues concerning module design and delivery. Such considerations and choices guarantee the reliability of the study's findings, analysis, and evaluation of data which can in turn provide language practitioners and the research community with the insights needed to examine further the issues involved.

The study concerned itself with two issues in order to access these types of data. The first issue has to do with the ways in which linguistic and academic literacy competence has been conceptualised across four English departments. The second and related issue is concerned with the extent to which such conceptualisation draws from the field of English Studies' central concerns with language as discussed in Chapter 2 (sections 2.1 and 2.2). On the one hand, engagement with these issues has the aim of exploring possible re-theorisation of educational disadvantage as it pertains to linguistic competence and, on the other hand, and also of suggesting an alternative theorisation of linguistic and academic literacy competence based on the analysis and explanation of experiential understandings of language practitioners.

As one form of data, narrative Recounts provide the study with opportunities to engage critically with what may be seen as language practitioners' conceptual understandings of the relationship between their modules and the concerns of the English discipline. This critical engagement, in turn, offers the study an insight into the actual experiences of the individual language practitioners in terms of how they felt and what implicit aspects of their practices worked best for them. Writing about this type of data, Oishi (2003) rightly points out that it assists a researcher with "getting at implicit aspects of experience to make them explicit. [It yields] opinions, facts, and stories, and [assists the researcher to gain] insight into experiences of others from the "inside" (173). Samuel (1998) describes the *inside* as the:

private knowledge acquired through extended engagement in the practical situated contexts of everyday classroom interaction. It involves deep personal understanding about how to deal with the unique particularities of specific contexts, specific learners, classrooms, and schools cultures (159).

This form of knowledge is highly subjective, but useful in qualitative terms because it yields narrative-like, experiential autobiographical data, with a clearer exposition of the nature of the reflexive processes that are involved when engaging with pedagogic practice. Data of this nature expose the artificiality of the separation between theory and practice. Most importantly, such data promote an understanding of the nature of teaching and learning as a developmental process acquired when practitioners see the value of reflecting, articulating and developing explanations of their own choices. This theorisation of the autobiographical data and narrative Recount necessitates a well thought out choice of research sites, research method, and the sample. The next section describes the environmental arrangement within which the survey was done, that is, how I envisaged a survey design, the rationale for choosing research sites, the survey as a method of research, and the sample chosen to participate in the study.

4.4 Research sites, survey methodology, and the sample

The experiences presented in Chapter 5, the narrative Recounts and modules documents gathered at Rhodes University, the former University of Natal, the University of Witwatersrand, and the

University of Sydney, are used as sources of data in this study. This section concerns itself with explaining reasons for choosing the four universities as sites for research, the rationale for using a documentary survey methodology and for choosing specific university language practitioners to form the sample.

In Chapter 1, I describe my intention to investigate ways in which the field of English Studies has responded to the linguistic and/or academic literacy needs of first-year students of all race groups as the motivation for choosing three HWUs in South Africa. Moulder (1991) notes that “it is not only Black students who require [linguistic and/or] academic support programmes. Many white students require the same help. The inability of many white students to graduate, or to graduate in the required time, is due to the sickness of the white education system” (in Jansen, 1991:118)⁴⁰. It is the arrival of Black students at HWUs in the beginning of the early 1980s, as discussed in Chapter 2, which saw the shift from *Bridging the Gap* type modules designed for students who spoke English as a first language, to the introduction of English language and academic literacy programmes for students who speak EAL. The shift suggests that the arrival of non-native speakers of English to a former white-only university automatically turned native speakers of English from being educationally disadvantaged to being educationally advantaged. A 1985 survey by the Human Sciences Research Council indicates that the shift was premature and inappropriate. According to Moulder (1991),

In 1985 the Human Sciences Research Council surveyed a representative sample of 4 520 students who had registered for a three year-degree in 1980. Many of these students were Black; but most of those with an aggregate of more than 78 per cent, the A and B matriculants, were white. An alarming 39% of them failed to graduate in the required time. In 1986 515 white matriculants registered for a three year-degree at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. Three years later, 60% had not graduated. These figures support a suspicion. White university students are no longer an elite (in Jansen, 1991: 119).

⁴⁰ In the late 1970s, for instance, the University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus) ran a module called *Bridging the Gap*. One of the research participants (I deal with this and other data in Chapters 6,7,and 8) notes that this module “was actually aimed at first language speakers because even then they had identified this problem of more than 60% of all entering first-year students taking longer than the minimum period to complete their degrees” (Interview: 2002)

The choice of the three HWUs as research sites, and not HBUs, on the one hand, is not an attempt to undermine historically disadvantaged universities, nor is it an attempt to dismiss the involvement and efforts of those committed to redressing institutional inequalities in historically privileged universities. Indeed in both contexts there were positive aspects in all the programmes designed to meet students' language difficulties. By choosing to research linguistic and/or academic literacy initiatives in these HWUs, I wish to reflect critically upon underlying theoretical inclinations which manifest themselves through the type of modules introduced to meet students' educational needs, across racial lines.

The inclusion of an international university (the University of Sydney), that is, a university that attracts students from different nationalities and which, according to *The Times Higher Education Supplementary: World University Rankings* (2004), occupies position number 40 in the top 200 world university rankings, is an attempt to construct a counterpoint to South Africa's three HWUs⁴¹. O'Learly (2004) notes that "Australians may be surprised to find six of their universities in the top 50 – more than any country except the US and the UK" (2). The University of Sydney interested me particularly because of extensive work by a group of researchers and scholars known as the Sydney School. Their work has made this University one of the leading tertiary institutions in the world in terms of research and programmes that directly address issues of teaching English language for epistemological access and equity in multilingual, multicultural and multinational contexts like South Africa.

Given the fact that the early 1980s occasioned fundamental curriculum innovations that were to be relevant to a multilingual and multicultural student body, South Africa had to come to terms with tertiary education challenges similar to those the University of Sydney had addressed some decades before. Students from Aboriginal (native Australians) communities, Asia (China, Japan, Malaysia), and other parts of the world where English is a foreign language, for example,

⁴¹ Please see Appendix A for the graphic presentation of the top 200 world university rankings.

became a major part of Australia's universities from the early 1950s⁴². Out of 45 966 students enrolled for 2005 in the University of Sydney, for example, 8 770 (22%) students came from non-English speaking countries (2005:1). An institutional context with such a long history of dealing with the majority of students who are non-native speakers of English and require an in-depth grounding in academic discourses, certainly remains one of the relevant points of reference to a context like South Africa, where issues of epistemological access continue to be a formidable challenge to South Africa's 'young' democracy.

Chapters 1 and 2 indicate that English departments in different tertiary institutions, both nationally and internationally, approach students' linguistic and/or academic literacy problems differently. Because of this observation it was important for my study to access qualitative data that was to offer more detailed and informed rationale for these differences. Accordingly, the survey methodology is adopted to source documentary evidence, and its principles are applied to gather this kind of data. As with most survey studies, this analysis is for the purpose of understanding reasons for the choices each institution made in terms of meeting students' language needs. Writing about this methodology, Tull and Albaum (1973) maintain that "survey research is the systematic gathering of information from (a sample of) respondents for the purpose of understanding and/or predicting some aspects of the behaviour of the population of interest" (3). Given the fact that it is qualitative data that the study is mostly interested in, a qualitative survey methodology is applied to collect data. Punch (2003) notes that this type of data is obtainable when "people respond with answers to...open-ended questions in words, and researchers often proceed to analyse such responses without somehow transforming the words into numbers" (2). These observations informed my choice of participants for the sample.

The purposes of the study necessitated that individuals who were to be sources of data be university practitioners with experience in the development of linguistic and/ academic literacy

⁴²The early 1980s is the period that marked relaxations in terms of admission policies in all HWUs in South Africa and it compares with the much earlier history of Australian universities (O'Learly, 2004).

modules, either as module designers, materials writers, tutors, coordinators, or in most or all of these roles. Access to such colleagues was made possible by attending the 2002 Humanities Conference with the theme: *What are the Humanities for?: Valuing and re-evaluating the humanities in South Africa* hosted by the Potchefstroom University for CHE. The paper I gave at this conference made possible lengthy discussions which, in the process, introduced me to colleagues relevant to my study⁴³. Furthermore, during the conference, as colleagues read their papers, I managed to identify participants who appeared to possess experience of the phenomenon I wished to research. Discussions after each presentation, most of which carried over to tea breaks and lunches were productive with regard to my research interests. It was during such occasions that I began to notice the differences between accounts offered by colleagues from different institutions. Yet all addressed the broader purposes of this study. Because at this stage I was simply pre-surveying the field of study, it was possible to identify key differences and similarities across the three contexts (HWUs in South Africa).

The most important questions that stood out for me, and which necessitated a careful choice of participants in the study were: firstly, how to understand each context's response to the same historical imperative facing historically white South African universities; secondly, how to understand each participant's perception of the central concerns of the field of English Studies in their strategic responses; thirdly, which theories of learning informed pedagogic approaches in modules that wished to respond to students' language and academic literacy needs? In the process of making decisions about the choice of sample that was to answer these kinds of questions, I was mindful of Samuel's (1998) observation that "it is only mature professional teachers who can reveal much confidence and yield relevant qualitative data about their pedagogic practices [and module design choices] when encouraged to draw from their experiential knowledge"(6).

⁴³ See Appendix B which shows information about the conference to which I have referred and the abstract of the paper I gave.

This type of experiential knowledge referred to by Eraut, within the context of this study, could only be accessed from research participants who, based on years of experience as university practitioners, possessed informed conceptual and theoretical understandings of linguistic and/or academic literacy competence. After the Humanities conference I corresponded with the Heads of English departments of the colleagues I met, requesting permission to meet with them⁴⁴. While the Head of Department at the University of the Witwatersrand referred me to the module coordinator of a literature studies-specific module, the Head of the English Department at Rhodes University became my source of data because he has a wealth of first-hand experience with the issues investigated in this study. An important aspect of my experience at this time that shifted my research activity beyond English departments (as originally planned) was the suggestions by colleagues I interviewed in these departments. With the exception of colleagues from the universities of Natal and Sydney, colleagues at Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand alerted me to the fact that the English Language and Linguistics Department and the Applied English Language Studies Department, respectively, also ran modules that had historical relationships with the modules offered by English departments.

As discussed in Chapters 6, 7, and 8, in the case of Rhodes University, collaboration was at the level of funding and the design of the module, and at the University of the Witwatersrand the collaboration was at the level of co-teaching and inclusion of material related to English literature in the module. As mentioned in Chapter 1, since my concern is with the broader field of English Studies, and given these historical links between the modules run by English departments and the ones run by applied language disciplines at Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand, it seemed appropriate to add colleagues from the English Language and Linguistics Department and the Applied English Language Studies Department as study participants. Excluding data from these departments would have rendered my study incomplete and limited in its dealings with ways in which colleagues who work in the field of

⁴⁴ Please see Appendix C which shows the letters sent to the universities used as research sites.

English Studies at Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand's attempt to teach English language for epistemological access.

Accessing the participant at the former University of Natal was relatively easier because I worked in the English Department and my supervisor was a coordinator of the language module investigated in this study⁴⁵. I had taught in this same module and, it seemed to me, that interviewing him *per se* was going to yield data of which I was part. I then chose to use the *Coordinating Report* (2001) written by the coordinator. This report, part of which I edited, documents the processes, the rationale, and the history of the module which is investigated within the University of Natal's English Department⁴⁶.

Accessing a colleague at the University of Sydney was a different matter. As explained in detail in Chapter 1 of this study, the University of Sydney is chosen to broaden the study and to construct a counterpoint in relation to research findings within the South African context. I had read some of the work by the Sydney School, particularly in the area of Systemic Functional Linguistics, both as part of my studies and as preparation for lectures in the former University of Natal. As part of the work towards writing a proposal for this research, I enrolled for a module in SFL⁴⁷. During this time I read publications by Christie (1988), Cloran (1989), Eggins (1994), and Hasan (1985). All of these authors (and others in the field) work and/or once worked in the University of Sydney, which makes this university one of the leading tertiary institutions in terms of research and programmes that directly address issues of epistemological access and equity in multilingual, multicultural and multinational contexts from an SFL perspective.

This assumption was affirmed when David Rose gave a paper at the 2004 Kenton Conference hosted by the Faculty of Education of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This

⁴⁵Please see Chapter 1 for the detailed rationale for the choice of research sites.

⁴⁶ This means, contrary to the way in which I refer to data at Rhodes, Witwatersrand, and Sydney universities in Chapters dealing with data, data from the University of Natal are not drawn from an interview, but from the *Coordinating Report* (2001) as a source.

⁴⁷ This enrolment was for non-degree purposes.

conference made it possible for me to meet David Rose, a colleague in Applied Language Studies from the Faculty of Education at the University of Sydney. After listening to his paper on the ways in which the University of Sydney tackled the challenge of enabling all students to gain epistemological access, and following conversations with him during breaks and social activities at the conference, we reached a point where we agreed that he would assist in my study. Because my study is about English departments, I requested that he furnish me with details of a colleague in this Department and responsible for issues investigated in my research. This began a trail of events that saw me sending a letter to the University of Sydney’s Humanities Faculty Dean, Professor Stephen Garton, requesting permission to meet with one of the staff members in the English Department, a scholar in rhetoric I read about as a student, and the module coordinator for a module offered by the English Department called *English 1000: University English* (2005). In 2005 I managed to meet this staff member and administered an interview with her.

In addition to relying on the insight of the thoughts of colleagues whose work has focussed on SFL (through reading their work) about the phenomenon investigated in this dissertation, the number of years as a university practitioner, gender, and qualifications were used as the criteria to select participants. Figure 4.6 outlines the sample and indicates the criteria for their selection.

Figure 4.6: List and the criteria used for the choice of participants⁴⁸

Code name	Years of experience	Gender	Qualifications	University
Bob	35	M	PhD: Literature	Rhodes
Leanne	6	F	Applied Language Studies	Rhodes
Lynn	6	F	MA: Literature	Wits
Martha	6	F	Applied Language Studies	Wits
Teresa	10	F	PhD: English Rhetoric	Sydney
Balfour	7	M	PhD: Language Education	Natal

⁴⁸Balfour (2001) coordinated an NRF sponsored project on English language module design and testing. The technical reports of this project can be accessed at www.ukzn.ac.za/RobertBalfour. Because several technical reports out of this document have been published, Balfour is referred to under his own name in this dissertation.

The reason for selecting the participants that have five years and experience of working as university practitioners is that I wanted to conduct qualitative research and be assured of a rich historical experience with the phenomenon under investigation. Punch (2003) correctly points out that this type of data “excels at "telling the story" from the participant's viewpoint, providing the rich descriptive detail that sets...results into their human context” (23). Once ‘results are set in their human context’, opportunities for a thorough organisation of data (as discussed and explained in section 4.4 above), an informed understanding of the issues involved, a critical engagement with assumptions and possibilities for alternative theorisation of the phenomenon studied, became possible and easier to manage. The next section offers a discussion on the research instruments used to gather and engage with data in this way.

4.5 Research instruments and schedule of research

At the onset of the construction of the research design I set up a mini-survey through which I intended to survey the three South African research sites. This instrument was designed to elicit qualitative data about ways in which the three HWUs attempted to respond to students’ linguistic and/or academic literacy needs. Writing about the survey as a research instrument, Cohen and Manion (1989) note that,

surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of (a) describing the nature of existing conditions, or (b) identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or (c) determining the relationships that exist between specific events. Thus, surveys can vary in their levels of complexity from those which provide simple frequency counts to those which present relational analysis (97).

My survey of selected English departments through discussions with colleagues at conferences and reading of documents such as module outlines and contents, was designed to enable me to “present relational analysis” (to use Cohen and Manion words) in terms of the different strategies each university deployed to address students’ language needs. Other types of survey instruments such as self-completion or postal questionnaires, standardised tests of performance, or attitude scales, were not used in this study because my focus is on qualitative data. I began to access

such data at the 2002 Humanities Conference referred to in the previous section. The conference afforded me an opportunity to administer a qualitative mini-survey. The central tenets in the survey questions were designed to elicit qualitative data about strategies that each institution employed from 1980 to 2002 to assist students who were at risk in terms of their linguistic and/or academic literacy needs. Figure 4.7 presents the preliminary findings of this mini-survey and indicates how each context responded differently to the phenomenon investigated in this study.

Figure 4.7: English Studies mini-survey conducted during the Humanities Conference

Year	Rhodes University	University of Witwatersrand	University of Natal
1980-1995	Voluntary <i>ad hoc</i> language module.	Disciplines-specific, credit-bearing academic literacy modules.	Voluntary <i>ad hoc</i> language module.
1996-2000	Credit-bearing, non-discipline, skills-based university-wide academic literacy module.	Credit bearing non discipline, faculty wide academic literacy module.	Voluntary discipline specific grammar and academic literacy modules.
2001-2002	Voluntary <i>ad hoc</i> language module and credit-bearing, non-discipline specific English Language for Specific Purposes academic literacy module.	Credit bearing, introduction to English literature half-semester module and Applied English Language Studies two semesters module.	Compulsory, credit bearing, non-discipline specific English grammar module.

As an “art and the science of asking questions and/or observing behaviour to obtain information” (Tull and Albaum, 1973: 1), this mini-survey provided me with preliminary, yet crucial baseline data that contributed to the construction of the broader survey design used to conduct the study. It enabled me “to obtain information that is retrospective, concurrent, [and] projective with regard to” (Tull and Albaum, 1973: 2) the ways in which the three HWUs in South Africa attempted, and were planning to continue, to engage with students’ linguistic and/or academic literacy problems.

Given the fact that this is a qualitative study, the research interviews, the next instrument I used, was designed to elicit responses about how the participants experienced the phenomenon studied, “rather than measurement of aspects of experience” (Oishi, 2003:9). This instrument was designed to elicit qualitative, narrative-like data to interpret (the circumstances surrounding)

decisions that influenced the nature of modules aimed at developing students' linguistic and/or academic literacy competencies. According to Wengraf (2001), narrative-style interviews "convey tacit and unconscious assumptions and norms of the individual or of a cultural group. At least in some respects, they are less subject to the individual's conscious control" (115). Wengraf (2001) adds that:

...many of the assumptions and purposes, feelings and knowledge, that have organised and organise a person's or a society's life are difficult to access directly. The less contested and controversial they are, the less an interviewee will be aware of them and able to talk about them. Conversely, to ask for a person's explicit knowledge and approach is to access only material that they themselves experience as consciously controversial and needing articulation and therefore capable of fairly quick articulation in words (115).

In the context of this study, the central question was how responses to linguistic and/or academic literacy needs of students in the selected universities acknowledge the central concerns of the field of English Studies. Answering this broad question necessitated the use of a narrative-style interview technique because it enables a researcher to divide the main problem into appropriate sub-problems through a series of questions, all of which, when answered, lead towards a solution of the main problem (Bailey, 1987). Figure 4.8 illustrates how this was achieved. I constructed three categories: the beginnings; the design; and pedagogy. Interview questions under the first category addressed issues around the historical factors that led to the introduction of a module; the second category elicited responses that were related to theoretical and philosophical underpinnings that informed module design; and the third category encouraged responses that were meant to yield data related to pedagogic choices and the accompanying rationale behind such decisions in relation to the central concerns of the field of English Studies.

Figure 4.8: Categories and examples of questions under each category

Category	Example of a Question
The Beginnings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you give me the background with regard to the English Department's attempts to meeting students' language related needs? • Who decided this particular module was necessary? what were the contextual considerations that made you make the above decision?
The Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think the module you have designed matches university students' needs? • What do you think students' needs are? how do you think the way in which the module is designed will assist your students?
The Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which particular teaching approaches do you apply in this module? • Why are these approaches chosen? • How do you measure the effectiveness of these teaching approaches?

Writing about administering narrative-type interviews, Wengraf (2001) points out that “it is crucial...that you do keep back all your questions, whether you understand what is said or not, whether you see ‘the point’ or not. Your questions, from your system of relevancy, come later” (123). As an application of this caution, the last two categories in Figure 4.8 were used only when responses to questions in the first category left out important details about the actual teaching and learning dynamics.

The piloting stage of my instruments in January 2002 enabled me to have first-hand experience of these observations⁴⁹. This occurred during piloting my interview questions with my supervisor and certain senior colleagues in the English Department at the former University of Natal. At first the only category I had was the ‘Beginnings’ and I thought it would cause the participants to offer narrative Recounts that were going to yield sufficient data. Often I would find myself anxious because certain questions were not providing me with the kind of logical, well-sequenced responses I perceived to be relevant to my purposes. This experience caused me to design two more categories used in cases where questions in the first category failed to yield enough data. Furthermore, in some cases my senior colleagues would ask me to clarify my questions, and it was not uncommon to realise that my verbal explanations of the certain

⁴⁹ Please see the schedule of work on Figure 4.10 of this section.

interview questions to colleagues would be clearer than what was written on the interview schedule. At the end of the piloting stage of the interview questions, my verbal explanations assisted me in the re-writing and clarification of my original questions. I realised that I needed to avoid a situation where I would find myself giving too much opportunity for the participants to respond to questions in such a way that the purpose of a question was lost. In relation to this point, Wengraf (2001) warns that “only when you start feeling *completely* at sea should you break the rule of not interrupting the system of relevancy of the interviewee, and you should do it as unobtrusively as possible” (124).

To observe Wengraf’s (2001) caution above, part of the process of piloting my interview instrument was through initiating interviews with a question designed to elicit a narrative-like response. This allowed me and my ‘trial’ participants (senior colleagues) in the English Department at the former University of Natal to participate jointly in the production of their narrative responses through formulating further elicitation and the respondents by responding to them (Wengraf, 2001). During this phase of the interaction, I alternated between two different types of elicitation that shaped the discourse as narrative, that is, elicitation which drove an event sequence forward (for example, “And what happened then?”), and elicitation which invited evaluations (for example, “And how did that make students and/or you feel?”). These strategies during the piloting stage prepared and assisted me to keep both participants and myself in the interview focussed and aware of the study’s key concerns.

The third type of instrument I used in this study was documentary evidence such as module outlines and contents. Singh’s (2003) research on pupils’ written responses to English literature assignments also made use of documentary evidence as a research instrument. In addition to using poststructuralist perspectives to investigate relations of power that underpin texts, Singh (2003) relies “on insights derived from narrative theory to undertake a critical analysis of three short stories which incorporates a focus on the construction of the narratives of the short stories

and the reader or subject positioning they intend” (iv). Her reference to documentary evidence as one of her research instrument indicates clearly the effectiveness of this type of research tool⁵⁰. Singh’s (2003) analysis of this documentary evidence illustrates clearly the role that documents can play in research. As part of the critical analysis of this documentary evidence, the ‘Character-Methods of Characterisation’ data, Singh (2003) argues that:

the assumption conveyed in this example is that firstly, there is a singular interpretation of the text, which learners must discover. Secondly, seeking the meaning and message intended by the author is in line with the design grammar of a Cultural Heritage approach to literacy practice (47).

In the context of my study, Singh’s research is useful because it explores the possibility of transforming teaching and/or learning practices within an English classroom, with the focus on ways in which literary texts are taught and learned at secondary level. Her use of a Critical Literacy approach in her study of classroom practice using the South African short story ties in with my research interests in this study. As I was investigating ways in which the field of English Studies at tertiary level approaches the teaching of language without neglecting its central concerns, Singh’s use of documentary evidence offers my study insights into the effectiveness of this type of instrument.

The choice of documentary evidence as part of my research instruments also stems from the observation that often interviewees may make generalisations or claims that needed corroboration to documents relevant to their narrative Recounts. Access to module outlines and contents guarantees that such instances, should they occur, are checked in order to ensure the reliability and verifiability of the analysis and evaluation of data. As a strategy to enhance the effectiveness of the use of these documents, I designed a document analysis worksheet which drew largely from the broader purposes of the study. Figure 4.9 illustrates how the questionnaire was designed.

⁵⁰ Singh’s (2003) research explores the possibility of transforming teaching and/or learning practices within English classroom at secondary level by using Critical Literacy approach to classroom practice using the South African short story. The documentary evidence she uses as a research instrument is under the heading *Critical Literacy Practices* used to document learners’ responses to tasks designed to measure their ability to use the tools in critical literacy.

Figure 4.9: Written document analysis worksheet⁵¹

1.	Type of Document:
2.	Date(s) of Document:
3.	Name and Status of the Author of Document:
4.	Position Held:
5.	For which Audience is the Document Written?
6.	Document Information (there are many possible ways to answer A-E) A. List three things the author said that you think are important within the context of the study. B. Why do you think this document was written? Quote from the document. C. What evidence in the document helps you understand the implementation plan of the purpose? D. List aspects of the document that tell you about participants in the implementation of the purpose. E. Identify any question(s) in the document that you feel is (are) left unanswered.

The above worksheet was used in the process of engaging with information and in comparing participants' verbal responses to the actual descriptors in the modules outlines and contents. After the research design was completed, the next step was to set out the schedule of work for the actual implementation of these strategies. In Figure 4.10 the work schedule for this research is presented. It indicates the month, year, and activity undertaken during the research involvement related to this study. All the research activities outlined in this figure were informed by qualitative methods of research.

Figure 4.10: Work schedule and target dates

Month	Year	Activity
1. January-September	2002	Research instruments piloting and sending letters of request to English Departments. Data collection at Natal University' English Department. Attendance of the Humanities Conference and meeting relevant participants.
2. October-December	2002	Data collection: Rhodes and Wits Universities.
3. January- December	2003	Collating of data from three HWUs: Rhodes, Wits, and Natal.
4. January to June	2004	Intensive interrogation and reflection on personal educational experiences from secondary to tertiary level.
5. July	2004	Synthesis of personal educational experiences document which culminates into a Kenton Conference Presentation. Meeting Dr David Rose.
6. August to December	2004	Comparison between narrative Recounts and data collected at three HWUs.
7. January to June	2005	Analysis of the already available data and identification of key issues.
8. July to September	2005	Data collection at the University of Sydney, Australia.
9. October to December	2005	Collating of data from the University of Sydney and analysis of it.
10. January to June	2006	Research report writing and dissertation submission.

⁵¹ Adapted from the Document Analysis Worksheet designed and developed by the Education Staff, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC, 20408. Please see Appendix D for the original document.

The interruptions in the above schedule of activity were due to changes of supervisors and faculties as I moved from the Human Sciences Faculty to the Faculty of Education in 2004, and the resultant change in registration of my degree in June 2004. These many changes had the effect of disruption on my dissertation development so that even though the official registration for this PhD was June 2001, I began to work thoroughly only in 2002. This is an issue to be explored and reflected upon in a different context, not in this study.

Reflections

This Chapter begins by explaining the rationale for the appropriateness of Grounded Theory as a conceptual framework used to analyse and evaluate data in this study. I argue that Grounded Theory is a useful approach to the conceptualisation of data, given the broader purpose of the study, that is, to promote understanding of the nature of teaching and learning as a process that requires conscious reflection, articulation and development of explanations for practitioners own choices. The Chapter further offers an explanation of why the narrative Recounts, experiential autobiographical data, and documentary evidence were necessary to understand the issues substantially. It is clear from the explanation that the organisation of data in this study is largely a result of observing the principles of Grounded Theory.

The Chapter then describes the type and nature of data relevant to the investigation of the ways in which curriculum developers in English Studies responded to students' educational needs. It describes two types of data, first, qualitative data and, secondly, quantitative data. An explanation for the relevance of both types of data is offered, the main reason being that there is a need for comparing verbal descriptions with documentary evidence in order to ascertain, by means other than narrative Recounts, the interpretation of issues concerning module design and delivery. The Chapter further describes how, although conceived of as a broad survey of issues, research sites, the survey mode, and sample were selected to bring a richly textured account of practitioners' worlds and thinking in relation to issues of English literature and language

development in South Africa and another multilingual context (Australia). This description of methodology and instruments clarifies how and why the qualitative interview questions were designed, piloted, and utilised to collect data. It further supports the need for Grounded Theory as a means of producing data to reflect on the theoretical implications of the questions posed in this dissertation.

Chapter 5 introduces the first type of data in this study and, in the process, introduces me as both a subject and the researcher in this study. This is achieved through an autobiographical narrative that reflects on my experiences of learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) and in English, first during my secondary education under the system of Bantu Education, and secondly as a teacher-trainee majoring in English at Historically Black University (HBU). By means of this narrative data, the study investigates and engages critically with reasons for my educational success regardless of my appalling educational setbacks when entering an HBU. These data and the accompanying critical engagement offer significant clues for the process of understanding data collected from three South African Historically White Universities (HWUs) and one multilingual, multicultural and multinational, internationally recognised University in Australia. The data yielded by the experiences narrated in this Chapter, furthermore, served as necessary motivation to investigate ways in which pedagogic approaches in English Studies can raise students' awareness of the importance of understanding the relationship between grammatical choices and the purpose in the construction of texts (both spoken and written).

CHAPTER 5

Learning English: The Autobiography of a Pupil Becoming a University Student

Introduction

To use Hartshorne's (1992) introductory remarks in his *Crisis and Challenge: Black Education 1910 – 1990*, "I do think that anyone writing on South African issues at present should give some idea of the influences and experiences that have shaped his views and beliefs about humankind and society" (1). This is one of the two purposes I intend to accomplish in this Chapter. The second purpose is to indicate explicitly how my educational experiences of learning English and *in* English informed my contributions to debates about meeting the linguistic and academic literacy needs of students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds. I hope to achieve these two purposes by constructing my position as both the researcher and a subject in the investigation of the extent to which English Studies in tertiary education assists students (across linguistic lines) to acquire both knowledge *of*, and *about* English language, and knowledge *of*, and *about* academic discourses relevant to the English discipline.

The use of my personal educational experiences as one of the data sources in this study is an attempt to indicate the extent to which, as Hartshorne (1992) asserts: "each of us is shaped by all the influences exerted upon us, by the way in which we have responded to them, and by what we as individuals decided to do as a result" (1).⁵² In addition to informing the research questions and becoming one of the data sources in this study, my educational experiences of being taught in English and learning EAL from the beginning of secondary education (Grade 8) to the final year (fourth year) of my first degree (Bachelor of Pedagogics) in an HBU, form the basis for my broader research interests, as well as my theoretical and philosophical inclinations regarding debates about the teaching and learning of English and the development of academic literacy

⁵² My personal experiences narrated in this Chapter serve two purposes in this study: first, they resonate with the research questions in this study and, secondly, they serve as a comparison between an HBU and HWU's attempts to meet the linguistic and literacy needs of students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds in South Africa. This makes me both the researcher and a subject in this study.

skills. In his *Knowledge and Power in the Classroom: Rethinking Educational Practice and Scholarship*, Jansen (1991) refers to his choice of an autobiographical narrative as an attempt “to demonstrate the power of an alternative research methodology” (189). As a rationale for using autobiographic data, he points out that:

The assumption is that only by unpacking the rich and variegated detail of educational practice (ritual, power, contestation, constraint, etc.) in apartheid’s classrooms will we be able to promote the radical change of the same educational system in a post-apartheid context (Jansen, 1991:189).

My inclination towards relying on lived personal classroom experiences as motivation for the study is a result of the observation that debates about the transformation of the education system (from primary, secondary, and tertiary levels) in South Africa often tend to concentrate on the establishment of broad principles to guide the restructuring of institutional policies regarding access, affirmative action, and democratisation. While the addressing of these issues may be regarded as laudable in the attempt to democratise learning institutions, a micro-approach that relates to the transformation of the quality of the teaching and learning processes within them, is also required. Educational institutions’ central premise for their existence is supposed to be (research-led) teaching and learning and, because of this, as Watson (1987) correctly puts it:

...teachers need to develop a clear philosophy of...teaching which will give support and direction to their day-to-day classroom practice. As James Briton has pointed out such a rationale ‘provides us with a running code of operational principles, a way of monitoring our own practice, a way of effectively influencing other people and defending our own position’ (2).

To suggest a shift of focus from broad principles guiding the restructuring of institutional policies regarding access, affirmative action and democratisation, to a micro-approach that relates to transformation of the quality of teaching and learning processes is, however, not an attempt to undermine the involvement of those committed to redressing institutional inequalities. In the context of this study, the shift is meant to direct attention to ways in which the transformation process could be tackled on a micro-level in terms of the quality of curriculum offered to first-year students who have linguistic and academic literacy needs. Coming to terms with the quality of a curriculum with an intention to critique, rethink, and transform it, among

other things, can be made possible by gaining access to students' classroom experiences or narratives. It is on the basis of access to my 'story' and the 'stories' of colleagues who have had to be involved in the design and teaching of linguistic and/or academic literacy entrance level modules, that this study investigates ways that will raise students' awareness of the relationship between grammatical choices and the purposes for which texts are constructed.

5.1 A secondary school literate life history of learning English as an Additional Language

Most learners from Black township schools received very poor exposure to English in environments uncondusive to effective learning. The South African history of discrimination, the impact of which we are still witnessing, accounts for most literacy setbacks that universities are confronted with today and the unavailability and/or limited educational resources in Black township schools⁵³. In 2003 the Gauteng Province Education Ministry expressed its concerns about a massive immigration of learners from most South Western Township (SOWETO) schools to former whites-only schools, a consequence of which, according to South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) president, is the fact that most township schools are still appallingly under-resourced (SABC 1 News: 13/02/2003). I was not immune from this plight.

I started learning English effectively at the age of fourteen in 1987 when I was in Grade 8. Until then, I was an absolutely monolingual individual which, even though my mother-tongue was the medium of instruction (by default), did more harm than good. Contrary to code-switching, which facilitates further learning for bilingual learners (Baker *et al*, 2001), the use of the mother-tongue in teaching became nothing more than the translation of English texts, and this confused us even further during self-study and when we had to write tests and exams, all of which were set in English. Writing about the teaching and learning process that occurs in former DET schools, Samuel (1995) notes that:

⁵³ Most Black township schools still suffer from the scarcity of educational resources such as school-owned television sets and tape recorders; the absence or poor quality of school and community libraries, and home environments that are not conducive to learning (Hart, 1995).

The supposed medium of instruction in such schools is English. In reality the classroom is characterised by a mixture of both Zulu and English. Such a linguistic environment may be said to promote the experimentation with the language acquisition process. However, with the emphasis on producing the accurate second language form that dominates within this environment, the classroom usually resorts to a process of grammar translation (17).

During my junior secondary education (Grade eight to ten) teachers seemed to be obsessed with completing the English syllabus. Although the majority of the pupils could not read English, teachers who dealt with teaching fictional texts set a very rapid pace as if they were teaching first language speakers of English. In Grade 8, dictionary usage became necessary. During reading lessons, without any sign of a smile, our teacher would give us lists of seven to ten words and instruct us to find their meanings by ourselves. Instead of assisting us with her knowledge of how to use a dictionary so that our literacy in English would go beyond mere basic literacy skills to advanced knowledge and understanding of the language, she would make discouraging comments such as: "I am not your walking dictionary". Writing about the teaching of English in Black South African schools after the introduction of Bantu Education, Balfour (2000) correctly points out that, "...English teaching for Black South Africans also began to change, becoming vocationally orientated to prepare pupils for semi-skilled forms of labour that did not require anything more than basic literacy and communicative competence" (46).

Because my teacher's priority was to finish the syllabus, she never considered our general or individual difficulties. Often when we wanted to ask questions her facial appearance would deter us. We would remain, as a consequence, with unresolved questions about texts we were reading. When it came to tests and/or exams on such texts, we would simply look for passages with words or phrases that appeared in the questions, and rewrite, either the whole paragraph or sentence, written in the set works. The most troubling factor was that we would pass such tests and/or exams, knowing very well that we were copying and not coping.

My Grade 9 and 10 English teacher, who would always carry a stick when teaching, never smiled during his lessons. His teaching approach was an epitome of what Balfour (2000)

refers to as “the transmission mode of teaching with its emphasis on the authority of the teacher and passivity of learners” (48). Both in my Grade 9 (in 1988) and Grade 10 (in 1989) he was the only person who carried copies of the novels prescribed for each Grade. Because of this, during reading lessons he would walk around our desks reading a novel, and checking if any of us was talking⁵⁴. We thus had no choice but to remain absolutely silent. The silence was so obstructive to learning that even if there were areas we did not understand as he read to us, it was almost impossible to raise a hand and ask him to repeat or clarify something. On one occasion during our so-called ‘Orals period’ he gave me five lashes because of my “wrong pronunciation” of the word ‘apple’.

Grammar teaching involved exercises drawn from his textbook as no pupil carried a copy. After the lesson he would write gap-filling exercises on the board and we had to copy in our exercise books, and then furnish the missing words correctly. These were based on such areas as articles, tenses, and parts of speech. Most of us would receive high marks in such activities, but this never meant we understood how and when to use some of these language structures within the context of extended texts, not to speak of understanding their functions within a specific discourse. Even when we had the so called ‘orals’, the teacher simply focussed on how long our presentations were and whether we were confident or not. The emphasis was thus more on communicative competence than on evidence of conscious understanding and reflection on the words we chose during our oral presentations. This confirms Balfour’s (2000) assertion about Black schooling during the apartheid era that “teachers came to focus more on communicative than on analytical competencies for second language speakers of English” (47). Those of us who received less than 50% in written and/or oral exercises would receive corporal punishment. We all ‘ended-up’ concentrating on English more than other subjects, not because it was more interesting, but because it was frightening to be in the English class.

⁵⁴The apartheid government did not provide resources in the form of textbooks or stationery to Black schools, although this was the case in white schools. For detailed reading, see Balfour (2000).

Grade 11 (in 1990) was the worst for me. Our teacher, then a student at one of the teacher training colleges, ‘taught’ us essay writing and only one novel over the whole year. She missed most of her lessons as she spent most of her time either in the staff room or on ‘sick leave’. Mostly other teachers who taught other subjects, especially the Biology teacher, used her lessons. On some days, if we were fortunate, she would spend one period reading to us different examples of what she referred to as ‘good essays’. She would then ask one of the females (it was never a male) pupils to write examples of such ‘good essays’ on the board for the whole class to copy. During exams she would set questions that included topics that formed part of examples of ‘good essays’ read to us and copied by us from the board in class. In his research report entitled *What students have to tell us about writing?*, Hart (1995) writes about key aspects of a three-year study in which he wanted to understand factors which have impacted on, and shaped learners’ knowledge and perceptions of, writing. Referring to one of his respondents in the study, Hart (1995) notes that:

Thulani spends much of his school day copying notes from textbooks. There is a strong reliance on a teacher's judgement. When asked why teachers wrote notes, Thulani stated that 'the book sometimes mentioned the things that are not very much important. The teacher will give the notes because he knows what the test needs' (84).

Hart’s study reveals exactly what I experienced in 1990. This implies that between the 1980s (when I started my secondary education) and 1995, things had not altered as my Grade 12 was worse than Grade 11. Our teacher told us that she would not waste her time teaching us grammar because we started it as early as Grade 5. She meant it. We did two literary texts with her: one play and one novel over the whole year. Like my teachers in the senior primary phase, this teacher was always translating these texts into isiZulu language so that (she believed) we would understand them. This is in line with Menck's (1994) assertion that “where learners have a common mother-tongue, which the teacher also speaks, that mother- tongue can be used in some instances” (124). These translations, however, negatively affected our development in English vocabulary as, quite often, we would learn and know the story through the teacher’s isiZulu

narration with little attempt to challenge us to access or talk about texts through the medium of English⁵⁵.

A few of us as Grade 12 learners joined together and formed study groups in which we agreed that we would have to use English. Such discussions led to effective peer tutoring which occurred outside of classroom time. Writing about peer-tutoring, Kwamangamalu and Varasamy (1999) note, “pupils act as surrogate teachers, with the more proficient ones tutoring their less proficient...classmates” (61).

I want to point out, however, that even though my secondary school educational experiences may be seen as distant from what most Black students are going through in 2006, Balfour (2000), Mgqwashu (1999) and Hart (1995)’s studies referred to in my personal autobiographical narrative indicate otherwise. Indeed my last year of secondary schooling was 1993, but these studies reveal that much of Black schooling remains largely unchanged. The post-1994 period (with notions of national equality and equal access to schools that were catering for specific race groups), however, saw many Black learners migrating from former DET schools to the former Model C schools. It is these schools, private schools, and those in former House of Delegates meant for Indians and Coloureds that have relevant educational facilities with better qualified teachers, most of whom have university degrees (see HSRC Report, 1981 and DET Annual Report 1988, Table 6:355). Perhaps these more fortunate Black learners may be experiencing a different set of circumstances from my own, but they remain a minority. For a learner whose parents cannot afford fees in these other schools, his or her secondary education experiences are unlikely to be radically different from my own.

A number of students enrolled in the modules I currently teach in the Bachelor of Education programme, particularly those who matriculated in former DET schools, still

⁵⁵ The negative effects were usually manifested when we had to write tests and exams in English. We often lacked the relevant vocabulary to produce lengthy written responses.

demonstrate exactly the same kinds of linguistic and academic literacy difficulties referred to in my autobiography. Both my past experiences and what I witness in these students indicates the extent to which Bantu Education not only has a devastating effect on the overall level of education of students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds, but also deprives most of them of the opportunities to acquire good literacy skills in English. What is also apparent is the degree to which teachers in Black schools were (and are) under-trained. Implicit in the way they taught is a lack of confidence and/or motivation. It is no surprise, therefore, that a rush to finish a syllabus or being harsh on pupils were convenient strategies to deal with these insecurities and inadequacies.

5.2 A tertiary education literate life history of learning English

In the midst of all the experiences I have recounted regarding my learning of English during secondary education, I had a neighbour who was an English teacher in the Catholic, girls-only high school called Albini. This teacher once received an award to attend a three months course at Cambridge University. I would say I received an informal and private form of tuition from her. In particular, I would get assistance from her when I had Afrikaans composition exercises. Because she knew she was not as good in Afrikaans as she was in English, she would help me write the composition, first in English, and then encouraged me to use my English and Afrikaans dictionary to translate it into Afrikaans. While she was helping me with an Afrikaans composition, I was simultaneously developing my English vocabulary.

I remember one occasion when I had to write a composition on the topic *Misdaad betaal nie* (*Crime does not pay*). She encouraged me first to write the composition in isiZulu, translate the same composition into English, then finally into Afrikaans. I was inspired by her strategies so much that I developed an interest in becoming an English teacher as well, and wished that all my English teachers were like her. A teaching career, accordingly, became my dream. Quite soon I started to enjoy teaching others strategies that helped me receive better marks in language

subjects drawing from what I learnt from my private tutor. At the former University of Durban Westville (UDW) I then enrolled for a Bachelor of Pedagogics (BPaed) degree, with English, Education, and Geography as my majors.

I can recall the first meeting in English in 1994⁵⁶. It was interesting, yet scary at some points: "...you are making a contract to learn. Be sure that you understand it means sleepless nights and, in case you realise during the course of the year that you are not coping, feel free to move out. We have had students, especially Black students, de-registering from the module in the past". This was an address from one of the lecturers in the Department, probably the then first level coordinator⁵⁷. There was some truth in what he said. After three weeks of lectures in *Not Either an Experimental Doll* (1987), a collection of letters reflecting the life experiences of three women in South Africa by Lily Moya, we wrote a test. The 32% I received in that test brought a vivid memory of the address we had during our first business meeting. This disheartening result was compounded by the comment of one of my lecturers on my performance in this test. She said: "Mmmmmmm! You performed badly. Maybe you must consider registering for isiZulu..." It seemed to be a fulfilment of the 'prophecy' declared at our first business meeting. Then I thought: "Should I go on with the module? Should I de-register? What about my future goals because I want to be an English teacher? English is an official language and, if I master it, people like me will benefit". These were the questions and resolutions that occupied my mind such that I decided to persist and find my way through the Department. I made a commitment that whatever it took, I would make my mark in the world. Getting into the university was a struggle. That I was already registered was enough motivation for me to find my way through.

⁵⁶ Please see Appendix E to read the 1994 English 1 prescribed reading material at the former University of Durban-Westville.

⁵⁷ My use of the word "probably" is due to the fact that this was the first and the last time I met this staff member. At some stage I even thought he was brought in just so that he can address (or scare?) first year students, and Black students in particular.

Eventually I introduced myself to Mr Mngadi, one of the lecturers in the English Department who was himself a product of Bantu Education. Introducing myself to him in particular and not to a white academic, however, should not be read as an indication of my reservations and/or unease with the non-Black staff members of the then English Department. There were other Black academics with the same background as the staff member I approached, and there were other white academics that I could easily have approached at the time that were as, if not more, approachable than the Black academic I approached. What was special about him was that, unlike most lecturers in general (at universities), his lecturing style involved *teaching us* as opposed to *lecturing to us*. In other words, his pedagogic approach was not used to merely impart knowledge; it was enabling us to learn. Mr. Mngadi spent more time during his lectures explaining Literary Theory concepts. He always illustrated the theory through several concrete examples from set works. This was accompanied by occasions where we would demonstrate our understanding by providing our own illustrations to answers we gave during his answer-and-question stages of his lectures. This is precisely the reason why Mr. Mngadi's lecturing style appealed to many of the students, both Black and White.

Mr Mngadi had been once a schoolteacher in township secondary schools, but later decided to improve his qualifications. In many respects, as a prospective teacher at the time, I saw him as a role model, both in his capacity as a former secondary school teacher (something I wanted to become) and then a (Black) lecturer who clearly succeeded against all odds. Part of the reason students in general got along with him was that whenever we attempted to respond to his questions during lectures he would always try to identify the value in what a student attempted to say as a response to his questions. This gave me confidence to approach him in his personal capacity, both as a lecturer and a Black person. Seeing that I got along better and easier with him, I showed him my first test essay (in which I received 32%). It is only at this time that I understood where I went wrong. From that moment on I knew whom to turn to when I could not make sense of certain sections of the course. He made it clear to me that in case I needed help in

any other sections of the module, his door was open. This was the green light for me. I would voluntarily go through old examination papers and choose questions on which to write essays. I would then submit these to him for assessment. He enjoyed reading and assessing my essays even though I was not in his tutorial group. In some occasions I would sit in his tutorials, an arrangement which he welcomed. Every moment I spent with him was a step forward as far as coping with English Studies was concerned, not only on the aspects of the module that were a challenge to me, but on the discipline in general. The most fascinating moments with him were when I read his comments on my essays.

His comments on my essays often drew my attention to the purpose of my writing and the kind of grammatical choices I needed to deploy in order to achieve such a purpose. After marking the essays I used to write as responses to previous years' examination papers, Mr Mngadi would first ask me what I understood to be the requirements of a topic. Much of the initial stages of our meetings during these occasions were usually around the identification of key words in the questions to which my essay had responded. During such moments that he would assist me to identify the purpose of the writing and which grammatical choices, as well as vocabulary and literary theorists, were appropriate for my purposes. It is only later that he would take me through the essay, with his detailed comments based on what we discussed at the initial stages of our meetings. Due to the fact that he spent half of our meetings on the kind of discourses that were to be in accordance with the purposes of the writing, my reading of his comments, especially on essays in Literary Theory, offered the greatest fascination. Literary Theory is the aspect of the Discipline that gave me access to texts and the ability to talk and write about them.

At the former UDW, Literary Theory was compulsory for every student, from English 1 to post-graduate level. At English 1 and 2 level it was not presented as a series of competing 'approaches', each with its theoretical positions and commitments. Rather, we were made to

discuss shared questions and claims by different schools of thought, and important debates that do not necessarily oppose one 'school' to another, but that mark salient divisions within movements. At English 3 and Honours level we began to treat Literary Theory as a set of competing approaches to interpretation, yet with a focus on its broad challenge to common-sense expectations of how meaning is created and human identities take shape. In a nutshell, Literary Theory helped me to think more about thinking, to engage "in an enquiry into the categories we use in making sense of things, in literature and in other discursive practices" (Culler, 1997:15). Through all these engagements, it offered me a meta-language through which I managed to enter texts in ways that helped me transcend my limitations in English language in particular, and my educational background in general. In retrospect, I can understand why I managed to succeed, even though my English expression was not up to an acceptable standard. Quite often though, my lecturers did not comment on my grammatical competence. Their focus was more on content than expression.

What surprised me, however, was that when I did not pass outright, but was allowed to sit for a supplementary examination for English 1, the explanation was that my "expression let me down". I have never been so motivated in my life as I was when I had to prepare for that supplementary exam, and, as I expected, I passed the supplementary examination in 1995. Out of 169 students who were writing the supplementary examination, only 16 students passed. During preparation I worked mostly on essay writing, trying to improve my expression. Dictionary usage made things much easier for me as there were no English language module tutors to turn to when I was preparing.

Given the fact that English was my major subject, as part of my training as a prospective teacher I enrolled for a module in which the lecturing approaches complemented those used by Mr Mngadi. This module for which I received a distinction was called English Usage and it was related closely to English Studies. Its focus was on raising our awareness of the way in which

genre, purpose, and the context of a text together determine one's grammatical choices when constructing a text (both spoken and written). One of the teaching strategies in this module was that we would be allowed to suggest topics that we thought would allow us to experiment freely with ideas discussed in our lectures. Such topics had to be related to any social, educational, political, cultural, or economic aspects of our society. Of course, the lecturer did give us specific topics at times, but the philosophy behind the module was that students were the 'main players'.

I remember at one occasion when I chose a song by Peter Tosh: "*Can't Blame the Youth*"⁵⁸. I had to sing the song in class, explain the lyrics, and write a commentary on the song, pointing out its relevance to us as South Africans. In writing the commentary I explained that it offers a criticism of the school History curriculum, and why it is worth listening to. In some of the lines of the song, for instance, Tosh (1973) asserts that,

You teach the youth about Christopher Columbus, and you say he was a very great man. You teach the youth about Marco Pollo, and you say he was a great man, you teach the youth about pirate Hopkins, and you say he was a very great man. So you can't blame the youth when they do wrong, you can't fool the youth. You can't blame the youth not at all (Line 8).

Later I was required to submit my responses in writing and the tutor asked me questions regarding the language choices I made and provided me with suggestions on grammatical uses that, according to him, were going to achieve the impact I desired. This was the way in which my tutors attended to grammatical expression within communicative and functional contexts. This strategy is the same as the one used by Mr Mngadi in terms of written essays in literary studies and is the aspect of a pedagogic approach to language teaching that this study wishes to investigate in later chapters. Given the way in which this approach enabled me to transcend my own linguistic and academic literacy difficulties to the extent that I achieved a distinction in this course, it is worth investigating its effectiveness within the context of a country where English is the medium of instruction in almost all educational institutions (at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels) in the country. Such an investigation needs to examine the role played by a

⁵⁸Please see Appendix F to read the whole song.

pedagogical approach that encourages explicit engagement with learning tasks that required me to use language within functional, purposeful contexts.

In the context of my experience, Literary Theory in the English Department became a meta-language through which I could enter literary works in order to be able to speak and write about them. English Usage challenged me to learn to reflect consciously on, and think critically about, my language choices within the context of talking and writing about various socio-cultural, political and educational texts that have a bearing on our everyday lives. What I learnt as a result of this pedagogical approach during my undergraduate study at university, in other words, is that universities have a challenge to equip students with language skills that will make them understand that language is not simply a collection of distinct grammatical structures, but a vehicle through which we learn to express our ideas in ways that take into account the context and the purpose of the communication.

Conclusion

This Chapter offers a narrative Recount of the reasons and experiences that may be said to have led to my educational success despite the appalling educational disadvantage as a result of the Bantu Education system, the legacy of which continues to disadvantage students even in 2006. The Chapter further indicates, most importantly, the extent to which pedagogic approaches in English Studies in an HBU raised my awareness and brought about an understanding of the relationship between grammatical choices and the purpose in the construction of texts (both spoken and written). Such insights may be said to have played a critical role to my epistemological access in the university.

Chapter 6 presents data from four research sites, and assesses and evaluates participants' understandings of the strategies deployed by English departments to address linguistic and/or literacy challenges of students from Bantu Education backgrounds as narrated in Chapter 6.

Balfour from the University of Natal, Bob from Rhodes University, Lynn from Witwatersrand University, and Teresa from the University of Sydney, are the participants whose responses to narrative-style interviews (discussed in Chapter 4) are assessed and evaluated. Data presented through Chapter 5 which constructs me as both a learner within a school environment and a student at university, is integrated with data from these research sites. In chapters to follow, these data are assessed and evaluated with regard to strategies through which English literature departments have attempted to meet students' linguistic and/or academic literacy needs.

CHAPTER 6

English Literacy Practices and Practitioners' Worlds: South Africa

Introduction

The data presented through an autobiographical narrative in Chapter 5 seem to suggest that curriculum choices at the university where I studied for a BPaed degree may be said to have inculcated cognitive skills that enabled me, a student from an 'inferior' educational background, to become successful⁵⁹. Reflecting on these experiences enables the reader to understand the reasons for my educational success regardless of the educational challenges. These data, furthermore, allow useful critical engagement with, and comparison between, my experiences within one English Department and ways in which three other English departments in South Africa understood and dealt with the linguistic and/or academic literacy needs of students with educational backgrounds similar to my own. This critical engagement and comparison offers significant insights into data collected from three South African HWUs discussed in this Chapter.

Chapter 6 presents an evaluative assessment of qualitative data (that is narrative interviews) gathered at three English departments in HWUs in South Africa. Data from the English Language and Linguistics Department and Applied English Language Studies Department of Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand, respectively, and from the international context (the University of Sydney), are not discussed in this Chapter. The focus in this case is largely on the South African context, and is designed to present the reader with a detailed comparison across three English departments within South Africa. These data create useful comparisons and contrasts across different local research sites and are integrated with data presented in Chapter 5 which, although representative of a particular South African experience, yield insights in contrast to experiences at three other South African universities. When the study deals with the relationship between module design and the concerns of the field of English

⁵⁹ This is suggested by the fact that I graduated with distinctions in *English Usage* and *English Special Methods* at the end of my first (BPaed) degree from the University of Durban-Westville in 1997.

Studies across all four research sites in chapters 7 and 8, data from these departments and the University of Sydney's English Department are integrated with data from South African universities. In Chapter 6 the underlying theme which informs my engagement with the data, as the title suggests, is literacy practices and practitioners' worlds, and the extent to which such understandings are a product of the institutional demands on the one hand, and their own sense of their individual contexts, on the other. This theme is explored in two sub-themes in this Chapter, namely:

- language practitioners' understanding(s) of the reasons for the introduction of the language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules and;
- language practitioners' perceived theoretical persuasions that underpinned literacy practices in the language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules.

These sub-themes in this Chapter facilitate critical engagement with, and an evaluative assessment of, data yielded, first, by my autobiographical narrative and, second, by the study's participants. Given the fact that this study uses Grounded Theory to conceptualise data, the goal of engaging with participants' responses to interview questions in this way is not necessarily to verify certain already formulated hypotheses based on various conceptual ideas, but to formulate hypotheses derived from evidence 'from the ground'.

The Chapter comprises an evaluative assessment, first of Narrative-style interviews with one lecturer at Rhodes University, one lecturer from the University of the Witwatersrand and, secondly, the *NRF Coordinating Report* authored by Balfour (2001) about the University of Natal's *An Integrated English Language Course*.⁶⁰ All these data enabled the study to present an evaluative assessment of English departments' attempts to facilitate epistemological access for first year-students. Through this evaluative assessment of data, the study identifies similarities

⁶⁰The reason I refer to two interviews, and not three within the context of English departments in three HWUs in South Africa, is that data from the University of Natal is drawn from the *Coordinating Report* (2001) concerning an English language development project authored by Balfour. The *Coordinating Report* (2001) documents the activities that were part of the English Language Research Unit (ELRU), a group of colleagues at the University of Natal who were part of the establishment of the National Research Foundation research project whose brief was to investigate students' language needs across the university, all of which was to lead to the development of an English testing system.

and differences across the three research sites, and uses Grounded Theory to understand how language practitioners' different construals of their worlds gives rise to hypotheses about the contexts under investigation.⁶¹ Grounded Theory insists that a researcher must develop hypotheses based on the nature of data, rather than proceeding to test already formulated hypotheses. This issue is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

The first section of this Chapter deals with data from all the three research sites in the light of the two sub-themes: language practitioners' understanding(s) of the reasons for the introduction of linguistic and/or academic literacy modules. The second section discusses data according to the second sub-theme, namely: language practitioners' perceived theoretical persuasions that underpinned their departments' literacy practices in linguistic and/or academic literacy modules. The evaluative assessment of data in this Chapter is integrated with data from Chapter 5. This evaluative assessment reveals that language practitioners seem to hold different perspectives about their roles with regard to the issue of integrating language and different disciplinary content as part of strategies to develop students' linguistic and/or academic literacy skills. As academics in the broader field of English Studies, the study's participants, as I shall show, understand the integration as having to do with, first, English proficiency, secondly, using accessible language during teaching and, thirdly, making the discourses of the disciplines explicit. I turn now to the evaluative assessment of data under the first sub-theme.

As Systematic Functional Linguistics is one of the tools used for the evaluative assessment of qualitative data, I identify how participants' responses are dominated by a Story Phase⁶². According to Wengraf (2001), narrative style interviews generally yield story-type responses, as exemplified in Figure 4.8 (Chapter 4). This type of interview has the potential to

⁶¹According to SFL, we construe our experience through language. 'Construe' encompasses both the "ability of language to represent something other than itself, and also its active role in the construction of meaning" (Jordens, 2002: 52). Please read Chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion on SFL.

⁶²According to Jordens (2002), research participants' responses to interview questions can either be in a form of a story (sequenced according to the order of events) or direct responses to specific questions (both open-ended and close-ended). Figure 6.1 shows that the story-type responses dominated participants' responses in this study.

yield qualitative data that “convey tacit and unconscious assumptions and norms of the individual or of a cultural group. At least in some respects they are less subject to the individual’s conscious control” (Wengraf, 2001:115). In the process of administering this type of interview, the last two categories (the module design and pedagogy) in Figure 4.8 were used only when responses to questions in the first category (the beginnings) left out important detail about the actual teaching and learning dynamic. This understanding informs the way in which data based on the two sub-themes in this Chapter are discussed.

Figure 6.1 illustrates how the participants’ responses to the interview questions varied in terms of the proportion of time dedicated to the Story Phase, relative to time that yielded responses elicited through the open-ended interview.

Figure 6.1: Relative duration of Story Phase vs. Open-Ended Interview, by participants (adapted from Jordens, 2002)*

Participants	Total duration (mins)	Story Phase (%)	Open-Ended (%)
Bob	80	90	10%
Leanne	90	80	20%
Lynn	60	90	10%
Martha	80	90	10%
Teresa	90	90	20%

*Dark shaded numbers show the proportion of the interview dedicated to the Story Phase genre (percentages are shown in figures) and light shaded numbers show the proportion dedicated to open-ended interview questions.

In terms of Figure 6.1, Teresa and Leanne’s interviews ran for one hour and thirty minutes each. While seventy minutes of their responses were in a form of a story, only twenty minutes were responses to open-ended questions. This is why the Figure indicates that 80% of Teresa and Leanne’s responses were in the Story Phase. Lynn’s responses to the interview took one hour. Fifty minutes of her responses were in a form of a story, and only ten minutes occupied

responses to open-ended interview questions. This means, as the Figure shows, 90% of Lynn's responses were in a story form, and only 10% constituted responses to open-ended questions. Finally, Bob and Martha's interviews ran for eighty minutes each. Of these eighty minutes, seventy minutes of their responses were in the Story Phase, and only ten minutes were responses to open-ended questions. There is thus a tendency for the Story Phase to account for a larger proportion of the participants' responses to interviews. As pointed out earlier, this is because of the use of the narrative-style interview technique. As the discussion on data will indicate, the three sets of data differ qualitatively. This could be ascribed partly to the fact that participants' expertise, positions held, and years of experience as university lecturers, are not the same.

Bob, the Head of the English Department at Rhodes University, for example, holds a doctorate in English Literature and studied Applied Linguistics for non-degree purposes, with lecturing experience which started as early as 1969. Lynn is a module coordinator at the University of the Witwatersrand and holds a Masters degree in English Literature and Applied Linguistics, with lecturing experience that started in 1996. Teresa, the participant from the University of Sydney, holds a Masters degree in 19th and 20th century English and American Literature, and has a doctorate in English Rhetoric, with lecturing experience that started in 1995. Leanne and Martha hold Masters degrees in Applied Language Studies, with six years of university teaching experience. Balfour, on the other hand, is a Head of School at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and holds a doctorate in Education and an interdisciplinary Masters degree in Literature and Education, an HDE, and has lecturing experience that started in 1995. The academic expertise and qualifications of all the study participants in the disciplines of English literature, English language, and Applied English Language Studies, enabled them to yield informed and thoroughly thought out responses to narrative-style interviews that would otherwise not be available. All the participants' academic qualifications enabled them to make research-led decisions for their departments in ways that suited their contexts. Figure 6.2 illustrates information about participants' years of experience, gender, discipline, and field.

Figure 6.2: Participants (lecturers' code names) from each institution by years of experience, gender, discipline, field, and university.

Participants	Years of experience	Gender	Discipline	Field	University
Bob	35	M	Literature/ Applied Linguistics	English Studies	Rhodes
Leanne	6	F	Applied Language Studies	English Studies	Rhodes
Lynn	6	F	Literature/ Applied Linguistics	English Studies	Wits
Martha	6	F	Applied Language Studies	English Studies	Wits
Balfour	7	M	Literature/ Education	English Studies	Natal
Teresa	10	F	Literature/ Rhetoric	English Studies	Sydney

6.1 Reasons for the introduction of linguistic and/or academic literacy modules

6.1.1 English literature, not English Language: Academic staff perceptions at Rhodes University

Over the last twenty years the English Department at Rhodes University has constructed itself as a purely 'literature' Department, with the canonical and Leavisite traditions informing approaches to the study and teaching of literature. It is only in the middle of the 1990s that the Department began to observe the need for extending its scholarly concerns to English language development. Bob's employment in this period, for instance, introduced a staff member who, though with training in English literature, possessed expertise in the teaching of English literature and language. The introduction of Bob facilitated a move from purely literary concerns to issues that addressed language needs of students enrolled in the Department. This move reflected Pope's (1998) conceptualisation of 'English' "as the name of the subject [which is] an adjective made to serve as a noun" (16). Given the persistence of attitudes by the English Department who never considered issues of language as part of the Department, Bob's attempts to move language from the margins of the Department to the centre of its scholarly concerns failed. Instead, collaboration with colleagues from the English Language and Linguistics Department enabled the design and teaching of a module that addressed language needs of

students who needed such help, but this occurred outside the English Department. In this section I discuss Bob's responses to interview questions concerning these developments.

The initial sections of Bob's Story Phase orientate the reader to the context within which the response to the interview is constructed, thereby offering the context out of which the narrative unfolds. The fact that Bob has thirty-five years experience of lecturing shows in the way he responds to the first elicitation question. His response constructs him as an experienced lecturer with a very specific view of what constitutes an English Department, thereby fulfilling Wengraf's (2001) understanding of this type of responses to Narrative-style interview questions:

EM: Could you give me the background with regard to the English Department's attempts to meeting students' language related needs?

Bob: Quite often in the minds of donors, and some of us in other contexts, the distinction between English literature and Linguistics is not clear. And indeed in many universities they are both contained within the English Department. But within this university, going back thirty years or more, they have been two separate departments, and so this is the literature department (Interview, 2002).

The use of *background* in the first question was intended to elicit, not the type of response given by Bob in the above interview extract, but the one that would refer to historical contextual factors that contributed to the introduction of the then module designed to meet students' linguistic and academic literacy needs, particularly those who speak EAL. Through his ability to read between the lines (given his awareness of the broader concerns of the study), Bob chooses to begin by addressing the "*often*" misleading thinking (by "*donors and some of us*") that English and Linguistics are not two sides of the same coin, but separate and distinct departments. This is not what I asked Bob, but the response is not surprising because it represents, not an individual's thinking, but, as Jacobs (2006) puts it: "a collective understanding influencing...dominant institutional discourses" (182). As shown in Chapter 2, Bob's first response, in other words, is representative of English departments' attitudes towards the question of addressing students' linguistic and/or academic literacy needs, and this is evident across the three participants within

the South African context⁶³. The origins of this thinking, as Chapter 2 indicates, may be traced back to Arnold's (1896) romanticised idea of English literary studies as a discipline concerned with "great men of culture...carry[ing] from one end to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of the time" (70). Such ideas about the discipline of English literature have tended to cause English departments to distance themselves from the teaching of language because it is seen as "not a serious and intellectually engaging job" (Angelil-Carter, 1998: 56). Bob's response is therefore a reflection of the Arnoldian understanding of English departments as concerned with literature. Responses of this nature, furthermore, have the potential to cause the listener to empathise with, rather than challenge, English departments concerning some of the decisions taken with regard to assisting students to acquire skills relevant to the discipline of English literature.

To further justify, rather than encourage critical engagement with certain decisions, Bob decided to introduce broader university dynamics that influenced final decisions in the English Department at Rhodes University concerning the introduction of an add-on ADP. In this way Bob's Story Phase presents the reader with the central concerns of the story, the 'backbone' of the narrative. Based on his expertise and longer years of service on the one hand, and as a result of the country's socio-economic, educational and political changes that were looming at the time, on the other, Rhodes University decided to appoint Bob to be the first Chair of English as a Second Language:

Bob: In 1982...I was appointed the first H.A. Molteno Professor of English Second Language, which was the first chair in the country so designated. But my job principally was to set up an Academic Development Programme, of the old style ADP. That was my first involvement (Interview, 2002).

Bob's choice of "*but*" when he begins the second sentence in his response is a continuation of a deliberate attempt to distinguish his Department's business from that of Linguistics. The appointment he refers to is termed *Professor of English Second Language*, which leads the

⁶³ Chapter 2 presents a lengthy discussion on the nature of English Studies as a field, and the debates on whether or not English literature and English language can be taught "under one roof" (Van-Wyk Smith, 1990).

listener to assume that this must mean responsibility for the design and teaching of English as a Second Language programmes for students who require such interventions. However, the use of “*but*” destabilises this assumption and prepares the listener for a contradictory state of affairs: his appointment “*principally was to set up an Academic Development Programme*”, and not an English Second Language Programme⁶⁴. As discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.3), the discourse, because it hides the difference between academic support and EAL teaching, frames students who speak EAL in a deficit mode, and views them as the ‘problem’⁶⁵. In this context, lecturers are not necessarily challenged to reflect critically on their teaching practices. As though to justify this, and thus further strengthen his initial reference to what the English Department is not, Bob takes the reader back in time in terms of his expertise and experience with language related work:

Bob: I had come here in the middle of 1979 from Pietermaritzburg where I had been the first Director of a Bridging the Gap Course, which in those days was designed and ran from 1977 to 1979. And that was actually aimed at first language speakers because even then they had identified this problem of more than 60% of all entering first year students taking longer than the minimum period to complete their degrees (Interview, 2002).

Clearly, Rhodes University’s decision to appoint Bob had to do with his expertise and experience with students who, although speakers of English as a first language, were nevertheless not adequately prepared for academic discourse, and not with students who spoke EAL who experienced linguistic related difficulties. Why then was his position referred to as H.A. Molteno Professor of *English as a Second Language* if it had nothing to do with the introduction of English Second Language Programmes? According to Bob,

Bob: When we at Rhodes in 1982 began to set up our Academic Development Programme, obviously we targeted particularly students from a DET background and we looked at it in terms of language, cognitive difficulties, and the extent to which these students have not been stretched to higher levels of cognitive skills (Interview, 2002).

⁶⁴ While English Second Language modules generally concern themselves with tuition in the structures and vocabulary of English, Academic Development Programmes tend to focus on introducing students to academic writing skills, with a focus on ways of reading, thinking, writing, and speaking valued within higher education (Boughey, 2005).

⁶⁵ The view opposite to this sees students who speak EAL as having educational problems because of their status as outsiders to academic discourses (Taylor *et al*, 1988), and in their lack of familiarity with the literacy of [academic] culture’ (Ballard and Clanchy, 1988:8). Their problems are not with language (grammar) *per se*.

The above represents Bob's attempts to make explicit how the narrative in the events affected his context. The introduction of the Academic Development Programme (ADP) represents this stage in the narrative. It is clear that Rhodes University, and the English Department in particular, were aware of ex-DET students' English language and academic literacy needs, yet the main thrust of the new programme (because it is called Academic Development) was on developing their academic literacy ("*high levels of cognitive and language skills*")⁶⁶. As pointed out in Chapter 2, this understanding does not appear to lead to much improvement as students' access to disciplinary knowledge cannot necessarily be made possible simply by their becoming proficient in the language of instruction. The same understanding is evident at the University of Witwatersrand where an introduction to the discourse of literary studies module was introduced in 1996.

6.1.2 Literacy for literary studies: the English Department at the University of the Witwatersrand

Just like the English Department at Rhodes University, the English Department at Rhodes University has constructed itself as a purely 'literature' Department, with the canonical and Leavisite traditions dominating approaches to the study and teaching of literature. At the beginning of the 1990s two members of the English Department expressed concerns about the Department's tendency to marginalise the applied language aspect of the field of English Studies in its scholarship. After several attempts to bring to the centre such concerns, these two colleagues broke-out of the English Department and formed an Applied English Language Studies Department. Housed within the same School as the English Department, this Department's work focussed on the study of language as used in different disciplines, genres, and contexts. Given a slant towards language pedagogy, the Applied English Language Studies Department has since became part of the Faculty of Education.

⁶⁶ This issue is discussed and debated in Chapter 2, and will be explored further in Chapters 7, 8 and 9.

Faced with the challenge of students who needed more support to study literature, the English Department introduced a module that was designed to offer such support and, ironically, staff members from the Applied English Language Studies collaborate in the teaching of this module.

The University of the Witwatersrand's English Department decision to opt for a credit-bearing academic literacy module was due to the fact that the supplementary assistance (similar to Rhodes') for first-year students in the discipline of English literature was seen to be unproductive. Lynn was appointed to teach literature half-time and academic development half-time. Writing about this add-on type tuition at universities, Jacobs (2006) notes that:

this understanding of integration is underpinned by the notion that language and content exist as two separate subject areas. This type of understanding is reinforced by tertiary curricular with mandatory subjects such as Communication Skills and/or separate courses in Academic Literacy (200).

In this module the focus is on teaching selected works of literature with the hope that the process will alert students to what they will be expected to know and understand in the mainstream English syllabus. This is evident in Lynn's response when she says:

I have been here for about eighteen months and my first job was to provide supplementary help for first year students in the discipline of English literature. I then decided that students will benefit from a preliminary course focussed on skills needed for the study of literature before they go into English 1... There is attention paid to language, both as used in literature and in the form of writing essays, speaking in seminars and tutorial situations, but there is no specific focus on grammar teaching (Interview, 2002).

The idea of teaching students "*skills needed for the study of literature*", as pointed out by Lynn in the interview, actually meant introducing students, among other things, to the Leavisite approach to the study of literature: "to establish the vitality of its 'felt life', its closeness to 'experience', to prove its moral force, and to demonstrate its 'excellence'" (Selden and Widdowson, 1993:22). These remain the bases for the sort of skills Lynn's module was designed to develop, and Chapter 8 illustrates and discusses strategies through which they were to be developed. Lynn's response does not refer at all to the issue of providing students with a

thorough grounding and/or acculturation into the disciplinary discourses of literary studies so that students could learn to read, speak, think, and write in ways that are valued in English literary studies⁶⁷.

Lynn mentions, not knowledge of and/or about dominant discourses in the discipline, but skills such as “*speaking in seminars and tutorial situations*”. In her response there is also no mention of attempts to introduce students to debates around questions of whether or not the term ‘literature’ is universally understood as meaning the same thing, and how it is studied, for example. Instead the focus is largely on presenting lectures, tutorials, and seminars as part of the strategies designed to enable them to access the plot, and, prepare them for essay writing based on such literary works. Inherent in Lynn’s response is the extent to which the Leavisite critical paradigm (the notion that literary studies need to be about language as used in literary texts), influenced decisions taken by Lynn at the University of the Witwatersrand. According to Selden and Widdowson (1993):

Following Richards, Leavis is a kind of ‘practical critic’, but also, in his concern with the concrete specificity of the ‘text itself’, the ‘words on the page’, a kind of ‘New Critic’ too: ‘[the critic] is concerned with the work in front of him [sic] as something that should contain within itself the reason why it is so and not otherwise’... (22).

Within the context of South Africa, where English departments’ enrolments include students from diverse educational and class backgrounds, it is not advisable to assume that students possess literacy skills at levels required to engage with literary texts as suggested above. Writing about a survey of the (English) language and grammatical usage of matriculants (Black and white) going to university in South Africa, Titlestad (1998) reports that,

One would find lack of concord, including problems with *this these* and *that those*, (‘this things is’), lack of relation of pronoun to antecedent, lack of any sense of pronoun gender (of the capacity to distinguish *he she* and *his hers*), a muddling of time sequence and the virtual disappearance of the present perfect tense, widespread use of continuous forms, especially in stative verbs,

⁶⁷ In Chapter 8 I discuss at length the extent to which this module seems not to be providing students with relevant metalanguage and vocabulary necessary to develop in “*skills needed for the study of literature*”, and valued by the English Department.

problems with conditionals and modals, dangling particles, muddled 'do support' in questions and negatives, problems with articles (36).

The problems that students bring with them from secondary education, regardless of linguistic and/or educational background, as identified by Titlestad above, point to the necessity of integrating language within the context of attempts to raise students' awareness of disciplinary discourses, with an intention to problematise, or even extend, disciplinary boundaries. This needs to occur, furthermore, as part of the mainstream tuition, not an add-on, preliminary offering that precedes (in this case) English 1. Data in Chapter 5 show that the English Department at the former University of Durban-Westville (UDW) attempted to integrate language within the context of introducing students to the discourse of the discipline of English literary studies as part of English 1. I believe that it is the introduction of Literary Theory from English 1 to postgraduate level that facilitated this integration. The fact that at English 1 Literary Theory "*was presented not as a series of competing 'approaches'... [but] we were made to discuss shared questions and claims by different schools of thought and important debates that do not necessarily oppose one 'school' to another, but that mark salient divisions within movements*", presented first year students with what Bakhtin (1981) describes as a "unitary language" (31) relevant to the discipline. For Bakhtin (1981), this constitutes:

the theoretical expression of the historical processes of linguistic unification and centralisation, an expression of the centripetal forces of language. [It] is not something given but is always in essence posited - and at every moment of its linguistic life it is opposed to the realities of heteroglossia. But at the same time it makes its real presence felt as a force for overcoming this heteroglossia, imposing specific limits to it, guaranteeing a real, although still relative, unity (31).

One of the reasons why this approach seems to be more effective than the approach presented by Lynn is that literary works were taught in conjunction with Literary Theory. Moya's *Not Either an Experimental Doll* (1987), for instance, was taught parallel to, and was integrated with, theoretical fields such as postcolonialism, feminism, and deconstruction. Students were encouraged to read, talk, and write about the text from various perspectives. In this way, first-year students were "*offered a meta-language through which [they] managed to enter texts in*

*ways that helped [them] transcend [their] limitations in English language” and their status as outsiders in the discourse of the discipline. Rather than understanding literary works as containing one specific meaning and/or message, the teaching of Literary Theory assisted students to understand (right from English 1) that meaning is simply a matter of interpretation, “a function, not of particular words or wordings, but rather of the discursive formation in which...expressions occur” (Montgomery *et al*, 1992:7). As pointed out in Chapter 5, Mr Mngadi, one of the lecturers, for instance, “spent more time during his lectures explaining Literary Theory concepts, illustrating through several concrete examples from set works and allowed us to demonstrate our understanding by affording us opportunities to provide our own illustrations”⁶⁸.*

Like Bob’s narrative at Rhodes University’s English Department, and this is contrary to Lynn’s Recount of the University of the Witwatersrand’s English Department module, student mentoring seem to be another feature that stands out in the data presented in Chapter 5. The autobiographical narrative illustrates the role mentoring can play in facilitating students’ induction into academic discourses. Data refers to the role played by individual attention in the development of a student from a disadvantaged educational background. Even though this arrangement was not official, the mentoring offered to students such as myself does appear to raise awareness of the way in which genre, purpose and the context of a text together determine one’s grammatical choices when constructing a text (both spoken and written). My experiences as presented in Chapter 5 testify to this. Though the English Department at Rhodes University did provide mentoring in the form of one-on-one tuition, this does not seem comparable in my experience. While the former was part of a non-degree ADP, the latter was integrated within the formal, credit-bearing module. The mentoring process in my experience seems to have afforded

⁶⁸Balfour (1996) refers to an English Department lecturer at UDW who insisted that “I do not wish to patronise a student and I do not summarise the reading material for them. They appear to accept responsibility for reading and do not expect second-hand material” (35). Within this context students are not only learning skills needed to study literary texts, but their discipline-specific vocabulary is enhanced, and is developed through their understanding of how the knowledge in constructed, contested, and disseminated within the context of the discipline.

an opportunity to increase awareness of how different ways of organising information in writing interacts with the purpose of the text. It is for this reason that data in Chapter 5 indicate that “*it is only then that I understood the reason for getting 32%*”. The type of mentoring referred to in Chapter 5, and in particular with regard to the way, in which I was taught grammar, seems to have been approached differently at the University of Natal.

6.1.3 Grammatical competence: the English Department at the University of Natal

The University of Natal’s English Department started out as all the other two discussed earlier. Pope’s (1998) work, however, led the Department to bring language issues on par with literary concerns. While the English departments at Rhodes and Witwatersrand universities never considered paying attention to teaching English grammar explicitly, and while language at UDW was addressed within the context of how purpose determines grammatical choices, the English Department of the University of Natal taught grammar differently. As was the case in the English departments of the two HWUs analysed so far, the English Department of the University of Natal (1996) initially gave the responsibility of students’ language-related difficulties to a colleague who was to teach half literature and half English grammar. With regard to the University of Natal’s English Department initiative, the then coordinator points out that:

The English Department’s first project towards this was a preliminary one-year English Grammar, non credit-bearing course to equip students for English 1...This became concurrent tuition for students in English 1, and was restricted to conditional-entry students or tutor referrals, but access opened to self-referred students as well (Shum: 2002, Interview).

It became obvious, however, that such tuition was not sufficient for students, and the Department realised that even though such private consultation was in place, students’ writing and reading competencies did not appear to improve. A change of approach became necessary. These classes were then made compulsory for all students who speak EAL. Every Friday afternoon students had to attend forty five minutes of English Grammar tuition.

The study conducted by Mgqwashu (1999) concerning the efficacy of this tuition reveals that it did not develop students' ability to relate linguistic forms to semantics. Different grammatical elements were taught on different Fridays without relating them, first, to one another and, second, to the functions they perform in relation to purpose of writing or speaking and, third, to the construction of meaning. In addition the self-referral and add-on features of this module rendered it worthless in the eyes of students. Drawing from recommendations from Mgqwashu's (1999) and Balfour's (2000) studies, the former University of Natal in 2000 acknowledged the need to provide substantial and sustained English language development for its students, given that the medium of instruction is English. Both studies maintain that problems with expression and competence in English had the potential to obscure and retard the quality of students' writing, and consequently academic performance. At the same time the experience of Rhodes and Witwatersrand universities presented earlier in this Chapter indicated to colleagues at the former University of Natal that language curriculum development in these two HWUs has occurred in an *ad hoc* fashion, "often without the benefit of a scientifically oriented research methodology" (Balfour, 2001: 43).

As a result of these acknowledgements, responsibility for the development of a sustained response to students' language needs came again to the attention of the English Department in 2000. Other English related disciplines, such as Linguistics, also had a long and rich history of developing approaches/modules/tools for English language development at the former University of Natal. According to the *Coordinating Report* (Balfour, 2001), the English Department, initially, sought the collaboration and input of Linguistics in the initiative. Between the years 2000-2001, in co-operation with Linguistics and the Faculty of Human Sciences, the English Department appointed Balfour as part of the language development initiative. According to Balfour (2001) his brief was to:

liaise with the English Department and Linguistics in order to establish a more co-operative working relationship between the two Programmes with the purpose of pooling existing resources and personnel in order to respond to a perceived need for more intensive language development for students

entering the Human Sciences at first year level (*NRF Coordinating Report*, 2001:44).

As a member of the academic staff at the former University of Natal's English Department, I joined the English Language Research Unit (ELRU) which was tasked to investigate the possibility of establishing an English Language Proficiency Test and develop an English Language Course, which was to complement the core modules' offerings at the first-year level of the Human Sciences that existed then. As I report and discuss data about the former University of Natal, I am therefore a participant and a researcher; an insider and outsider. The next section discusses data with regard to the theoretical understandings and conceptual underpinnings of the modules under investigation in this dissertation.

6.2 Theoretical persuasions underpinning literacy practices

6.2.1 Historical contingencies and ad hoc academic literacy development support: the English Department at Rhodes University

This section discusses data according to the sub-theme: language practitioners' perceived theoretical persuasions that underpinned their departments' literacy practices in linguistic and/or academic literacy modules. The evaluative assessment of data in this section is integrated with data from Chapter 5. The section shows that participants understand the integration of linguistic and/or academic literacy as having to do with English proficiency, using accessible language during teaching and, making the discourse of the discipline explicit.

Bob's personal Recount (section 6.1) provides this study with valuable data in terms of how his expertise and experiences in Pietermaritzburg warranted the Rhodes University's decision to appoint him as the first H.A. Molteno Professor of English as a Second Language. A concurrent story about his past experiences suggests that students' proficiency in a language used as a medium of instruction does not necessarily guarantee access to disciplinary and academic discourses (please see Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion). The reason is that knowledge of the language used as the medium of instruction "does not expose students to powerful disciplinary

discourses or to how these discourses function within the context of disciplines” (Jacobs, 2006:204-205).

Unlike Jacobs’ (2006) argument though, I argue in this study that students’ access to their disciplinary discourses and rhetorical features can be facilitated better within the field of English Studies, not by language specialists working with disciplinary experts. To suggest that students’ access to disciplinary discourses and rhetorical features will be made possible by ‘team-teaching’ between disciplinary experts and language specialists reduces the field of English Studies to a sub-discipline. I argue that the field of English Studies cannot reduce itself to being a service provider to other disciplines. Instead, the field should regard its central concerns with language and its role in constructing experience as key in the process of raising students’ awareness of how their individual disciplines construct themselves in language. Teaching students the discourses of their disciplines within the confines of their ‘departmental walls’, and not leaving this responsibility to experts in the field of English Studies, a field concerned with the way language constructs the world and societal identities through texts, we are colluding with what Macedo (1993) calls “the instrumentalist approach to literacy” (187). Said (1994) argues that this instrumentalist approach to English language pedagogy “...all but terminally consign[es] English to the level of a technical language stripped of expressive and aesthetic characteristics and denuded of any critical or self-conscious dimension” (369).

The narrative about my experiences in Chapter 5 indicates that, even though I began to learn English relatively late in my life, because it occurred within the context of a discipline (English literature) which concerns itself with ways in which language constructs the world, I learnt more than just English language. Using the same structure of story, complication, and resolution used in Chapter 5 the Recounts offered by Lynn, Bob, and Balfour can be similarly analysed. When I reached university, there were not English language specialists *per se*; instead, the pedagogic approach in the English Department facilitated proper grounding into the

discipline. The Resolution stage of the narrative in Chapter 5, for instance, represents a stage where the Complication (linguistic and cognitive unpreparedness for university education, for example) has been resolved. After a series of events in my personal narrative, the Resolution stage answers the question: how did different experiences and events bring about the Resolution of the complications that gave rise to the story getting told in the first place? My narrative offers this in the last section (5.2) of Chapter 5. By referring to the narrator's learning experiences and events that accompanied such experiences in the University, the narrative provides reasons for the protagonist's ability to attain the Equilibrium: "*sustained exposure to an environment with speakers of English as a mother-tongue (both lecturers and students) and having to read and write about literary texts and critical readings written in English further contributed to my overall development as a university graduate*" (Chapter 5). At this stage the Complication is resolved and the narrator is finally comfortable and has become an active member of the university community. It is after this stage that the narrative has to return the reader to the here-and-now, the Coda stage in the narrative (Chapter 3). The question to be answered at this stage is: how does the story bring us back to our present circumstances? Towards the end of the narrative, I point out that "*I received proper grounding in disciplinary discourses in my major subjects and...this made it possible for me to overcome educational setbacks (language and course related) due to my secondary phase schooling experiences*" (Chapter 5).

Implicit in the way the narrative ends is a suggestion for all university practitioners to re-examine the extent to which disciplinary content provides students with opportunities to access disciplinary constructedness. It is this type of pedagogic approach, that is, the one that ensures students' access to disciplinary discourses, that my lecturers achieved through the teaching of Literary Theory and English Usage. Both aspects in my training as an English teacher began the process of acculturating me into the discipline of English literature, thereby developed the repertoire of genres required to succeed in a university. The command of such genres at the beginning of my university education was clearly non-existent. These resonate with Chapter 2's

discussion of Gee's (1990) conceptualisation of a discourse and literacy. Drawing from Gee's understanding of these terms, 'literacy' in 'disciplinary discourses' means "mastery or fluent control over a secondary discourse" (153). This suggests that add-on type modules, such as the one referred to by Bob, may not be able to achieve this. In this way, Chapter 5 (narrative data) brings the story into the present of the research conducted as part of this dissertation, thereby playing a didactic role for language practitioners confronted by a set of similar challenges. Chapter 5 thus plays a key role in this dissertation, for it unpacks, first, the details of educational practice in former apartheid classrooms and, secondly, ways to engage innovatively and critically with the source of the difficulties students experience when attempting to read and write about texts written in English required in their studies. This data, it may be argued, presents a critique of Bob's and Lynn's decisions and theoretical underpinnings, especially as these seem to rely heavily on historical contingencies.

Bob's account draws on historical events in terms of his experiences with the *Bridging the Gap Course* designed for students who spoke English as mother-tongue. He does this by referring to earlier experiences when he was at the former University of Natal's Pietermaritzburg campus.

Bob: But just about that time [existence of the *Bridging the Gap Course*] of course there were other changes taking place: certain relaxation in terms of racial restrictions on admissions and so on. And then the whole thing began to shift towards language deficiencies and language difficulties and so on and so forth, and general difficulties in terms of university education (Interview, 2002).

The semantic shift indicated by the use of "but" in Bob's story works effectively to refer to earlier experiences. This shift introduces the listener to yet another story that was to have a long-term impact on future decision-making processes in South African universities in general (Hartshorne, 1992). Bob's choice to begin his new sentence by using the conjunction "but", on the other hand, indicates that if South Africa had not experienced a "certain relaxation" with regard to racist legislation of the time, the shift from *Bridging the Gap Course* (1979) to ADP

might never have occurred⁶⁹. The fact that it did occur in the early 1980s, however, raises several questions: did the arrival of non-white students to former whites-only universities automatically make academic discourse accessible to students who spoke English as a first language? Was the shift from the *Bridging the Gap Course* to ADP motivated by the restrictions on human and financial resources to deal with both problems concurrently? Were universities motivated by financial incentives as the government paid more subsidy to those institutions who ‘did something’ for Black students (*Mail and Guardian*: 1999, November: 22-27)? Whatever the answers to these questions are, the shift in itself suggests various possibilities.

The available data in this study provided by Bob concurs with research (Clarence-Fincham, 1998; Hartshorne, 1992) which has shown that even though ‘Black education’ left much to be desired, ‘White education’ was not at all ‘perfect’ either. Drawing from his years of experience and expertise, Bob’s Story Phase of his responses to the interview refers to both systems of education and makes illuminating observations:

Bob: I think it is still true to say of South African education...the emphasis on rote learning and memorisation is still disproportionately high (EM across racial li----) across all lines. But one of the worst...to me one of the worst effects of that Education, the worst aspects of White education were exaggerated and distorted in Bantu Education. So, where whites had access to other modes of learning, other modes of knowledge, other forms of stimulus, Blacks had only, as I said, this distorted, the kind of leaning, and the worst. It was that intensified plus a lack of familiarity with the language (Interview, 2002).

“*Plus a lack of familiarity with the language*”? This closing statement implies that Black students had more challenges to tackle compared to their white counterparts, yet attempts to meet their needs at Rhodes University did not involve the introduction of strategies to address language proficiency within the context of the Academic Development Programme. Instead, as Bob’s responses indicate, we see the introduction of an Academic Literacy Development Programme in 1984, with aims and objectives similar to the one introduced for students who

⁶⁹ The shift led to the opening of access to former whites-only universities to every citizen of South Africa in the 1980s.

spoke English as their mother-tongue in the former University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus).

6.2.2 Reading and writing for literature: the English Department at the University of the Witwatersrand

At the University of the Witwatersrand's English Department module coordinated by Lynn, developing students' grammatical competence was never taken as a priority in the design of English literature academic literacy module. Although Bob's Recount does not refer explicitly to the introduction of an English language module as an unnecessary initiative, the fact that he never mentioned anything towards that direction suggests that, just like the English Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, English Department at Rhodes University also regarded ADP as sufficient for students who had EAL needs. Lynn of the University of the Witwatersrand, on the other hand, explicitly mentions that students needed "*to get into another year in which to improve their language skills*", and that "*English proficiency is not that important in studying English Literature*". What then does she mean by "*language skills*" and "*English proficiency*"? Given the way these terms are juxtaposed, Lynn's understanding shows a distinction between language skills and English proficiency. Based on Lynn's response, it seems to me, language skills mean academic literacy skills and English proficiency means something that amounts to knowledge of English grammar:

Competencies in close-reading of texts, understanding how texts create meaning, understanding underlying meanings in literature, nuances (the fact that while you are reading literature stories are used to convey concerns and wider issues...). But we also work on developing competencies for writing coherent, well structured, analytical essays which contain an argument. And I believe quite strongly that students pick-up those skills for effective essay writing when they are struggling with the content that they need to master (Interview, 2002).

Her supposition that students "*pick up those skills for essay writing*" implies that as long as students 'understand' how literary texts work to express opinions and ways of understanding the

world, language skills will be learnt automatically⁷⁰. Jacobs (2006) identifies this approach to be the source of problems for most students, for it views access to disciplinary discourses as possible through “making content knowledge accessible to students by simplifying disciplinary language” (203). As argued in the previous sections of this Chapter, this does not raise students’ awareness of where certain specific disciplinary terminology originates, “what it means, what the implications are, how just one word changes the whole meaning, how language sets up relationships of power,...of equality or inequality” (Jacobs, 2006:205). While it is true that experts in different disciplines are better positioned⁷⁰ to answer questions of this nature, I argue that their strength lies mainly in assisting students with content knowledge, not with rhetorical features and ways of writing and speaking peculiar to disciplines. This is the province of experts in the field of English Studies, for it concerns itself with how language choices construct the author and the reader, and how these dynamics are a result of specific conventions to which disciplinary experts subject themselves.

6.2.3 Grammar as prerequisite for further learning: the English Department at the University of Natal

The coordinator of the University of Natal initiative that culminated into a module entitled *An Integrated English Language Course* (2001); on the contrary, seems to suggest that English departments need to concern themselves with the design of modules concerned with teaching grammar:

The task of developing any co-ordinated response to the question of English language development would need to draw upon expertise from within and beyond UND⁷¹. In other words, research concerned with English language acquisition and teaching would need to refer simultaneously to education (pedagogic approaches), second language acquisition (existing research in SA and in other similar contexts), as well as Linguistics (theoretical approaches to language learning and development) and English (reading and writing skills development) (Balfour, *NRF Coordination Report*, 2001: 23).

⁷⁰ Such language skills include knowledge about which adjective to use to achieve what purpose, or which adverb to use in order to convey a particular attitude when writing an essay within the discipline of English literature.

⁷¹ Before the former University of Natal merged with the University of Durban-Westville to form the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2004, UND was an abbreviation for University of Natal, Durban. Durban referred to the Durban campus or Howard College.

This is different from English departments at the two universities referred to earlier in this Chapter, where attention to English grammar was either non-existent, *ad hoc* and/or accidental. The English Department's decision to include this component at the University of Natal suggests a general perception of most English departments, that proficiency in English remains a prerequisite for the acquisition of academic discourse. Reporting on her study about such perceptions, Jacobs (2006) notes that:

Those lecturers, who understood knowledge as something to be imparted, and a curriculum as a body of content, were inclined to understand literacy as an autonomous list of generic skills which could be taught alongside a disciplinary curriculum (187).

Balfour's account of the preliminary research activities before the design of the module indicates the extent to which, in comparison to Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand's English departments, the University of Natal's English Department language initiative not only prioritised English proficiency as the basis for the successful acquisition of academic literacy skills, but also the fact that proper theoretical grounding before the design of the module is essential for meeting students' perceived 'language' needs.

My survey of English curriculum development, in projects both at secondary level between 1997-1999 (conducted in Tongaat), and at tertiary level in 1995 (UND) and 1996 (UDW), respectively, has demonstrated to me that in South Africa curriculum design remains woefully under-researched, but also under-theorised. It is only very recently that academics themselves have come to appreciate that curriculum innovation which is not research driven necessarily lacks self-reflexivity since it is based largely on anecdotal accounts of what students 'need', what government 'requires', what is currently 'fashionable'. (Balfour, *NRF Coordination Report*, 2001:25).

The identification, analysis, and critical engagement with the research the coordinator refers to above alerted the team to the perception that the failure of earlier language programmes developed by the English Department at the former University of Natal (and in other universities in general) was due to the fact that:

Language support classes [are] in addition to the mainstream curriculum and are therefore perceived by students as being 'remedial', of low status, and irrelevant to their studies. Language support programmes have been directed by inadequately trained staff and/ or graduate students with no formal training in language instruction. The pedagogic/ theoretical approaches to acquisition used in such programmes are either outdated, inappropriate

(transmission and audiolingual approaches) or inadequate (communicative and narrative approaches) to the specific needs of second language speakers from educationally impoverished backgrounds (Balfour, *NRF Co-ordination Report*, 2001:27).

In terms of the specific theories and pedagogic approaches that informed the design and the implementation of the new language module, Balfour explains that it was informed by a:

structural discourse model within a ‘communicative context’. The decision to adopt this theoretical bias was not arbitrary. Recent research (from 1985 onwards) by linguists and educationists has shown that language is best acquired through communication. However, in order for acquisition to be effective, it requires monitoring not only by the teacher, but also by the learner, thus justifying the use of structure as a ‘meta-language’ for the teaching of the conventions of English language usage. Such a course would thus need to take account of theoretical developments in a number of linguistics related fields such as discourse analysis, communicative language theory, genre theory and reader response theory, each of which profess a focus upon language in the construction of meaning for communication purposes within texts (Balfour, *NRF Co-ordination Report*, 2001:31).

The idea of integrating theories such as discourse analysis, communicative language theory, genre theory, and reader response theory suggests a deliberate decision by the coordinator and the team to draw on a poststructuralist paradigm as described by Foucault’s (1977) discourse on power. Selden and Widdowson (1983) see this paradigm as attempting to raise awareness of the fact that “discourse is involved in power” (158). Selden and Widdowson (1983) trace this strand of poststructuralist theory back to Nietzsche:

The father of this line of thought is the German philosopher Nietzsche, who said that people first decide what they want and then fit the facts to their aim: ‘Ultimately, man finds in things nothing but what he himself has imported into them’. All knowledge is an expression of the ‘Will to Power’ (158).

Drawing from this theoretical paradigm, the *An Integrated English Language Course* (2001) taught English grammar within the context of extended texts, and illustrated to students how certain grammatical features work. Among the three colleagues of the South African HWUs English departments interviewed in this study, Balfour is the only participant who managed to provide an explicit theoretical basis and research-based rationalisation for the structure and the pedagogic approach of this module. This could be attributed to the fact that often individuals,

who had to lead in language initiatives in English departments, did not have the expertise, or the motivation that qualified them to be involved. Whatever they attempted to achieve was based either on how they themselves were taught, or what they regarded as the best way to proceed. Balfour and the team at Natal University, on the other hand, acknowledged that South African students already possessed some awareness of English as a communicative tool because of the fact that English is the medium of instruction in most schools. However, given the fact that such instruction is ineffective and sometimes damaging (Mgqwashu, 1999), the group decided that it would best not to make undue assumptions about learners' existing knowledge. If anything, most speakers of EAL possessed a basic 'communicative competence' characterised by fossilised errors, strong mother-tongue interference, and little awareness of how to modify and correct the production of their own texts in English. Drawing from an understanding of the debates within language learning, teaching, and assessment as exemplified by the kind of preliminary research work Balfour exposed the team to, the group began to design a trial module⁷².

Conclusion

Chapter 6 offers an evaluative assessment of data presented in Chapter 5 and data gathered through Narrative-style interviews at the three HWUs English departments in South Africa. The integration of interview and other data with insights from Chapter 5 seems to suggest that curriculum and pedagogic choices inculcated different cognitive skills among students. Data from Chapter 5 indicates that curriculum and pedagogic choices assisted a student from an 'inferior' educational background to be a successful student who demonstrated identifiable educational progress. The Chapter thus manages to offer a critical reflection on reasons for my educational success and students with whom I share the same educational background, regardless of prior educational disadvantage. Engagement with data in this way, furthermore, allows for useful critical engagement with, and comparison between, my experiences within one English Department and ways in which three other English departments engaged with the linguistic

⁷² Chapter 8 engages with documentary data and discusses module outlines and contents under investigation in this study.

and/or academic literacy needs of students with educational backgrounds similar to my own. Practitioners' literacy practices and worlds differ according to the circumstances in which they find themselves. This suggests that there is still an urgent need to conduct research and design research-led curricula in order to apply principles to module design, and not be dictated to by historical and/or contingent circumstances.

While Rhodes University's English Department continued on with an add-on, remedial-type ADP, the University of the Witwatersrand's English Department introduced a semester long, credit-bearing academic support module in 1996. The English Department at the University of Natal initially introduced *ad hoc* tuition similar to Rhodes University English Department, but later designed a fully-fledged English grammar module. All of these developments represent different ways in which language practitioners' worlds and literacy practices differ across three English departments, and how these responded differently to the linguistic and academic literacy needs of students. Regardless of the type of intervention, ideally, every student who has to pass one or more modules in literary studies has to be proficient in the reading of, writing and speaking about, and listening to, intellectually challenging English texts across different genres and contexts. This means that every student has to possess what Cummins (1984) calls the Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).

Chapter 7 concerns itself with the language practitioners' conception of the relationship between their literacy practices in language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules and the central concerns in the field of English Studies. The Chapter also introduces ways in which applied language studies disciplines at Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand contributed to processes that were designed to facilitate first-year students' epistemological access in ways that English departments could not. Data concerning the University of Natal English Department's module is first to be discussed in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 7

English Literacy Practices: South African and Australian Contexts⁷³

Introduction

The discussion of data in Chapter 6 represents ways in which the study's participants understand their own literacy practices in linguistic and/or academic literacy modules that were designed by English departments to meet the needs of students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds. The opening of access to students from racial groups previously barred to study in HWUs in South Africa remains a fundamental feature that influenced research participants' perceptions of 'their worlds', and how this influenced thinking about students' learning needs. Apparent in the data presented in Chapters 5 and 6 is the extent to which language practitioners' understandings of the reasons for the introduction of literacy programmes is a consequence of either contingent, historical and circumstantial factors, or comprehensively theorised, research-led interventions. What also emerges in Chapter 6 is that language practitioners' perceived theoretical positions, which underpin pedagogic practices in literacy modules, are derived from differential understandings (by participants) of long-standing philosophical positions about the nature of the literary studies. The Leavisite critical paradigm and the poststructuralist theory, for instance, seem to have influenced much of the module design and delivery in English departments and the universities of Witwatersrand and Natal, respectively. Regardless of the theoretical orientation, all participants perceive their programmes to have the potential to develop students' proficiency in the reading of, writing and speaking about, and listening to, intellectually challenging English texts across different genres and contexts.

These are skills critical for success in studying English literature because students are supposed to engage independently with reading literary criticism, which requires an adequate

⁷³ Please see Appendix H where the interview transcripts from the University of Sydney, the University of the Witwatersrand, and Rhodes University are presented.

(English and disciplinary) vocabulary and the ability to construct complex arguments, both in speaking and in writing. Adequate knowledge of language and disciplinary tenets facilitates the independent production of written texts that, as Rose and McClafferty (2001) put it, are “intellectually engaging, rich rhetorically, theoretically, methodologically” (32). Jacobs’ (2006) work referred to in Chapter 6 indicates that this kind of autonomy on the part of students cannot be attained through literacy programmes which are either appended, or external, to the mainstream curriculum. Instead, as Little (1999) argues, this autonomy can be attained by means of an explicit pedagogic approach (defined by Cope and Kalantzis, 1993) that brings about “metalinguistic awareness [which] is fundamental...in all domains of formal learning...” (3). One of the ways in which students can demonstrate the attainment of this ‘metalinguistic awareness’ is through their writing, the most commonly used assessment tool in formal education.

In his *Towards a reading based theory of teaching*, Rose (2006) argues that “the function of writing in school and university courses is primarily to demonstrate what we have learnt from reading” (1). My autobiographical narrative in Chapter 5 has already indicated the extent to which one of my lecturers’ pedagogic practices in the English Department treated reading as the basis for competent and advanced academic writing skills. The integration of these experiences with the narrative interviews in Chapter 6 is thus meant to construct a counterpoint and comparison between three HWUs in South Africa in terms of the way in which reading and writing were integrated. As mentioned at the end of Chapter 6, the examination of data in Chapter 7 concerns itself with the language practitioners’ worlds, and ways in which applied language studies disciplines presented alternative language teaching approaches that facilitated epistemological access in ways that English departments did not. The common aspect of Chapters 6 and 7, however, is regular reference to my experiences as narrated in Chapter 5.

My understanding as a literary scholar and teacher-educator is that we teach our students to be creative and critical in their engagement with broader societal changes which means the ability, in Bruner's (1986) terms, to: "express stance and must invite counter-stance and in the process leave place for reflexion, for metacognition" (129). For this to occur, literacy practices need to enable students to gain access to the most powerful genres in society, such as argumentative and persuasive writings, not just narratives (Rose, 2006; Reppen, 1995; and Martin, 1996). In the context of my dissertation this entails exploring pedagogic practices that make the dominant discourses in the discipline of English literature explicit to entrance-level students. For Horn (1999) this means making students aware, through literacy and pedagogical practices, that "the study of literature [and other modes of communicating experience studied in the broader field of English Studies in general] is about our ways of thinking and speaking about individual existence, which is also, and always, a social existence" (1). Such an approach has the potential to present students with opportunities that will develop critical grounding in the fundamentals of the field of English Studies, among which is the fact that language is central in understanding ways in which texts present different ways of thinking. On the basis of these observations this Chapter examines data that deal with participants' sense of the extent to which their literacy practices draw from the concerns of the field of English Studies with language.

Chapter 7 focuses broadly on ways in which data from English departments at the four research sites and English Language and Linguistics and Applied English Language Studies departments at Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand, respectively, suggest ways in which participants' literacy practices draw from, or are related to, the concerns of the broader field of English Studies with language as discussed in Chapter 2. The analysis of data gathered through Narrative-style interview questions draws on SFL paradigm, with a focus on data as either located within Story genre or Non-story genre as represented by Figure 3.10 in Chapter 3. Data concerning the English Language and Linguistics and Applied English Language Studies departments' modules at Rhodes University and the University of the

Witwatersrand, respectively, as well as the modules at the universities of the Witwatersrand, Natal, and Sydney English departments, are analysed through Grounded Theory. The reason GT is used to engage with participants' responses in these universities is so that the study may reflect on group behaviour as "the source of the developed theory which is ultimately grounded in the behaviour, words and actions of those under study" (Goulding, 2000: 40). This is designed, in Goulding's (2002) words, "to bridge the gap between theoretically 'uninformed' empirical research and empirically 'uninformed' theory" (41).

The first section examines data about *An Integrated English Language Course* (2002), a module offered at the University of Natal's English Department. Data about this module is yielded through the *National Research Foundation Report* (2001) authored by Balfour, the module coordinator.

The second section of this Chapter concerns itself with data based on a module coordinated by Lynn called *Foundation Course in English Literature* (2002) offered to entrance level students at the University of the Witwatersrand's English Department. Lynn presents narrative-like responses and allows an examination of the extent to which literacy practices in the module she coordinates draws from the concerns of the field of English Studies with the role language plays in constructing and maintaining cultural and disciplinary identities.

The third section concerns itself with data gathered from the English Language and Linguistics and Applied Language Studies departments at Rhodes and Witwatersrand universities, respectively. These data will indicate that an *ad-hoc*, non-credit bearing literacy intervention by one member of staff in the English Department at Rhodes University, and the limitations in the University of the Witwatersrand English Department module to facilitate students' epistemological access, compelled collaboration between these departments and applied language studies departments. The modules designed in these departments integrated

both literary concerns and language in the process of teaching first-year students language for epistemological access. Unlike English departments' initiatives which created an artificial separation between English literature and English language in both module design and pedagogy, modules from applied language studies departments treated both aspects as belonging to one field: English Studies.

The final section of the Chapter addresses data from an international context, the University of Sydney's English Department. As the discussion will show, by and large, interview data indicates a deliberate choice of literacy practices that draw from the broader concerns (with the nature of language) of the field of English Studies rather than just the disciplines of English literature or of English language. The University of Sydney's English Department approach to teaching language for epistemological access compares well with modules designed by applied language studies departments at Rhodes and Witwatersrand universities. All these data, as mentioned earlier, are integrated with data from Chapter 5. This integration is constructed so that parallels between all research sites and the University where I studied, may be revealed. The next section examines data in one of the HWUs in South Africa, the University of Natal.

7.1 Literacy practices and grammar teaching at the University of Natal

This section discusses data concerning the language module in the University of Natal. Data concerning this research sites are drawn, not from an interview *per se*, but from the *Coordinating Report* (2001) authored by Balfour as the coordinator of an NRF sponsored project. The report documents events and processes that preceded the module under investigation. Data from this context differ in that they are drawn from a structured document designed to be read. This enabled me to access data in ways that are different from the way they were accessed from other contexts. There is evidence in the data that rigorous research and critical engagement with findings informed the design and delivery of the module, and this is different from the two English departments from the other two HWUs.

As was the case at Rhodes University's English Department, every attempt by the English Department at the University of Natal to attend to students' obvious language needs tended to encounter a degree of resistance by some colleagues who, as Bob puts it in terms of Rhodes University experience: "*felt they were hired to teach literature and not language*" (Interview, 2002). As an attempt to dispel possible resistance and a reluctant attitude towards a language related initiative, Balfour decided to go beyond using previous research and literature as bases for the module, and created an atmosphere for the gathering of data from the 'ground'⁷⁴. Balfour's purpose, in other words, was to avoid "making any prior assumptions about what [was] going on...and taking seriously, indeed giving priority to, inmates' own accounts" (Cohen *et al*, 2000: 25). In order to gain access to the latest knowledge on the subject, this involved organising the first seminar series which was given a title: *Language Proficiency and Assessment*. Between March and May of 2000 speakers with relevant expertise (educational and linguistic) were invited to this seminar to present the most recent and innovative research developments in the region. As is the case with many university documents, the *Coordinating Report* (2001), in the process of documenting this event, presents itself as an instance of a macro-genre. In order to achieve its purpose, that is, to inform the reader about considerations that informed decisions concerning the module's structure and form, the Report combines elemental genres from both spoken and non-spoken genres. According to the *Coordinating Report* (2001), speakers came from:

A broad spectrum of educational institutions (Technikon Natal, Durban se Onderwys Kollege, University of Durban-Westville, and the University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg and Durban) Department of Linguistics). There were specific aims to this series: to develop an appropriate pedagogic approach to the *teaching* of grammatical competence and related writing skills in English for non-native speakers at the university...to assess the feasibility of the proposed English language course within debates about what constituted language proficiency in English, as opposed to language competence; or whether content specific proficiency assessment might be more useful than the use of a generic assessment instrument for all learners...(NRF Report, 2001:19)

⁷⁴ Glaser and Strauss (1967) define data from the 'ground' as data that "does not aim for the 'truth' but to conceptualise 'what is going on' using qualitative data" (36).

The first line in the above reference, for example, is an instance of an Exemplum (story genre) which, according to Plum (1998), is designed to share a moral judgement. The use of “*broad spectrum*” indicates an inherent judgement: the use of scholars across a number of institutions is much better than using a limited number of sources. The Exemplum genre is soon followed by the Explanation (non-story genre): “*there were specific aims...*”. The switch from an Exemplum to Explanation (or a story genre to non-story genre) is designed to provide a rationale to the reader for the judgement implied in the first sentence. The last two sentences represent yet another non-story genre in the above extract: Discussion. Jordens (2002) argues that discussions function to explore both sides of an argument. Reference to “*what constituted language proficiency in English, as opposed to language competence*”, for instance, indicate that processes that involved deliberations before the mounting of the module involved detailed explorations of opposing views.

In his *The Status of Yoruba Dialects in Communicative Competence and Language Proficiency*, for instance, Fabunmi (2004) distinguishes clearly between the terms ‘competence’ and ‘proficiency’ in language. For him, language competence refers to knowledge of “theories about language structure” and language proficiency refers to knowledge of “language use” (104). Within this context, the aims of the seminar series as presented by the report reflect a deliberate intention to take opposing views seriously before taking final decisions concerning questions such as “*whether content specific proficiency assessment might be more useful than the use of a generic assessment instrument for all learners*”. Balfour (2001) shifts from the story genre to non-story genres as reflected in the way the *Coordinating Report* (2001) represents ways in which people exercise choices in order to make meanings within and about specific social contexts and processes. Within the context of the module under investigation, “*non-native speakers at the university*” needed a module through which they were going to learn the language of instruction in order to access disciplinary content the same way as speakers of English as a native language. Because such content is communicated in English, perspectives from different

scholars were needed in order to make informed decisions from different schools of thought. Balfour's (2001) choice of language in communicating meanings about the module he coordinated needed to take into consideration what Fairclough (1992) sees as: "contemporary changes [that] affect [...] the role of language in social life" (2). Through his module, for instance, students had to receive tuition from a module that was to be geared towards what Freire (1970) calls "a pedagogical space for critical students" (117). The components of the module designed at the University of Natal reflect a deliberate intention to theorise the structure and pedagogy of the new module based on the ground, that is: research and classroom experiences upon which each presenter based their seminar presentations:

The first part of *An Integrated English Language Course* would begin with the use of lexical and morphological development with the aim of extending learners' lexicons and their awareness of the parts of speech (nouns and adjectives, verbs and adverbs, tenses: all aspects of local coherence). The language emphasis on vocabulary development and morphology is justified in terms of recent research which has indicated that learners with extended lexicons were able to write more cogently than learners with limited lexicons were. This, and subsequent parts of the course, would be text based with the aim of developing academic writing as a genre. The second part of the course would focus on syntax (that is subject: verb: object relations, the use of connectives and punctuation: all aspects of local/ micro coherence) again within relevant (con)texts (*NRF Report*, 2001:20).

The above represents attempts to theorise language design and pedagogic underpinnings in ways that are perhaps different from (not superior to) other English departments investigated in this study. This was certainly a different response from students' language needs by an English Department in HWUs in South Africa. Balfour notes that for the first time,

English as an explicit (and not implicit) area of focus was integrated into the mainstream literary curriculum; a curriculum already characterised by literary textual studies in the broadest sense to include the audio-visual media. I cannot stress enough how radical a departure this has been for a Faculty which has traditionally considered English language development as a form of remediation or support, and so on; despite the well researched and documented fact that only a minority of its very best students have been able to negotiate the perils of academic discourse competently (*NRF Coordinating Report*, 2001:21).

Chapter 8 discusses at length, with an accompanying graphic presentation, the different elements of the module. At this stage of the dissertation it is sufficient to note that Balfour's closing comments above indicate the extent to which the University of Natal English Department

language module has several aspects completely different from similar modules in English departments, both at Rhodes and Witwatersrand universities. The fundamental difference relates to the fact that, while in the latter two universities, programmes were either add-on type (Rhodes), or totally ignored explicit focus on English language development for epistemological access (Witwatersrand), the University of Natal’s programme was informed by the “*well researched and documented fact that only a minority*” benefit from language programmes that ignore completely explicit attention to grammatical competence. Figure 7.1 illustrates clearly one of the ways in which grammar is addressed in this module:

Figure 7.1: An example of a grammar exercise in an Integrated English Language Course

<p><u>Write “A” or “AN” in the spaces provided</u></p> <p>You must read this article. It has.....interesting argument by Njabulo Ndebele on issues in literature in South Africa. Do this if you have.....spare moment though. Njabulo Ndebele came to one of our seminars in.....elegant suit as though he was intimidating us with it. Because he sat next to me, I had to pass him.....slice of cake and.....cup of tea. He is.....experienced teacher indeed. As he was speaking one could identify.....element of determination to convince his listeners. He requested.....pair of scissors to demonstrate one of his abstract formulations in his essay.</p>

As the above example indicates, even though the University of Natal English Department’s module differed in important respects from similar modules in the English departments at the University of the Witwatersrand and Rhodes University, there seem to be few aspects that require critical interrogation. The idea of learning an additional language in this module, for instance, seems to be thought of as a process based on the acquisition of one grammatical item at a time. In addition to the extract above, this is also suggested by Balfour’s (2001) reference to the fact that “*the first part of An Integrated English Language Course would begin with the use of lexical and morphological development, with the aim of extending learners’ lexicons and their awareness of the parts of speech (nouns and adjectives, verbs and adverbs, tenses*”. Nunan (2005) argues that this linear approach to teaching language still informs most of the language modules at all levels of education. Within the context of South Africa, resistance towards Outcomes Based Education’s ideals seems to be the source for a wish to maintain the *status quo*.

Most language teaching, for instance, still emphasises that students should demonstrate their mastery of one grammatical item at a time, before moving on to the next (Mgqwashu, 2001, 1999, Hart, 1995). In fact I taught the section of tenses in the module introduced at the University of Natal's English Department, and the sequence was such that students were to master one tense form, such as the simple present, before being introduced to other forms, such as the present continuous or the past simple. Speaking of this approach in a metaphoric way, Nunan (2005) asserts that,

...learning another language by this method is like constructing a wall. The language wall is erected one linguistic 'brick' at a time. The easy grammatical bricks are laid at the bottom of the wall, providing foundation for the more difficult ones. The task of the learner is to get the linguistic bricks in the right order: first the word bricks, and then the sentence bricks. If the bricks are not in the correct order, the wall will collapse under its own ungrammaticality (191).

Being a speaker, a teacher, and a researcher of EAL, I have witnessed this collapse of the linguistic bricks "under [their] own ungrammaticality", both from personal experience as a learner and a student of English language and English literature, and in the work of students⁷⁵. As a university student, I was always surprised by my failure to apply knowledge of specific grammatical items that I had learnt and mastered during my secondary education. My identifying of similar experiences by most of my students in their Weekly Independent Writing tasks in *An Integrated English Language Course* (2001) became sufficient motivation to investigate reasons for this failure to apply what was supposedly learnt.

My personal narrative of learning English at University, as narrated in Chapter 5, by and large, shows that I did not acquire language in the step-by-step, building block fashion suggested by the linear model. My learning of English occurred through engagement with learning tasks that required me to use language within functional, purposeful contexts. Literary Theory in the English Department became a meta-language through which I could enter literary works in order to be able to speak and write about them, and English Usage challenged me to learn to think

⁷⁵ Chapter 5 is record of data concerning my experiences of learning English and through English at secondary school and at university.

critically about my language choices within the context of talking and writing about various socio-cultural, political and educational texts that have bearing on our everyday lives.

I want to point out, however, that this does not need to be read as a suggestion that literary analysis is, or can be, a substitute for academic literacy. Instead, as Teresa of the University of Sydney's English Department (drawing from Gee, 1990) points out during the interview in 2005: "*literacy means more than the ability to read and write, but involves knowing how to behave in a discourse; is underpinned by beliefs, values and attitudes, and it is more than a set of skills*". My experiences illustrate this because during lectures I was often encouraged to apply grammatical items for specific functional purposes as defined by specific English literary studies discipline. What I learnt, in other words, was to have conscious control over the deployment of grammatical items as dictated by the purpose for which I was constructing texts (spoken and written), and acquired the necessary rhetorical structures relevant to literary studies.

In terms of my personal experience, rather than being isolated bricks, the various elements of language interacted with, and were affected by, other elements to which they were related closely in a functional sense. This interrelationship, as Nunan (2005) points out, "accounts for the fact that a learner's mastery of a particular language item is unstable, appearing to increase and decrease at different times during the learning process" (192). When I was a lecturer in *An Integrated English Language Course* from 2001 to 2003 my students often showed a deterioration in mastering the past perfect continuous tense (for instance, "he had been doing a good job for us until he went to Linguistics") at the point when they were beginning to acquire the future in the past (for instance, "I was going to become a literary scholar, but I did not know the right people in the field"). My students would use the future in the past correctly, but when they had to refer to an event that took place before another event in the past (to use the past perfect continuous), within the same text, they would fail to do so. On the basis of this and other examples, I want to argue that students do not learn one thing perfectly, one item at a time, but

numerous things simultaneously, and I would add, imperfectly. Learning another language is thus more like growing a garden than building a wall. According to Nunan (2005):

Linguistic flowers do not all appear at the same time, nor do they all grow at the same rate. Some even appear to wilt, for a time, before renewing their growth. The rate of growth is determined by a complex interplay of factors related to speech processing constraints, pedagogical interventions, acquisitional processes, and the influence of the discursive environment in which the items occur (192).

There are correlations between what Nunan (2005) points out, and Krashen's (1981) theory of language teaching, learning, and acquisition. Krashen (1988) makes a distinction between acquisition and learning, and sees both processes as distinct. Krashen and Terrel (1983) describe each process clearly: "language acquisition is the natural way to develop linguistic ability, and is a subconscious process... Learning refers to explicit knowledge of rules, being aware of them and being able to talk about them" (26). Within the context of my own literacy development in English, in most cases success in tasks depended on my tutors' constant reference to grammatical structures that I had thought I understood earlier, but always found myself unable to deploy accurately the moment I learned new grammatical features. As will be shown in this Chapter, unlike students who were part of an add-on ADP in English literature at Rhodes and *Foundation Course in English Literature* (2002) at Witwatersrand universities' English departments, the way the study of texts was approached in the English Department I studied in enabled me to learn that language is not simply a collection of distinct grammatical features. Rather, it is a vehicle through which we learn to express our ideas in ways that take into account the context and the purpose of the communication. If I wished to give equal weight to two pieces of information, for instance, I had to learn to present the information in a single sentence, using coordination. If I wanted to give one of these pieces of information greater weight, I had to learn to use subordination. I also learnt that passive forms have evolved to enable the speaker or writer to place the communicative focus on the action rather than on the performer of the action, to avoid referring to the performer of the action.

While it is true that speakers of EAL understand these language skills in their first languages, it takes time to develop conscious control over them in another language. My tutors in the English Usage module, as I pointed out earlier, taught me which grammatical structures to use to communicate which meanings, a set of skills that is difficult to grasp and understand in another language. While at the University of Natal's English Department attempts were made to teach language within context, aspects such as engaging with extended texts in order to understand ways in which choice of rhetorical features arise as a result of the purpose of the text, were overlooked. The concern was mostly with the identification of grammatical structures, taught in a linear fashion in the previous weeks, in extracts from texts such as short stories, newspaper articles, the university annual financial report, and day-to-day texts. The next section discusses data concerning the Rhodes University English Department's add-on ADP in English literature.

7.2 Academic Development Programme and literacy practices at Rhodes University's English Department

This section examines and discusses data yielded by the narrative interview with Bob at Rhodes University. It begins by a discussion of data concerning the issue about the central concerns of English literary studies in the design and delivery of the non-formal, non-credit bearing ADP. The discussion indicates that Bob's sense of the model of intervention adopted by his Department draws from a particular understanding of the nature of the discipline of English literature. It is clear from the data, furthermore, that his colleagues did not understand students' challenges with linguistic and/or academic literacy as their responsibility.

The issue about the central concerns of English literary studies at Rhodes University is addressed by Bob during the interview conducted in 2002. Unlike data concerning *An Integrated English Language Course* (2001) which has different elemental genres from both story and non-story genres, Bob's responses often switch from a Narrative (story genre) to Policy (non-story genre). Jordens' (2002) description of the Policy genre is useful here: "a useful gloss of the

Policy genre is ‘Given this scenario, I do this, for these reasons’” (176). In describing the characteristics of this genre, he asserts that:

The function of the Scenario stage is to locate the goings-on that are construed in the text...The Policy stage construes a routine of behaviour, or a practical way of proceeding in the circumstances, and so getting on with the business [as usual]. The Rationale stage provides *reasons* for so proceeding...it *explains why* the policy is enacted (Jordens, 2002:177).

This shift from the Narrative genre to a Policy genre compels the listener to assess seemingly questionable decisions as inevitable institutional resolutions:

EM: In your opinion, do you think the structure and the approach in the Academic Development Programme you introduced drew from the central concerns of the discipline of English literature, and do you think it succeeded in meeting the language needs of Black students who were part of the English Department?

Bob: Based on our knowledge of Black students’ educational backgrounds, our decision to mount a skills-based course, with an aim to developing academic literacy through mini-lectures, note-taking skills, library skills, essay writing skills and reading skills, became a reasonable policy decision (Interview, 2002).

Bob’s use of “*our knowledge*” seems to be an attempt to relinquish responsibility for, or distance himself as an individual (the Head of Department) from, decisions made at the time, and, in the process compels the listener to engage with such decisions as products of an organisation rather than an individual. It is not clear, however, whether “*our*” refers to the English Department or Rhodes University as an institution. Whatever the case, Bob’s shift from a Story genre to a Policy genre in his Recount invokes not just an individual’s narration on how events unfolded, but an institutional voice that responded to circumstances. In this way the scenario orientates the listener, not to a unique event or sequence of events in which particular individuals are the primary agents, but to a familiar configuration of actors or roles in a familiar situation, that is, in a situation that is constructed as recursive (Jordens, 2002). This is one of the main ways in which the Policy genre differs from the Narrative genre, which is centrally concerned with particular persons and unique events. Drawing from his responses so far, on his arrival at Rhodes University in the early 1980s, Bob was given the responsibility to lead a team of academics that designed an Academic Literacy Development Programme to be used for first-

year students from ex-DET schools. Bob's Recount of events with regard to this programme illustrates, once again, a shift from Narrative genre to Policy genre, and I indicate clearly each characteristic of this genre:

Scenario

If you go back to the 50s and the implementation of Bantu Education...by the 70s children now were being taught by teachers themselves who were the product of Bantu Education. And possibly they never had contact with first language speakers of English...So by this period kids from DET schools were getting second generation, second language speakers as teachers...

Policy

So when at Rhodes in 1982 we began to set up our Academic Development Programme we targeted particularly students from a DET background and white students who were seen to be at risk and needed the support...and we provided an in-term support. It was of course only ever voluntary.

Rationale

There were several kinds of difficulties: some students feeling they were being stigmatised and peculiar sensitivities not in the sense of being odd but I mean...special to Black students in White institution in the early 80s...It was a politically fragile period, with funerals every week and speeches every week, more funerals and more speeches the following week...Black students who were here were regarded as sell-outs inside a White institution. So they were under immense pressures. And then to be told you are not good enough and you actually have to go to the Academic Development Programme was an additional burden that was a stigma. So it was a tight rope that we walked. But what ended up happening is that we were over loaded with struggling whites who themselves were sort of marginal or wished to improve their marks (Interview, 2002).

The response by Bob begins by describing, not a particular event, but a scenario that saw more and more students from ex-DET schools entering into white-only universities across the country. Under these circumstances, the introduction of ADP was critical. As the Rationale stage above shows, Rhodes intended such a programme to be directed to students from underprivileged educational backgrounds who spoke EAL. Opening the ADP up even to students who did not necessarily come from ex-DET schools, and who spoke English as a mother-tongue, was a consequence of the political sensitivities of the time, not an acknowledgement of the fact that no student enters university education with sufficient mastery of academic discourses (regardless of linguistic background). Chapter 5 shows that when I enrolled for English 1 in 1994, the mainstream curriculum exposed all students to the English literature discipline's specialised discourses from the entrance level, and this was done through the teaching of Literary Theory. This is the aspect of the discipline that gave me access to texts and the ability to talk and write

about them. The personal attention I received from one of the lecturers, as discussed in Chapter 5, provided one-to-one tuition and, because of it, I was able to understand the Literary Theory.

Through all these engagements, Literary Theory offered me a meta-language through which I managed to enter texts in ways that helped me to transcend my limitations as an outsider in the discipline of English literature. Elsewhere (Mgqwashu, 2000) I have argued that lecturers remain insiders within certain disciplines in the academy because they possess “certain forms of language which operate as ‘given’ and, as a consequence, [employ] a particular set of linguistic codes...These linguistic codes become the criteria in terms of which students are assessed” (63). Jacobs (2006) notes, furthermore, that the insider identity may also be ascribed to lecturers’ ability to use the “rhetorical structures of the discipline” (205) in ways that students cannot. This is why the data in Chapter 5 may represent attempts to explain how I managed to succeed, even though my educational background did not prepare me for the demands of higher education. This was achieved through raising my awareness of the way in which genre, purpose, and the context of a text together determine one’s grammatical choices when constructing a text (both spoken and written). In his *Language and Education in South Africa: The Value of a Genre-based Pedagogy for Access and Inclusion*, Johnson (1994) asserts that:

A genre-based approach to language emphasises the cultural and social dimensions underpinning the formation and constitution of language and text. It allows us to understand what language does or is made to do by different people in order to make particular meanings...it aims to give disadvantaged students a more equitable access to the cultural and social resources offered by society. It argues that access to social, economic, and cultural benefits have much to do with commanding the highest level of literacy skills...full access to and the control of social institutions is dependant on access to the most powerful forms of writing and the most powerful genres in one’s own society (31-32).

Johnson’s (1994) assertion seems to have informed the pedagogic practice in my experiences, for, after submitting written work to our tutors, we would be asked questions regarding the language choices we made, and received guidance on grammatical uses that, according to them, were going to achieve the impact we desired. This was the way in which my tutors attended to

grammatical expression within communicative and functional contexts. Contrary to ADP-type modules which view literacy as a list of decontextualised technical skills at a superficial level, my learning experiences enabled me to gain access to “the highest level of literacy skills”, to use Johnson’s (1994:32) words. My tutors realised, in Soles’ (2005) words, that: “it [was] better to teach the fundamentals of the writing process thoroughly than all of its particulars superficially” (xvii). Such fundamentals of the writing process may include questions like: what function does an introduction perform in different text-types such as argument, narrative, explanation, description, and discussion? How do we construct and provide evidence and/or support for our position in writing within each of these text-types? What is the relationship between specific rhetorical features and the purpose of the text being written?

According to Bob, Rhodes University’s decision to require students, who spoke English as a mother-tongue, to register for ADP, was not motivated by the rationale presented above, but rather because the University did not wish to burden further a psychologically and emotionally overwhelmed group of Black students by designating a ‘language’ module just for them. Jacobs (2006) writes about the politicization (Pennycook, 1994, Brock-Utne, 2000) of ‘English as a Second Language’ as a term, and argues that this presents students who speak EAL as having a form of deficit. It appears, from what Bob suggests, that Rhodes University felt that setting a module just for such students would suggest an endorsement of this viewpoint. The best policy decision was thus to make the Academic Development Programme in the 1980s compulsory to those first-year students (both Black and white) “*who were seen to be at risk and needed the support*”, regardless of their linguistic background. The fact that the English Department ended up “*overloaded with struggling whites who themselves were sort of marginal or wished to improve their marks*” (Bob: Interview, 2002) is clear indication of the fact that the shift by Rhodes University in 1995 from academic literacy development for white students, to directing such an intervention only to Black students, was a politically motivated, potentially misguided, and under-theorised policy decision. This was despite the fact that the political climate in the

country had changed already. In her *A Description of the Language Experiences of English Second-Language Students Entering the Academic Discourse Communities of Rhodes University* (1997), Reynolds notes that “An *ad hoc* committee was established in 1993 to initiate English for Academic Purposes course at Rhodes. This was a late start in comparison both with other universities in South Africa and with other countries...” (38). The fact that Bob refers to “*struggling*” white students implies that *every* student, as was the case in the University of Durban-Westville in 1994 when I was a first-year student, required proper and systematic tuition on the nature of academic discourses. It must be pointed out that the English Department staff members at Rhodes University were not necessarily enthusiastic about the idea of involving themselves with the Academic Development Programme, even when more funding became available. According to Bob,

In the early 1990s...Margery McIntosh, who was a very wealthy donor to the University, gave the Department, the English Department, a large amount of money to help with second language students. Now, the English Department admitted from the beginning that they did not have the expertise, they did not have the will, they really did not want to... I mean this is one of the classic dilemmas, the classic English Department, people say I am not hired to teach grammar you know, I am not hired to teach language, that kind of thing. And they said, no!, our area of expertise lies in teaching literature (Interview, 2002).

Bob’s assertion that “*they did not have a will, they really did not want to*” sits uneasily with the fact that his colleagues “*admitted from the beginning that they did not have the expertise*” to teach in the English literature-specific ADP. Academic literacy in the discipline of literature for Bob’s colleagues, it seems to me, did not mean guiding students through the process of acquiring discipline-specific ways of reading, writing, and speaking about literary texts, what Christie (1987) calls: “learning the genres of one’s [discipline]” (30). Given the fact that ADP was perceived as something designed for ‘problem students’, that is, those who could “*not string together a meaningful sentence, construct [] proper paragraphs...*” (Bob: Interview, 2002), Bob’s colleagues misunderstood the nature of educational challenges faced by these students. The real educational challenges for these students are not merely due to lack of knowledge of English syntax and/or vocabulary. Taylor (1988) explains that:

many errors in the forms of syntax and other linguistic structures are traceable to problems of meaning external to the forms and conventions of English syntax itself. That is to say, much poor syntax arises because students do not know, or only dimly know, what they are talking about. It also arises because...students only dimly know what their lecturers and tutors want them to do (58).

The “problems of meaning external to the forms and conventions of English syntax itself”, to use Taylor’s (1988) words, involve what Kuhn (in Brufee, 1993) describes as “...the common property of a group or else nothing at all” (3). This is the reason Reynolds (1997) insists that:

It would be a gross simplification to suggest that the difficulties experienced by ESL students in writing academically are merely due to a lack of knowledge of English vocabulary and syntax which shows in the language errors typically made by these students. There is an increasing understanding...that language or surface errors are manifestations of much deeper difficulties (42).

The source of these difficulties arises from the fact that the process of education is a form of initiation into a kind of culture in which “cognitive and linguistic behaviour” is assessed in terms of its “appropriateness to cultural context” (Reynolds, 1987). For Bob’s colleagues in the English Department, it seems to me, the reluctance to be involved in the literature-specific ADP lies in their misunderstanding of students’ problems, and failure to recognise that their embeddedness in the culture of the discipline positions them better to initiate these students. Kapp (1994) provides an example of why students’ educational difficulties are largely not about English syntax and vocabulary. She reports that students “frequently interpret the word ‘critical’ to mean fault-finding, ‘argument’ as a process whereby the opposition is proved wrong” (116). Discipline-specific ADPs, when theorised and designed properly, can raise students’ awareness of grammatical structures and their functions in relation to the context in which they are used, and when to use which structure to achieve what purposes (Halliday, 1978)⁷⁶. They can also teach students ways of reading, of thinking, of writing, of speaking, of knowledge construction and dissemination, of contesting knowledge, and of defending one’s point of view in an acceptable way that will be recognised within a particular discipline.

⁷⁶ Please see Chapter 3 for a detailed analysis of the Hallidayan (1978) approach to the teaching of grammar.

The interview with Bob offers some insights into this rather unexpected response by his colleagues to a generous offer by the donor. In continuing with the Policy genre, Bob begins by offering a scenario stage (defined earlier in this section) in which he manages to identify real reasons for his colleagues' despondency. According to Bob, his colleagues' thinking could be described as follows:

Scenario

Simply have to assume certain levels of competencies otherwise we cannot operate with the students. We really do not want to be involved with the business of getting underprepared students to get to the level where they can work with us.

Policy

Dan was appointed here as an ADP officer in a sense. So Dan was supposed to have half time teaching literature and half time working on students' development within the Department.

Rationale

We needed a professional ADP person on our team because the university had required that departments have their own ADP officers. Dan does not run courses, but he does one-on-one consultations; he runs mini-workshops of one to twelve students. He will run things like exam workshops, essay workshops, and that kind of thing.

Bob's scenario stage in his use of the policy genre in the above response exposes his colleagues' awareness of another problem, which they chose (or pretended?) not to notice. Given the fact that all of them possibly have a clear understanding of the distinction between a language module and an academic literacy module, their reluctance to be involved with 'underprepared' students shows that they understand that work with such students requires more than just tuition in literature-specific academic literacy.

It is not surprising then that "*sadly of course, other colleagues who were resistant to the idea from the word go, simply refer 'problem students' to Dan, and do not get involved with it themselves*". According to Bob, 'problem students' "*simply did not have conscious control over the use of language*" (Bob: Interview, 2002). The conscious control over language, according to Balfour (2000), is only possible when analytical thinking is encouraged by a pedagogic process. The literacy setbacks characteristic of students referred to by Bob are thus a result of a lack of

exposure to teaching and learning contexts that encourage students to think analytically. And thus in the same sense the responses of Bob's colleagues suggest that they themselves are responsible partly for the perpetuation of students' underpreparedness for university education. Boughey (2005) suggests that these attitudes and responses "collude in denying [students] access to much of what they hope and expect from a university" (1). My experiences presented as the data in Chapter 5 indicate clearly that there were identifiable efforts on the part of lecturers to facilitate first-year students' epistemological access.

The data recorded in Chapter 5, for example, show that my experiences of learning English and learning in English may be said to have positioned me to gain access to skills important for my success at university. It represents my development across three phases, namely: first, vulnerable secondary school pupil; secondly, confident pupil due to supportive and dynamic tuition from the 'private tutor' and, thirdly, a successful university student. Language choices in the narrative enable the text to present each of these identities as indicative of different stages in my English language development.

As with the students Bob refers to, my monolingual status was certainly an indisputable disadvantage for a pupil from a working class, monolingual home and community. However, the fact that the type of curriculum I was exposed to "stresses the social purposiveness of knowledge", as Cope and Kalantzis (1993:81) put it, meant that this type of disadvantage did not have a lasting negative effect. In addition, the special, one-to-one mentoring I received from my tutor further enhanced opportunities for educational success. Of course, at junior primary and senior primary schools my mother-tongue was often used as a medium of instruction. At senior primary, instead of improving my cognitive skills, "*the use of mother tongue became nothing more than the translation of English texts, and this confused us even further when we attempted to study in our homes and when we had to write tests and exams, all of which were set in English*". My only hope at secondary school was supposed to be my teachers, especially those

who taught English. As was the case with students at Rhodes University who came from ex-DET schools and were attending ADP, my English teachers were either unapproachable and/or used corporal punishment whenever they thought that was necessary.

Evident in the way English teachers taught in the schools where the majority of students Bob refers to came from, is a high degree of under-development. Chapter 5, for example, refers to an English teacher who never took seriously pupils' request for assistance in skills to use the dictionary, and another teacher who used corporal punishment: *"instead of assisting us with her knowledge of how to use a dictionary, she would make discouraging comments such as: 'I am not your walking dictionary'"*. Then there was the Grade 9 and 10 teacher *"who would always carry a stick when teaching, never smiled during his lessons...he gave me five lashes because of my 'wrong pronunciation' of the word 'apple'"*. Implicit in the way teachers in schools under the system of Bantu Education taught is also a lack of confidence and/or motivation; and pupils paid the price for it (Hartshorne, 1992). According to Balfour (2000), *"the approach employed by teachers in schools for Black South Africans discourages critical awareness because knowledge is perceived as 'packaged truth' to be ingested without questioning"* (96).

Most students for whom Bob's ADP was designed never carried copies of some of the literature set for their Grades during lessons. Under these circumstances, no rigorous attention to reading skills was ever given. Samuel (1995) notes that within these circumstances *"the teacher therefore becomes installed as the repository of L2 terminology and pupils reduce her function to that of a translator"* (17). This suggests that simple translation, as opposed to code-switching, does active damage to developing students' language abilities⁷⁷. The teaching of writing was also a matter of swatting a 'good essay' and regurgitating it at tests and exams. As with most students from former DET schools, I was never taught about the function that introductions,

⁷⁷ 'Translation' refers to changing the whole text from one language to the other, and is often used in courts, Home Affairs offices, and many other contexts. It is also used within the context of written languages. 'Code-switching', on the other hand, refers to occasional switch to the language spoken by the teacher and the majority of the audience. Translation involves a rewriting of the whole text, while code-switching refers to using the language of the majority in the audience sparingly, and only when this is necessary. Translation is detrimental within the classroom context.

opening sentences in paragraphs and conclusions serve. The English teacher simply asked one of the “*female pupils to write such essays on the board and the whole class had to copy*”. These are the kinds of students for which Dan’s mini-workshops in the English Department ADP had to cater.

Contrary to the way the English Department at the University of Durban-Westville dealt with these challenges, the focus at Rhodes shifted from the discourse of English literature to English grammar, an aspect in which most students who speak EAL were perceived to struggle. In this context, more time had to be spent on concord, subject-verb agreement, sentence and paragraph constructions, tenses, and rules regarding the use of discourse markers (also done in academic literacy). Needless to say, Dan’s workload and weekly marking in particular, increased, with draft after draft as students crowded his office. For Dan, this meant spending more time involved with students’ language-related problems than teaching literature. Bob, as the Head of English Department, had to think of a radical solution to tackle these disturbing and unforeseen developments. His Recount, once again, adopts a Policy genre through which he indicates that changes ensuing as a result of these challenges were policy-driven:

We set up a sort of joint committee: English language and Linguistics, ISEA, Education, English Department, and we said let us use McIntosh money to set up a proper course because by the early 1990s the University thinking had changed and they were looking at credit bearing courses. The big flaw in what we did in the 1980s is that it was all voluntary, and was not credit bearing. And so you had students who had language problems and possibly learning problems and possibly cognitive problems, which lacked academic literacy, having to keep a full course load of four credits, and then expected to do ADP support work in addition, which was a huge problem (Interview, 2002).

The setting up of a committee, as Bob’s response indicates, which involved the English Department and other departments was thus a response to the broader University’s policy decision in 1993 to move from ADP, voluntary, non-credit bearing support towards a more professional and structured credit-bearing module that was to be among the modules constituting a junior degree. For the English Department the involvement of colleagues from Linguistics and Education meant the availability of people with relevant expertise and, more importantly, a

willingness to teach language and related academic literacy skills, all of which meant better support for Dan. The committee's meetings culminated in the English Language for Academic Purposes (ELAP) module. Sarah Murray of the Education Faculty, and Vivian de Klerk of the English Language and Linguistics Department, played a major role in the design and delivery of the ELAP module. The module content included topics such as the extensive use of journals, feedback on journals, note-taking skills, library skills, essay writing skills, reading skills, with the aim of developing academic literacy. Due to the fact that funding came from the English Department, Bob gives the following explanation:

ELAP was attached to the English Department for a couple of years but actually run and staffed by English Second Language specialists who were more Linguistics. After sometime the McIntosh money ran out and, fortunately, the University realised that it had to take the initiative on. After this, the initiative went to its logical home, which is Applied Linguistics. Because of the limited availability of financial resources, the university agreed that the course content remained relatively unchanged for a reasonable period of time (Interview, 2002).

I discuss at length data conducted through Narrative-style interview with Leanne concerning ELAP in the fourth section of this Chapter. As a concluding point about the English Department at Rhodes University, it is important to note that it ultimately relinquished its role to expose first-year students to how the literature discipline views language and its function in constructing and defending one's position through the English language. The English Department also missed the opportunity to raise their students' awareness, prior to English 1, about which grammatical structures work best if one wishes to indicate ambivalence and/or empathy with a particular point of view, for example. The focus was simply on 'correcting' grammar and guiding students on writing essays about literary works, all of which excluded the teaching of literary skills. The next section discusses data about another English Department, the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002) module at the University of the Witwatersrand. The English Department at this University introduced a credit-bearing, semester-long module to teach literary skills, not just *ad hoc* ADP on how to respond to essays about literary works as was the case at Rhodes University.

7.3 Introducing students to literary studies at the University of the Witwatersrand’s English Department

Contrary to Rhodes University’s English Department, the English Department at the University of Witwatersrand succeeded in introducing a discipline specific foundation module entitled *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002). In this section the data show that the exclusion of critical material such as Literary Theory and other critical readings about literary texts remained a disadvantage in the module. Lynn’s responses to interview questions point to this as a major limitation in the initiative⁷⁸. Even though the module is seen as preparatory for students intending to major in English, as the discussion will show, students who pass the module do not appear to cope with English 1. The problem with both approaches, however, is that they ignored the fact that success in the study of literature written in any language requires a command of the discourse of the discipline. Rose (2006) suggests that a pedagogic practice can facilitate the acquisition of this command by assisting students to “independently process [...] large quantities of texts across the curriculum...learning to recognise, understand, and reproduce their language patterns...” (6). The reason for students’ failure to acquire disciplinary discourses is that “the focus of teaching is on curriculum content, not the language patterns that realise them” (Rose, 2006:6). Figure 7.2 indicates how the focus on curriculum content, and not on the discourse of the discipline of English literature, is reflected in the structure of the timetable of the module under investigation in the English Department of the University of the Witwatersrand.

Figure 7.2: Timetable for the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002)

Monday	8:30 – 9:15	Lecture/Seminar <i>Weep Not, Child</i>] Weeks 1-3 <i>We Shall Sing for the Fatherland</i>] Weeks 4-5 <i>Poetry</i>] Weeks 6-7
	9:15 – 10:00 10:15 – 11:00	Tutorial Writing Workshop
Tuesday	11:30 – 12:15	Lecture/Seminar <i>Weep Not Child</i>] Weeks 1-3 <i>We Shall Sing for the Fatherland</i>] Weeks 4-5 <i>Poetry</i>] Weeks 6-7
	12:30 – 1:15 10:15 – 11:00	Tutorial Writing Workshop

⁷⁸ As mentioned in Chapter 5, Lynn is the coordinator of the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002) offered by the University of the Witwatersrand’s English Department. In 2002 I interviewed her about this module.

The manner in which the timetable is sequenced appears to suggest that lectures focus on the set fictional texts, as there is no mention of sessions which focus on critical readings about each set work. One would expect that a ‘foundation’ module would strive to facilitate students’ access to the language patterns in the English literature disciplinary discourses predominantly found in critical readings, and not leave these as part of students’ own reading⁷⁹. This state of affairs is contrary to my experiences when I was an English 1 student where attention to critical readings about specific texts and Literary Theory featured in the sequence of lectures. In his *Consequences of Pragmatism* (1982), Rorty presents his understanding of Literary Theory:

Beginning in the days of Goethe and Macaulay and Carlyle and Emerson, a new kind of writing has developed which is neither the evaluation of the relative merits of literary productions, nor intellectual history, nor moral philosophy, nor social prophecy, but all of these mingled together in a new genre (66).

This ‘new’ genre’s dominant feature is its focus on problematising the notion of a text and the process of its reading. Questions about what a text is and how it works to construct which realities, meanings, and identities, for whose benefit, at whose expense, and for which purpose, for instance, are defining characteristics of this genre. Before the emergence of this genre in the nineteenth century, both the nature of textual processes and reading were considered unproblematic because literature was considered to be “creative or imaginative work” (Eagleton, 1983:18). The inclusion of Literary Theory in the sequence of lectures when I was an English 1 student gave me access to “the systematic account of the nature of literature and of methods for analysing it” (Culler, 2000:1). As a genre that problematises textuality and the reading process, it enabled me to reflect on, and debate systematically, literary works in ways that are valued within the discipline of literary studies. Because Literary Theory was not appended, and outside the mainstream curriculum, as pointed out in Chapter 5, it “*offered me a metalanguage through which I managed to write about literary works*” in ways that equipped me to transcend my

⁷⁹ While it is true that most syllabi and module outlines list primary texts only, in the case of this module a further examination of the section entitled *Guide to Students* in this module indicates clearly to students that tutors “will not supply you with factual information or suggest critical perspectives to you” (8).

disadvantaged educational background. It became what Gee (1990) calls a “sort of identity kit...to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful ‘role’” (143).

In a module entitled the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002) designed “to introduce students to different strategies to study literature” (Module outline), it would make sense to expect the inclusion of this aspect of the discipline. The fact that this aspect is missing, and that neither Lynn nor the lecture timetable referred to it, appears to reflect a particular perspective concerning the introduction of critical reading material to students of literature. The idea of excluding Literary Theory in the teaching of literature in the University of the Witwatersrand English Department’s *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002) reflects a conventional (or Leavisite) perspective which refuses to focus on anything other than the words on the page. According to Selden and Widdowson (1993), Leavis...

defends his refusal to theorise his work by saying that criticism and philosophy are quite separate activities and that the business of the critic is to ‘attain a peculiar completeness of response [in order] to enter into possession of the given poem...in its concrete fullness’. Leavis produced many volumes of criticism and cultural commentary...resolutely untheorised in abstract terms...Leavis is...concern[ed] with the concrete specificity of the ‘text itself’, ‘the words on the page’...is concerned with the work in front of him...as something that should contain within itself the reason why it is so and not otherwise (21-22).

In writing about explanations for the exclusion of critical material such as Literary Theory in literature modules, Culler (2000) notes that often the complaint is that this inclusion causes “too much discussion of non-literary matters, too much debate about general questions whose relation to literature is scarcely evident, too much reading of difficult psychoanalytical, political, and philosophical texts” (1). What Chapter 5 appears to indicate, however, is that far from an addition of irrelevant content, the inclusion of Literary Theory offers students, who are novices in the study of literature, opportunities for the acquisition of the discourse of the discipline of literary studies. Given Rose’s (2006) assertion that “the high level reading skills required for university study...remains limited to ...[a] small minority” (6), it is important to expose students to reading material that models ways in which literary scholars as a discourse community employ

different rhetorical features specific to the discipline of English literature. The influence of the Leavisite sense of understanding literature and concern with “the concrete specificity of the text” itself is revealed in Lynn’s assertion that “*language improvement, I believe, is developed simply through working with the language closely, and this allows students to pick up some important language skills*” (Interview, 2002). It is not clear whether by ‘language skills’ Lynn means English language or the discourse of the English literature discipline. Whatever the case may be, under these circumstances (it seems to me) that it is not fair to expect the majority of students to learn how to couch an opinion in ways that are logical and coherent based on their primary reading. Taking into consideration opposing opinions in the process of constructing ones’ position, for instance, is often a result of the engagement with critical readings in the discipline of English literature. Lynn’s response to a question designed to elicit details about students’ performance in her module unfolds within the Recount macro-genre but, as it is the case with data about the University of Natal’s module, there are several elemental genres within it. In her response, Lynn points out that few students, after finishing the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002), manage to qualify for entrance into English 1:

I think those students who plan to study literature benefit basic reading skills of studying literature...not many of these students qualify for English 1. Out of 84 students we had last year, only 16 qualified for English 1, with the rest of the group pursuing other disciplines. Even the very few students who do qualify find English 1’s pace is much faster for them and less supportive than the Foundation Course, with less and less interaction with tutors. Hence I’m not sure whether the support is enabling or disempowering (Interview, 2002).

The first sentence in Lynn’s response, as with all texts within the Recount genre, orientates the listener into a context within which her response is located: “*those students who plan to study literature*”. After this orientation, she presents a record of events concerning such students: “*Out of 84 students we had last year, only 16 qualified for English 1*”. Inherent in Lynn’s personal experience with students’ performance in this module is a great degree of uncertainty which is probably a consequence of limited experience and expertise in the field of academic literacy in the discipline of English literature. This uncertainty is expressed through an elemental genre called Observation; a genre that shares personal response to specific set of events. On the one

hand, her response begins by an expression of a belief in the success of her foundation module in the study of literature, which she only *'thinks'* benefits students who plan to study literature. On the other hand, she later acknowledges that not many students pass the module after all, and that even those who do, find it difficult to manage with English 1: "*English 1's pace is much faster for them and less supportive than the Foundation Course*". Attempts to express the effect these sets of circumstances have on her induce yet another elemental genre in this Recount: an Anecdote. The point of this elemental genre, according to Plum (1988), is to share a reaction with the audience: "*I'm not sure whether the support is enabling or disempowering*". Lack in proper reflection and informed judgement are the reasons for a failure of modules similar to the one coordinated by Lynn.

According to Jacobs (2006), the reason for the failure of such initiatives lies in the fact that modules of this nature fail to present "language as a means for accessing core disciplinary concepts, as well as an awareness of the rhetorical structures of the discipline" (205). Because of the lack of awareness of the 'rhetorical structures of the discipline', Balfour's (2000) findings about a similar module at the University of Natal indicate that "first year students of English with poor levels of linguistic competence were unable to develop critical skills, such as the ability to argue coherently in writing or read [material provided in the module] critically, even though the new programme focussed on these skills" (95). In the case of *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002), given the content of the module as suggested by the lecture timetable in Figure 7.2, it appears that it is disempowering to students who lack the skills to read independently with comprehension. Lynn points out that:

Students who go on to the Foundation Course are normally the students who would not have made it into the university based on their matric results. So they write an admissions test the university sets and depending on where their interests are they are steered into a particular Foundation Course, then they are put on into a four-year curriculum (Interview, 2002).

Lynn's assertion that these students "*would not have made it into the university based on their matric results*" means they needed a programme with a focus beyond just "learning topics across subject areas, sometimes known as 'themes' in the weakly classified [curriculum...]" to foster the underlying curricular goal of independently learning from reading, without teaching it explicitly" (Rose, 2006:6-7). Within this context then, the real issue appears not to be about student support *per se* (as suggested by Lynn's uncertainty), but about the type of support. This includes questions about the extent to which such support is informed by in-depth understanding of the ways in which the discipline of English literature constructs itself through various mediums, but especially through writing. Engagement with data at the University of the Witwatersrand's English Department thus indicates that so long as an explicit, well-thought out and systematic focus on rhetorical structures of the discipline remains on the margins of the syllabus in the foundation module, many students will not succeed academically. Lynn's Recount below exemplifies common, and often misleading, thinking with regard to teaching rhetorical strategies that contribute to the development of students' access to the discipline's discourses:

There is nobody who teaches grammar particularly in this university, but there are times when I would focus on particular grammatical problems that I think is the general problem that everybody could benefit from. Concord is always a problem for example, and so I do a bit of work on concord in our tutorials and (laughing) never seemed to lead to any improvement, but maybe there is some value in highlighting a problem and makes students aware of it (Interview, 2002).

Mere students' awareness of one particular linguistic problem, without an attempt to demonstrate the extent to which grammatical choices in general are a result of the purpose for which texts are constructed, does not guarantee successful learning. It will not help to learn the linguistic conventions and rhetorical strategies that are acceptable in the discipline of English literature because complete access to a discourse can be made possible within the context of extended texts. Bob (at Rhodes University) sees the problem as students' lack of "*conscious control over the use of language*" (Interview, 2002). This certainly requires more than accidental attention to a few obvious language difficulties. Such decisions usually prove to be unfruitful, as Lynn with humour points out above: "*...a bit of work on concord...never seemed to lead to any*

improvement". Lynn was still persuaded at the time of this interview, however, that explicit language teaching is not what students required in her module. The existence of Applied English Language Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, however, proved to be one of the solutions for students who needed more than Lynn's module. The next section examines data about two modules: *English Language for Academic Purposes* (ELAP) (2002) and *Foundation in English Language* (FEL) (2002) offered by applied language studies departments at Rhodes and Witwatersrand universities, respectively, as attempts to teach language for epistemological access in ways that English departments in these universities could not. While both modules see the teaching of English language and English literature as belonging to the field of English Studies (as will be shown by module contents in Chapter 8), these departments simultaneously take as their responsibility the development of students' awareness of the ways in which different disciplines construct their discourses through the English language. The applied language studies disciplines at Rhodes and Witwatersrand universities appear to have integrated both English language and academic literacy concerns in modules designed for students who needed attention in both areas.

7.4 Introducing students to discourse communities: The role of applied language studies at Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand

While each of the preceding sections in this Chapter is dedicated to an analysis and discussion of data about one module within individual English departments, engagement with data in this section is different. It focuses on two modules offered by two applied language studies departments: the English Language and Linguistics Department at Rhodes University and the Applied English Language Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand. The rationale for this shift in data presentation, analysis, and discussion, is based on four related reasons:

- both modules represent the teaching of English language and English literature as belonging to one field: the field of English Studies.
- both modules attempt to integrate the teaching of both Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills and Cognitive Academic Literacy Proficiency Cummins (1984) within one module.

- both modules enable this study to offer a critique of the English departments' tendencies to treat the teaching of English language separate from the teaching of English literature.
- both modules are comparable to the University of Sydney English Department's module (discussed in the next section), which itself reveals ways in which the other three English departments can rethink their role in teaching language for epistemological access beyond the discipline of literature.

The English Department's failure to utilise funding which was made available through Margery MacIntosh donation to Rhodes University, either by arranging staff development or employing and applied linguist, further alienated students who needed more than just a remedial program. Similarly, the English Department's *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002) at the University of the Witwatersrand failed to assist students acquire language skills that could enable them to access knowledge in English 1. This is evidenced by Lynn's admission that "*even the very few students who do qualify find English 1's pace is much faster for them and less supportive than the Foundation Course*". In both contexts extensive cooperation between the English departments and applied language studies departments led to a design of modules that focussed on teaching the English language for epistemological access, not just access in the study of literature but, most importantly, in ways that language can be structured to have meaning within diverse disciplinary contexts. During the interview, Leanne's responses to the Narrative-style questions unfold within the macro-genre of a Recount, for she "Recount[s] personal experience in an unproblematic way" (Martin, 1996:24). This form of data is different from data presented in Chapter 5 in that the latter are a narration of my personal experiences in which I am confronted with formidable challenges within the system of Bantu education and university education. I ultimately overcome these challenges and reach a stable, equilibrium state of affairs as suggested by Labov (1972). Leanne's Recount begins with reference to decisions that seem to have created a conducive (unproblematic) set of educational experiences for students in the module she coordinates:

We get somebody to come and lecture, in fact we are getting a guy from philosophy to talk about certain abstract ideas about culture that have been formulated by a South African philosopher in Cape Town. So every term we get a guest lecturer in, we get videos, we try and create a very rich learning environment for them so they are exposed to lots of different media, I suppose, as well as lots of different ideas...we really concentrate on

synthesising, that is a very difficult skill for them...we do not just read one thing, we read lots of different things. And each term they write an essay. And then in the fourth term we have a research term and this is when I try to make it more discipline focussed⁸⁰.

Just like Lynn's initial response to the Narrative-style interview analysed in the previous section, Leanne begins by orientating the listener: "*We get somebody to come and lecture, in fact we are getting a guy from philosophy to talk about certain abstract ideas about culture that have been formulated by a South African philosopher in Cape Town*". The orientation in Leanne's response indicates a deliberate choice to address what may be considered as an omission in the English Department's ADP programme at Rhodes University discussed earlier. While reading and textuality formed part of this programme, such engagements did not necessarily advance students' knowledge of language and ways in which ideas from diverse knowledge areas deploy it. To indicate how English Language for Academic Purposes (ELAP) module achieves this, Leanne's Recount offers a record of events that were part of the decisions in the module delivery mode: "*every term we get a guest lecturer in, we get videos, we try and create a very rich learning environment for them so they are exposed to lots of different media*". This represents a strategy by the module to expose students to the way in which different disciplinary areas formulate what is valued as knowledge through language, and "*concentrate on synthesising*" such ideas.

In addition to the fact that such synthesising occurs in the context of drawing from texts that are located within various disciplines, students are afforded opportunities to apply their knowledge of language within the contexts of their individual disciplines. By means of an elemental genre, an Anecdote, Leanne shares her reaction to these literacy practices with the audience. It is through this reaction that students in her module are afforded access into 'enriched English' (Granville *et al*, 1989) for epistemological access: "*we read lots of different things... then in the fourth term we have a research term and this is when I try to make it more discipline focussed*". Writing about Granville *et al*'s (1989) notion of 'enriched English' in the

⁸⁰ Leanne coordinates *English for Academic Purposes* (ELAP) at Rhodes University, and was interviewed in 2002.

context of teaching English as a subject, Wallace (2002) points out that “a pedagogy for an ‘enriched’ English will clearly need to attend to the complex manner in which structure, content and function inter-relate in the production of effective, literate English” (93). Through ELAP, the English Language and Linguistics Department, as Leanne’s response to the Narrative-style interview illustrates above, has as its primary goal to raise students’ awareness of the relationship between language, content, and the writing process⁸¹.

The Applied English Language Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, furthermore, seem to have identified problems with the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002). For this reason that Martha’s responses to the Narrative-style interview questions unfold as an Exposition, one of the formal, non-story genres. According to Martin (1984), the purpose of an Exposition is to defend an argument. Martha’s response unfolds as a text with the intention of identifying limitations in the English Department’s *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002), and presenting an alternative approach that addresses such limitations:

The English Department’s *Foundation Course in Literature*’s concerns with English literature became integrated into the *Foundation in English Language* course because of the need for a shift away from skill to teaching different disciplinary discourses. Literary concerns in this module became part of the *Foundation in English* course...The *Foundation in English* course is designed to enable students to become members of the academic community by developing their understanding of the requirements and conventions of different disciplines and subject matters. The English Department’s course, which used to be a whole-year course designed for students who were to major in English, still remained, but as a one semester module that was to be taken simultaneously with the *Foundation in English Language* course⁸².

The first part of Martha’s response unfolds as a Thesis: “*concerns with English literature became integrated into the Foundation in English Language course*”. In order to support the Thesis in her response, as with all texts within the Exposition genre, Martha offers an argument which represents as an inevitability at the time: “*because of the need for a shift away from skill to*

⁸¹ Chapter 8 draws on documentary evidence in the form of module content to illustrate how this Department achieves its aims.

⁸² Martha coordinates the *Foundation in English* (2002) module designed and taught in the Applied English Language Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand. She was interviewed in 2007.

teaching different disciplinary discourses". The suggested point of view in Martha's response, as discussed in Chapter 2, is that understanding how to behave in a discourse remains the most fundamental cognitive language skill that determines epistemological access for first-year students, not just skills such as sentence and paragraph construction. While rules of syntax, spelling, cohesion, remain one of the obvious aspects of language learning that formed part of the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002), Martha's module took a step further and drew students' attention to skills needed to produce particular kinds of written discourse structure effectively. In order to persuade the audience that her point of view is the correct one, Martha provides further arguments to support her Thesis. Her module is designed to: "*enable students to become members of the academic community by developing their understanding of the requirements and conventions of different disciplines and subject matters*". This approach seems to be addressing the problems pointed out in Chapter 5 regarding reasons for the results (32%) I received on my first test in the English Department. My autobiographical account in Chapter 5 indicates clearly that as first year students we were expected to demonstrate mastery of the structural conventions of the various text-types. In such assignments marks were rewarded according to how individual essays were structured, yet criteria for such a structure were never taught explicitly. The Applied English Language Studies Department's module at the University of the Witwatersrand attempts to redress these types of omission.

The *Foundation in English Language* (2002) offered by Applied English Language Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand addresses these omissions through providing first-year students with the knowledge and critical awareness in the application of the grammatical choices employed when writing for different purposes. Within this context, students are trained to master grammatical rules in order to develop their skills and knowledge concerning when and how to use specific grammatical purposes for particular purposes. This is contrary to the Rhodes University English Department's ADP type tuition and the University of Witwatersrand's *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002), where students' development was

confined to introducing students to a variety of texts to make them aware of different writing styles. Martha's Conclusion in her Exposition, after making different statements to support her arguments, reiterates a set of circumstances that rendered the skills-orientated approaches as having failed: "*The English Department's course, which used to be a whole-year course designed for students who were to major in English, still remained, but as a one semester module that was to be taken simultaneously with the Foundation in English Language course*". The strength in the *Foundation in English Language* (2002) is that it takes students beyond the identification of different writing styles to show them how the purpose for which a text is written, informs grammatical choices and register. *Foundation in English Language* (2002), furthermore, stresses writing and critical analysis, both of which are facilitated through the integration of literary discourses in the whole process of developing students' writing skills, with grammar as an important feature.

The main objectives of the *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) module introduced by the English Language and Linguistics at Rhodes University are similar to those in the Witwatersrand's Applied English Language Studies Department module. Leanne's response to the question regarding the aims and objectives of the *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) module indicates a clear sense of what the module intended to achieve:

The English Language for Academic Purposes module was designed to 1) facilitate the students' maturation into independent learners; 2) enhance students' ability to cope with the University's linguistic demands; 3) improve their academic vocabularies and communication in English and; 4) enhance students' ability to master the University's cognitive demands...

The module time table for ELAP illustrates clearly how the module hopes to realise these aims. As shown in Figure 7.3 below, this module integrates both linguistic and academic literacy concerns in its design:

Figure 7.3: *Timetable for the English Language for Academic Purposes (2002)*

Mondays	Lecture: Construction of written academic texts, note-taking, change of read knowledge to written texts
Tuesdays	Workshop: Library skills, reading, written responses to read texts
Wednesdays	Tutorials: Grammar, discourse, context, coherence, cohesion
Thursdays	Lecture-Workshop: Journal writing, narratives, arguments, oral presentations, debates.

Leanne further offers a detailed explanation on exactly how her module approaches each aspect on the time table as presented above:

We concentrate on reading, those are our core skills, and grammar. So, in the first semester we concentrate on very basic skills, like note taking, ...We do writing paragraphs, very basic things, building up paragraphs, support sentences, topic sentences, reading. We have a theme for each term. For instance, our theme in the first term is usually language issues. And this year we did language ecology. We looked at the death of languages globally and also in South Africa.... We sometimes do identity construction issues, we do code switching, and we do general language policy issues. Then, in the second semester, we go on to do, usually, human rights issues. For the last couple of years we've looked at circumcision-both female circumcision and male circumcision.

Leanne's responses so far unfold, in generic terms, as a Description. The purpose of this genre is to outline explicitly the component parts of a phenomenon, what is done in the teaching of the module to achieve its aim in this case. The Description constructs literacy practices in the module as having a very specific motive: to develop, to a greater extent, students' knowledge of language and a variety of aspects that emanate from language as a social construct. It is a module that makes its core the use of grammatical rules within the body of language, with particular reference to writing for academic purposes. This in itself involves the development of a constellation of abilities, knowledge, and skills necessary in the process of academic writing.

Leanne further points out that,

We make them see writing as a process, but also realise that that is not all... it is all very well to teach people how to edit their work and that writing is a recursive process, but it doesn't help them write a paragraph, it doesn't help them structure a paragraph. So that's why I say I'm eclectic in a way, I'm

taking genre theory and the process approach to teach my students how the discourse structures in particular disciplines inform text-types.

Leanne's response above unfolds as an Exemplum in that it shares her judgement of the process approach to teaching writing: "*We make them see writing as a process, but also realise that that is not all... it doesn't help them write a paragraph, it doesn't help them structure a paragraph*". The critique of the process approach is offered in Chapter 2, where it is presented as an approach that favours a minority of letters, and leaves the majority with little or no opportunity for epistemological access. Leanne shifts from an Exemplum genre to an Observation genre in order to share her personal response to limitations she identifies in the process approach. She points out that she is "*taking genre theory and the process approach to teach [her] students how the discourse structures in particular disciplines inform text-types*". Drawing on both approaches enables Leanne to integrate the teaching of grammar and academic writing simultaneously, and this is why she sees herself as "*eclectic in a way*".

I argue in Chapter 2 that this approach to language teaching tends to empower students with knowledge that prepares them for eventualities as language practitioners in such areas as editing, as well as broadening their understanding with regard to the use of language for communication. The Chapter argues further that this approach to language teaching enables students to view language as a social construct. In Leanne's module this is achieved through considering the teaching of various aspects of language such as language ecology, language death, code-switching, as well as the general language policy issues. The importance of including such aspects in the teaching of language to first-year students lies in the fact that it provides them with an understanding that language and society cannot be treated separately. In this way, *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) at Rhodes University's English Language and Linguistics Department allows students to draw from their experiences that relate to the use of language in society, and how such language usage varies in terms of the context of different disciplines. To determine the extent to which students are able to relate their social

experiences to academic literacy, *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) engages students in debates (on topical issues that relate to socio-linguistics), an activity which itself develops confidence, creativity and critical reasoning, In relation to this, Leanne says:

Every term we do oral work. We have debates, we have presentations. We try and give everybody, well, you can't give everybody, but a good fifty to sixty percent of the class has a chance to debate an issue or two to present something. We also have a poster presentation where they make fantastic posters and then they present them. They put them all over the classroom and then they present them like a poster presentation at a conference. We are building those kinds of academic skills as well.

Through debates and oral presentation, students gain knowledge and an understanding that writing for academic purposes does not end in the classroom, but involves an exposure to scholastic criticisms. The result is that students are introduced to the fact that academic argument draws on a repertoire of academic texts informing current contributions. Leanne argues that:

...that's what students are supposed to do, they're supposed to be able to go to conferences and speak. They've got to present their work to an audience. And so that's another skill that we are trying to get students to practice. That context of culture that we're trying to fit students into, and that's just part of it.

Both *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) at Rhodes University and *Foundation in English Language* (2002) at the Witwatersrand University represent measures by applied language studies departments to highlight, and address, problems that result out of an artificial separation between English language and English literature. The structure and mode of delivery in these modules encourage engagement with written texts in ways that go beyond just different writing styles, to ways in which language choices are always a result of, on the one hand, grammatical rules and, on the other hand, the purposes for which such texts are constructed. Raising students' awareness of these dynamics about textuality facilitates easy access to a variety of epistemologies as students negotiate their way through different disciplines in the university context. The University of Sydney's English Department response to students' language needs for epistemological access differs in many respects for those of English departments investigated

in this study, but is similar to strategies deployed by applied language studies departments discussed in this section.

The English Department at Natal University focussed on grammar in a linear fashion and completely excluded ways in which disciplines represented by students who enrolled for the module constructed their discourses. The English Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, on the other hand, offered a module that focussed entirely on aesthetic features of the novels studied and paid little attention to grounding students in the discourse of literary studies. The *ad hoc* ADP type tuition at Rhodes University's English Department limited its focus to individual students who struggled with their assignments, the process that never even began to address students' real needs to attain epistemological access. Both *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) and *Foundation in English Language* (2002), however, compare well with the University of Sydney English Department's module called *English 1000: University English* (2005). The next section examines data concerning this module in detail.

7.5 Reading and writing for epistemological access at the University of Sydney

As an attempt to broaden this study with the intention of constructing a counterpoint in relation to research findings within the South Africa's context, and to illustrate how some of the ideas suggested by my personal experiences inform practices in other contexts, my study includes a context beyond South African national borders. While data within the three South African HWUs may be said to have offered the study an important comparative element, data from an international context offers yet another important dimension to the investigation. As the data show, most programmes designed for students' linguistic and academic literacy needs at tertiary institutions within South Africa often draw from New Literacy Studies, the approaches that see literacy "as something done or performed as a contextualised practice" (Wallace, 2003: 89). Therefore, it seemed appropriate in this study to investigate a context where a similar approach has been adopted to inform initiatives that deal with similar students' linguistic and/ or academic

literacy challenges. The focus though is on ways in which international context implementation strategies differ from, or are similar to, the implementation strategies in South Africa. With this rationale in mind my study also investigated the extent to which the English Department in an international context has considered the central concerns of the field of English Studies with language (as discussed in Chapter 2) in its attempts to meet students' linguistic and/or academic literacy needs. These are the reasons why the University of Sydney's English Department was chosen as one of the data sources⁸³.

The language initiative under investigation in terms of the University of Sydney is the module entitled *English 1000: University English* (2005) designed for all entrance-level students, first those who intend to major in English and, secondly, those students in the Faculty of Social Sciences who wish to “strengthen and enhance [their] writing and analysis in English” (Module Brochure: 2005). The module is informed by an understanding of academic writing as a situated practice that is simultaneously a product and a reflection of its own context. Teresa, the module coordinator, pointed out during the interview that “*I feel strongly that [academic writing] should be informed by – indeed is interrelated with – research (research itself is a situated action)*” (Interview, 2005)⁸⁴. According to the coordinator, rhetoric is the fundamental basis of the module, and has three elements: ideology, practice, and method.

Ideology tells us something about what human (or academic) relations should be or about how humans should relate to each other through writing. Practice tells us something about how people actually do relate to each other and/or how they actually write (in a given situation). Method tells us something about how people enquire their tactics, heuristics, and procedures for invention (including research) (Teresa, Interview, 2005).

⁸³ Although Chapter 5 refers to the University of Durban-Westville, the fact is that at this University there were no interviews conducted with colleagues who taught in the modules referred to, and as explained in Chapter 4, it is not appropriate to add it as one of the contexts for comparison. Reference to this University is made only because of the personal, one- to-one, and personalised tuition I had with one of the lecturers in the English Department and tutors in the *English Usage* module. This University, furthermore, is a Historically Black University (HBU), and thus does not fall under the same category as the Historically White Universities (HWUs) studied within the South African context.

⁸⁴ Teresa works for the English Department at the University of Sydney and coordinates *English 1000: University English* (2005). I interviewed her in 2005.

The elements of rhetoric described by Teresa informed ways in which the module is designed and taught to assist students to understand writing in academic environments, and to enable them to become better writers. The rhetorical frame operates as a guiding principle in the way the module challenges students to “*examine ideological presences and pressures, typical writing practices in a given situation or discipline, and common or expected methods of inquiry*” (Interview, 2005). As with other modules under investigation in this study, the module outline and content are discussed at length, and presented graphically in Chapter 8. At this stage it suffices to point out that the module is offered four times per year: semesters 1 and 2, and summer school (November) and winter school (July). The module’s broad outcome is to assist students (across linguistic lines) to acquire both knowledge of academic discourses and knowledge about the language used by the university as a medium of instruction. This section of the Chapter presents an assessment of data collected from Teresa through, as with all other respondents, Narrative-style and open-ended interview questions. I deal with these data in this Chapter and not together with similar data from other participants in Chapter 6 because the latter is concerned with parallels and comparisons within HWUs in South Africa.

From the beginning of the interview, Teresa’s response to the first elicitation question constructs her Department differently from the English departments within the South African context⁸⁵. This difference is in terms of the focussed attention on the teaching of writing and reading, not as an add-on, but as a crucial component of the discipline from undergraduate to postgraduate levels.

I work in the English Department at the University of Sydney in Australia and I teach Rhetoric and Writing to first, second, third year students and at Masters level. My PhD is in Rhetoric and Composition and is a discipline widely known in Australia, and the fastest growing discipline.

Teresa’s expertise and qualifications suggest that the issue of students’ proficiency, not just in the language of instruction, but, most crucially, in academic discourse, is an issue that the

⁸⁵ Could you provide me with background information about yourself in relation to the English Department?

English Department takes seriously. It is interesting, however, that an English Department in an Australian university, a ‘first world’ context and an English speaking country, takes as its priority to employ a person with expertise in Composition and Rhetoric in order to design modules that are directed at addressing students’ reading and writing needs. Her closing comments unfold as an Exemplum genre, and present a judgement about the field of Rhetoric: “*the fastest growing discipline*”. It is this growth that explains a decision by an English Department of a University in the first world to introduce a language module. Teresa’s response to a question that was designed to elicit a narrative-like response in terms of the reasons for the introduction of such modules within a ‘first world’ context, shares some light in relation to this issue.

Research has taught us that writing complications for many of our students arise as a result of unfamiliarity with specific ways of writing acceptable within a group to whom the writing is addressed. These dilemmas remain a challenge for all students, but are felt particularly strongly by those students who speak languages not used as mediums of instruction. At this university these concerns have encouraged the English Department to introduce courses which intend to assist students to acquire both knowledge about academic discourses and knowledge about the language used as a medium of instruction, both at undergraduate and graduate levels (Interview, 2002).

Just like Balfour’s, Teresa’s response unfolds in the form of an Exposition, and this illustrates her expertise as both a researcher and a teacher in an institution of higher learning. The Thesis is her response is that “*Research has taught us that writing complications for many of our students arise as a result of unfamiliarity with specific ways of writing acceptable within a group to whom the writing is addressed*”. Engagement with research causes her to understand the distinction between knowledge *of* and *about* language, and knowledge *of* and *about* academic literacy, all of which informed the design of modules that observe these distinctions in the way they are structured and taught. Her Department’s response, the introduction of “*courses which intend to assist students to acquire both knowledge about academic discourses and knowledge about the language*” unfolds as an argument to support her Thesis. This response differs from Bob’s, Lynn’s, and Balfour’s departments, as her module addresses explicitly both the development of

proficiency in the language of instruction and in academic discourse⁸⁶. Teresa's response illustrates how the module she coordinates develops students both linguistically and academically when she says:

I think my course is in the multidisciplinary area and, of course I can see traces of rhetoric in English Department, but also in the Department of Linguistics, Department of Communication, and the Social Sciences. The approach is more than just the study of language or just the study of writing, it is also the study of grammar as it serves purpose. I have noticed that since my arrival in 1995 in this university more and more disciplines and departments are concerned about the ways that we write and the ways that we communicate. This is an interesting move for me because traditionally writing has been the business of English departments or Linguistics (Interview, 2005).

This response suggests that Teresa's theorisation is akin to the broader field of English Studies' broad concerns about raising students' awareness of the relationship between the purpose of a text and how such a purpose informs the author's grammatical stylistic choices. The above response unfolds as a Narrative, with Teresa as a narrator confronted by tendencies in her faculty that fail to recognise that concerns about language should be for all disciplines. The Equilibrium stage in this narrative is reached when: "*in this university more and more disciplines and departments are concerned about the ways that we write and the ways that we communicate*". As a member of the English Department, Teresa's awareness of the centrality of rhetoric in the field of English Studies and in university education in general contributed to the design and delivery of the *English 1000: University English* in 1996. When I asked what she understood as the central concerns of the discipline of English literature, and whether her understanding of these underpins some of her decisions in the design of her module, her response was:

I think that an English literary study over the years has mistakenly been understood as a discipline that deals with fictional texts or canonical literature. But there has not been clarity in terms of what exactly in this literature the discipline focuses on. For me the discipline's focus is the ways in which language use in these texts raise our awareness of the extent to which it [language] plays a role in the construction of our societal identities and the extent to which its discursive character and fluidity renders what we consider as reality temporal. My vision in this Department is to see more attention paid to this aspect of the discipline, and more and more students getting exposed to the centrality of language in any discipline (Interview, 2005).

⁸⁶ Chapter 8 illustrates in detail how each module under investigation in this study achieves some of the intended outcomes postulated through responses to interview questions.

Teresa's response above is mainly responsible for the shift of focus in her module content from literature to language, and corroborates Jacobs' (2006) understanding of language "as a means for accessing core disciplinary concepts" (205). The difference between Teresa (2005) and Jacobs (2006) though is that the former (and this is corroborated by my experience presented in Chapter 5) coordinates an English Department module that addresses these issues for students across disciplines, and the latter argues for 'team-teaching' between discipline specialists and language experts. Teresa's purpose in the module she coordinates is that students need to learn about the nature of language and how consciousness of its workings is crucial for students' access to disciplinary discourses across disciplines, not just in the discipline of literature. Hence students' learning of English language occurs through engagement with learning tasks that require them to use language within functional, purposeful contexts as they are challenged to think critically about language choices within the context of producing their texts. Teresa's approach lends itself to an approach that assists students to have conscious control over the deployment of grammatical structures. Through the realisation of this approach, Teresa observes that:

We can do our students a great service by teaching them to be critical and flexible in how they construct their...essays, think clearly, complete a task and sometimes solve a problem. Otherwise the study of literature has been privileged and the study of writing has been seen as beneath the English Department and as something outside the mission of English departments. It was that way in America for ages, for years and years, but then slowly, the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition Studies has become a situated self on the same plane and is as well as respected now as the study of literature. I think the two can co-exist harmoniously and there are advantages of both and I do not think one should be privileged over the other and be seen as not part of the business of the discipline (Interview, 2005).

Teresa's responses up to this point confirm the ideas presented in Chapter 2 where I deal with the debates about the extent to which an academic alliance between English departments and Applied Linguistics can benefit students' linguistic and cognitive development. Her responses, furthermore, indicate clearly the central theoretical tenants that underpinned thinking behind the design of *English 1000: University English* (2005). I then asked her questions about the practical realisation of these abstract observations.

EM: Could you identify a few areas that are in some ways responding to the theorisation that you have just discussed with me?

Teresa: I will say my course bridges the gap between school education and university education and a student who does it gets prepared for advanced reading and writing of texts, regardless of field. What I see with students who study literature is that they can become analytical but not necessarily thinking critically. I feel in other words that literature teaching is prescribed, whereas with writing students are responsible for creating a piece and think consciously what goes into it...For me the kind of teaching that focuses on writing with grammatical choices as a focus on understanding how we make meaning is important as it goes hand and hand with critical thinking. If people can become greater writers they can become greater critical thinkers, and the more critical they can think the more they can write, and I think that translates to studies in writing and studies in literature alike.

Teresa's thinking indicates that in addition to drawing from English literature disciplinary concerns, her module acknowledges the fact that the various elements of language interact with, and are affected by, other elements to which they are closely related in a functional sense. Teaching students in this way, as Teresa points out, develops students' critical thinking as they use language, both in speaking and in writing. At university level this is crucial because students have to unlearn school writing practices that encourage drawing from either a textbook or notes from a teacher without engagement with them, to writing that draws from understanding and active engagement with texts. In *Entering the academy as "the other" – about writing competence and the bridge to the discourse community*, Henning *et al*'s (2001) research project reveals that after students' written works were assessed:

their [students'] interactions during workshops were observed (one session was video recorded), and they were all interviewed in focus group format (the topic of discussion pertaining to their experiences and perceptions in the course and the way they go about reading and writing). These informal data were collated and indicated that their problems with regard to argumentative thinking and writing were a serious obstacle to their development in scholarship...we argue that...students who enter the university without a 'scientific system' or coherent network of abstract concepts find it difficult...and therefore opt for rote learning (111-112).

Martin and Rose (2003) argue that the reason for students' failure to adapt within academia is that "the practice of packaging complex meanings into abstract wordings" (in Rose, 2005:144) is not easy. "Where experienced readers are able to automatically process such lexical density", argues Rose (2005), "inexperienced readers may labour to 'unpack' dense wordings, often

without success” (144). It is no wonder then that novice students tend to furnish the reader with a list of ideas, with limited elaboration by way of offering explanations accompanied by a wide range of examples. The latter, on the contrary, keep referring the reader to previous research, with sufficient explanations on relationships among ideas and how the current writing responds to previous positions on the subject. Within the context of a university, further writing complications arise as a result of unfamiliarity with specific ways of writing acceptable within a group to whom the writing is addressed. Approaching the teaching of reading and writing in the way Teresa describes seems appropriate, in my view, for the cognitive demands within an institution of higher learning.

While Rhodes, Witwatersrand, and Natal universities’ English departments rationale that informed literacy practices in the language and academic literacy-related modules focussed on either reading and writing skills, and/or parts of speech within a context, the theoretical underpinnings at the University of Sydney’ English Department differ significantly because they draw from rhetoric. Culler (2000) defines rhetoric as:

the study of the persuasive and expressive resources of language: the techniques of language and thought that can be used to construct effective discourses...the art of persuasion...In the late twentieth century rhetoric has been revived as the study of the structuring powers of discourse (69).

Drawing from rhetoric as a theoretical framework, Teresa’s module raises students’ awareness of the difference between knowledge *of* language and knowledge *about* language, on the one hand, and knowledge *of* and *about* academic discourses.⁸⁷ Figure 7.4 indicates this clearly:

⁸⁷ For a detailed discussion of Rhetoric as a theorised field, please see Conley (1990), Hauser, (2002), Kennedy (1994, 1997); Austin (1975); and Baugh and Cable (2002).

Figure 7.4: Extract from *English 1000: University English* (2005) prescribed textbook

- Exercises*
1. In a magazine you enjoy reading, find an example of an argumentative essay that you think is well written. Determine the argumentative method – classical, Toulmin, Rogerian, or a combination – that the writer uses. Write a two-paragraph assessment of the effectiveness of the argument.
 2. Design an essay related to your major or to the discipline you are considering majoring in. Share your topic with others in a small group of two or three. Together develop a preliminary plan for each topic you and your group members have developed.

Figure 7.4 also indicates that the distinctions between knowledge *of* language and knowledge *about* language, on the one hand, and knowledge *of* and *about* academic discourses are not simply at the level of syntax. On the contrary, they imply a difference of emphasis in the pedagogic practice and module delivery (please see Chapter 9 for further discussion). For students to be asked to identify whether the argumentative essay in a magazine is classical, indicates a deliberate intention to raise students' awareness of rhetorical features characteristic of specific genres. In comparison to the three other practitioners from English departments at three South Africa universities analysed previously, Teresa's thinking about the focus of the *English 1000: University English* (2005) introduced in 1996 is thus different in various ways:

What is of prior importance to me is helping students see that various disciplines act through discourse, and that their ability to be successful in these disciplines is related to an ability to understand their chosen discipline and its linguistic and academic practices. My hope is to produce students who can become aware of how grammatical choices have to be made consciously, thereby becoming intellectuals in the academy, and later, professionals who have the practical wisdom to act intelligently (Interview, 2005).

I then asked Teresa to explain the rationale for the above theoretical understanding:

The long and rich history of rhetoric and writing studies in North America suggest that grammar instruction on its own and other types of skill building exercises are ineffective for teaching students to write. This is because methodologies based upon the notion of superficial correctness contradict the chief tenet of rhetorical practice which is a situated action. Training in rhetorical analysis, on the other hand, provides students with the capabilities necessary to judge, first, the extent to which grammatical choices are a result of the purpose of a text, secondly, the production of complex writing is a result of understanding the conventions of the discourse community (Interview, 2005).

Within the context of South Africa, Teresa's theorisation is appealing when one considers the fact that most of the students who took the English Department's Academic Literacy Development programmes at the University of the Witwatersrand, for example, manifested innumerable language (English grammar) difficulties (Balfour, 1996). This is understandable because these students' teachers, as Bob puts it during the interview, "*often did not have linguistic resources to take them beyond what the textbook had to say*" (Interview: 2002). It is plausible to suggest that in order to deal with insecurity as a result of linguistic challenges, many students' attempts to respond to assignment tasks possessed two features often in combination: either regurgitating what the tutor or lecturer said in the tutorial and lecture with innumerable grammatical errors, or plagiarising from textbooks to avoid failure (Clarence-Fincham, 1998). To deal with this more efficiently, students need to be exposed to the metalanguage and rhetorical aspects of the discipline so that they can learn to read independently and write in ways that draw from their deep understanding of the subject matter.

Conclusion

The examination of data so far enables access to deep-seated literacy beliefs underpinning the decisions and practices of language practitioners in four English departments, English Language and Linguistics Department, and Applied English Language Studies Department. Through the use of the SFL paradigm as a perspective to analyse data, it is possible to identify that register variables vary from research participant to research participant. Often there are shifts from story genres to non-story genres, depending on the nature of the context. Each social context (different departments) is realised in the language that unfolds as research participants respond to Narrative-style interview questions, and language construes this social context. The relationship is not so much one of cause and effect, rather that context of situation and language are, to a large extent, mutually defining. Given the fact that this study does not necessarily "aim for 'truth' but to conceptualise 'what is going on' using qualitative data" (Glaser and Strauss,

1967:36), through inductive and deductive thinking, the following can be regarded as a theorised account of data in the four universities:

- firstly, the opening of access to students from racial groups previously barred to study in HWUs is a fundamental aspect that led to curriculum changes;
- secondly, the language practitioners' understandings of the reasons for the introduction of literacy programmes is a consequence of either contingent, historical and circumstantial factors, or comprehensively theorised, research-led interventions;
- thirdly, language practitioners' perceived theoretical positions, which underpin literacy practices in literacy modules, are derived from differential understandings of long-standing philosophical positions about the nature of the field of English Studies;
- fourthly, English departments within the South African context in this study still see themselves as English literature departments, and thus do not consider the teaching of English language and English literature as belonging to one field: English Studies and;
- the English Department at the University of Sydney identifies as its one of its responsibilities to contribute in facilitating students epistemological access to different disciplines.

Research participants' narratives at Rhodes University, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the University of Natal have illustrated the extent to which their pedagogic practices (and the justification thereof) were a result of continued induction into the discourses of what they perceived to be their disciplines, as well as being a response to their students' needs. At Rhodes University, for instance, an add-on, appended and non-credit bearing type intervention seemed to have shifted from its original goals (introducing students to academic literacy) to skills-based and grammar instruction. Lack of expertise and/or commitment in the English Department led to a situation where the English Language and Linguistics Department took responsibility for this module. The culmination of these processes in the design of the *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) module reveals the English Department's reluctance to concern themselves with issues regarding epistemological access to the academic discourse of different disciplines, as indicated by non-participation by this Department later on.

The participants' various Recounts of how they went about developing students' linguistic and academic literacy competences within the South African context enabled me to make

analytical deductions from the data. Understanding lecturers' strategies to resolve the problems did not arise from abstract ideas detached from actual day-to-day classroom experiences, but through accessing participants' own narrative Recounts based on the 'ground'. Lynn's account reveals that even though the module she coordinates is an English literary studies module specifically designed for students who major in English, the exclusion of critical material such as Literary Theory in the module disadvantaged many students. The few who managed to pass Lynn's module find English 1 difficult⁸⁸.

These data suggest that discipline-specific interventions are not enough if students are not challenged to read beyond set works of literature because this encourages personalised responses to essay writing, a practice discouraged in the mainstream curriculum in English departments internationally. Likewise, at the University of Natal, the data suggests that while the English Department showed deliberate intentions to address students' linguistic needs, a focus on grammatical features remained a limitation of the module. All of these research findings suggest that group behaviour is part, and simultaneously a product of, contingent contextual factors "expressed through such symbols which include the most powerful of all, that of language" (Goulding, 2000:39). The module at the University of Sydney's English Department appears to be different in many respects from the modules investigated within three English departments in South Africa, but similar in some respects to modules offered by the English Language and Linguistics at Rhodes University and the Applied English Language Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Both Chapters 6 and 7 offer an evaluative assessment of interview data emphasising a range of implications suggested by participants. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Grounded Theory insists that data yield hypotheses, as opposed to verifying it. Data as presented in both Chapters

⁸⁸ Lynn pointed out that "16 out of 84 students managed to pass the course" (Interview, 2002).

seem to suggest that add-on academic literacy modules, on the one hand, or grammar-focussed pedagogy, on the other, may fail to facilitate students' access to specific disciplinary discourses.

The analysis of documentary evidence in Chapter 8 will attempt to indicate, by means of an evaluative assessment of module content and outlines, the extent to which this failure may be possible and/or avoided. Having analysed both the reasons, that is, structural, communicative, discourse, and others, for the introduction of, and the theoretical persuasions that inform literacy practices in, the modules under investigation in this study, I now turn to the analysis of data derived from modules that manifest all the verbal responses examined so far. This focus has to do with the extent to which the central concerns of the field of English Studies with language are seen to inform decisions on the design and teaching of these modules.

CHAPTER 8

Literacy Theory, Module Design, and Pedagogy

Introduction

The discussion of data in Chapter 7 suggests that the English departments of Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand appear not to have concerned themselves with the explicit development of students' written language in relation to the demands of university study. At the University of Sydney, however, recognition of the prominence of the concerns of the field of English Studies with language is explicit in the module offered by the English Department. At the University of Natal, however, the focus seems to differ from the other three contexts, and grammatical proficiency seems to have been the main focus.

Chapter 8 takes further the theme that underpins the engagement with data in Chapter 7, but within the context of curriculum design and pedagogy, and draws from documentary evidence to accomplish this engagement. Documentary evidence (which takes the form, first of module outlines and, second, module contents) is assessed and evaluated in order to ascertain the extent to which the design and teaching of linguistic and/ or academic literacy modules incorporate the concerns of the field of English Studies with language (as discussed in the previous chapters). Given the fact that interview's generalisations and claims need to be verified, in this Chapter I choose to include relevant documentary evidence to access data in the form of module outlines and contents which I triangulate with narrative Recounts discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. Documentary evidence also enabled me to corroborate narrative data in order to ensure reliability and verifiability.

I begin this Chapter with the section that examines documentary evidence from the University of Natal. Although the module under investigation was designed for students from

diverse disciplines, there are aspects of the module that draw from the concerns of the discipline of English literature. The analysis of documentary evidence reveals, however, that this module's vision is inclusive with a broad approach, yet limited in its scope. This, ironically, remains one of the major drawbacks of the module.

The second section examines documentary data from Rhodes University's English Language and Linguistics Department, and discusses ways in which attention to grammar in this module is significantly different to the University of Natal's English Department. This section also indicates ways in which the decisions concerning the design and delivery of the module are sensible, relevant, and appropriate. Documentary evidence indicates a clear intention by module designers to create space for students' entry into the different discourse communities within the University.

The third section analyses documentary data based on the University of the Witwatersrand's English Department. The examination of this data reveals that in comparison to all the research sites the English Department at this University is the only one in which the content of the module also indicates a deliberate move to take as first priority literary texts, the main unit of study in the discipline. The absence of concerted efforts to introduce students to additional reading material other than set works, however, leads to unsatisfactory results in terms of students' literacy development.

The fourth section discusses documentary evidence from the University of the Witwatersrand's Applied English Language Studies Department. This data shows strategies that were deployed by this Department to include language, knowledge construction, and discourse communities in the teaching of this module. The module challenges students to think about ways in which different text-types require different ways of using linguistic structures.

The final section discusses documentary evidence from an international context: the University of Sydney. Documentary evidence indicates clearly the differences between this Department and other English departments studied in this dissertation. Audience, composition, and epistemological access stand as the major themes in this module.

I use Grounded Theory (GT) to analyse data in this section, and this theory assisted me in the design of, and organisation of questions in, the document analysis worksheet, as part of the process of engaging with participants’ verbal responses to the actual descriptors in the modules outlines and contents. Figure 8.1 represents the role played by Grounded Theory in the process of analysing data in this Chapter.

Figure 8.1: Written document analysis worksheet guiding questions

Type of Document	Institutions	Question
Module Outlines	University of the Witwatersrand, University of Natal, and University of Sydney	1. Why was the document written? 2. What evidence in the document helps the reader understand the implementation plan of the purpose? 3. Identify any question(s) in the document that you feel is (are) left unanswered. 4. Does the document refer explicitly to the field of English Studies? Explain.
Module Contents	University of the Witwatersrand, University of Natal, and University of Sydney	1. What is the status of the author(s) of the document? 2. What is the position of the author(s) of the document? 3. For which audience is the document written? 4. In what ways does the document draw, or not draw, from the field of English Studies? Explain.

In the process of implementing the principles of Grounded Theory, each question in the worksheet was used to code data from each context. Each module outline was coded in order to identify how each research site understood, and conceptualised strategies, to deal with the learning needs associated with being a first-year student in the university. This process was challenging because information in each documentary data set was conceived to achieve diverse, yet similar goals:

- to address the linguistic and/or academic literacy needs of students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds in the English Department (Universities of Natal and the Witwatersrand);

- to equip students from different faculties with linguistic skills to cope with writing demands in the university (Rhodes University: English Language and Linguistics) and;
- to enable students to gain access into, and control over, specific disciplinary discourses across different faculties (University of Sydney: English Department; and University of the Witwatersrand: Applied English Language Studies).

As data of this nature had to be unpacked and reorganised in order to construct concepts and issues as they emerged across the four contexts, Grounded Theory proved useful. This form of engagement with data enables one to formulate hypotheses by comparing data across different contexts. Within the context of analysing documentary evidence, the purpose of such a comparison is to ascertain the extent to which concepts emerging from the qualitative data yielded through the qualitative survey interview questions, reflect the incidents they were representing. I point out in Chapter 5 that “qualitative methods are often used when there is not enough known for the researcher even to propose a hypothesis” (173). The questions in the documentary analysis worksheet thus facilitated the process of engaging with documentary evidence by way of engaging critically with participants’ verbal responses (as rendered in chapters 6 and 7) in relation to the actual descriptors in the module outlines and contents, without any form of hypothesis. It is for these reasons that Chapter 8 shifts the focus from data that are concerned with practitioners’ assumptions, theorizations, literacy practices and worlds. Instead, it concerns itself with curriculum design and pedagogy, with the focus on the relationship between curriculum design and pedagogy and the concerns of the field of English Studies with language, summed up here (but reflected on in more detail in Chapter 2):

- the relationship between purpose of a text and how such a purpose informs the author’s grammatical stylistic choices;
- our ways of thinking, writing, and speaking about individual existence as presented in literary texts and other forms of communicating experience, which is also, and always, a social existence;
- distinction between knowledge *of* and *about* language, and knowledge *of* and *about* discourse communities;
- to transcend the particular and abstract from the physical and social context in order that the knowledge from literary texts, media, visual and written texts, may be transformed into something more generalisable;
- the ability to generalize, to grasp relationships such as cause and effect, to predict the consequences of events, to grasp the essential message of a speech, novel, a written text, and to evaluate situations through writing and;
- to examine ideological presences and pressures, typical writing practices in a given situation or discipline, and common or expected methods of inquiry.

As mentioned in Chapter 4 (Figure 4.9), I designed a data document analysis worksheet which drew largely from the broader purposes of the study as presented in Figure 4.1:

- to understand reasons for the introduction of the language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules by four English departments and English Language and Linguistics Department and Applied English Language Studies Department;
- to understand theoretical positions that underpin language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules design and classroom pedagogic practices during module delivery in four English departments, together with English Language and Linguistics Department and an Applied English Language Studies Department;
- to understand the conceptual relationship between the language proficiency and/or academic literacy modules and the central concerns of the field of English Studies with language and;
- to theorise an alternative approach to module design and pedagogic practice akin to the central concerns of the field of English Studies with language.

To recapitulate for the reader: this worksheet contained questions to be applied to the documentary evidence in order to engage critically with data:

- list three things the author said that you think are important within the context of the purposes of the study;
- why do you think this document was written? Quote from the document;
- what evidence in the document helps you understand the implementation plan of the purpose?;
- list aspects of the document that tell you about participants in the implementation of the purpose and;
- identify any question(s) in the document that you feel is (are) left unanswered in relation to the purposes of the study (www.archives.gov.2006).

Given the fact that all the modules under investigation are within the field of English Studies, some by English departments and others by applied language studies departments, the comparison, furthermore, interrogates whether or not curriculum and pedagogic decisions took into consideration the concerns of this field. As Figure 8.1 indicates, only five departments provided the researcher with documentary evidence in the study. At Rhodes University the English Department's ADP programme never became a fully-fledged, credit bearing offering with prescribed texts, or a module reader with a series of worksheets, from which classroom activities were to be drawn, nor did it have a properly designed module outline (as is the case with other departments).

The Rhodes University's English Department approach remained an *ad hoc*, add-on type of support, and it is from this arrangement that students enrolled with the Department received tuition “with an aim to developing academic literacy through mini-lectures, note-taking skills, library skills, essay writing skills and reading skills” (Bob: Interview, 2002). The bases for this tuition were individual students' own essays and assignments written as part of the mainstream module offerings in English 1. Documentary data from Rhodes University concerns a module offered by the English Language and Linguistics Department, and the English Department contributed into the discussions that led to the introduction of this module. Chapter 8 thus does not refer to documentary evidence from Rhodes University's English Department because it does not exist, but refers to this type of evidence from the English Language and Linguistics Department. This is the reason why the evaluative assessment of data from the English Department only occurs in Chapters 6 and 7.

The module outlines for the *An Integrated English Language Course* (2001), *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002), *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002), *Foundation in English Language* (2002), and *English 1000: University English* (2005), offer detailed descriptions of how each module deals with an understanding of literacy and how that understanding is situated in terms of theory and practice⁸⁹. Each module outline has a specific title designed to guide students' sense of its purpose and structure⁹⁰. Chapter 8 discusses this documentary evidence and module contents.

8.1 Inclusive vision, broad approach, yet limiting scope

The module outline for *An Integrated English Language Course* (2002) presents its own unique characteristics. It points out that the module “concentrates on the integration of three aspects of

⁸⁹ These modules were designed by the following departments: University of Natal's English Department, University of the Witwatersrand's English Department, Rhodes University's English Language and Linguistics Department, University of the Witwatersrand' Applied English Language Studies Department, and University of Sydney's English Department, respectively.

⁹⁰ Please see Appendix G which shows all the module outlines.

English grammar: Time, Modality, and Sentence Construction” (Module outline, 2002: ii). The rationale for this design is derived from an understanding that

Locally, within the English medium institution, access to reading, writing, and intellectual discourse is mediated primarily (but not exclusively) through English as the means to varied and multifaceted ends. This [module] is meant ...to enable you to attain the ‘means’ in order for you to achieve the ‘ends’.
(Module outline, 2002: ii)

The purpose of the module is thus foregrounded: students will learn the nuances of English grammar in order to be able to learn and write in the English medium. To achieve this, the module draws from “discourse analysis, reader response theory, and critical pedagogy. We believe this synthesis enables the learner to use English more effectively: that is, within the context of ‘real’ texts used and read in everyday situations” (Module outline, 2002: ii). What is left unclear is the meaning of the terms “*real texts*” and “*everyday situations*”. The table of contents indicates that this means the use of newspaper articles, financial reports, advertisements, short stories, and a medical report.

Within the context of the module, then, ‘real texts’ refers to texts within specific authentic contexts, and ‘everyday situations’ to non-technical, non-discipline specific language usage. Part of the reason, as mentioned in the introduction of this Chapter, is that this module was designed to teach English to students from different disciplines: Law, Commerce, and Medicine, with whom the English Department had formal agreements. These same students, after the completion of the module, were expected to have received training which is supposed to assist them in the process of learning to gain “*access to reading, writing, and intellectual discourse*”. It seems ironic, however, that even though access to “*intellectual discourse*” remains as key to success at any university, as the module outline indicates, the module still exposes students to “*real texts*” about “*everyday situations*”, not texts that reveal the distinctiveness of the specific rhetorical structures of the disciplines from which they came. The list of contents indicates as much, and topics of selected readings seem not to address sufficiently specific issues

concerning the nature of the field of English Studies in the context of the disciplines with whom the arrangements were made. Figure 8.2 shows how the module is organised:

Figure 8.2: An Integrated English Language Course (2001) module outline

Reading material	Grammatical features
<i>Africa's Past</i> by Anderson and Rathbone	Articles and Prepositions
<i>Institutional and Financial Report: UND</i> (1996-1997)	Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences
<i>The Advertisement</i>	Clauses and Conjunctions
<i>The Sisters</i> by Pauline Smith (1990)	Clauses and Conjunctions
<i>Medical Text</i>	Relative Clauses
<i>Educational Theory: Outcomes Based Education</i>	Nominal and Adverbial Clauses
<i>English in Education</i> by Robert J. Balfour	The Present
<i>The Prisoner Who Wore Glasses</i> by Bessie Head	The Past
<i>Violence</i> by Ahmed Essop	The Future
<i>Horoscope and Travel</i>	Modals and Register
<i>The Bill of Rights and the Constitution</i>	Modals, Active and Passive Voice
<i>An Interview with Breytenbach</i> by Illeana Dimutri	Direct and Indirect Speech

The module outline indicates a commitment by the English Department to accord language teaching the same status as the study of literature, and this is laudable when one considers English departments' generally negative attitudes towards such policy decisions (as discussed in Chapter 2). My concern though, is that this focus on language teaching by the University of Natal's English Department neither embraces the discipline's concerns with discursive, cultural, and social critique, nor rhetorical features relevant to disciplines represented by students in the module. The language used in texts selected for the module is often a product of a 'slavish' observation of specific 'imposed' literary conventions alien to ways in which we use language under ordinary circumstances and/or when producing texts (spoken and written) within the scope of different academic genres valued within the university. As one of the lecturers in the module, I noted that some students did learn to string together (or formulate) correct sentences and construct proper paragraphs, but were not developed in what Bob (2002) calls "*conscious control over language use*" (Interview: July 2002). This is because exercises often taught students types of sentences and tenses (the section of the module I taught), parts of speech as identified in a novel, a short story, a financial or medical reports, and a newspaper article. Often they were also asked either to label certain sentences in an extended text or to write short paragraphs using two or more types of sentences. This is contrary to raising students' awareness and understanding of

different genres relevant to different disciplines from which students came, and how grammatical choices are largely a result of discipline specific discourses and the purpose for which texts are produced. There is thus no indication of the extent to which the module draws from the concerns of the field of English Studies with language use. The module outline, in other words, indicates that the language training offered by the English Department appears to be concerned with improving students' competence in English language, but does not incorporate engagement with the discursive nature of language.

Gee (1999) warns that teaching English language “ought not to be about teaching English, or, for that matter, about teaching language, at least as these are traditionally construed” (2). The module under discussion, it seems to me, focuses mainly on the internalisation of grammatical structures and skills in sentence construction. This occurs outside the field's concerns with language as not simply a collection of words to communicate meaning, but as a discursive entity that is used to construct and contest identities, both in speaking and in writing. The assumption seems to be that the linguistic proficiency required by students does not need to occur simultaneously with the development of this sophistication in students' understanding of the nature of language, an understanding of language valued in the field of English Studies. The Rhodes University's English Language and Linguistics Department seems to be attempting to address some of the limitations identified in the University of Natal's English Department module. The next section discusses documentary evidence based on this module.

8.2 Reasonable decisions, relevant practices, appropriate response

Drawing on the English Language and Linguistics Department's *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) module outline, the module is designed to “facilitate the students' maturation into independent learners, enhance students' ability to cope with the University's linguistic demands, and enhance students' ability to master the University's cognitive demands” (2). As

part of the strategies to achieve these outcomes, the module is organised according to different themes. Leanne points out that:

The module focuses on three themes...Language and Power, Culture, and Ecology, Economics and Human Rights. Under Human Rights, sometimes we look at circumcision, and sometimes we do the death penalty and abortion...under human rights. Every year it is slightly different. But the female circumcision one has always been very popular, so we have done that about three times. But obviously we try and change the assignment, so that is different every year.

At the initial stages of the module, however, the trend is towards drawing on students' knowledge and life experiences, especially initially, and to shift from working with familiar, real-life experiences to more abstract, decontextualised, academic tasks. In order to draw from students' knowledge and life experiences, the module makes use of journals and journal writing. These journals facilitate, according to Leanne, "*the open exchange of ideas...and warm acceptance by the teacher of the student's writing*" (Interview: 2007). One of the strategies that made this journal writing exercise to extend students' development beyond the focus just on individual experiences, students were challenged to write about how they were experiencing the current module.

Furthermore, in order to go beyond skills and language, the module used lecturers from the mainstream disciplines to give lectures under individual themes. Each lecturer draws on their expertise as specialists in their disciplines: "*every term we get a guest lecturer in*" (Interview: 2002). These lectures facilitate the teaching of language and skills within Discourses as each lecturer is challenged to teach content with greater explicitness, guided by the theme under consideration. Brinton, Snow, and Wesche (1989) identify the value in theme-based teaching. They argue that:

...the organisational principles inherent in the theme or topic dictate to the language syllabus a rich array of language items or activities, ensuring their contextualisation and significance...and an attempt is often made to integrate the topic into the teaching of all skills (15).

Each lecturer organises their lecture content around a particular academic text under a specific theme. Such texts are often academic journal articles from different sources. These texts are written for a specialist (academic) audience and individual lecturers are challenged to make such texts accessible to first year students. When I asked Leanne (2002) about reasons for the introduction of lectures in her module, she pointed out that:

I think there are two types of academic support: there is the kind of bridging courses where you are looking back at the things that they have not done at school and you are bridging those gaps. And there is the academic support where you are pushing students forward into what they are supposed to be at university level. This module is trying to do both. Introducing lectures is designed to achieve some of it, and we hold meetings with individual lecturers to make them aware of this.

Leanne's response indicates a deliberate choice to make academic discourse and register as accessible as possible to first year students. The module achieves this by modelling a range of texts the tutors wish students to produce. Leanne points out that "*we model then we do a joint construction and then they do an individual construction of texts. We do a lot of modelling. We do a lot of looking at other texts*" (Interview: 2002). This is one of the strategies Leanne's module inducted students into the discourses they were supposed to learn in order to succeed in the mainstream. Unlike the University of Natal's English Department module where lectures focussed on individual grammatical items without any critical readings under each topic, readings, lectures, and discussions in *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) functioned to induct students into their particular disciplinary practices. In writing about this type of approach, Kapp (1994) points out that it:

attempts to provide students with a metalanguage about academia and its discourse, a metalanguage which serves as a tool with which to decode and discuss the concept of transition to the new learning environment [in order] to demystify and explain the processes students encounter in the mainstream (120).

Figure 8.3 illustrates how the module material achieved this.

Figure 8.3: English Language for Academic Purposes (2002) tutorial worksheet reading

TOPIC	ACTIVITY
<p>1. <i>Why is Language Standardisation an Issue?</i></p> <p>2. <i>We Should Talk the Talk</i></p>	<p>Summarise arguments and main ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore headings discussed in the lecture • identify key issues under each heading • discuss main points and sub points • how is the argument structured? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore headings discussed in the lecture • identify key issues under each heading • discuss main points and sub points • how is the argument structured?

The above activity challenges students think critically about the structure of the arguments in two academic articles discussed in the lectures. Both articles were taught under the theme: Language and Culture. Lecturers who are experts in Socio-linguistics gave lectures drawing from their expertise and the academic articles prescribed for students. The process of engaging with academic texts by means of a series of questions, as exemplified above, enable students to systematically engage with, and analyse the text. This approach provides students who speak EAL opportunities to learn “to function competently in a range of written genres” (Hyland, 2004: 43). Leanne points out that in the final term of the module she tries to make the module focus on individual students’ disciplines by setting assignments based on their main stream specialisations: “*My commerce students get help from the Economics lecturers and the Management lecturers and they give me topics, and then the students choose. The Humanities students did some nice literature*” (Interview: 2002).

Before the writing of assignments in this module, tutors discuss students’ topics in terms of the linguistic and rhetorical features of academic genres within the disciplines they have chosen to write their research assignment. This indicates clearly that Leanne’s module draws from English for Specific Purposes theorists who see “genre as a class of structured communicative

events employed by specific discourse communities whose members share broad social purposes” (Hyland, 2004: 44). The fact that students who choose to research their topics in Commerce or Humanities are made to understand that academic communities and the texts’ purposes remain the core in what they do indicates clearly that this module draws from the ESP perspective to genre.

Another distinguishing factor about this module is its focus on grammar in ways that are different to the University of Natal English Department’s module. Instead of teaching grammar in a linear, step by step approach, *English Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) teaches grammar within functional contexts. Figure 8.4 presents the tutorial activity to illustrate this difference.

Figure 8.4: *Language for Academic Purposes* (2002) tutorial worksheet on grammar and context

LANGUAGE ITEM	ACTIVITY
1. Topic sentences 2. Conjunctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify topic sentences in the journal article that are the same as the ones given in the lecture • how does each topic sentence structure a paragraph in the lecture and the journal article? Give examples • why do we use conjunctions? • explain the ways in which however, therefore, but, and thus, change the meaning in language usage

This activity indicates the focus on grammar, but not as something isolated from real communicative contexts. Students are challenged to focus on ways in which lecturers choose grammar, and how such choices suggest specific meanings. The communicative requirements of particular academic groups, in other words, seem to be the main focus, and this suggests that there is a need for first year students to gain knowledge about ways in which purpose influences language choices. This pedagogic practice arises out of a perspective on genre as the property of the communities that use them, and as such regard educational institutions as having the task to

make these accessible to those ‘outside’ these communities. In the context of the above activity, students are exposed to ways in which topic sentences influence the form that paragraphs take, and ways in which choosing specific conjunctions influence the meanings rendered.

In order to facilitate entry into discourse communities, Swales (1990) argues that ‘outsiders’ need to be taught what he calls “schematic structure”. Facilitating this entry involves identifying a range of texts representative of the types a discourse community uses, and begin a close analysis of moves that make up the genre.

Each move is a distinctive communicative act designed to achieve one main communicative function and can be further subdivided into several “steps”. Both moves and steps may be optional, embedded in others, repeated, and have constraints on the sequence in which they generally occur (Hyland, 2004: 47).

Within the context of teaching speakers of EAL, this pedagogic approach enables students to see how particular aspects of real communicative world works in order to translate these understandings into the classroom. Explicit teaching of rhetorical devices, as shown in Figure 8.4 in the above activity, offers students metalinguistic awareness that improve their ability to read and write texts that are otherwise complicated and out of reach for individuals outside a discourse community.

In comparison to the Rhodes University English Department’s *ad hoc* ADP, this approach to addressing students’ educational needs indicate a well thought out a pedagogic and module design theory. Students are challenged to read, think about their reading, and draw from such thinking to write grammatically accurate and logically communicated texts. The module further draws on individual students’ specialisations to facilitate entry into such disciplinary areas. The fact that lectures are given by staff members from home disciplines to enhance students’ engagement with individual themes, indicate the extent to which the module differs significantly from similar initiatives at Rhodes University and the University of Natal’s English departments. The next section discusses data gathered from the University of the Witwatersrand English

Department's module called *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002). This trajectory creates opportunities for comparing modules introduced by two applied language departments as a response to limitations identified in modules offered by English departments in their respective universities. The next section discusses data concerning the English Department's module designed to develop students' literacy skills to study literature.

8.3 Good ideas, appropriate content, disappointing results

In terms of the University of the Witwatersrand English Department's module outline, the module is designed to "introduce [students] to the study of literature in English at university level and give [them] *the knowledge and skills to study literature successfully* (my emphasis) in the English and African Literature departments" (Module outline, 2002:2). As part of the strategy to implement this plan, students

will read different kinds of literature written in English including novels, drama and poetry; literature from many parts of the world including Africa, England, Caribbean and America. During the course you will develop a sense of what literature is and of how it operates by: learning ways of studying numerous genres of literature such as novels, drama, their time and place; learning techniques for analysing literature (Module outline, 2002:2).

Indeed, all of the above indicates to students exactly what they must expect to learn in the module, and how this will be achieved. However, there appear to be 'great expectations' about first-year students' cognitive abilities on the part of the author of the module outline. Inherent in the outline, for instance, is an assumption that first-year students will be able to cope with the workload and the reading demands placed upon them by the module. This is suggested by reference to "you will develop a sense of what literature is and of how it operates by: learning ways of studying numerous genres of literature such as novels, drama". In Chapter 5 I show that most students who came from former DET schools have educational backgrounds where the teachers' priority

was to finish the syllabus, never considered our general or individual difficulties...When it came to tests and/or exams on such texts, we would simply look for passages with words or phrases that appear on the questions, and rewrite, either the whole paragraph or sentence, written in the set works. (Chapter 5).

To assume that “*students who would not have made it into the university based on their matric results*” (Interview, 2002) have the competence to learn “ways of studying numerous genres of literature” (Module outline, 2002) is thus ironic, for Lynn herself points out that: “So they write an admissions test the university sets and depending on where their interests are they are steered into a particular foundation course, then they are put on into a four-year curriculum” (Interview, 2002)⁹¹.

The irony is made even more complicated by the fact that the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002) expects these students to be able to think, read, write, speak, and engage independently with the subject matter in ways that distinguish university education from schooling, even though schooling did not prepare them for such demands. According to the module contents:

This module introduces you to different types of fiction such as novels and short stories. The first texts studied will be African or postcolonial and will deal with issues likely to be familiar to you. These texts will be followed by texts from America. You will study the conventions of these texts, how they are written and how they relate to their social and political contexts (3).

The inclusion of the phrase “issues likely to be familiar to you” in the extract indicates a certain set of assumptions among which is the fact that if literary texts reflect students’ historical contexts, access into them will be easier. In her *A Handbook for Teaching African Literature* (1984), furthermore, Gunner reflects similar sentiments within an international context: “many teachers in multi-ethnic schools in Britain have felt the need to introduce into the classroom literature which reflects more closely the plurality of present-day British society – in other words, something other than purely ‘English’ literature” (vi). This can be traced back to post-colonial theory, which Culler (2000) describes as “the attempt to understand problems posed by the European colonization and its aftermath” (130). Within the context of this thinking, the introduction of texts to students from former colonies (plots set within such contexts), it is

⁹¹ Please read the detailed analysis of this response in Chapter 6 which illustrates that this module was designed as an access module for students who did not meet the admission criteria for university study.

assumed, will facilitate students' access because "they relate to their social and political contexts" (Module contents, 2002)⁹².

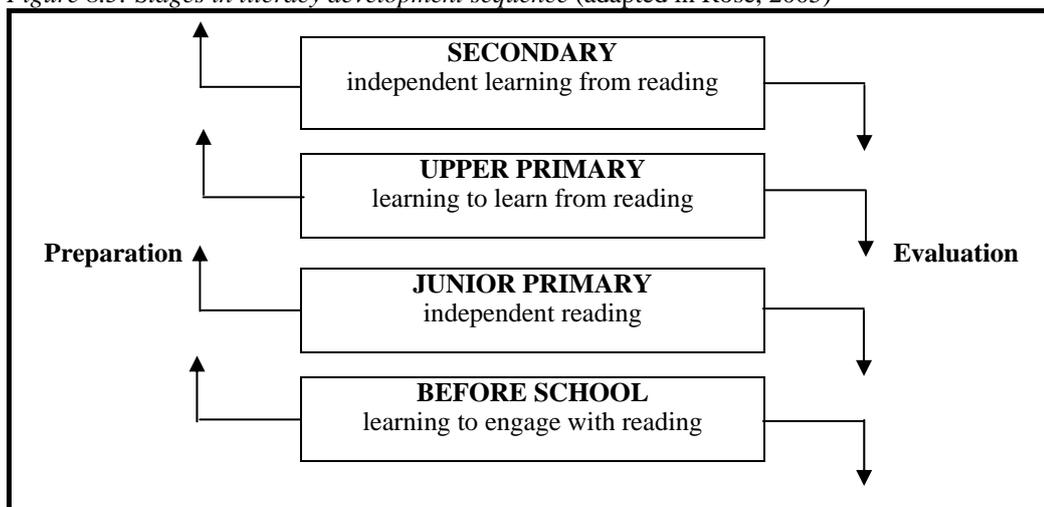
While the idea of acknowledging students' socio-political backgrounds in the choice of module content appears to be good and appropriate, it does not guarantee that students will access these texts at the level expected at university. There is no guarantee, for example, that these students, because of the choice of texts, will be able to read independently and be able to write about these texts in ways that observe ways of thinking and writing about literary texts within the discipline of English literature. According to Rose (2004), independent reading of texts is key to every student who enters a university education for the first time, as few students enter tertiary education with an ability to learn from reading. Students who "*would otherwise not be admitted into the university*" (Interview with Lynn, 2002) are expected to "read each set work before classes on that set work begin" and submit "two compulsory written assignments (essays) per quarter" (Module contents, 2002: 6).

The differences between the students who qualify for university education and those who do not, but gain access through other means (for example, admissions and/or placement tests as is the case at the University of the Witwatersrand), lie in their abilities to engage with reading independently. This difference in ability is a consequence of the kind of primary socialisation in the home in terms of the extent to which each child receives parent-child reading from an early age (Rose, 2006). According to Bergin (1999), "children in literate middle-class families experience an average of 1000 hours before starting school, whereas those from oral cultural backgrounds may experience little or none" (in Rose, 2006:3). The majority of students enrolled for *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002) come from cultural backgrounds that value orality more than literacy. As Chapters 2 and 5 indicate, students from ex-DET schools generally came from either rural areas or Black townships in which the culture of reading in most families is

⁹²For example, Gunner (1984), writing about one of the set works in *Foundation Course in Literature* (2001), *Weep Not, Child* (Ngugi, 1964), points out that Ngugi "depicts parents and children under stress in a time of political turmoil, and he turns a critical eye on the British role in Kenya's fight for independence (vi).

non-existent. This form of disadvantage is even exacerbated by the fact that English, the medium of instruction in South African institutions, is rarely spoken in rural areas and Black townships. As researcher and subject in this dissertation, in Chapter 5, I point out that “*until grade 8 when I was 14 in 1987 I was absolutely a monolingual person*”. Rose (2006) asserts that from the home environment, each level in formal education, that is, from primary to tertiary, puts different demands on learners. Figure 8.5 illustrates this clearly.

Figure 8.5: Stages in literacy development sequence (adapted in Rose, 2005)



In Figure 8.5 the centrality of the ability to read in formal education is emphasised. It is important to note from the Figure that what happens in the preceding stage in terms of reading influences much of what occurs in the next stage. Most students in the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002), as pointed out, come from family and cultural backgrounds where reading is not a priority. If reading at home prepares individuals for formal education, then such students certainly lack necessary pre-junior primary reading skills when they began formal schooling. Becoming part of formal learning, according to Rose (2005), appears not to be designed to undo this educational disadvantage, as he points out:

But as these skills are not explicitly taught in the following stage, what learners are evaluated on are actually skills they have acquired in the preceding stage. That is, junior primary teaching evaluates children on reading orientations they have acquired in the home, upper primary practices evaluate them on independent reading skills acquired in junior primary, and so on (138).

Students who enrolled for the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002) were admitted to the university without having met the requirements the ability to learn independently (“*students who would not have made it into the university*”) from reading, a secondary education level stage in the literacy development sequence according to Figure 8.5. Despite this educational disadvantage, these students, it was hoped, will learn “ways of studying numerous genres of literature such as novels, drama, their time and place; learning techniques for analysing literature” (Module outline, 2002:2). There is no indication in the module outline or module contents of the ways in which the module will achieve this. Nor does it mention anything that will attempt to make available strategies and methodologies designed to introduce students to fundamental concepts which are core to the discourse of the discipline of English literature, as Figure 8.6 illustrates:

Figure 8.6: Compressed version of Foundation Course in Literature (2002) module outline

- In this module you will learn:
- different kinds of literature written in English including novels, drama, and poetry;
 - literature from many parts of the world including Africa, England, Caribbean, and America;
 - learning ways of studying numerous genres of literature such as novels, drama, poetry, and short stories and,
 - learning about the social and political contexts of these texts and how they relate to their time and place.

One of the activities in the module reflects an assumption that students have abilities to read autonomously, and are in possession of reading skills that would enable them to respond to discipline specific questions about literary texts. Figure 8.7 is an example of activities with such assumptions:

Figure 8.7: An example tutorial activity in the Foundation Course in Literature (2002)

- Where do you position yourself in relation to *Weep Not, Child* (1964)?
- Consider whether part of your role as a reader is only to fill the spaces and text-reader relations allowed by the author, or also to imagine spaces and relationships appropriate to your own circumstances.
- What do you imagine is the overall intended effect, upon a reader, of this novel?

The first question, for example, has two challenges. Firstly, it is not clear what the word “position” means in the context of both the novel and the question. One reading of it suggests that it refers to how students feel about its relevance to them in terms of the plot. It could also concern its formal structures: novel writing conventions. Secondly, for any student to answer this question, they have to decide to draw either from personalised, subjective, and self-orientated understanding, or a theorised position drawn from critical material as would be available in Literary Theory. The last two questions presuppose a variety of cognitive abilities on the part of students, and do not regard them as a foundation cohort lacking the necessary concepts to manage these kinds of questions. Chapter 5 indicates ways in which the development of such concepts was achieved at the University of Durban-Westville’s English Department. Writing about my experiences in this University, I refer to the pedagogic approach that enabled students with educational backgrounds similar to students enrolled in the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002). The lecturer, through whom my access to fundamental concepts of English literature was facilitated, was himself a product of Bantu Education and a former teacher in one of the ex-DET schools in uMlazi, one of the Black townships in Durban:

Mr. Mngadi spent more time during his lectures explaining Literary Theory concepts, illustrating through several concrete examples from set works and, quite often, allowed us to demonstrate our understanding by affording us opportunities to provide our own illustrations to answers we gave during his answer and question stages of his lectures (Chapter 5).

This pedagogic approach illustrates a deliberate intention of making accessible to students the specificities of the discipline of English literature. Chapter 2 indicates, furthermore, that once pedagogic practices focus explicitly on enabling students to learn rather than simply transmitting knowledge and skills, students’ access to fundamental disciplinary concepts will become a reality. Writing about formal learning as part of the ways in which core concepts in any discipline may be made accessible to students, Little (1999) draws from the Vygotskian (1978) notions of ‘spontaneous’ and ‘scientific’ concepts, which he (Little) defines in the following manner:

Spontaneous concepts are acquired implicitly as a by-product of living; they are maximally contextualised, and in many cases context-bound. Scientific concepts, on the other hand, are acquired by explicit instruction; they are decontextualised and abstract (4).

There is no mention whatsoever in the module outline of explicit instruction strategies that will be deployed to assist students access core disciplinary concepts except Lynn's casual comment that "*I believe quite strongly that students pick-up those skills when they are struggling with the content that they need to master*" (Interview, 2002). It appears that by providing students with different types of literary works across different genres (as suggested by the module outline), students learn analytical skills that will ultimately make them acquire core disciplinary concepts as understood by Little (1999). This is not convincing for, by Lynn's admission in the first place, there is doubt that students can read with understanding, write in ways that demonstrate this understanding, and demonstrate a sense of what counts as valid knowledge in the discipline. Lynn's admission that "*not many of these students qualify for English 1. Out of 84 students we had last year, only 16 qualified for English 1, with the rest of the group pursuing other disciplines*" (Interview, 2002) confirms this critique. But even passing the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002) itself does not necessarily mean qualifying for English, for "*even those who passed find English 1 difficult to cope with because the pace is too high and tutors' support is limited*" (Lynn: Interview, 2002). Figure 8.7 appears to indicate possible reasons for the failure by many students to qualify for English 1, including those who pass the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002). Furthermore, there is only one forty-five minute period a week dedicated to what is referred to in the module outline as the *Writing Workshop*. During these workshops students "work through drafts...with the trained writing consultants. The writing consultants will not supply you with factual information or suggest critical perspectives to you" (Module contents, 2002: 8). The Workshops' insistence that the consultants do not have to provide support in the form of offering students critical perspectives reflects what Rose (2005) refers to as:

practices that construct, maintain and evaluate inequalities between learners. The content of this hidden curriculum is inequality in students' abilities to participate and perform successfully. The process by which this is achieved is ordinary classroom discourse, including the 'triadic dialogue' of question-response-feedback described by many analysts as endemic to classroom interaction (2).

Figure 8.5 has already identified the source of this inequality among students: it is unequal schooling experiences designed to prepare students for formal learning as a result of family backgrounds. In a module that is supposed to induct students into the study of literature, one would expect explicit efforts to "support learners to operate at a high level no matter what their independent ability" (Rose, 2005: 142). Because these workshops appear to draw from the process approach to writing, student support through explicit guidance on rhetorical features valued in the discipline is seen by the module designers as interfering with their independent learning. The interference is described as telling students "exactly how to write certain types of texts, rather than learning for themselves" (Hyland, 2004: 19). I argue in Chapter 3 that while it may be true that in some instances learners, especially those who speak EAL and have several difficulties as a consequence, may turn genre-based pedagogy into recipes for producing written texts, this depends entirely on the experience of the teacher concerned and the types of texts used. Otherwise I do not see anything wrong in making explicit what is expected of students, that is, providing them with opportunities to see what the target discourse looks like. In writing about the production of texts in contexts similar to the *Writing Workshop* in the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002), Cope and Kalantzis (1993) argue that:

texts generated in the process writing classroom ('choose your own topic', 'say what you feel like saying') often end up monotonous and repetitive. Worse, the most powerful written genres are those generically and grammatically most distant from orality – for example, scientific reports which attempt to objectify the world, or arguments which are designed to persuade (6).

Within the context of the process approaches, writing tasks often do not draw students' attention to the relationship between purpose and the choice of rhetorical features relevant to the discourse of the discipline. This is despite the fact that the *Writing Workshops* are based on students'

written assignments about literary works⁹³. Because process approaches encourage, and reward, narrative writing as it represents students' own 'authentic thoughts', "*even the very few students who do qualify, find English 1's pace is much faster for them and less supportive than the Foundation Course, with less and less interaction with tutors*" (Interview, 2002). Although English 1 does not form part of the investigation in this study, it is worth mentioning that it expects students to engage with texts in ways that are valued in the discipline. Within these circumstances, often students who speak EAL (usually the majority in the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002)), represent a group that tends to struggle with content communicated in English (Balfour, 2000; Clarence-Fincham, 1998; Hart, 1995). Chapter 2 suggests that students who speak EAL often show verbal fluency during tutorial discussions, but this is not matched with their writing abilities. Reppen (1995) insists that,

Just as students learn to control different oral registers, they must also be able to write in different ways for different purposes. Recent research has shown that students need to be exposed to, and have practice with, various genres in addition to narrative writing...This is important for English 1L students and crucial for English 2L learners (32).

Because there has (in South Africa's past) been a particular understanding of the nature of the discipline of English literature which shared a utilitarian view of learners as individuals into which knowledge was to be poured, pedagogy tended to focus on the plot of a literary work and neglects a focus on developing students' critical writing about such works. Prinsloo's (2002) Masters thesis affirms this perspective in her analysis of English language examinations in South Africa's secondary schooling system between 1994 and 2002.⁹⁴ This perspective is described by Eagleton (1983) who argues that literary studies is an arena in which the most fundamental questions of human existence are dealt with: "what it meant to be a person, to engage in significant relationship with others, to live from the centre of most essential values?" (31).

⁹³The set works in this module are *Weep Not, Child* (1964) by Ngugi Wa Thiongo, *We Shall Sing for the Fatherland* (1980) by Zakes Mda, *Short Stories* (not dated, stories taken from a selection of American and Caribbean stories written in different periods) and *Of Mice and Men* (1932) by John Steinbeck.

⁹⁴Doherty's (1987) study, furthermore, reflects a similar line of thinking. His study identifies "certain social and institutional forces acting upon academic literary critics and their practices" (Doherty, 1987:1), which if left unchecked, may stifle critical intellectual engagements with literary texts.

Such theoretical biases caused the English Department at the University of the Witwatersrand to marginalise the importance of metalinguistic awareness which “empowers students and gives them tools to manipulate information and accomplish different purposes through writing” (Reppen, 1995:32). This perhaps explains why the module outline of the *Foundation Course in Literature* (2002) does not begin with questions discussed at length in Chapter 2 such as: what makes the discipline of English literature what it is?; how does it construct, contest, and disseminate knowledge?; what constitutes an argument, or discussion in the discipline?; what ‘counts’ as valid knowledge?; and what is the role of research and what constitutes valid research in the discipline? Given that this is a foundation module such concerns are valid. These concerns are important, and should not be taken for granted at undergraduate levels, especially at first-year level. The University of Natal’s *An Integrated English Language Course* (2002), a first-year module, introduces students to the fundamentals of English grammar but, as with the University of the Witwatersrand, not within the context of addressing broad questions central to the purpose and nature of the field of English Studies. The Applied English Language Studies Department in the same University, on the contrary, offers a module that draws on the English for Specific Purpose orientation to genre to teach English language for epistemological access. As indicated in the next section, the concerns of the field of English Studies are addressed in this module.

8.4 Language, knowledge, and discourse communities

The University of the Witwatersrand Applied English Language Studies Department’s *Foundation in English Language* (2002) module is significantly different to the Rhodes University’s module discussed in the previous section. The difference, however, is not so much on purposes and goals as it is on the implementation strategies to achieve such goals. Both modules, for instance, arose out of concerns about some of the limitations identified in language and/or academic literacy programmes designed by English departments at both universities. Another similarity, furthermore, concerns the structure of both modules: a move from ordinary,

life world language to an academic, specialist language. It is the strategies designed to implement this structure that render the modules as different. The module outline of the *Foundation in English Language* (2002) states that at the end of the module students would have learnt to:

...read and interpret a range of complex academic articles with insight and understanding...control a range of different text types such as academic essays, research papers, reports, reviews, autobiographies, expository and argumentative essays...brainstorm, make mindmaps, categorise, classify, compare and contrast, understand the relationships between cause and effects...take notes effectively...distinguish between main ideas and illustrations/examples...recognise connective words...become a member of the academic community by being able to identify the audiences, purposes, styles, and languages of academic discourse...(6).

The first section of the module challenges students to recall their schooling and life experiences prior to joining the university community. Because they are first year students, this exercise facilitates a critical reflection on the way they were taught at school level, thereby enhancing the realisation that this is a completely different learning environment from the one they are used to. The most interesting aspect of the initial stages of the module is that students' attention is drawn to aspects of their lives that they may have never regarded as important, yet this has been made to become part of what constitutes part of learning in an institution of higher learning. The content of the reading material they are supposed to tackle at this stage of the module, furthermore, addresses issues around personal histories, precisely what they are supposed to bring into their own learning. Ramphele (1995), Fugard (1994), and Mandela's (1995) autobiographies, and Leibowitz's (1995) research on first year students' experiences of university education, for instance, are provided to students to model the text type they are asked to read and construct: an autobiographical narrative. Figure 8.8 illustrates the way in which the first activity reflects strategies deployed in the module to introduce students to one of the basic, yet necessary skills to succeed at university, that of brainstorming:

Figure 8.8: Your pathway to university-telling your story: brainstorming and categorizing activity

1. You will begin the process of telling your story about how you came to be at university by **brainstorming** ideas about what should be included. This will be a type of autobiography, but not one in which you will tell your whole life story. You will concentrate on your education, school days and other learning experiences both formal and informal. You will also consider the people who have influenced you throughout the years. Allow your ideas to flow **freely** and spontaneously. Do not be concerned with neatness or correctness but try to get as many ideas down as fast as possible.
2. When you have completed the initial brainstorm, **organise** the ideas that emerged under headings or categories. Fill in your main **categories and related ideas** in a spray diagram as shown in the diagram below.

The organizing principle relating to this activity is self and educational experiences. It is interesting to note, as indicated by Figure 8.8, that students are provided with a model of what and how they are expected to engage with the activity. The module uses an activity that seems easier to introduce students to one of the key, and often one of the difficult skills in academic contexts: brainstorming and the identification of categories and related ideas. As the skill that they will rely upon for the duration of their university education, it is pedagogically sensible that it is introduced as the first activity in the whole module. They will have to brainstorm every time they are tasked to engage with written and visual texts across different disciplines in order to formulate informed responses.

One other related value in using students' own personal educational experiences lies in the fact that it has potential to expose them to their "epistemic assumptions [which may be] inappropriate for dealing with specific, textually embedded university task demands" (Hardman, 2000:3). Such epistemic assumptions usually are a consequence of certain entrenched pedagogic practices within the schooling sector. Often first year students, as Hardman (2000) puts it:

...rely too heavily on inappropriate epistemologies, leading to misunderstand university tasks. There is then a disjuncture between what learners bring to university tasks and what these tasks demand. Clearly, these learners not only need to learn new ways of understanding but also to unlearn, or relinquish their inappropriate 'ways of knowing in order to learn new ways of approaching university ways of knowing' (3).

Although it is not mentioned explicitly in the module's workbook, discussions based on students' written autobiographies are bound to draw their attention to ways in which their past schooling experiences are different, and sometimes contradictory, to experiences they are likely to encounter at university level. This is implied by two questions based on Leibowitz's (1995) research about first year students' autobiographical narratives relating to their experiences at university. These questions are designed to elicit responses that will raise spontaneously students' awareness of the relationship (or not) between the experiences referred to in Leibowitz's (1995) article and their own narrations:

Mention the three language related practices acquired by students in their schools, homes and communities. Discuss how each of these might contribute positively and negatively to university learning...This research was conducted with students at UWC. Which aspects of the article are similar to your own schooling experiences? In what ways has your own schooling prepared you positively and negatively for university? (Workbook, 2002:11)

Responses to questions about Leibowitz's (1995) findings automatically draw their attention to their own experiences, thereby establishing parallels between themselves and students at UWC. Such parallels broaden students' understanding of their need, and thus increase their motivation levels. While it may be argued that this kind of activity seems to be about 'warning' first year students about what not to expect in the university, and draws their attention to what may be considered as a deficit about their cognition, it also makes explicit to lecturers' the nature of students' needs, and challenges them to consider seriously ways to tackle them. The activity achieves this through challenging students to present a Recount of their schooling experiences, including where they received secondary schooling, and this enables lecturers to ascertain what Vygostky (1978) calls fossilised behaviour hindering students' cognitive development. The task given to students achieves this two-prong educational agenda through the way an instruction to students is constructed:

Remember that people who have not experienced what you write about will be interested in the **details** that make the event seem real to them. Include your **own point of view** and **feelings** about the experiences you record. In your autobiography think of your tutor and of your fellow classmates as your audience. Try to help them understand who you are, where you come from,

what brought you here to Wits and what is important to you (Workbook, 2002:2)⁹⁵.

The use of bold letters in the above quotation reflects an intention on the part of the module designers to make explicit the formal patterns that shape the text students are required to construct. Reference to “details” and “own point of view” and “feelings” indirectly draws students’ attention to what Carrell (1983) calls formal schemata of autobiographical writing. Hyland (1992) asserts that formal schemata:

...constitute knowledge about text types and thus provide the reader with powerful genre specific problem solving strategies which identify, locate and organise the incoming information in accordance with our general knowledge about the structure of a particular genre (12).

In the context of the exercise referred to above, the fact that the instruction is explicit about which formal patterns are required, students’ access to the formal schemata governing the construction of autobiographical writing is made possible. While students’ understanding of how to organise their written assignment is enhanced, opportunities to master the structural conventions of a specific text type (research report) are made available. Further questions under this section draw students’ attention to specific sections of Leibowitz’s (1995) grammatical choices to achieve certain purposes in her academic article which “explores ways in which prior schooling influence the skills and learning styles students bring to university” (Workbook, 2002:7). In the case of Leibowitz’s (1995) text, for instance, students are asked:

What **device** does the writer use to indicate that she is making 3 related points about language related practices? See paragraph 4, 5 and 6...Leibowitz begins paragraph 8 with the following **generalisation (statement)**: ‘The interviews also reveal much that was directly harmful about the students’ schooling’. What **supporting ideas** does she use to develop this generalisation? (Workbook, 2002:11).

In addition to introducing first year students to reading autobiographies, brainstorming, categorising and identifying related ideas, initial stages of *Foundation in English Language* (2002) shift students’ thinking from personalised texts to impersonal academic registers.

⁹⁵ Not my emphasis.

Leibowitz's (1995) text seems to be useful to this transition because, while it draws on first year students' own personal experiences, it engages with such detail in ways that observe the conventions of constructing an academic argument. Questions relating to Leibowitz's (1995) academic article in the above quotation, for instance, provide students with a 'smooth' transition from texts about personal, subjective narratives to texts that draw on personal narratives to construct an objective, impersonal academic argument. The first question concerning Leibowitz's (1995) use of a particular language 'device' to communicate a specific meaning marks the module's shift from personalised Recounts to issues around ways in which purpose influence grammatical choices in the process of constructing a text. This trajectory is illustrated further with the second question which requires students to identify evidence used by Leibowitz to support her claims. The sub-text in this exercise is that claims in academic texts must be followed by evidence. Leibowitz's text thus works as a model for students' learning of unfamiliar academic writing conventions. In writing about language and literacy development, thereby offering a rationale for the basis of modeling texts students are required to construct, Callaghan *et al* (1993) point out that:

Despite the apparent natural progression of child's language acquisition, [modeling] assumes that, at very least, there is an equal input from the social in this process. Adults play a crucial role in providing language models for children...It is a social, interactive process, such that language development is best described as active construction, not passive acquisition (180).

The inclusion of actual autobiographies written by famous national figures and an academic text that draws on students' educational experiences both at secondary and tertiary levels represent the principle of modeling the text type students have to construct at the end of the first section of the module. After the assessment of students' own autobiographies, tutors' extensive comments enable students to broaden their understanding of autobiographical writing. The modeling through the use of other 'successful' autobiographies plays an important role in this regard. In order to move students beyond personalised writing tasks, the second section of the module compares autobiographical, narrative writing with expository, academic writing. The module

achieves this by drawing students' attention to extracts (Text A and Text C) from Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom* (1995). The questions challenge students to identify different kinds of text types, and ways in which specific rhetorical features assist the writer to achieve his purposes.

Figure 8.9 illustrates this:

Figure 8.9: Comparison between narrative writing and expository writing: Comparing text A and C

1. Which text aims to describe an experience, an event, and life experience?
2. Which text aims to analyse another text and to present and which is then supported by various examples and details?
3. Which text uses the language and structure of narrative and which text uses the language and structure of academic writing?

In order to answer these questions, read through the two passages again, concentrating on text organisation. As you read each passage, circle the relevant link word. This will help you identify the text structure. Also think about the purpose of each text, as you read.

Chapter 3 discusses at length different orientations to the concept of genre, and the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) perspective on genre seem to be having a bigger influence on this module. The above exercise challenges students to identify and analyse specific linguistic features and their contextual relevance in order to understand texts A and B construction. Given the fact that the majority of students in this module speak EAL, the module is designed to provide them with tools for understanding the kinds of writing required at university level. One of the strategies employed in the module to enable such students to access epistemologies in their studies in order to function competently in a range of written genres is to make explicit the differences between two text types that tend to dominate university academic disciplines, as Figure 8.10 illustrates:

Figure 8.10: Clue to help students answer the questions about texts A and C

CLUE:

Narrative writing is usually chronological with an emphasis on describing an event or experience in the order in which it happened. Therefore, link words that indicate time such as when, then, next, are used frequently in stories.

Academic writing usually deals with ideas and concepts. Time does not play an important role in the organisation of these sorts of texts. Instead, main points are developed and elaborated through the use of examples and supporting details. The presentation of information/ideas in a logical order is very important (e.g. firstly, secondly, finally).

This level of explicitness is important, especially when one considers the fact that, as Hyland (1992) puts it:

Students are handicapped by an inadequate understanding of how to organise their written assignments to meet our expectations. They are simply unable to master the structural conventions of the various text types they have to produce. We ask learners to submit essays and reward those we recognise as being appropriately structured, but we are often unable to explicitly state the criteria we use to judge this (11).

Foundation in English Language (2002) takes as its goal to work on linguistic rhetorical features of different academic genres and the description of the contexts in which these genres occur. The module's focus on the communicative needs of particular academic and professional groups implies that this module regard genres as the property of the communities that use them, and as such sees itself as having the task to make these accessible to those 'outside' these communities. Emphasis on linguistic aspects and social purpose, as indicated by the examples above, remain the core character of this module.

In order to facilitate entry into the discourse of academic argument, the module begins the process described by Swales (1990) as facilitating 'outsiders' access to what he calls "schematic structure", and what SFL describes as "stages". In this module, the facilitation of this entry involves identifying a range of texts representative of the text types different discourse communities use within the university. The module introduces students to intensive reading skills of academic arguments texts around such topical issues as AIDS education and polygamy. Students are then exposed to technical terms such as plagiarism, rules of evidence, and of developing stance. This section of module canters around three areas: reading, language, and academic literacy. Through a close reading and analysis of Campbell *et al*'s *Gender as an obstacle to condom use: HIV prevention amongst commercial sex workers in a mining community* (1998), for instance, the module introduces students to different moves characteristic of academic argument text type. Unlike the University of Natal English Department's module, this module uses extended texts and combines this with develop students' discourse competence. In referring

to the concept of moves and steps in the process of constructing written texts, Hyland (2004) asserts that:

Each move is a distinctive communicative act designed to achieve one main communicative function and can be further subdivided into several “steps”. Both moves and steps may be optional, embedded in others, repeated, and have constraints on the sequence in which they generally occur (47).

Within the context of teaching speakers of EAL, as is the case with the University of the Witwatersrand Applied English Language Studies Department’s *Foundation in English Language* (2002), this pedagogic approach enables students to see how particular aspects of real communicative world work in order to translate these understandings into the classroom. Explicit teaching of rhetorical devices, furthermore, offers students metalinguistic awareness that improve their ability to read and write texts that are otherwise complicated and out of reach for individuals outside a discourse community. Figure 8.11 presents the activity related to the academic article referred to above. In this activity students are provided with opportunities to acquire the metalinguistic knowledge accessible only to members of the discourse community, but could remain a mystery to those ‘outside’ if it is not taught explicitly:

Figure 8.11: Argument structure activity

We will look at the writer’s argument in terms of the following structure:

- the situation
- the problem
- the solution
- the evaluation

In the opening paragraphs (par 1-5) of the paper the writers tell us in summary what they will argue in the rest of the paper.

In your own words explain:

- what situation is presented?
- what the problem is?
- what solution the writers will argue for?

While the activity teaches students ways in which academic arguments are introduced, it simultaneously draws their attention to moves (or stages) that constitute, not just introductions,

but, most importantly, moves that are characteristic of academic argument text type. This is Granville *et al*'s (1989) 'enriched English', or Wallace's (1998) 'literate English' classroom. In this context, the way in which the structure of the introduction is presented to students, that is, the structure of the actual text they are about to read begins by setting a context (situation), identifies issues to deal with (problem), and closes with presenting a range of ideas and concepts (solution) designed to persuade the reader. In the process of persuading readers that a particular idea or point of view is the correct one, arguments rely on providing evidence or support. Figure 8.12 indicates how the module introduces this aspect of argument construction to first year students:

Figure 8.12: Evidence or support in academic argument text type

- do the writers draw on the work of other researchers? How do you know? Copy out one reference from the body of the paper which shows this. Also copy out the same reference from the reference list at the end of the article.
- what evidence comes from the writers' own research? Copy out one reference from the paper itself which shows this. Also copy out the same reference from the reference list at the end of the article.

The above activity achieves three purposes. First, it raises students' awareness of what counts as evidence in academic writing: read knowledge (not personal feelings) on the subject and understanding recent research findings by others who conducted studies around the same subject. Second, it indicates to students that academic ideas are seldom 'original' and often draw from a wide community of other people and their ideas. While this is the case, however, the originality of a piece of academic writing may be in its synthesis of existing ideas in combination with new empirical research. Third, the activity teaches students that while the latter is true, it is critically important that every idea drawn from another book, article or web site is acknowledged. This is indicated by an instruction that requires students to reference sources used in the article they are asked to engage with. Later on in the module students' attention is drawn to acceptable ways within academic contexts of treating read and/or researched evidence.

The one final aspect of the module I wish to discuss is the way in which it deals with raising students' awareness of the way in which the purpose of a text (in this case it is to argue that a particular point of view is the right one) shapes grammatical choices that writers make in the process of constructing academic arguments. Figure 8.13 presents activities designed to expose students to linguistic techniques that to indicate different positions such as neutrality, a viewpoint, agreement, and disagreement.

Figure 8.13: Introductory phrases to tell the reader what the author thinks or does

- X states that...
- X agrees that....
- X suggests that...
- X alleges that...
- X takes the view that...
- X reminds us that...

Another activity in the module that draws students' attention to ways in which grammatical choices are a result of purposes for which texts are written concerns the choice of types of sentences. One of the classical examples of this in the module concerns the use of compound-complex sentence and the purpose they serve in academic writing, as shown in Figure 8.14:

Figure 8.14: Sentence structure in academic argument writing in the university

Read the following sentence:
As is the case in many parts of Southern Africa, levels of HIV amongst Carltonville residents are high, and condom use with casual partners is low, despite the fact that people are generally well informed about the causes of HIV and how to prevent its transmission.

This is called a compound-complex sentence. This means that there are a number of components in the sentence. Some are called main clauses and others are called subordinate clauses and these are sometimes embedded in the main clause/s. this sentence can be broken down in the following way:

- Levels of HIV amongst Carltonville residents are high (main)
- Condom use with casual partners is low (main)
- This is the case in many parts of Southern Africa (subordinate)
- People are generally well informed about the causes of HIV (subordinate)
- They know how to prevent its transmission (subordinate)

Find another long sentence from paragraphs 1 and 2 and try to break up its component parts, as has been shown above.

The above activity offers students opportunities to understand language as having the potential to offer them possibilities for doing things, the central concern of the field of English Studies with language. It indicates to students, for example, that if they wish to give more weight to a particular issue, they should present such information in the main clause. But if, on the other hand, they wish to indicate to the reader that they wish to indicate lesser importance to a particular phenomenon, then they must use a subordinate clause. While it may be argued that this pedagogic approach to grammar is formulaic and mechanistic, its value lies in the fact that it describes “characteristic schematic types and shows how they are realised linguistically” (Hyland, 1992: 13). In this context first year students are given linguistic tools to access different kinds of epistemologies available across different areas of study at university. Within this context, the strength in *Foundation in English Language* (2002) module lies in its ability to introduce first year students to “general inquiry strategies, rhetorical principles and tasks that can transfer to other course work” (Spack, 1998:40-41). I now turn to a module within an international context, yet with striking similarities with the module discussed in this section.

8.5 Audience, composition, and epistemological access

At the onset, the *English 1000: University English* (2005) module outline presents itself as “far from a ‘remedial’ unit, *English 1000* is appropriate and beneficial for all undergraduate students from all university faculties...[It] is theoretically grounded in classical rhetoric and emphasizes the importance of audience awareness and clarity in the composing process” (Module brochure: 2005). Figure 8.15 indicates clearly how one of the tutorial activities achieves this:

Figure 8.15: Tutorial activity in *English 1000: University English* (adapted from Soles, 2005)

<p>Week 8 Peer Review: Cultivating an Effective Writing Style</p> <p>This week we read each other’s drafts and focus on the effectiveness of each writer’s style. Consider especially these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the writer avoid any prolonged use of short, choppy sentences?• Is there a sense of rhythm and flow in the writer’s essay?• Is the tone (the voice) of the essay in sync with its audience and purpose?• Is there variety in the writer’s sentence structure?
--

The documentary evidence in Figure 8.15 appears to indicate that in combining language acquisition (“variety in sentence structure”) with discursive critique (“sync with its audience and purpose”), the English Department at the University of Sydney takes itself beyond a mere service role to other knowledge areas, and presents its key concerns with language as central to a broader area of application. Students are made aware, through explicit attention, of the relationship between grammatical features, and how these are closely related to the purpose to which, and the audience for whom, a text is constructed.

This approach represents an entirely different view of learning from that of the English Department at the University of the Witwatersrand. Because the latter appears to use the progressive and New Literacy approaches (discussed in chapters 1 and 7, respectively), the pedagogic practice relies on students’ abilities to assimilate and use information independently.⁹⁶ The approach adopted by the University of Sydney’s English Department, on the other hand, corroborates “the Vygotskian (1978) model, which claims that learning takes place in the ‘zone’ between what learners can do independently and what they can do with support of a teacher” (Rose, 2005: 142). Figure 8.16 illustrates how this is achieved in one of the tutorial activities:

Figure 8.16: Tutorial activity in English 1000: University English (adapted from Soles, 2005)

<p>Collaborative Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In a small group, select an interesting topic and design a web with this topic at its centre. Make sure your topic is specific and focused, not vague or too broad.• Create a thesis based on one of the topics above. In a small group, read your thesis out loud and then we will discuss ways to make it more focussed.

Figure 8.16 indicates that the English Department takes the teaching of reading, speaking, and writing as its natural responsibility for the benefit of the whole university. Part of the crucial strategies used in the module to achieve this is alluded to further in the interview: “*the key, I*

⁹⁶ The Writing Workshops at the Witwatersrand’s English Department, as illustrated in section 8.1, were not designed to guide students’ writing by means of presenting them with critical perspectives on particular texts. Instead, they are expected to know this, and such knowledge is to be reflected through their writing.

think, is being able to understand the audience, problems and purposes that constitute typical types of writing situations in the academy” (Interview, 2005). This challenges students to move beyond grammatical correctness (as at the University of Natal), or an ability to apply certain types of literacy skills (as at the University of the Witwatersrand). Instead, they are trained to understand that writing in academia is, as Teresa puts it: “*a situated practice*” (Interview, 2005), and various disciplines construct themselves (in writing and speaking) through discourses which draw from certain ideological positions, practices, values, and methodologies.

As indicated already, the *English 1000: University English* (2005) module prescribed Soles’ *The Essentials of Academic Writing* (2005). The module coordinator’s choice of this book lies in the fact that this book “*takes an interdisciplinary approach to academic writing, presenting conventions and contexts across a range of disciplines. Sample student essays comprise the entire second section of the book*” (Interview, 2005). It is through the choice of this text that students access a thorough grounding into the fundamentals, not just of the discipline of English literature, but of other disciplines as well, within the context of an analysis of extended texts focussed on developing their discourse competence. The book achieves this easily because its strength “*lies in its ability not only to discuss what good writing is, but also to demonstrate what good writing looks like and how to achieve it*” (Interview, 2005). Chapter 4 (section 4.3) discusses at length this approach to pedagogy, and ascribes it to genre theory. The module at the University of Sydney, as pointed in Chapter 3, draws from the New Rhetoric orientation to genre theory as elaborated by Hyland (2004). Through Figure 3.11 in Chapter 3, I indicate how genre theory as understood by Martin (1992) introduces a further level of context beyond that of situation, that is, the context of culture, or discipline in the context of this study.

In *English 1000: University English* students are taught grammar, not in the way used at Natal University, but as “a category that describes the relation of the social purpose of text to language structure” (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993:2). The list of contents in the prescribed book

indicates a deliberate intention of the module to go beyond offering grammar instruction on its own and/or other types of skills. Because reading, writing, and speaking within academia occur within specific disciplinary discourses, with specific value systems and established traditions, the prescribed text, as Figure 8.17 indicates, introduces students to the following sequence of topics:

Figure 8.17: Sequence of topics in the text prescribed in English 1000: University English (2005)

Part One
What is academic essay?;
Getting Started: Consider Topic, Audience, Purpose;
Research your topic;
Make a Plan;
Write a Draft;
Revise your Essay;
Edit your Essay;
Acknowledge your Sources.

Part Two has a section with a sample of academic essays with instructional notes and commentary. Part Three presents students with an anthology of academic writing with model essays written by students and model essays written by academics and, as Figure 8.18 shows, concludes with model essays classified by rhetorical mode:

Figure 8.18: A list of academic writing model essays in the text prescribed in English 1000: University English (2005)

Part Three
Expository: Examples and Details;
Expository: Analysis and Interpretation;
Expository: Process;
Expository: Compare and Contrast;
Expository: Cause and Effect;
Expository: Classification;
Expository: Problem and Solution; Argument

Part of the prescribed text, as shown above, reflects a deliberate intention by the module to teach students skills “to analyse the conventionalised nature of linguistic interactions” (Kress, in Cope and Kalantzis, 1993:22) within specific genres. The tutorial activity presented in Figure 8.19 illustrates Kress’ (1993) assertion clearly:

Figure 8.19: Activities from *English 1000: University English* (2005)

Exercises

- In a magazine you enjoy reading, find an example of an informative essay that you think is well written. Compose a plan from which the author might have worked. Identify the thesis, the points the author makes to support or develop the thesis, and the points the author use to develop each main idea.
- Explain why you think a sound structure – a definite organisational pattern – is important for good writing. What is the relationship between order, structure, and readability of an academic essay? Do other forms of writing – poems or plays, for example – require the same level of order and structure? Explain.

The first activity is designed to encourage students to think about specific conventions that inform the writing process within academia, an aspect of language the field of English Studies wishes to develop in students. Since the activity requests them to “identify the thesis...and the points the author use to develop each main idea”, students are made aware of how writing within academic contexts is supposed to observe certain “conventionalised nature of linguistic interactions” (Kress (1993) in Cope and Kalantzis, 1993:22). The second activity, on the other hand, challenges students to think explicitly about the processes involved in constructing well written texts: good writing is a result of conscious choices of grammatical features and text structure. The question indicates to students that there are sets of criteria that make explicit what constitutes “a sound structure”, and these have to be observed in the way they write. The consequent point for students is that the audience for whom their writing is constructed expects them to observe these criteria, failing which their writing may not be rewarded. It is important for students to understand these dynamics sooner because it raises their awareness of how different disciplines construct themselves as different genres. Eggins (1994) refers to awareness as “all the linguistically-achieved activity types recognised as meaningful (appropriate) in [that] culture” (35).

Conclusion

This Chapter indicates that there are observable differences in the ways in which different English departments design and deliver linguistic and/or academic literacy modules. First, the

module designed at the University of Natal did not approach the teaching of grammar within the context of how purpose informs grammatical choices in the construction of extended texts. Second, while the module was never designed for students in the English Department only, there were no attempts to approach the module in ways that foreground the broader concerns of the field of English Studies with the nature of language as a discursive entity (as is the case at the University of Sydney's English Department). Third, because the module failed to draw students' awareness of how individual disciplines construct, say an argumentative text, the module limited itself to sentences and short paragraphs⁹⁷. These three points make this module different from the module at the same Department in another University.

English departments' failure at Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand to design modules similar to the one designed by the English Department at the University of Sydney, indicates that English departments in South Africa still consider themselves as literature departments. The extensively theorised modules by English Language and Linguistics and Applied Language Studies departments at these two universities, respectively, seem to have had purposes similar to the module at the University of Sydney's English Department. All the three modules appear to have foregrounded the concerns of the field of English Studies with regard to the role of language in constructing knowledge and identities. As at the University of Sydney, these modules purposed to raise students' awareness of the nature of language to students from different faculties. There are three identifiable similarities in these modules. Firstly, they drew students' attention to rhetorical structures used to construct different discourses across disciplines. The choice of Soles's (2005) book at Sydney University, research journal articles at Rhodes University, and prominent figures' autobiographies as well as research journal articles at the University of the Witwatersrand, as prescribed texts, enables students from different disciplines opportunities to access texts from

⁹⁷ The logic for the exclusion of this aspect in the module is that *Academic Learning in English* (Faculty wide, skills-based, generic module) and *English 1B* (first level module in the English Department) were designed to pick these aspects up. The argument in this study though is that both *An Integrated English Language Course* (2001) and *English 1B* ought to have been integrated and become one module in order to achieve what the module at the University of Sydney English Department managed to accomplish.

their individual disciplines. Secondly, tutorial activities did allow students to construct texts from the perspective of their disciplines, and the pedagogic approach facilitated an understanding of how to structure different text types to meet the requirements of different disciplinary discourses. This approach exposes students to a rich environment where the knowledge about behaviour in various disciplines is enhanced. Thirdly, even though activities provided to students appear to have been brief in some instances, often these activities scaffold students through the process of learning about what constitutes writing in discipline specific discourses, with focus on how purpose inform grammatical choices.

Within the context of Sydney University's English Department, students who intended to major in English, Geography, Philosophy, or History, for instance, gained access into different ways of using language in writing, a key skill to succeed at university. Contrary to Jacobs' (2006) dissertation, this way of enabling students to access the rhetorical features and the discourses of their disciplines within the English Department and applied English language studies departments, and not within the confines of their individual disciplines, saves students from what Macedo (1993) calls literacy practices that function:

to domesticate the consciousness via a constant disarticulation between the narrow reductionist reading of one's field of specialization and the reading of the universe within which one's specialism is situated. This inability to link the reading of the word with the world, if not combated, will further exacerbate already feeble democratic institutions and the unjust, asymmetrical power relations that characterize the hypocritical nature of contemporary democracies (187).

The module at the University of the Witwatersrand's English Department seems to have 'fallen short' of introducing students to important readings that would have equipped them with relevant metalinguistic awareness to read, think, speak, and write about set works in their module. The *Writing Workshops*' failure to scaffold students through the process of writing academic texts within the discipline of English literature further disadvantages students who desperately need such assistance. The difficulties experienced by students who passed this module when they become part of English 1 indicate that the teaching of academic literacy needs to occur within the

context of the teaching of the rhetorical features dominant in a discipline. The Applied English Language Studies Department in the same University introduced a module that seems to have succeeded in addressing the limitations in this module. The ambiguous position of the field of English Studies as a field concerned with literature, but also of texts more generally, and also the study of English language (which is global, associated with status and hegemony), is seen in this dissertation as better positioned to offer opportunities for epistemological access for all students. In the concluding Chapter of this dissertation I engage with the implications these findings have for the development of academic literacy in South Africa in terms of the ways in which modules are designed to develop students' linguistic and/or academic literacy in the context of the field of English Studies.

Chapter 9

Theory, Hypotheses, and Further Research on Language Teaching in English Studies

Introduction

This Chapter concerns itself with the implications of my study regarding the theoretical underpinnings for module design and pedagogy in modules meant to develop students' linguistic and/or academic literacy skills for epistemological access in English departments, and English Language and Linguistics and Applied English Language Studies departments. Drawing from a critical examination of qualitative and quantitative data in Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8, Chapter 9 discusses further aspects of the study that provide important theoretical insights for the successful development of students' awareness of the rhetorical features relevant to the broader concerns of the field of English Studies with language. To this end, the Chapter is organised into four sections.

First, I begin by examining the accumulative argument as developed in each Chapter in this dissertation. My intention is to identify important questions and possible answers to such questions. The second section evaluates and assesses aspects of the study that render it an original contribution to debates relating to language education and the concerns of the field of English Studies. This section engages critically with Jacobs' (2006) and Balfour's (2000) studies, as well as with Martin and Rose's work (2003) as representing recent critical and theoretical engagements with the subject of this dissertation. As the section will show, both recent research and recent theoretical developments do present practitioners with research-led and theory-based approaches to developing students' linguistic and/or academic literacy skills. Finally, the Chapter concludes with a discussion on further research that might extend the work undertaken in this dissertation. This concluding section indicates that further research in the area of developing students' linguistic and/or academic literacy skills within the context of the field of

English Studies is as important in the twenty-first century as it was in the nineteenth century when English Studies was first conceptualised as a field of scholarship.

9.1 English departments: historical contingencies, module design, and pedagogy

The detailed account of the socio-political, educational, and historical contingencies that led to the introduction of English as part of formal education in South Africa is presented in this dissertation as a context for further exploration of teaching, and learning English in South Africa. This account is intended to reveal three related issues. The first issue relates to the manner in which English became part of formal education. The second concerns reasons why the teaching of, and in, this language demands proper contextualisation in terms of module design and pedagogic practices in higher education institutions. The third issue deals with understanding the factors that cause English to be central to educational success at all levels of education in South Africa. Chapter 1 argues that despite the introduction of English as the language of learning and teaching from primary to tertiary levels of education in South Africa, there appear to be multiple observable learning difficulties encountered by many university students. Within this context, there arises the need for concerted efforts to investigate strategies to improve the teaching of, and in, English language. Universities are institutions recognised as centres where such investigations may take place in order to facilitate innovative ways to address the challenges and issues raised above.

For universities to play an effective role in researching ways in which the teaching of, and in, English may be improved, there is first a need to revisit the purpose of university education. I argue that this understanding is crucial for module design and pedagogy in programmes meant to develop students' linguistic and/or academic literacy skills. Scholars across historical periods referred to in this dissertation upheld different conceptions of what university education is. While Ziembinski (1997) suggests that universities transmit knowledge, Newman (1891) understands university education as having to do with the extension, rather than transmission, of

knowledge. In this regard, I argue that since students bring to university certain forms of knowledge, Newman's (1891) understanding of the purpose of university education is adopted in this study. It acknowledges, among other things, that students are not empty pitchers into which knowledge has to be poured, but already possess some form of knowledge learnt and acquired at primary and secondary levels of education. The extension of this knowledge, however, depends largely on the nature of the curriculum and pedagogic practices adopted by university practitioners. This is as true in Africa as anywhere else. Chapter 2 indicates that scholars from Africa such as Mazrui (1978), Nkrumah (1956), Nyerere (1995), and Makgoba (2002) agree that across the globe universities have emerged to serve the interests of the societies in which they were established. Within a context where the language used as a means of instruction is spoken by the majority of students as an additional language, teachers, lecturers, and research scholars in the field of English Studies (as discussed in Chapter 2) need to pay attention to systematic ways in which the teaching in, and of, such a language can be done effectively and efficiently. Chapter 1 shows that within the context of the history of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa, bringing about epistemological access through, and in, English remains a formidable challenge. I argue that this can be achieved once practitioners in the field of English Studies in South Africa work together, first among themselves across universities then, secondly, deliberate on ways in which students' epistemological access into various disciplinary discourses may be a reality.

I discuss in Chapter 3 ways in which the SFL theory of understanding language informs a Genre-based approach to teaching: an approach that leads to the development of linguistic and/or literacy skills simultaneously. I argue that this particular theoretical framework encourages a pedagogic practice that raises students' awareness of rhetorical features, as well as the discourse of a discipline, both of which are crucial in university education (please see Chapter 5). Part of the process of raising students' linguistic and/or academic literacy skills simultaneously in the discipline of English literature, for example, involves understanding the history of, and theory to

study, literary, cultural, and media studies, and the extent to which such history and theory have influenced English literary studies in South Africa. In Chapter 7, I argue that this historical and theoretical engagement facilitates a rethinking of the place of language teaching in the discipline of English literature, a move that may lead to deliberate decisions towards context-sensitive curriculum innovations.

My dissertation further draws attention to the negative effects on students' learning brought about by the artificial separation between the teaching of English literature and English language in most universities. I argue that within the context of a society marked by decades of past racial (and present economic) inequalities (like South Africa), modules should not focus on a pedagogic practice that is either grammatical rules or academic writing and critique based, without an attempt to integrate the two aspects of the field of English Studies. The persistence of this artificial separation in English departments causes students not to learn to choose grammatical structures according to the purpose for which they construct texts. The systemic functional approach to understanding language (developed by Halliday, 1978), seems to be relevant in this regard since it offers a theorised understanding of language within the context of the field of English Studies.

I argue that the systemic functional approach moves beyond traditional and progressive approaches that inform some of the modules discussed in this dissertation. The relevance of this approach to the dissertation lies in its strength in teaching students to identify the relationship between social purpose and grammatical choices (please see Halliday, 1985, 1992, Rose, 2005, and Martin and Rose). This approach informs a pedagogic practice underpinned by two key questions about language: "how is language used?" and "how is language structured for use?" My argument in Chapters 2 and 3 is that these are questions informing the study of textual (visual, written, and audio) representations within the context of the field of English Studies in relation to texts (media, novels, film, poetry, short stories, and popular magazines). The ability

of these questions to inform the study of texts is made possible by the fact that possible answers to these questions need to draw from the context of situation and of culture (discipline and genres) within which the language is used. I argue that this approach is most relevant to a context like South Africa, where access to knowledge by many students is often hampered by limited competence in the language of learning and teaching. It has to be pointed out, however, that SFL is included in my dissertation because it informs the way in which issues investigated in this study are conceptualised and analysed. This is seen in the way some data in Chapter 5 are understood and evaluated. The understanding of my experiences is made possible through the application of Genre Theory, a pedagogic approach that arises out of SFL theory of language. Chapter 4 further indicates the role played by SFL in the process of engaging with data yielded through my autobiographical narrative and the narrative interview at Rhodes University.

Given the fact that research often involves looking again into an already existing phenomenon, Chapter 4 presents a detailed discussion on the choice of Grounded Theory as conceptual framework used to analyse and evaluate data. The usefulness of this theory to research lies in its ability to promote a particular understanding of the process of data collection. In the context of this study, it is a process that requires conscious reflection, articulation, and development of explanations why data collection is understood the way it is in the context of a study. The Chapter further offers an explanation why, for example, the narrative Recounts, experiential autobiographical data, and documentary evidence, were necessary to explore the issues investigated and the questions posed. The principles of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Goulding, 2002) are such that the researcher need not formulate a premeditated hypothesis, but has to allow the data to do so. It is clear from the manner in which the data are explained that this is largely a result of observing the principles of Grounded Theory⁹⁸. The participants' verbal responses, for example, are analysed within the context of engaging critically

⁹⁸According to Goulding (2000), the basic principles of Grounded Theory include a deliberate decision "to reflect the source of the developed theory which is ultimately grounded in the behaviour, words and actions of those under study" (40).

with spoken words with an intention to identify underlying assumptions that inform them. Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8, for instance, do not necessarily impose certain value judgements on participants' responses, but allow the data to suggest several hypotheses about each context; these hypotheses are drawn together in the conclusion of this Chapter.

Data concerning my educational success (despite an educational disadvantage as a result of the system of Bantu Education) is an example of what yields its own hypotheses without any form of imposition of particular conclusions. These emerge in Chapter 5, for example, where data indicate that individualised, one-to-one tuition, with mentoring as one of its aspects, remains one of the key strategies with potential to introduce students to the discourse of the discipline of English literature. I argue that this type of tuition raised my awareness and brought about an understanding of the relationship between grammatical choices and the purpose in the construction of texts (both spoken and written). Successful access to such insights about the discipline is corroborated by the fact that I was able to graduate with two distinctions within the four years duration of my junior degree in 1997.

I further used Grounded Theory to engage critically with data yielded by six participants from Rhodes University (two interviews), the University of the Witwatersrand (two interviews), the University of Natal (published *NRF* Report (2001) authored by Balfour), and the University of Sydney (one interview). By means of a mini-survey which I administered after the Humanities Conference at the University of Potchefstroom (2002), I managed to select participants who worked either in academic literacy or grammar-focussed modules. Drawing from data accessed through the principles that underpin Grounded Theory, I argue that *ad-hoc* academic literacy modules, on the one hand, or grammar-focussed pedagogy, on the other, may fail to facilitate students' access to specific disciplinary discourses. Chapter 6 shows that data yielded by participants within the South African context, for instance, confirm this critique. Data yielded through the autobiographical narrative in Chapter 5, from Rhodes University and the

University of the Witwatersrand's Applied English Language Studies departments and from the University of Sydney's English Department in chapters 6, 7, and 8 appear to suggest more advantages to approaching academic literacy tuition within the context of ways in which purpose of a text informs ones grammatical choices.

There are observable differences in the ways in which the design and delivery of linguistic and/or academic literacy modules between the University of Sydney's English Department and the universities of Witwatersrand and Natal's English Departments are executed. In terms of the latter, the emphasis is on skills development and grammar instruction, respectively, while with the former, on the contrary, the attempt is towards integration of both awareness of rhetorical strategies akin to the concerns of the field of English Studies with language. The Sydney University's approach compares well with the approach used in at Rhodes University's English Language and Linguistics Department and the University of the Witwatersrand's Applied English Language Studies Department. In all the three contexts, the concerns of the field of English Studies with language are observed, and they focus on teaching students to apply appropriate registers and grammatical constructions suitable to the purposes of texts (spoken and written) in ways that alert them to the relationship between purpose, rhetorical features, and text types.

Chapter 7 indicates that although the University of the Witwatersrand's English Department is the only one that designed a module specifically for students in the English Department, there seem to be several limitations that undermined the effectiveness of the module, such as the absence of Literary Theory and the high failure rate (16 out of 84 students). The module at Rhodes University is comparable to my experiences narrated in Chapter 5. The comparison lies in the fact that even though there was no specific module, students received one-to-one tuition, the aspect in my experiences that facilitated access to the discourse of the discipline of English literature. But at Rhodes, because this type of interaction with students was

not complemented by module material and/or readings in Literary Theory and critical readings (as was the case in my own experience), students did not attain “*conscious control over the deployment of language*” (Bob, 2002: Interview).

While there are similarities between the modules introduced at Natal and Sydney universities, there are significant differences between the two. The dissertation indicates that the module designed at the University of Natal did not approach the teaching of grammar within the context of broadening students’ awareness of how grammatical choices, within the context of extended texts, are made. When this was done (for example, the teaching of passive voice in the scientific text), it was based on short texts. Exercises involved independent writing activities of half to one page length at the end of each week, in which the grammatical features were assessed and highlighted. This was in addition to close exercises and sentence completion exercises. Secondly, while the module was never designed for students in the English Department only, there were no attempts to approach the module in ways that foreground the field of English Studies concerns with the nature of language as a discursive entity (as is the case at the University of Sydney’s English Department). Thirdly, because the module failed to teach English language in ways that draw students’ awareness to how their individual disciplines use writing to construct, say an argumentative text, the module limited itself to sentences and short paragraphs. The follow-up module to *An Integrated English Language Course*, the *Academic Learning in English* (1996) module, was designed to introduce students to academic discourse in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Natal, but enabled the English Department not to concern itself with the issues of disciplinary content. I argue that this omission is damaging.

Although the University of Sydney English Department and the Applied English Language Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand’s modules were designed to develop students’ competence in English (the medium of instruction), appear to have foregrounded the concerns of the field of English Studies with the nature of language. The

University of Sydney module and the module offered by the Applied English Language Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand attempted to raise students' awareness of the rhetorical features relevant to different disciplines. Tutorial activities in both modules, furthermore, appear to have allowed students to construct texts from the perspective of their disciplines. I argue in this dissertation that this approach exposes students to a rich environment where the knowledge about their individual disciplines is enhanced by understanding ways in which they differ from others⁹⁹. This is contrary to the module offered by the English Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, which appears to have been limited in its attempts to introduce students to important readings that would have offered them a metalanguage to read, think, speak, and write about prescribed works in their module. The *Writing Workshops*' failure to scaffold students through the process of writing academic texts within the discipline of English literature further disadvantaged students who desperately needed such assistance. These observations represent important findings in the study. The next section discusses ways in which my study challenges existing research and explores ways in which it represents an original contribution to the field of language education and academic literacy.

9.2 Challenges to existing research findings in the field of English Studies

This section begins with a discussion of two studies, namely, Balfour's (2000) PhD dissertation entitled *Investigating the Integrated Teaching of Language and Literary Skills: Trialling a New Syllabus for Non-Native Speakers of English in South Africa*, and Jacobs (2006) PhD dissertation entitled *Negotiated Understandings of the Academic Literacy Practices of Tertiary Educators*. While Balfour's (2000) study associates the failure of students at universities with lack in grammatical competence, Jacobs' (2006) argues that students' failure has more to do with the fact that lecturers get subjected to "discourses [that] exonerated them from the need to reflect on how they were or were not making explicit for their students the rhetorical nature of their

⁹⁹ The fact that some assignments encourage students to write on issues specific to their major subjects other than English expose them to ways in which their disciplines differ from other disciplines. This is possible because tutorial feedback regarding such assignments is made in the presence of students from different disciplines. They thus identify what constitutes an argument, say in History as opposed to Geography, or English literature as opposed to Economics, for instance.

disciplines” (185). To include perspectives from the international context, I discuss Martin and Rose’ (2003) theory on the debates about the teaching of reading and writing. Their research informs pedagogic practices designed to raise students’ awareness of texts’ rhetorical features for the development of their linguistic and/or academic literacy skills simultaneously (please see Chapters 3 and 7 for more details). I conclude this discussion by examining aspects of my study that appear to represent an original contribution to the field of language education and academic literacy. Specifically, I identify how my study represents an alternative theoretical orientation with regard to module design and pedagogic practices in attempts meant to enhance students’ awareness of the relationship between grammatical choices and purpose for which (spoken and written) texts are constructed.

Drawing from the premise that reading and writing have to be taught in an integrated manner at school level, Balfour (2000) conducted a study within rural secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. The aim of the study was to pilot and assess the effectiveness of an alternative model to the teaching of language skills using literary texts. Balfour’s (2000) study represents a theoretical orientation that prioritises mastery of grammatical structures within the context of literary texts such as novels and/or short stories, before the teaching and learning of other aspects of the curriculum:

The aim of the thesis was to develop an alternative curriculum which might improve English skills in the classroom. The assumption underlying the project was that integrating language and literary skills could have beneficial effects on pupils’ progress at secondary level (iii).

Balfour’s (2000) study used qualitative and quantitative data and testing to demonstrate learners’ improvement. However, his curriculum did not address the discourse of the discipline of English literature, but focussed instead on teaching English by means of the unit of analysis in the discipline: literary texts. This is an important difference, for it points to the uniqueness of my study. Throughout my dissertation, the prevailing argument is that the teaching of language skills, without incorporating raising students’ awareness of the rhetorical features peculiar to the

discourse of the discipline of English literature, is limited as an approach. Even though it may be argued that at secondary level there is no 'discourse' of English literature, Martin and Rose (2003) show that it is possible to alert younger learners as early as at primary school to this aspect of language. One of the ways to achieve this is to move learners beyond reading and writing narrative texts to persuasive and argumentative discourses (please see Chapters 2, 6, 7, and 8). They argue that

In our view ideology and power run through the whole ensemble of language and culture, positioning people within each social context as having more or less power, and opening or narrowing their access to resources for meaning. Of course, up to a point all speakers of a language share an equal range of meaning-making resources, but there are also certain varieties of meanings that are not equally distributed. These include resources for engaging in the written discourses of contemporary social institutions, such as sciences, government and education. One important strand of work in SFL has been to provide access to these discourses through literacy pedagogies grounded in discourse analysis (Martin and Rose, 2003:15-16).

Martin and Rose's (2003) theorisation appears to suggest that the narrowing of access to certain resources of meaning can be overcome through literacy pedagogies, as discussed in this dissertation, drawn from SFL. I argue in Chapter 3 that SFL is concerned with how we use language to mean, and data in Chapter 5 suggest that a pedagogic approach drawing from Literary Theory enabled students to answer this question within the context of the study of literature. Martin and Rose's (2003) work identifies scaffolding as a strategy that could make accessible forms of meaning not accessible to other social groups. I argue in this dissertation that in addition to scaffolding our students through complex texts, teaching about, and how to use, theories that inform the construction of such texts, is also crucial. If this is not done there arises the risk that scaffolding students through a particular genre in a text has a danger of encouraging them to parrot what they have read when asked to write about such texts. Reppen (1995) shares this point of view, when he says:

The role of genre in content writing instruction should emerge naturally from the material. Caution should be exercised not to turn genre instruction into a formulaic type of instruction in which students are simply instructed to manipulate certain features. Rather, students must learn to respond to the informational and organizational demands of various settings (35-36).

The ability to “respond to the informational and organisational demands of various settings”, in the context of data in Chapter 5, was made possible by exposure to Literary Theory, one-to-one tuition, and a pedagogic practice that raised my awareness of specific rhetorical features as they suited contextual demands of a text under construction. Drawing from this understanding, the qualitative data in my study appear to indicate that there is a need for the incorporation of disciplinary theoretical underpinnings in pedagogy and in module design. This finding of the dissertation represents an original contribution to the field of language education and academic literacy particularly in higher education.

My perspective that embraces the idea of integrating disciplinary content in the teaching of grammatical features appears to be shared by Jacobs (2006):

In a shift from the ‘study skills’ view of academic literacy which supports an autonomous model of literacy...This model proposes that disciplinary specialists need to be working within their disciplinary discourse communities, while simultaneously having a critical overview of this ‘insider’ role, from outside of it. It is through engaging with language lecturers who are ‘outsiders’ to their disciplinary discourse that disciplinary specialists find themselves at the margins of their own fields, and are able to view themselves as insiders from the outside, as it were (iv).

This perspective represents a deliberate move from skills-orientated tuition, both in language and academic literacy modules. For Jacobs (2006), it represents an initiative to involve, not just language experts, but discipline-specific tutors as well as to facilitate an integrated approach to developing students’ linguistic and/or academic literacy skills. In terms of my dissertation, however, (and drawing from conclusions I render in chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8) the point of departure is that the practitioners in the field of English Studies are better positioned to address the development of these skills for students across different faculties. This represents a critique of Jacobs’ (2006) study, since I do not believe that there is so strong a need to locate language expertise in the teaching of discipline-specific content. Discipline specialists are experts in the content of their areas of research and teaching, and are better positioned to enhance students’ knowledge of content in those disciplines. Understanding content, however, does not enable them to teach rhetorical features of their disciplines, nor are practitioners concerned with

teaching English as a Foreign Language, or as an additional language, better equipped to teach these features. On the contrary, my dissertation is that practitioners in the field of English Studies, through its concerns with language as applied to construct experience and societal identities, are better positioned to address needs arising from an awareness of the rhetorical use of language across a range of discipline specific discourses. Language, as used in (visual, spoken, and written) texts, remains the central concerns in the field of English Studies, and expertise to develop students' repertoire of academic discourses in different disciplines can be found in practitioners in this field (please see Chapters 3, 6, and 7). Students, regardless of their disciplinary affiliations, have to learn to read newspapers critically, listen to news, view films, read magazines, and meet students with cultural backgrounds different from their own. They have to work, furthermore, for institutions that will require them to operate as team members, all of which require an understanding of different, and sometimes contradictory, discourses and modes of thinking.

As argued in chapters 6 and 7, Jacobs' (2006) thesis that language specialists need to work hand-in-hand with disciplinary experts in order for students to learn within the confines of their disciplines, seems to perpetuate what Macedo (1993) describes as "potentially dangerous educational practices that privilege specialisation while ignoring the need to make linkages using critical literacy" (183). I argue in Chapters 6 and 8 that instead of this, students need to leave the confines of their disciplines and interact with discourses from other disciplines. As a field, English Studies is better positioned to create an environment where these students can access the discourses of their individual disciplines, yet within the context of understanding what makes their disciplines different from others at the level of rhetorical features¹⁰⁰. This will afford students with opportunities to acquire, not only discourses of their disciplines, but access to the highest levels of literacy skills.

¹⁰⁰As is the case in *Foundation in English Language* and *English 1000:University English* (2005) modules at the University of the Witwatersrand's Applied English Language Studies Department and Sydney University's English Department, respectively.

For this dissertation, students' success and access to these literacy skills depends on the development of language modules that will not compromise ways in which the field of English Studies engages with the role of language in representing and constructing experience. As is the case at the University of Sydney, now that most faculties in universities described in this study identify language as key to students' access to discipline-specific knowledge and skills, the field of English Studies ought not to conceive of itself as a service field to other fields of study. Instead, the field needs to re-think the place of English language teaching and learning and the relevant pedagogical approaches that are aligned with its key concerns. Instead I suggest this as an area for further study. In addition, there is a need to investigate ways in which the field of English Studies contributes in the process of reinforcing knowledge and skills to which students are introduced at entrance level modules across different faculties.

Conclusion

My study demonstrates that success in higher education depends entirely on ways in which module design and pedagogic practices acknowledge and extend the differential capabilities of students as they learn. Drawing from data in Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8, and using Grounded Theory, a number of inter-related hypotheses can be generated. These concern enabling students' access to the discourse and the rhetorical structures of diverse disciplines through the active involvement of the field of English Studies in module design for entrance level students at university.

- if students are afforded one-to-one tuition (or very small group tuition) in which the rhetorical structures peculiar to the discourse of a discipline are discussed as one of the formal aspects in entrance level modules, then students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds will better access the rhetorical features relevant to their individual disciplines;
- if the theory that informs engagement with the subject matter of the discipline of English literature is taught in relation to the module content, then students will acquire the metalanguage necessary to write effectively and engage with issues related to the discipline;
- if academics in the discipline of English literature raise students' awareness of the relationship between grammatical choices and the purpose for constructing a text, then the field of English Studies is better positioned to enable students to access disciplinary discourses across other disciplines.

A conventional practice and principle of research in the sciences is that hypotheses need to be tested before they become theory. It is not my intention in this dissertation, however, to test the three hypotheses presented. The three hypotheses provide a basis for researchers to pursue further research as alluded to previously in this Chapter. Drawing from Grounded Theory in this dissertation, these hypotheses arising from the data, suggest directions for further development of a model for academic literacy in English in which epistemological access is foregrounded.

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APPENDIX A:
World University
Rankings

THE TIMES

HIGHER

EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT

WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

NOVEMBER 5 2004

Aachen RWTH Aarhus University Aberdeen University Adelaide University Alabama University Alberta University Amsterdam University Arizona University Auckland University Australian National University Bath University Beijing University Birmingham University Bologna University Bonn University Boston University Brandeis University Bremen University Bristol University Brown University California Institute of Technology Cambridge University Carnegie Mellon University Chalmers University of Technology Chicago University University of Chicago City University of Hong Kong City University of Hong Kong Colorado University of Technology Dartmouth College Dundee University Durham University Ecole Polytechnique Edinburgh University Rotterdam ETH Georgia Institute of Technology Göttingen Hebrew University of Jerusalem Helsinki University of Technology Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Indiana University Indianapolis University of Kentucky Kyoto University La Sapienza University of London Leicester University Leiden University Liverpool University London School of Economics Lund University Maastricht University Malaya University Manchester University and University of Manchester Massachusetts University Massey University McGill University Michigan State University Minnesota State University Nagoya University Nanjing University National Taiwan University National University of Singapore Newcastle upon Tyne University Nijmegen University Norwegian University of Science and Technology Oxford University Paris VI, Pierre and Marie Curie University Pennsylvania State University Pohang University of Science and Technology Princeton University Purdue University Queen Mary University of London Queen's University Belfast Queensland University of Technology Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Rice University RMIT University Rochester University Royal Institute of Technology Rutgers University Sains Malaysia University Sorbonne Paris South University Southampton University Stony Brook, State University of New York University Tasmania University Technical University of Denmark Technical University of Munich Darmstadt Tohoku University Tokyo Institute of Technology Trinity College Dublin Tsinghua University Louvain University de Montréal University of California Berkeley University of California, Davis University of California, San Francisco University of Southern California University of Technology, Sydney University of Texas at Austin University of Washington Uppsala University Utah University Utrecht University Vanderbilt University Vienna Technical University Vienna University Virginia Polytechnic Institute Virginia University Warwick University Washington University in St Louis Waterloo University Western Australia University Wisconsin University Würzburg University Yale University Yeshiva University York University Aachen RWTH Aarhus University Aberdeen University Adelaide University

WHO IS NUMBER ONE

THE WORLD'S TOP 200 UNIVERSITIES

RANK	NAME	COUNTRY	PEER REVIEW SCORE	INT'L FACULTY SCORE	INT'L STUDENTS SCORE	FACULTY/STUDENT SCORE	CITATIONS/FACULTY SCORE	FINAL SCORE
	Max score		1000	100	100	400	400	1000.0
1	Harvard University	US	643	17	17	50	243	1000.0
2	University of California, Berkeley	US	665	6	7	7	169	880.2
3	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	US	484	13	18	28	221	788.9
4	California Institute of Technology	US	236	19	17	45	400	738.9
5	Oxford University	UK	560	57	18	30	45	731.8
6	Cambridge University	UK	541	65	19	31	46	725.4
7	Stanford University	US	420	9	13	28	197	688.0
8	Yale University	US	347	53	20	65	81	582.8
9	Princeton University	US	353	18	18	19	133	557.5
10	ETH Zurich	Switzerland	170	72	25	4	266	553.7
11	London School of Economics	UK	257	79	100	27	6	484.4
12	Tokyo University	Japan	371	3	3	30	60	482.0
13	University of Chicago	US	254	31	18	58	71	444.0
14	Imperial College London	UK	237	60	51	55	27	443.7
15	University of Texas at Austin	US	183	9	8	8	202	421.5
16	Australian National University	Australia	212	48	31	9	105	417.7
17	Beijing University	China	322	9	11	35	3	391.8
18	National University of Singapore	Singapore	266	35	46	10	18	385.9
19	Columbia University	US	213	10	18	56	75	384.1
20	University of California, San Francisco	US	21	5	0	39	300	376.5
21	McGill University	Canada	132	84	42	11	84	364.1
22	Melbourne University	Australia	207	49	51	12	23	353.2
23	Cornell University	US	202	10	16	19	91	348.8
24	University of California, San Diego	US	96	3	6	7	208	331.5
25	Johns Hopkins University	US	107	16	13	68	116	330.8
26	University of California, Los Angeles	US	180	2	8	12	106	316.4
27	Ecole Polytechnique	France	144	25	55	23	59	315.5
28	Pennsylvania University	US	142	14	23	31	87	306.9
29	Kyoto University	Japan	207	3	3	25	57	303.7
30	Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris	France	105	11	22	100	51	298.4
31	Michigan University	US	173	17	11	19	65	293.3
32	Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne	Switzerland	56	100	67	13	44	289.4
33	Monash University	Australia	136	49	64	8	19	286.0
34	University College London	UK	108	48	40	44	36	284.2
35	Illinois University	US	152	3	3	15	100	281.6
36	New South Wales University	Australia	140	49	47	19	12	275.7
37	Toronto University	Canada	131	24	16	6	88	272.5
38	Carnegie Mellon University	US	129	35	25	24	37	259.4
39	Hong Kong University	Hong Kong	96	74	14	8	50	249.5
40	Sydney University	Australia	124	49	29	11	24	245.2
41	Indian Institute of Technology	India	209	3	2	13	8	241.7
42	Hong Kong University of Sci & Technol	Hong Kong	135	37	15	8	38	240.6
43	Manchester University and Umist	UK	130	40	23	19	19	238.5
44	School of Oriental and African Studies	UK	62	70	77	20	0	235.8
45	Massachusetts University	US	118	1	4	7	99	235.7
46	University of British Columbia	Canada	114	24	14	6	65	230.4
47	Heidelberg University	Germany	124	11	33	12	41	228.3
48	Edinburgh University	UK	118	32	21	22	29	227.6
49	Queensland University	Australia	95	49	25	6	42	223.9
50	Nanyang University	Singapore	123	32	47	9	0	217.1
51	Tokyo Institute of Technology	Japan	118	3	13	27	50	217.0
52=	Duke University	US	61	12	11	58	66	212.6
52=	Université Catholique de Louvain	Belgium	104	26	41	17	19	212.6
54	Brussels Free University	Belgium	54	41	57	10	36	205.1
55	MIT University	Australia	60	49	80	8	0	203.9
56	Adelaide University	Australia	69	49	29	5	45	202.7
57	Paris VI, Pierre et Marie Curie University	France	99	7	39	15	33	198.7
58	Sussex University	UK	73	51	23	11	32	196.2
59	Purdue University	US	105	25	14	8	36	194.0
60	Technical University Berlin	Germany	83	11	39	2	50	191.1
61=	Brown University	US	46	39	14	19	65	188.9
61=	Tsing Hua University	China	140	9	7	24	3	188.9
63	Copenhagen University	Denmark	111	18	14	19	22	188.7
64	Erasmus University Rotterdam	Netherlands	70	27	11	11	63	188.4
65	Georgia Institute of Technology	US	117	4	11	9	39	185.7
66	Wisconsin University	US	104	0	8	18	48	184.5

THE WORLD'S TOP 200 UNIVERSITIES

RANK	NAME	COUNTRY	PEER REVIEW SCORE	INT'L FACULTY SCORE	INT'L STUDENTS SCORE	FACULTY/STUDENT SCORE	CITATIONS/FACULTY SCORE	FINAL SCORE
67	Auckland University	New Zealand	76	49	30	7	15	183.5
68	Macquarie University	Australia	45	49	62	5	15	182.3
69	Osaka University	Japan	78	3	5	28	63	181.8
70	St Andrews University	UK	39	42	57	19	19	181.0
71	Paris 1 Sorbonne	France	124	3	43	5	0	180.8
72	University of California, Santa Barbara	US	64	9	3	6	93	180.6
73	Northwestern University	US	61	4	12	27	71	180.4
74	Washington University	US	48	16	8	18	82	177.0
75	Boston University	US	78	12	19	17	45	176.6
76	Curtin University of Technology	Australia	35	50	79	6	0	176.2
77	Vienna Technical University	Austria	83	19	45	16	6	175.4
78	Delft University of Technology	Netherlands	106	20	12	20	12	174.2
79	New York University	US	90	8	10	19	41	173.2
80	Warwick University	UK	70	49	25	9	14	170.6
81	Yeshiva University	US	2	14	15	31	103	170.2
82	Minnesota University	US	59	10	5	11	79	169.6
83	Eindhoven University of Technology	Netherlands	45	20	12	11	77	169.5
84	Chinese University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong	81	30	16	12	25	169.2
85	Gollingen University	Germany	72	11	13	4	64	168.5
86	Rochester University	US	49	10	8	49	48	167.8
87	Trinity College, Dublin	Ireland	57	45	29	8	24	167.0
88	Case Western Reserve University	US	23	4	11	49	75	166.8
89	Malaya University	Malaysia	50	29	68	15	0	166.4
90	Alabama University	US	27	10	4	8	112	166.0
91	Bristol University	UK	59	38	16	17	31	165.9
92	Lomonosov Moscow State University	Russia	97	9	15	31	5	161.6
93	Hebrew University of Jerusalem	Israel	81	5	11	16	44	161.4
94	Vienna University	Austria	77	19	30	5	25	161.2
95	Technical University Munich	Germany	72	11	32	23	18	160.7
96=	Western Australia University	Australia	36	49	29	10	31	160.1
96=	King's College London	UK	34	44	27	24	26	160.1
98	Amsterdam University	Netherlands	68	17	14	10	46	159.8
99	Munich University	Germany	82	11	26	12	24	159.7
100	Queen Mary, University of London	UK	41	47	30	23	13	158.8
101	Oslo University	Norway	81	21	18	13	21	158.5
102	National Taiwan University	Taiwan	100	10	11	11	22	157.8
103	Bath University	UK	25	45	39	22	21	155.5
104	Tufts University	US	17	10	15	26	81	153.9
105	Texas A&M University	US	78	12	3	6	49	153.2
106	Iowa University	US	23	10	11	5	99	152.6
107	Colorado University	US	38	17	3	10	79	151.9
108	Massey University	New Zealand	41	49	42	5	8	150.6
109	Washington University, St Louis	US	38	10	10	13	76	150.3
110	Chalmers University of Technology	Sweden	71	17	22	11	25	150.2
111	Sains Malaysia University	Malaysia	26	27	78	15	0	149.5
112	Glasgow University	UK	59	33	10	15	27	148.5
113	University of Technology, Sydney	Australia	46	49	39	7	0	146.1
114	Otago University	New Zealand	25	49	42	10	15	145.9
115	Brandeis University	US	13	26	15	12	75	145.6
116	Michigan State University	US	81	10	7	8	35	145.1
117	North Carolina University	US	37	9	3	17	75	144.3
118=	Virginia University	US	53	6	10	17	54	144.0
118=	Seoul National University	South Korea	83	6	20	9	21	144.0
120	Utrecht University	Netherlands	58	16	9	11	45	143.9
121	Paris XI, Université Paris-Sud	France	47	11	31	10	40	142.6
122	Royal Institute of Technology	Sweden	37	19	30	4	47	142.5
123	Maastricht University	Netherlands	24	20	51	20	23	142.0
124	Stuttgart University	Germany	61	11	39	17	10	141.7
125	Humboldt University Berlin	Germany	69	11	23	7	28	141.3
126	Birmingham University	UK	41	36	19	14	26	140.5
127	Aarhus University	Denmark	59	18	13	26	20	140.0
128	Durham University	UK	52	33	10	11	28	139.3
129	Helsinki University	Finland	75	11	7	13	28	138.6
130	Penn State University	US	64	10	5	10	44	138.4
131	Leiden University	Netherlands	24	20	13	12	65	137.9
132	Strasbourg University	France	29	11	40	9	45	137.6
133	Leeds University	UK	54	31	17	15	16	136.9

THE WORLD'S TOP 200 UNIVERSITIES

RANK	NAME	COUNTRY	PEER REVIEW SCORE	INT'L FACULTY SCORE	INT'L STUDENTS SCORE	FACULTY/STUDENT SCORE	CITATIONS/FACULTY SCORE	FINAL SCORE
134	Maryland University	US	35	20	5	14	58	136.7
135	Bonn University	Germany	56	11	37	13	14	135.0
136	Stony Brook, State University of New York	US	26	7	10	11	75	134.3
137	York University	UK	36	39	16	16	22	133.3
138	Dartmouth College	US	18	13	12	20	65	132.5
139	Stockholm University	Sweden	40	19	30	3	35	131.9
140	Uppsala University	Sweden	43	19	30	11	24	131.5
141	Utah University	US	51	10	13	14	40	131.0
142	La Trobe University	Australia	27	49	23	4	25	130.8
143	Waterloo University	Canada	50	25	12	5	35	130.6
144	Toulouse 1 University	France	31	8	40	5	42	130.4
145	Technical University of Denmark	Denmark	49	18	15	23	20	128.6
146	Rice University	US	35	10	7	25	48	128.5
147=	Hamburg University	Germany	66	11	17	9	20	127.3
147=	McMaster University	Canada	28	24	13	11	47	127.3
149	Kiel University	Germany	27	11	15	3	67	127.0
150	Sheffield University	UK	38	33	15	15	22	126.9
151	Liverpool University	UK	32	39	14	13	25	126.8
152	Karlsruhe University	Germany	47	11	29	9	26	126.0
153	Tohoku University	Japan	48	6	2	27	39	125.7
154	China University Sci & Technol	China	85	5	1	24	6	125.2
155	Montpellier 1 University	France	43	11	31	5	31	124.8
156	Vanderbilt University	US	20	2	5	39	55	124.6
157	Frankfurt University	Germany	51	11	30	6	22	124.1
158	Technion - Israel Institute of Technology	Israel	78	0	1	12	30	124.0
159	Madrid Autonomous University	Spain	62	19	11	8	19	123.7
160	Korea Advanced Institute of Sci & Tech	South Korea	86	7	19	8	0	123.5
161	Tasmania University	Australia	27	49	22	6	15	123.3
162	La Sapienza University	Italy	89	4	5	4	16	121.5
163	Pohang University of Sci & Technol	South Korea	22	14	18	8	56	120.9
164	Innsbruck University	Austria	31	19	38	6	23	120.8
165	Georgetown University	US	38	10	10	13	46	120.6
166	Alberta University	Canada	28	24	23	13	28	120.4
167	Nagoya University	Japan	45	3	3	19	47	120.0
168	Dundee University	UK	9	42	21	14	31	119.4
169	Würzburg University	Germany	11	11	15	6	72	118.8
170	Nottingham University	UK	24	39	20	13	19	118.0
171	Lund University	Sweden	36	19	6	11	40	117.3
172	TH Darmstadt	Germany	39	11	28	2	33	116.9
173	Emory University	US	12	1	8	43	48	116.6
174	Indiana University	US	29	0	10	6	68	115.9
175	University of California, Santa Cruz	US	14	5	2	4	87	115.6
176	Helsinki University of Technology	Finland	61	20	8	15	8	115.4
177	Université de Montréal	Canada	35	24	23	14	14	114.2
178	Freiburg University	Germany	26	11	29	14	29	113.0
179	Newcastle upon Tyne University	UK	19	33	19	20	19	112.6
180	University of Southern California	US	40	15	14	4	35	111.4
181	Lancaster University	UK	23	44	16	7	18	111.3
182	University of California, Davis	US	27	1	4	10	65	110.8
183	Arizona University	US	35	5	9	10	49	110.6
184	Aachen RWTH	Germany	60	11	27	9	0	110.5
185	Queen's University Belfast	UK	16	54	16	5	16	110.3
186	Bologna University	Italy	76	4	8	4	14	109.8
187	Norwegian University of Sci & Technol	Norway	30	23	19	22	12	109.6
188	Tulane University	US	27	10	20	33	16	108.9
189	Leicester University	UK	5	32	21	17	29	107.4
190	Rutgers State University	US	24	25	5	10	40	107.3
191	Nijmegen University	Netherlands	22	20	12	33	17	107.1
192	Nanjing University	China	73	4	2	16	7	106.3
193	Southampton University	UK	12	45	11	16	18	105.9
194	Aberdeen University	UK	6	38	22	16	20	105.7
195=	National Autonomous University of Mexico	Mexico	68	7	0	25	1	104.5
195=	Fudan University	China	61	8	13	15	4	104.5
197	Bremen University	Germany	35	11	21	2	32	104.4
198	City University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong	40	47	3	10	0	103.6
199	Virginia Polytechnic Institute	US	56	10	7	11	17	103.0
200	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	US	24	19	9	9	38	102.9

APPENDIX B:

Humanities

Conference

Circular



Humanities Conference



What are the humanities for? ;
Valuing and re-valuing the humanities in South Africa

Humanities Conference
12-14 September 2002
Potchefstroom University for CHE

12-14 September 2002
Potchefstroom University for CHE



Potchefstroomse Universiteit
vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys

r. Emmanuel Mgwawashu

re-conceptualizing language teaching and learning in the Humanities faculty: knowledge ABOUT language vs knowledge OF language"

a world that sells and buys everything in exchange for the general equivalent, it is the criterion of economic usefulness that tends to determine the acceptance, and therefore success, of any course introduced within the context of tertiary education. Within such contexts educational authorities and market forces tend to exert pressure on higher education. This pressure poses a threat to formative degrees offered by most disciplines in the Humanities. This threat is felt particularly by the traditionally non-vocationally specific disciplines, a description that has come increasingly to characterize English Studies with the national decline in the training of secondary educators. As an attempt to negotiate this challenge, most (English) language courses introduced in Humanities faculties tend to be instrumental, with an impetus to servicing other disciplines and, in some cases, specific professions. Commerce Law - and Accounting - specific language courses are a consequence of this negotiation. This paper wishes to resist this tendency and sees it as reducing the effectiveness of teaching and learning of language into a service function for the disciplines outside the Humanities. Today's professionals need to be able to utilize language, not only for writing business letters and reports, but also for solving problems and generating ideas. Our students should not attain to these fundamental abilities if our language teaching focuses on mere formalization of grammatical structures and skills in sentence construction within a discipline-specific content, and ignores the importance of teaching language through a focus on language as a discursive and manipulative entity. Rather, I argue, we should draw students' attention to the fact that 'descriptions of language structures are completely interconnected with descriptions of the contexts in which language is used' (Unsworth 2000:1).

of. Musonda Mpepo

ome of the problems in First year Students' Academic Writing at University of Zambia

There are many problems that confront ESL learners in an academic writing. One of these problems is the low proficiency which manifests itself in numerous syntactic errors and inappropriate lexical selections in their use of the target language. This paper discusses some of the problems that African learners of English seem to have in academic writing when they enter tertiary education. Apart from the problem of linguistic incompetence, issues of negotiation, presentation and argumentation are also covered.

of. Allan Munro

strategic Positioning of Research in the Arts Within a Technikon"

Traditionally work and training in Arts Departments have been split along two "fault-lines." As in the United States "theoretical work" (also known as "academic work") has been clustered around History, Literature and Criticism" with occasionally "basic principles" thrown in for good measure. This can be seen in Fine Arts departments, for example, making the "theory of Art" a basic component of their qualification, and Musicology consisting of History of Music, and Music theory.

This is by no means exclusively so, but it develops from an historical trend and tradition.

The second "fault-line" is clustered around the "practice" of the art. (Occasionally this might become the "Praxis" of the art). Fundamentally, this is built around the passing on and the learning of the skills of the art/craft, normally from experts to apprentices. Within the cloistered traditions of tertiary institutions, these skills are then employed in exploring the realms of creativity within a "safe" environment. These experiments are then placed at the door of "scholarly endeavour."

This paper will argue that, between the fault-line of the "History Lit Crit" tradition, and the "practice/practical" tradition there is a gulf that needs to address the interface (if you are of the conservative bent) or the interweave (if you are of the liberal persuasion) between the art as product, located in history, etc, and the art as process, located in the changing dynamic of culture, material, pedagogy, technology and scholarship. Because the Technikon prepares students particularly for the professional world, located in the here-and-now, it is ideally situated to engage with and research the culturally disparate (in terms of student requirements and industry demands) as it interfaces with the pedagogy required to answer to the demands of the profession. It can draw on the changing material demands (in terms of technology and the human). It can delve into the indigenous, providing the curatorial, but also engaging in and with the diverse. And finally, it can provide a forum for the interface between the industrial demands of the profession, and the aesthetic or artistic demands of the burgeoning artists/craftspeople.

In short, the Technikon can provide a the locus of research into "what we did" and "what we do" by engaging with "why we do it" and "how we can do it better."

Ms. Marth Munro and Ms Emily Groenewald

"Computer-Aided Performance Voice Training: An Example of Interdisciplinary, Inter-Institutional Research in the Humanities"

The crucial factor in the training of the singing voice is the discriminating ear of the teacher and singing student, due to the fact that the vocal instrument is largely hidden from sight and relies mainly on auditory feedback (Borden, Harris & Raphael, 1994; Kent, 1997). In addition to this, communication between teacher and student about the singing voice is very often characterized by the use of "vague" traditional terminology for the description of voice quality. The danger is that this may lead to the continuation of a potentially faulty teaching tradition. More specifically, problems may arise regarding the transfer of terminology, concepts and aesthetic values that may be related to a particular voice culture, in this case specifically referring to the classical singing style. The possibility of miscommunication becomes even more acute in a situation where the teaching of classical singing on the tertiary level, has to accommodate the multi-cultural/lingual South African student population. Modern technology offers a possible aid in the form of computer aided perceptual feedback. This project sets out to investigate the feasibility of computer aided training of classical singing students in a multi-lingual, multi-cultural tertiary educational institution in South Africa.

APPENDIX C:

Authorization Letters to Conduct Research

From: <p.walters@ru.ac.za>
To: "Emmanuel Mgqwashu" <Mgqwashue@ukzn.ac.za>
Date: 2006/03/13 03:34:48 PM
Subject: Re: Official Document

Dear Mr Mgqwashu,

This is to confirm that I, Professor Paul Stephen Walters, as the then Head of the Department of English, Rhodes University, gave you permission to conduct research on your stated topic in the said department, and was duly interviewed by you on Friday 11 July 2002.

The interview took up most of the morning from 10h30 onwards.

Paul Stephen Walters BA(Hons) PhD
H A Molteno Professor of English
Rhodes University

13 March 2006

From: "vhouliston" <vhouliston@languages.wits.ac.za>
To: "Emmanuel Mgqwashu" <Mgqwashue@ukzn.ac.za>
Date: 2006/03/22 10:09:28 AM
Subject: Re: Fwd: Request for an official document

Dear Mr Mgqwashu

This is to confirm that your interview with Dr Jennifer Stacey, which was conducted in 2002 as part of your doctoral research, was fully authorised by the Department of English.

Yours sincerely
Victor Houliston

Head of English

Victor Houliston
Department of English Literature
School of Literature and Language Studies
University of the Witwatersrand
P O Wits
Johannesburg 2050
Tel. 027-11-7174106

--

CC: <mawilliams@languages.wits.ac.za>

Emmanuel Mgqwashu - Re: Request for Confirmation of Research Visit

From: Anne Campbell <anne.campbell@arts.usyd.edu.au>
To: Emmanuel Mgqwashu <Mgqwashue@ukzn.ac.za>
Date: 2006/04/04 02:11 AM
Subject: Re: Request for Confirmation of Research Visit
CC: Susan Thomas <susan.thomas@arts.usyd.edu.au>

Dear Mr Mgqwashu

The Dean acknowledges that you visited the University of Sydney and meet with Dr Susan Thomas, from the Faculty of Arts, Department of English.

Anne Campbell
for
Professor Stephen Garton
Dean
Faculty of Arts
University of Sydney

Emmanuel Mgqwashu wrote:

Dear Professor Garton

You may or may not remember me. My name is Mr Emmanuel Mfanafuthi Mgqwashu, a lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Faculty of Education in the English Department, in South Africa. I met you in July 2005 and my visit was part of my PhD research at the time. After a few minutes conversation with you, you referred me to Dr Susan Thomas whom you thought was going to be useful to my research interests. The following day I went to her office to interview her about the course she coordinates: English 1000: University English.

In October 2006 I will be graduating and I need to send my thesis for examination at the end of March. Before this, however, I need to get the Ethical Clearance Certificate. The application for this certificate requires documents that confirm that I received permission to meet colleagues in your faculty who I thought were going to be helpful to my research.

Would you please assist by sending me a simple e-mail that indicates that indeed we did meet and you allowed me to interview Dr Susan Thomas in your faculty. I copy this e-mail to her as well so that she can be aware of my current correspondence with you.

Hope to hear from you.
Regards
Emmanuel

School of Language, Literacies, Media and Drama Education
Faculty of Education
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Durban, 4001 KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

0027 [0]31 260 3549 (Personal)

0027 [0]31 260 3411 (School Administrator)
0027 [0]31 260 3480 (Subject Administrator)
0027 [0]31 260 3678 (Fax)

www.ukzn.ac.za/sllmde

Please find our disclaimer at <http://www.ukzn.ac.za/disclaimer>

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Anne Campbell
Secretariat Officer
Dean's Unit
Faculty of Arts
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006
AUSTRALIA

Telephone: +61 2 9351 2209
Fax: +61 2 9351 5333
mailto: anne.campbell@arts.usyd.edu.au

APPENDIX D:
Written Document
Analysis Worksheet

Written Document Analysis Worksheet

1.	<p>TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Patent <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum </td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Map <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram <input type="checkbox"/> Press release <input type="checkbox"/> Report </td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional record <input type="checkbox"/> Census report <input type="checkbox"/> Other </td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Patent <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum	<input type="checkbox"/> Map <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram <input type="checkbox"/> Press release <input type="checkbox"/> Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional record <input type="checkbox"/> Census report <input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Patent <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum	<input type="checkbox"/> Map <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram <input type="checkbox"/> Press release <input type="checkbox"/> Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional record <input type="checkbox"/> Census report <input type="checkbox"/> Other		
2.	<p>UNIQUE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting letterhead <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten <input type="checkbox"/> Typed <input type="checkbox"/> Seals </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Notations <input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp <input type="checkbox"/> Other </td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Interesting letterhead <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten <input type="checkbox"/> Typed <input type="checkbox"/> Seals	<input type="checkbox"/> Notations <input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<input type="checkbox"/> Interesting letterhead <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten <input type="checkbox"/> Typed <input type="checkbox"/> Seals	<input type="checkbox"/> Notations <input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp <input type="checkbox"/> Other			
3.	<p>DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT:</p> <hr/>			
4.	<p>AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT:</p> <hr/> <p>POSITION (TITLE):</p> <hr/>			
5.	<p>FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?</p> <hr/>			
6.	<p>DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)</p> <p>A. List three things the author said that you think are important:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>B. Why do you think this document was written?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>			

Designed and developed by the
Education Staff, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408.

APPENDIX E:
English 1
Prescribed Books at
University of
Durban-Westville:
1994

University of Durban-Westville

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT PRESCRIBED BOOKS FOR 1994

ENGLISH 1

1. **Murray and Johansen:** *Write to Improve* (Holder).
2. **Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English** ed. Hornby (Oxford)
(Recommended for Purchase).
3. **Shakespear:** *Richard II* (New Penguin/Oxford).
4. **Shakespear:** *Macbeth* (New Penguin/Oxford).
5. **Mtwa/Ngema/Simon:** *Woza Albert* (Methuen).
6. **Dangarembga:** *Nervous Conditions* (The Women's Press).
7. **Dickens:** *Great Expectations* (Penguin).
8. **Pirandello:** *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (Heinemann).
9. *Not Either an Experimental Doll.* ed. **Marks** (Natal University Press).
10. **Bennet and Roy:** *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory* (Prentice Hall).
(Additional material will be supplied by the Department, especially that for the study of
Language and Theory).

APPENDIX F:
Can't Blame the
Youth (1976) by
Peter Tosh

Can't Blame the Youth (1976)

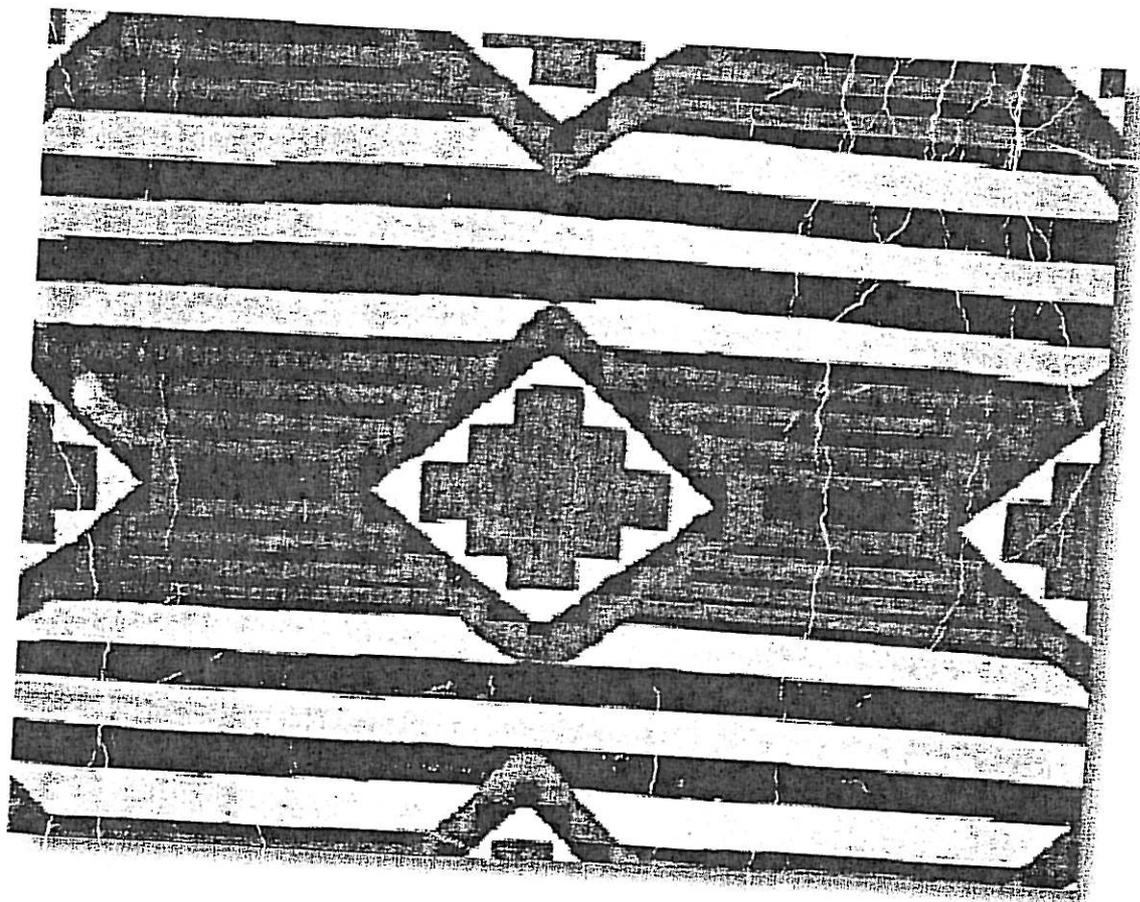
Peter Tosh

You can't blame the youth
You can't blame the youth of today
You can't blame the youth no at all!
You can't fool the youth
You teach the youth about Christopher Columbus
And you said he was a very great man
You teach the youth about Marco Polo
And you said he was a very great man
You teach the youth about Pirate Morgan
And you said he was a very great man
You teach the youth about Pirate Hockins
And you said he was a very great man
So you can't blame the youth when they get bad
You can't fool the youth
You can't blame the youth of today
You can't fool the youth, no at all
You can't blame the youth
When every Christmas come
You buy the youth the pretty toy guns
So you can't blame the youth when they do wrong
You can't fool the youth
You can't blame the youth no at all

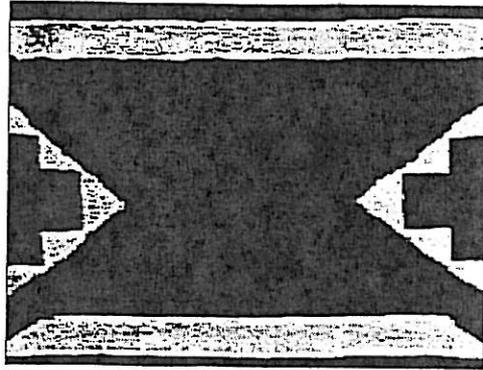
APPENDIX G:
Module Outlines
for All Research
Sites

*An Integrated
English Language
Course*

for one semester
2001



Foreword



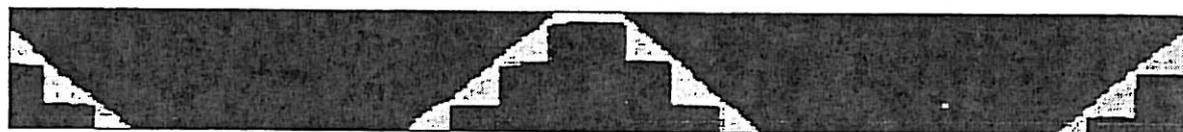
The 21st Century will be characterised by the accelerated growth of already established 'global' languages. English is only one such language. It is not an inherently superior language. Nonetheless, it is true that the language occupies an anomalous position in South Africa. While English is the language of education, the media, the economy and politics, it is not the native language of the majority of South Africans. Though this is no accident, the educational opportunities to learn in and through English, for you the learner, are considerable.

Locally, within the English medium institution, access to reading, writing, and intellectual discourse is mediated primarily (but not exclusively) through English as the means to varied and multifaceted ends. This book is meant to *enable* you to attain the 'means' in order for you to achieve your 'ends'. The emphasis of the course is on *enablement*. See English as a means to your *enablement*. No one book or teacher can provide that; you have to want it for yourself. There are no 'soft options', no 'sure thing'. Ultimately, those who have mastery of more than one language have access to more than one world. Using a language competently *enables* you to enter those worlds with confidence. To fail in this task is to limit your choices and without choices the world is a hard place. The generations before you, in South Africa especially, knew that.

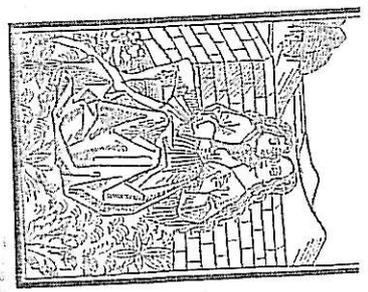
This book is not a complete guide. It concentrates on the integration of three aspects of English grammar: Time, Modality and Sentence Construction. The course is based upon discourse analysis, reader response theory and critical pedagogy. We believe this synthesis enables the learner to use English more effectively: that is, within the context of 'real' texts used and read in everyday situations. Though this book focuses upon three aspects of English we have added other language activities which address punctuation and the finer points of accurate language usage. We hope the course will prove helpful to you and we would, in this its 'trial year', be grateful especially if you provided your tutors/ lecturers with constructive criticism about what is, and is not, necessary.

Co-ordinator: English Language Course

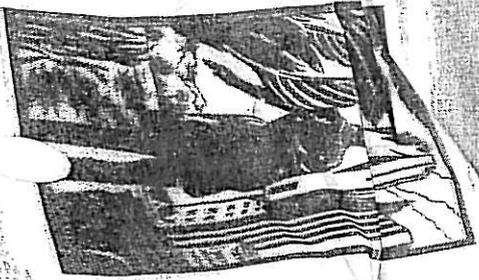
Table of Contents



Week 1	Introduction to <i>Africa's Urban Past</i> by Anderson and Rathbone (2000) Articles and Prepositions for accurate meaning	p.1
Week 2	Introduction to <i>The Institutional and Financial Report: University of Natal, (1996-1997)</i> Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences	p.11
Week 3	Introduction to <i>The Advertisement</i> Clauses and Conjunctions: packaging information in sentences	p.25
Week 4	Introduction to <i>The Sisters</i> by Pauline Smith, (1990) Clauses and Conjunctions: (as above)	p.39
Week 5	Introduction to <i>the Medical Text</i> Relative Clauses: What are they? How do they work?	p.49
Week 6	Introduction to <i>Educational Theory: Outcomes-Based Education</i> Nominal and Adverbial Clauses: Why, and how do they work?	p.64
Week 7	Introduction to <i>English in Education</i> By Robert J. Balfour (1998) Speaking about Time: The Present	p.78
Week 8	Introduction to <i>Life in Prison</i> Bessie Head's "The Prisoner Who Wore Glasses" Speaking about Time: The Past	p.87
Week 9	Introduction to <i>Violence</i> by Ahmed Essop Speaking about Time: The Future	p.95
Week 10	Introduction to <i>Horoscopes and Travel</i> Modals and Register: tone and mood for an audience	p.104
Week 11	<i>The Bill of Rights and The Constitution</i> Modals and Active and Passive Voice	p.114
Week 12	Introduction to <i>An Interview with Breytenbach</i> by Illeana Dimitriu, (1997) Direct and Indirect Speech	p.124



DEPARTMENT OF
ENGLISH
English Foundation



University of the
West Indies

FOUNDATION COURSE IN LITERATURE

Welcome to the Foundation Course in English Literature!

The course is offered jointly by the Department of African Literature and the Department of English.

The course consists of 1 module, ENGL 111 (running July - November).

1. WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THE FOUNDATION COURSE IN LITERATURE

This course will introduce you to the study of literature in English at university level and give you the knowledge and skills to study literature successfully in the English and African Literature departments. It will also improve your English language skills and teach you skills for writing academic essays.

In this module you will read:

- * different kinds of literature written in English including novels, drama and poetry;
- * Literature from many parts of the world including Africa, England, Caribbean and America.

During the course you will develop a sense of what literature is and of how it operates by:

- 1) learning ways of studying different numerous genres of literature such as novels, drama, poetry and short stories;
- 2) learning about the social and political contexts of these texts and how they relate to their time and place;
- 3) learning techniques for analysing literature.

This module integrates content and skills teaching and learning. You will be actively involved in acquiring the processes, strategies and skills that should enable you to participate fully in the lectures and seminars of the English and African Literature departments and to complete demanding departmental written assignments at first year and higher levels.

SECOND SEMESTER MODULE (16th July - 30th November)

FOUNDATIONS IN DRAMA FICTION AND POETRY - ENGL 111

This module introduces you to different types of fiction such as novels and short stories. The first texts studied will be African or postcolonial and will deal with issues likely to be familiar to you. These texts will be followed by texts from America. You will study the conventions of these texts, how they are written and how they relate to their social and political contexts. Some poetry will also be studied.

There will be a weekly writing workshop in which you will develop your writing ability and learn the requirements of university writing by writing about the texts studied during the week.

SET WORKS

Poetry A selection poetry from Africa, England, Europe and the Caribbean (to be given out in class)

Weep Not Child - Ngugi Wa Thiongo

We Shall Sing For The Fatherland - Zakes Mda

Short Stories - (a selection of American & Caribbean stories to be given out in class)

Of Mice and Men - John Steinbeck

STUDENTS WHO HAVE APPLIED FOR UNIVERSITY BURSARIES CAN SPEAK TO JENNIFER STACEY IN CB 111 ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT'S BOOK BURSARY FACILITY, WHICH MAY HELP YOU OBTAIN SOME OF THE BOOKS YOU NEED.

2. TUTORS ON THE COURSE

<u>Tutor</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Phone Ext</u>
Jenny Stacey (Course Supervisor)	CB111	74111
Daniel Ojwan'g	SH3168	74146
James Ogude	SH3166	74145
Michelle Adler	CB 124	74124
David Medalle	CB113	74113



How can I obtain more information?

For more information on English 1000, including examples of past unit materials and a current unit outline, please contact the unit co-ordinator, Dr Susan Thomas, at ENGL1000@arts.usyd.edu.au

What is *University English*?

University English is a practical unit designed to improve student writing at all undergraduate levels in a variety of formats across a range of disciplines. It features lectures and workshops organized around exercises in rhetoric, style and grammar. Assignments are drawn from actual university documents, including examples of exemplary and unsatisfactory student writing. As students begin to view writing as a process of drafting, revising, editing and receiving feedback, they should notice a dramatic improvement and greater confidence in their ability to write for university audiences.

The unit is fun and engaging, with a range of assignments designed to reflect student interests. In fact, students are often asked for their input on unit materials and assessment methods. The small-group writing workshops are especially collaborative, interactive and meaningful.

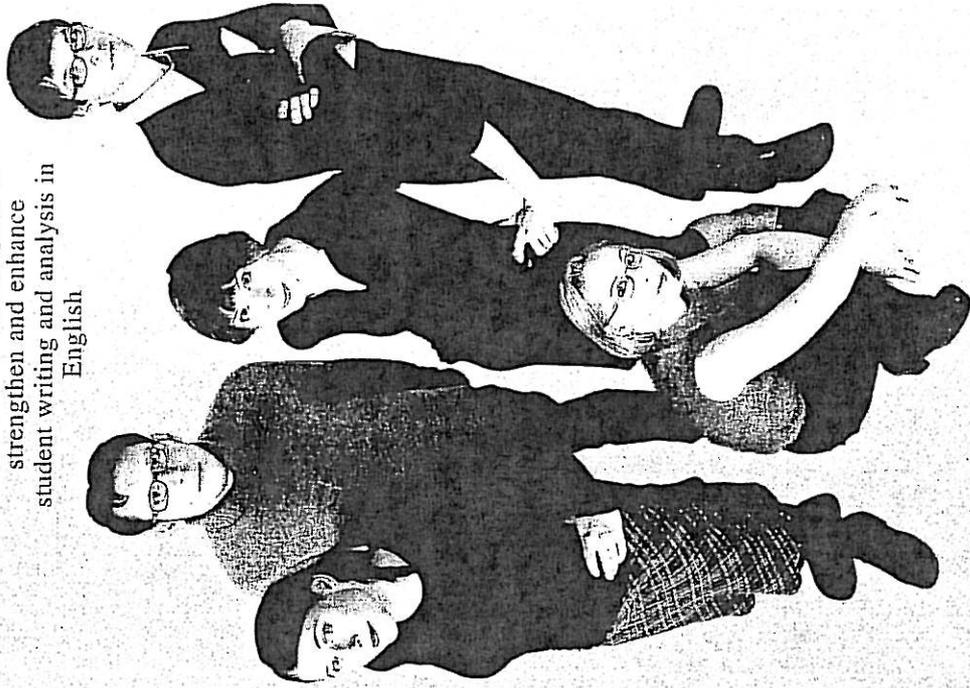
Join us in English 1000 and begin your own journey towards clearer expression in English.

“A writer is a lot of people trying very hard to be one person.”

F. Scott Fitzgerald

English 1000: University English

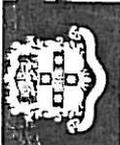
A specialised unit designed to strengthen and enhance student writing and analysis in English



Offered four times per year in Semesters 1 and 2, Summer and Winter School



The University of Sydney

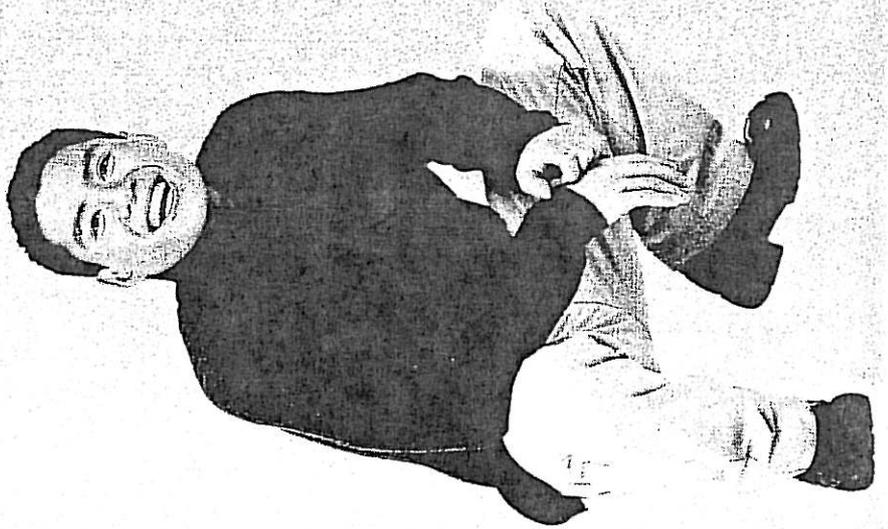


How is it organized?

There is one lecture and one two-hour workshop per week in Semesters 1 and 2. For Winter and Summer School arrangements, please visit the respective websites.

WebCT

In addition to lectures, workshops and short readings, WebCT information and exercises will be available. These online resources are designed to complement lectures and workshops in a convenient and interactive format.



For whom is the Unit designed?

Far from a 'remedial' unit, English 1000 is appropriate and beneficial for all undergraduate students from all university faculties. It can be counted for degree credit as a 6-credit-point option in faculties that allow an Arts junior unit in their undergraduate courses of study. Many faculties already offer this arrangement.

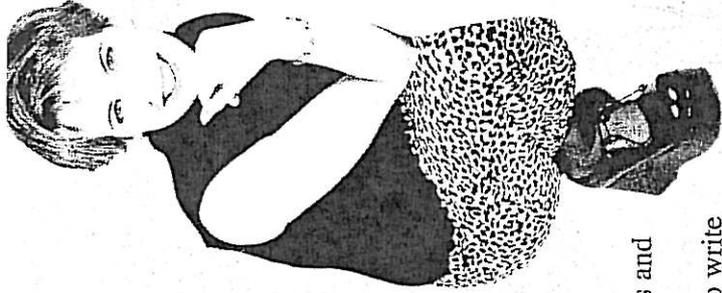
English 1000 is theoretically grounded in classical rhetoric and emphasises the importance of audience awareness and clarity in the composing process. The unit is designed to provide students at all undergraduate levels with strategies of critical thinking and analysis that will increase their abilities in written and spoken discourse throughout their university experience and beyond.

How do I enrol?

To enrol in the unit for Semester 1 or 2, follow the same procedure as for any other unit of study. To enrol for Summer or Winter School, visit the appropriate websites for specific instructions.

What will I learn in the Unit?

- How to produce effective written assignments for various audiences across a range of academic disciplines
- How to employ rhetorical strategies and apply grammatical concepts in order to write and analyse documents in English more effectively
- How to develop an appropriate 'voice' and tone for university writing in a variety of settings and formats
- How to edit your own text as well as that written by others
- How to analyse documents for grammatical correctness, concision and word economy
- How to become not only a better writer, but a more critical consumer of written and spoken discourse
- How to evaluate the authority and effectiveness of written discourse in a variety of formats



ENGL 1000 University English

Semester 2, 2005

Coordinator:

Dr Susan Thomas

Room N350 Telephone 9351 2489

Email: susan.thomas@arts.usyd.edu.au

Consultation times: Monday 4-5 pm, Tuesday 3-4 pm

Unit Description

University English is a practical unit designed to improve student writing at all undergraduate levels in a variety of formats across a range of disciplines. It is taught by means of lecture and workshops organized around exercises in rhetoric, style and grammar. Writing and editing assignments are drawn from actual student writing.

Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of English 1000, students should be able to:

- Think creatively and imaginatively to produce effective written assignments across a range of academic disciplines, according to specific guidelines
- Exercise critical judgment in developing an appropriate 'voice' and tone for academic writing assignments in a variety of settings and formats
- Evaluate realistically their own work and that written by others, according to specified criteria, in order to improve not only their writing, but also their critical analysis abilities
- Collaborate effectively in peer review and group writing situations, recognising both as essential components in the writing process

Classes

There is one one-hour lecture per week for twelve weeks and one two-hour workshop per week for eleven weeks. As some workshops are streamed according to discipline, you will need to check your timetable for your workshop assignment.

Lectures — Monday 5-5:50 Woolley N395

Workshops — Check your timetable.

Attendance at lectures and workshops is compulsory, and students are required to attend at least 80% of classes in order to pass the unit. Since a schedule of readings and assignment due dates will be provided, students are expected to plan ahead and organize their work accordingly. The standard deduction of 2% per day (including weekends and holidays) will apply to late work. In keeping with English Department Policy, **assignments cannot be submitted late without appropriate documentation from the Director of Undergraduate Studies in English, Dr. David Kelly.** Room S347; phone 9351 2214; email: david.kelly@arts.usyd.edu.au

Note: Students are expected to establish contacts within in the class for purposes of catching up on missed lectures or workshops. It is the **student's responsibility** to obtain lecture notes and other information missed due to unexcused absences. **It is also essential that students attend the workshops in which they are enrolled, in order to receive proper credit for attendance and assessments. Attendance will be taken at each workshop, using the class list for each workshop. Any latecomers should ensure that they have been marked present. Finally, please do not ask to 'substitute' workshops** unless there is a compelling case for doing so (hospitalization, death in the family or legal matters). Many 'Absent Fails' have been the result of students failing to attend their designated workshop or failing to ensure that their attendance was recorded.

Set Text

Derek Soles, *Essentials of Academic Writing, 2005 Edition*

Please purchase this book from the Co-op Bookshop, as it will be used heavily in workshops. **A reliable dictionary of your choice is also highly recommended.**

WebCT

In addition to assigned readings, there will also be supplementary WebCT tasks. Students are encouraged to visit the WebCT site frequently, as it contains unit information, resources, and links to other useful sites.

Assessment

The assignments for this unit are designed to support the unit learning outcomes and to offer a variety of activities to support diverse student learning styles. Assignment topics and detailed instructions will be distributed by workshop leaders well in advance of the due dates, which are listed on the attached schedule. There are four assessable tasks that will determine a student's final mark:

- One **500-700-word annotated bibliography/outline** worth **10%** of the final mark
- One **1200-1500word essay** (the result of the bibliography/outline) worth **50%** of the final mark
- One **1000-word critical reading task** worth **30%** of the final mark. Workshop leaders will distribute more detailed instructions well before the due date.
- One **oral presentation** worth **10%** of the final mark.

Please note that unexplained absences from class, or failure to complete any component of the assessment, can lead to failure, according to Faculty of Arts policy. All marks assigned during the semester are raw marks and subject to scaling at the end of semester.

Communication Policy

Workshop leaders will provide detailed written feedback on all marked assignments. They are also available for consultation during announced times and by appointment.

Please reserve the use of e-mail for brief messages or queries that can be answered in a timely manner. Workshop leaders check e-mail only a few times per week, so students should allow adequate turnaround time (approx 3 to 5 days) for e-mail correspondence. In the case of urgent matters requiring an immediate response, students should phone the workshop leader or visit during consultation hours. Sending an email does not excuse a student from attending class or submitting work on time. **Assignments should not be emailed to workshop leaders or slipped under office doors. All written work should be submitted via the English Department Drop Box, outside the general office (Woolley N386), with the appropriate cover sheet attached.** Students are encouraged to obtain a copy of the *Undergraduate Handbook* for complete information on student responsibilities.

Student Feedback

The coordinator and workshop leaders are committed to student satisfaction and value student feedback on all aspects of the unit at any time, not solely during formal evaluation times. If you have a comment about the unit or feel that something could be done better in order to support your learning, please send an e-mail outlining your thoughts to ENGL1000@arts.usyd.edu.au. All feedback will be regarded as confidential.

One final note: Please turn off mobile phones and pagers during lectures and workshops.

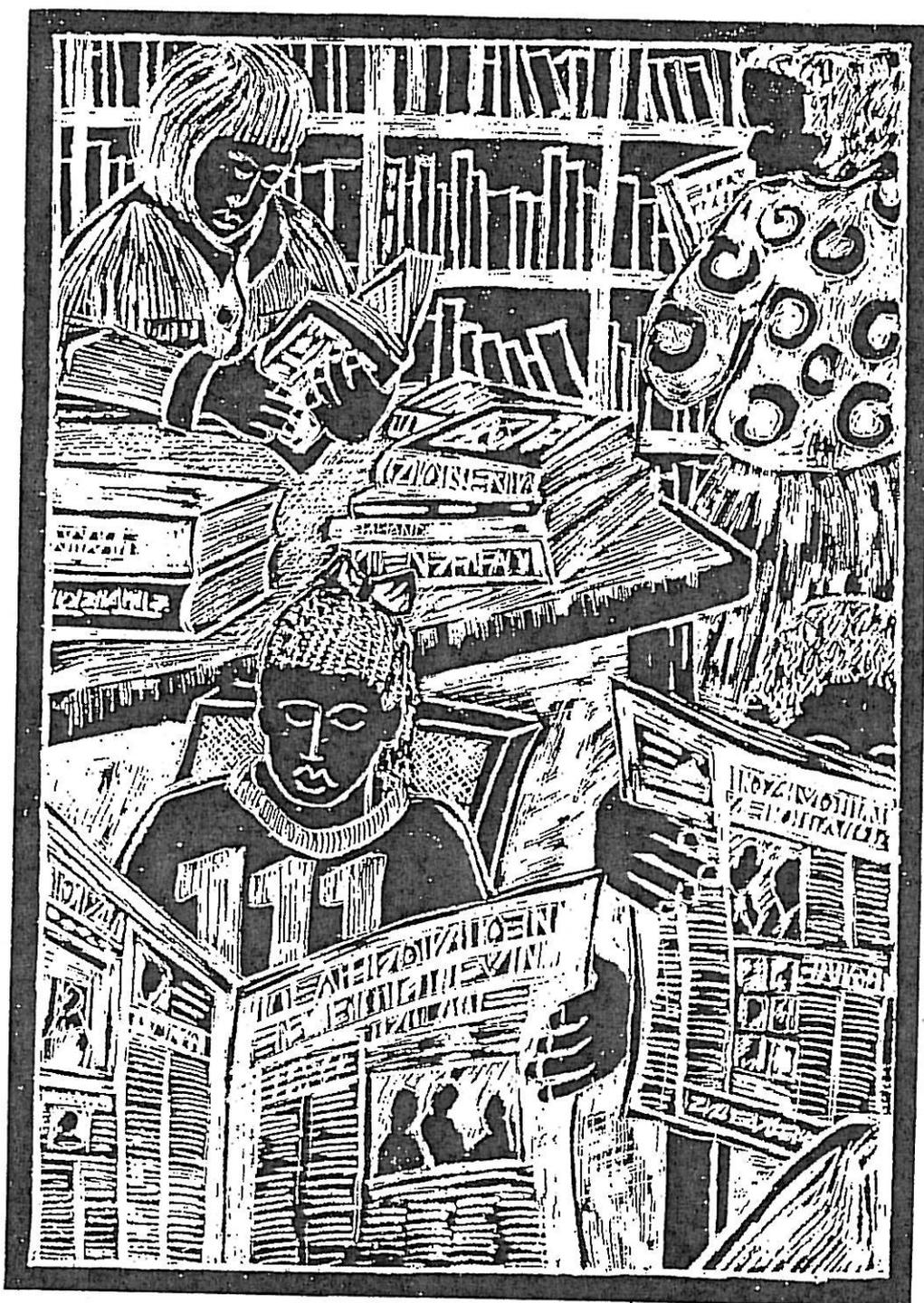
Lecture and Workshop Schedule*

Week Starting	Lecture (Monday 5 p.m.)	Workshop
Week 1 25/7/05	Introduction to Unit/Overview Susan	
Week 2 1/8/05	Historical Foundations of Rhetoric Susan	Seminars Begin Student Record Cards Choosing Essay Topics/ Annotated Bibliography/Outline Instructions Distrib.
Week 3 8/8/05	Academic Writing: Theory and Practice Susan	Narrowing Topics Preparing Annotated Bib/Outline
Week 4 15/8/05	Conducting Research/Avoiding Plagiarism Simone	Preparing Annotated Bib/Outline
Week 5 22/8/05	Reading Critically Simone	Annotated Bib/Outline Due in Workshops Critical Reading Task Distrib.
Week 6 29/8/05	ENGL 1000 Reading Week No Lecture	ENGL 1000 Reading Week No Seminars
Week 7 5/9/05	Arguing Effectively Simone	Critical Reading Task Due To General Office Drop Box, Woolley N386, on Monday, 12 Sept. Oral Presentations Instructions Distrib.
Week 8 12/9/05	Formatting the Academic Essay: Citation Styles Rebecca	Preparation for Oral Presentations Drafting Essay
Week 9 19/9/05	Written vs. Oral Presentations Rebecca	Preparing for Oral Presentations Drafting Essay
26/9/05	AVCC Common Week	AVCC Common Week
Week 10 3/10/05	Labor Day No Lecture	Oral Presentations/Drafting Essay
Week 11 10/10/05	Proofreading Strategies Rebecca	Oral Presentations/Drafting Essay
Week 12 17/10/05	Style, Clarity and Grace Susan	Oral Presentations/Drafting Essay
Week 13 24/10/05	Unit Wrap-Up/Evaluation Susan	No Workshops Essays Due To General Office Drop Box, Woolley N386, on Monday, 31 October
31/10/05	STUVAC	STUVAC

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND
SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE STUDIES
APPLIED ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES

FOUNDATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION TO ACADEMIC
LITERACY AELS 123\124F

COURSE INFORMATION 2002



FIRST QUARTER: COURSE OUTLINE

Monday 11 February - Friday March 29 2002

Course Codes: AELS123 (A slot) and AELS125 (D slot)

Week	Topic	Task, activities, skills
Week 1: Monday 11 February	<u>Opening lecture</u> Reflections on your learning - past, present future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting to know your classmates/tutors - Managing your learning and your time - Organizing yourself to begin the year - Reading informational documents from the university
Week 2: Monday 18 February	<u>Lecture: note taking and listening</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note taking from lectures - Learning to listen - Writing your autobiography - Brainstorming, mind-mapping, categorizing
Week 3: Monday 25 February	<u>Lecture: Literature</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading: poetry, short story and other autobiographical texts
Week 4: Monday 4 March	<u>Reading academic articles</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading skills - Note making from written texts - Text organization, paragraph construction, topic sentences - Comparison and contrast

SECOND QUARTER: COURSE OUTLINE

Mon 8 April – Wed 29 May 2002

Week	Topic	Tasks, activities, skills
<p>Week 8 Mon 8 April</p>	<p><u>Lecture: What is academic literacy</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying the audience, purpose and language features of popular text types which are compared to academic texts - Technical terms and specialist language
<p>Week 9 Mon 15 April</p>	<p><u>Lecture: Academic evidence</u> Work with <i>Agenda</i> text</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plagiarism - Referencing and paraphrasing - Constructing arguments and debates - Different kinds of evidence <p><i>Hand in Agar assign: 1st draft: Wed 17 April</i></p>
<p>Week 10 Mon 22 April</p>	<p><u>Literature lecture</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poetry/prose/short stories - Constructing an argument and producing evidence in literature <p><i>Return and feedback on Agar assignment</i></p>

Learning outcomes for this module

1. Topics/ subject matter

Themes: 'Meeting the challenge of change'
'Making choices': AIDS, polygamy, teenage pregnancy, abortion, gender issues

Become a competent reader

Learn to read and interpret a range of complex academic articles with insight and understanding. Learn reading techniques: skimming, scanning previewing, predicting, annotating texts, summarizing.

Become a competent writer

Control a range of different text types such as academic essays, research papers reports reviews autobiographies expository and argumentative essays

Think and link

Learn to brainstorm, make mindmaps, categorize, classify, compare and contrast, understand the relationship between causes and effects. Learn to analyze, interpret and critically evaluate your own ideas and also the views and writings of others. Learn to integrate and link the details of what you learn in order to gain a 'big picture' of the subject matter. Learn to reflect on your own learning processes so as to gain a deeper understanding of your studies.

Become an competent listener and speaker

Take notes efficiently. Distinguish between main ideas and illustrations/examples. Recognize connective words and other verbal and non-verbal signals to help you follow the direction of the speaker/lecturer.

Develop speaking competence by interacting in small groups and giving public presentations.

Develop institutional 'know how'

Become a member of the academic community by being able to identify the audiences, purposes, styles and languages of academic discourse; by using and identifying technical/specialist language; by using appropriate evidence to support arguments and ideas; by becoming aware of the complexities of plagiarism and referencing conventions; by understanding the requirements and conventions of different disciplines and subject matters.

APPENDIX H:

Interview

Transcripts from

Research Sites

Bob's Interview Transcript:

EM ... it was 1982

PW Uh – '92.

EM Eh - sorry, '92, ja. [*indistinct*]. Otherwise - so, what are you implying is you don't have necessarily a language proficiency course in this discipline – in this department?

PW Not in this department - no, no.

EM But you did have some attempts in the past.

PW Yes, yes.

EM That is interesting.

PW This is running, is it?

EM Yes

PW I – we- we – quite often in the minds of donors (Yes.) the distinction between English literature and linguistics is not clear, okay. And indeed, in many universities are both contained within the English Department, but with the – in this university, going back I suppose thirty years or more, they have been two separate departments. So, this is the Literature Department and Professor Vivian de Klerk heads up the Linguistics Department. (Ja.) Our predecessor was Bill Banthall, who was something of a pioneer in these things. But also working in that department was Professor Len Lanham, who was probably the godfather of Applied Linguistics in this country. (Alright)

What - we had –. In 1982 - there's your - there's your date – I was appointed the first H.A. Molteno Professor of English Second Language, which was the first chair in the country so designated. But my job principally was to set up an academic development programme of the old style – [] twenty years ago – of the old style ADP (Ja.) So that was my first involvement and we tried – I had come here in the middle of '79 from Pietermaritzburg, where I had been the first director of a bridging the gap course which was in – in those days designed- that ran '77, '78, well, I was involved '77, '78, '79 – and that was *actually* aimed at first language speakers, because the - even then they had identified this problem of more than sixty percent of all entering first year students at South African universities taking longer than the minimum to complete their degree. And so the idea of a sort of summer school/ extended orientation course grew out and that was what bridging the gap was, in - in its early years in Pietermaritzburg. (Right) Okay?

But just about that time there were other changes taking place: there was a certain relaxation in terms of racial restrictions on – on admissions and so on. And then the whole thing began to shift towards – what? – language deficiencies and language difficulties and so on and so forth. And then - it did – general difficulties experienced. So, in 'Maritzburg it started with the gap simply between school and university, for people who – or first language speakers – and they were all – but there was still a, you know – there was a gap. (In terms of accessing academic literacy?)

Exactly. Ja, ja, ja. I mean, the – I think it's still true to say of South African education, the emphasis on rote work – memorisation - is still disproportionately high (Across racial...) Across all lines, you know. But one of the worst – to me - one of the worst effects of Bantu Education was that the worst aspect of white education were exaggerated and distorted in Bantu Education. So, where - where whites had access to other modes of learning, other modes of knowledge, other forms of stimulus, blacks, had only - as I say - this distorted - the kind of leavings, the dregs, the worst in some ways. So of course that intensified the problem. Plus a lack of familiarity with the language. (Ja.) By then of course, you had had – I mean, if you go back even further to the early 'Fifties and the implementation of Bantu Education, by the Seventies - you – the children were now being taught by teachers, who were themselves the product of Bantu Education, and who had possibly had - never had contact with a first language speaker of English. (Okay) Whereas prior to that, in the mission schools you had a lot of contact with first language speakers. The teachers – teachers – many of the teachers on the mission schools were ex-patriate Brits and this sort of thing. So, much as it's politically incorrect to say anything good about mission schools - but that, from a linguistic point of view – that was a positive. (Yes, certainly) So, you know - by the 'Seventies, kids in Black Education, DET and so on, were getting in a second generation – second language speakers as teachers. So the teachers themselves often didn't have the linguistic resources to – to take the kids beyond what the textbook had or whatever.

So when – when we at Rhodes, in '82, began to set up our academic development programme, obviously we were - we targeted particularly students from a DET background. And we looked at, in terms of language difficulties, cognitive – the sort of – the - the Blumian - Blumian Taxonomy, which is still one of my favourite - models, you know, and the extent to which people had not been stretched towards those higher level - cognitive skills, and so on. And so we tried to design a one-week course that would address this. And - but there were all kinds of difficulty, a lot of them with having nothing to do with language and that was that we found that bringing people here a week or so before they were registered. The, the DET results were so late in coming out we were often having to accept people for that course, who still didn't have their matric results and who, when they did, were rejected by the university. Okay? So they'd paid their money, they'd come all this distance and at the end of the week they were told,

'Sorry you don't qualify. You must now pack your bags and go.' And understandably, a - a proportion of those people simply sat down in the corridors and said, 'We're not going anywhere.'

So, the university then said to us, ' You're not going to run another course like this, because you're creating hassles for us. You're bringing people here who are not yet fully admitted to the university, etc, etc, etc. So that summer thing kind of died. Partly on those non-linguistic, simply practical grounds.

And then of course - I mean - the thinking was growing all the time - [] added - the sort of theoretical powerhouse that was, probably still is, UCT - Mann, Yerrold, those sorts of people were thinking and working furiously - WITS, Natal, Keith Chick, you know, those - those sort of bases. We were the last to - Rhodes was the last of those four universities to get into the academic development game and so we tried to learn from - from all of them and I was an ardent attendee at all the workshops and conferences wherever they were held then. You know, just trying to sort of learn. We did have Lanham here and Lanham helped to start the ADP at WITS and had made a study - in the late 'Seventies - he was given money to go and study what - British universities were doing. So he had made a detailed report on what six British universities were doing. But of course what they do is bring people in with that long summer vacation - they bring them in, say in June, and they give them a *three-month* intensive course, before launching them into [] September - ja,ja - which of course we don't have, because we don't have the results available. I mean, they're dealing with people who have one degree, generally speaking. From their - from their home universities.

So we did have Lanham here at Rhodes, so we had that repository of tremendous information and wisdom and he was multi-lingual - he was one of the few multi-lingual linguists that I knew, and a real expert in African languages. So, you know, it was a tremendous resource, in terms of informing our thinking - and (Right, Ja) designing the course and that kind of thing... So then of course we started to look much more at getting alongside and providing in-term support, but of course it was only ever voluntary. Ah, you know, it was support - and there's all kinds of difficulties, because there's the difficulty of the students feeling that they're being stigmatised, and - and the peculiar sensitivities - not in the sense of being odd - but I mean, you know - special too. Um - black students in a white institution in the Eighties, the early - early 'Eighties, and I mean, '84 to '87/'88 in Grahamstown, as indeed everywhere else in the country, there was terrific violence. You know, there were funerals, there were speeches, there were deaths; there were more funerals the next week, the more speeches, the more deaths. And this town is small enough so that the teargas that was being used in the black location drifted across to white Grahamstown, you know. So it was a very, very, very fraught period. Probably, in my memory, one of the worst that I've lived through. Certainly. I was too young to remember the bus boycotts of the 'Fifties... (Ja.) and things like that. But in my - in terms of my experience - it was probably one of the worst patches in South African history - period.

So it was - and people who were here were being called sell-outs because they were at a white institution – so they were under immense pressures. And then to be told, ‘No, well you’re really not good enough. I mean, we’re just being charitable and you have to go on the academic development programme,’ was an additional burden and it was a stigma. So, it was a tightrope that we walked and one way we tried to get around that was to say, ‘This is not for black students only. This is for all students who are seen to be at risk academically.’ So what happened: we were almost overloaded with struggling whites! (Okay) Who were – who were themselves sort of marginal, or keen to improve their marks. Okay. And this led – it did lead – and, and I think I can truthfully say, that where – at other places- UCT for example, where they simply were up-, well, upfront and said to ESL, black ESL people, ‘You will do that!’ and then they said, ‘No, we won’t because it’s a second class, second language, stigmatised course.’ We never had that political resistance here. (Right) To my knowledge – from the students. (Ja.) Because –ah- we had this policy of, even at the cost of thinning our resources - we had this policy of that it was completely non-racial. The ADP was completely non-racial. And as I say we got a bit bogged down (Ja) by whites, for whom we were not really getting the money, I mean, you know.

Our main donors I suppose were Anglo- American Chairman’s Fund and B.G. Murray, on the maths and science side, but for [..you] - I mean they’re still around. Then my – I – what happened – I was part of the - the work Lanham was doing and it was all based in our Institute in the Study of English in Africa, IS - ISEA . (Ja) One of the other things he was doing was the Molteno Project which was working in primary schools, from sub-A and – and - looking at ways of improving early reading skills amongst black pupils in the mother tongue and this work went back to '77 – Well, I mean, he’d been doing this at Formu? in the Sixties in Soweto. But then it was very phonetically – it was basically teaching English phonetics. And then gradually out of that, this work evolved. And the Molteno Project was growing, and we were - you know. Lanham’s health was declining and he had emphysema. He had - so he had a very bad chest and every so often he would just be totally unable to- to work, you know. So, we thought well, we can actually [*hive*] off the Academic Development Programme - it’s big enough: there’s enough staff, it’s well funded; We’ll hire an independent director of ADP and then that freed me up to concentrate on Molteno project work and help Lanham with that. So that’s more or less what happened. And then – and ADP became an independent entity. I think we had - two or three directors, until it reached it’s new form of course now. And there its focus is staff: staff skills, here at Rhodes. Its focus is staff development. (Rather than students’ development?) Rather than student development, but developing staff so that they can develop students. (Okay,)

Okay. But they had tended to become the police of all these new policies that were coming down, you know: assessment policy, and teaching policy - they helped people with their teaching portfolios, and all that kind of thing. They - Of

necessity, they were very, very close to the vice-principal, so tha- a perception among some staff that in a sense they're campus police. In terms of monitoring our political correctness, you know? And they're very, very helpful and, and they, they're very – and, and Chrissy Bayle and people are very high-powered. I mean, we were very lucky to get Chrissy here from UNI[*indistinct*] (Okay) Um, but, but - and I wouldn't want you to think that I was - I personally had anything against them, but there are problems of perception (Yeah, I see.) on campus about them (Okay) about their role.

Now in the early 'Nineties, we come to, to ... the sort of – this in the department. In the early 'Nineties, Margery MacIntosh, who was a wealthy donor to the university, gave the department, the English Department, a large amount of money to help with second language students, okay. Now, the English Department admitted from the beginning that they didn't have the expertise, they didn't have the will, they really didn't want to - I mean, this is one of the classic dilemmas, you know – the classic English Department - because they are not hired to teach grammar, you know, are not hired to teach language and that kind of thing. And they said, 'No, our area of expertise lies in the teaching of literature and we simply have to assume a certain level of competence, or we can't operate with the students and we really don't want to get into the business of getting under-prepared students *to* the level where we can work with them, (Right) okay. Except, we had Wi – Dan Wiley, who in the middle stage of the development of the academic development programme, when they were - the thinking was now you should have an expert in each department or a faculty, Dan was appointed here as the ADP officer, in a sense. So Dan was supposed to have half-time teaching literature and half-time working on student development *within* the department. (Okay, alright) So we do – we do have a professional ADP person on our team, in the department. (Yes, Yes) But he doesn't run courses, he does one on one consultations, he runs mini-workshops in the –the - I've got this grand office because I'm HOD. (Ja) If you draw a line up the desk, we all have rooms about that size, because it is -. So, we do a lot of tutorial teaching (One-to-one?) Ah, no, one-to-twelve – small groups, okay? And we take them here in our- in our offices. The HOD gets that extra little built-in filing cabinet and stuff. Otherwise, we've got about –you know - it's the nice, it's a decent sized room.

Um, so Dan does the ADP work. He will run things like exam workshops, he runs essay workshops and that kind of thing. But, sadly of course, another result of that is that other colleagues, who were resistant to the idea from the word go, simply refer people – problem students - to Dan and don't get involved (Okay) with it themselves. Okay. And I mean, that's a fairly common pattern. (Yeah, I ...I know it)

So, the English Department was given this money and they said, 'This is a bit of an embarrassment – we don't want to give it back. That's bad policy.' And so, they - they initiated -. I was at that time still with the ISEA. Ah - the Molteno

Project head office had moved from Grahamstown to Braamfontein. And so I was – I was still there, but I was working on other things. I kind of last my role in life for a time, because I had *loved* that Molteno Project work. Um – and we set up a kind of a – we had - we set up a sort of joint committee: Linguistics, ISEA, Education, English Department, Okay? And we said, 'Let's use Mrs Mac's money to - ah to set up a proper course,' because by the Nineties, the early Nineties, the university's thinking had changed to the stage where they were looking at credit-bearing courses, (Okay) you know. The big flaw in what we were doing in the Eighties was it was all voluntary and it was not credit-bearing, okay. And so it was – you had students who had language problems, and possibly learning problems, and possibly cognitive problems, with the whole – well, who lacked academic literacy and then that's... okay. You, you – let's state that [*indistinct*] - who lacked academic literacy, having to keep a full course load of four credits, and then expected to do ADP support work in addition, which was a huge project, you know. (Of course) And, and, I mean, because in a sense we were approaching it in a top-down way and nobody had actually gone through and said, or even worked through it imaginatively and said, 'What does this actually mean for Student X, in terms of contact hours, workload, etc etc?' okay. So - but by the Nineties people had worked through that and the universities had come to accept – slow-streaming, an extra year, let's- you know, if people do appear to have difficulties - let's say right a B.A. will be four - you can do it over four years, rather than doing it in three. Donors had come to accept that, because that's terribly important, you know: if you've got people here on bursaries and they expect a passing- every-year kind of performance. Donors have become – it was very interesting, because those are things we identified as critical issues in the early Eighties and it took nearly a decade to educate both the donors and the institutions into the idea of taking an extra year, and/or a foundation year, and/or foundation courses, you know those - all those sorts of options. I mean TEXA *now* is quite happy to, to – for - the four-year B.A. (Okay) Okay. But you had to do – there was an awful lot of educating of those key players. (Ja) To - to get to that stage. So we said, 'Okay, let's put together a credit-bearing course which will accomplish these aims of achieving academic literacy. And so we produced, what we call here, English ELAP – English Language for Academic Purposes (Okay). Okay. And that was how the ELAP course evolved. We, we took –oh, and we had Sarah Murray from Education as well, who, who is – she started her - her academic development work – in fact, way back at Fort Hare in the Eighties, then moved to UNIBEL as it was then, and then came here. And she had published - ah textbooks as well. So Murray and um – Liz Johansen - Johansen. Murray & Johansen was a fairly well known series of ADP workbooks - tertiary level workbooks. (Okay) So we had Sarah as well.

Lanham by this stage was retired and –and - really not well, so he wasn't a player in that- in the Nineties, except for his influences there, and people like myself - and Vivian de Klerk. And –and so we – that was out of that, that we designed ELAP. And we looked at things like journals, the extensive use of journals, and um feedback on journals – you know, that whole, the whole – I think

that's more or less what the pattern is these days, (Ja) mini-lectures, note-taking skills, library skills – aah- well, of course, essay-writing skills, reading skills, okay. And so it was basically a skills-based course, with the aim of academic literacy and it was credit-bearing. (Okay). It was attached to the English Department for a couple of years, and then but then - but actually run and staffed by ESL people, who were more Linguistics. And then we - Mackintosh money ran out and the university realised that they needed to take it on. And so, as the university took it on, it went to its logical home, which is – which is Linguistics – Applied Linguistics.

EM Okay. And where had Helen –

PW – Where had Helen? Helen at that stage was hired in also from UNIBEL. Helen was hired in to kind of run it.

EM Okay. So when did it leave the –

PW English Department? (Ihhm) Just trying to think. I moved back here from ISEA in – at the beginning of 1995 - and I would say '93, '92/'93 were the years that we designed it. '94 was probably the first full-length implementation – we might have had a pilot group the previous year. '94 was probably the first year full-length implementation and about that time, either '94/'95, it moved to Linguistics. (Okay) But because I had been on the design team while I was still on the ISEA, and also, I mean, I believe in it , because of all my years with ADP and so on. The first year, I remember meeting when we had a weekly meeting with the tutors to monitor its progress. So I remember quite intensively monitoring it in its early stages. But then once we had Helen – oh, no – it was – it was under the auspices of the ADP, that's right. So, so – ah - but then with Helen it was located firmly in Linguistics. (Yes, I see) Because the ADP, not being a department, couldn't really issue a credit. Credit had to be located in a recognised teaching department. And so that is how it ended up in Linguistics.

EM Perhaps the last thing I may ask, Professor, is actually what you've done is – you've given me the – the historical background, but I need the – especially, as far as English Department is concerned (Ja) because my research project is basically, as I explained it in my in - I'm looking at English departments, as such. Of course I end up having to visit ADPs and linguistics, but my focus is (on English departments...)on English departments, because I'm in the English Department anyway. And I'm looking at the extent to which every language proficiency initiative that has ever been in the English Department had tried to actually bring in discursive critique, because that is the focus of the discipline, you know – what is literature – to understand what language is as a discursive entity. You can manipulate it. You can play around it, even through literary teaching of literary understanding and we use literary theory to sort of expose students to that epistemology. So what- what I am basically looking for is the

extent to which that thinking would think the discipline – that thinking that informed the discipline English studies or the discipline of literary studies actually - sort of informed early language proficiency initiatives, you know. That's what I'm basically looking at.

So, what you have done has actually given me the history behind what English Department has been doing over the years, you know. And I've been to WITS, I've been to UCT, this is my last institution (Oh, right) and in all these institutions, what I find is that, is that in these departments did initially tried to sort of control this initiative, but because of the lack of expertise, these initiatives ended up either in Linguistics or in academic development programmes, you know. And my belief is that this is the area of - for English studies actually, because, I also believe that, as you pointed out earlier, that you ended up wanting even first language speakers of English to be part of ADP – and that's my debate, you know – that it's not – I mean I read a paper by Chrissy, you know, from this [] - from ADP. And in fact I communicated with her and then she said she won't be around and then she sent me her paper, which was very kind of her. Then she sort of referred me to Helen Alferts. But her paper is – is on the fact that the students who are speaking English as a second language, experience problems, not necessarily because of language as such, but it's because of academic literacy – they can't access that. It's not just language you know. So where I – I sort of differ with her is that, of course, academic literacy is a problem for them, but in addition to that, as you pointed out, is also the language proficiency itself.

So what I am then arguing for in my – in my work, is that we as English departments, sort of resume the responsibility and then design a course that would be informed first by our thinking as - as a discipline, you know, so that when we teach language we make students aware that it is a discursive entity - you can manipulate it, even if it means using literary texts to show how language manipulation works and then invite not just second language – you know - of English speakers, but also students who are – who are also speaking English as a first language, you know. And what I find at UCT is that they *do* have a course of that nature – although it is not in the English Department. It's in the academic development programme *again*, you know. So.

My understanding is that linguistics has always been about the theory of language as opposed to the use of language and – and sort of - sort of –eh – what –what - showing students how – the way one uses language positions themselves and the [ideas] and how do you construct power and all that type of– I think linguistics is about theorising those things as opposed to actually teaching students grammar, so that you will show them how grammatical choices realise meanings, you know. Why if, for instance, I choose to take this clause this way, what effect does it have? What? You know. Those kinds of things. (I'd be grateful if my third-years could recognise a clause, because my third year first language speakers first language speakers -) Exactly. And – and what I understand, is even first language speakers in their schooling, they were never taught grammar

(No) at all (No) you know. And they are fluent of course and in fact what is increasingly evident now, is that even so-called black students are from private schools or ex-model C schools. (Yes, Yes) So the issue of an actual grammar course seems to be, you know, fading away. Then – but they are fluent, of course, like first language speakers, but when you actually read their essays and you look at how they actually use language, you realise that they - they still don't have that idea of how to use language for your own purposes. How do you use language to establish yourself – you know -

PW They don't have the conscious control over language – they don't have the consciousness of control – (Exactly) because they don't have that level of conceptual understanding.

EM You know. And then so –so what I am arguing for therefore it's a language course that would be informed by the –I- what - what I would call a central focus of English discipline - that is discursive critique, you know. Making them aware that how grammatical choices actually realise that which you want to achieve, you know. Why – why for instance, you choose - say for instance, the use of 'we' a pronoun, but - you can use 'we' when you are speaking about yourself and your family, yourself and an institution, yourself and excluding the person you are speaking.... So that those – those awareness – exposing students to that sort of thing. But English departments for years, I think, it has sort of, as you were saying, you know, [*that said*] has pushed away this language – 'I am not employed to teach this.' Perhaps understandably so, maybe we need people in English departments who are also in Applied Linguistics. So it would be a team of-of people who are literary scholars and applied linguists, who are also literary scholars. That the two skills would actually be utilised you know.

PW That's –that's one of my great beliefs. I did – when I - I was an honours student here and they were just – Brandford was newly appointed within the English department (Right) Okay. And I did his third year linguistics course and an honours paper simultaneously. (Right) Because that was the only way – he said, 'Well you can't do honours if you haven't done third year.' So we did it si-piggy back, simultaneously. So that gave me a - a reading knowledge of, you know, the – the linguistics in its not quite infancy, but in the late 'Sixties. Okay. And - and that gave me or that meant that I was certainly never as intimidated as my other literary-only colleagues - by these discourses, by linguistics and so on. And when I moved from here to ISEA, to the H.E. Molteno chair, I was sent – Lanham – Lanham sent me to Lancaster for a year and I did a masters – I didn't do – I didn't take the degree, because it was the first sabbatical I had had. (Right) And I also had my family along, and – but I did all the curse - coursework and I did some mini-research projects and so on.

[*Tape break*]

PW Um – but – ahh. So I had a year's exposure to applied linguistics (A year's exposure) at Lancaster. Okay. As I say, I don't have a degree to prove it, but I was there, I walked the walk.

EM So that meant you were sort of comfortable, when –

PW Yes, yes, but it took me nearly three months there. I mean, I was -. I turned forty in Lancaster and I realised how entrenched my liter-literary categories had become. (Ja) It was (Okay) it was quite a recycling process. But since that time, that was '83/'84, I've always felt that I've, sort of, straddled these two things. And I couldn't agree with you more, I think that that - especially looking at that kind of diversity of populations in universities that we must welcome, that we are going to get and we must welcome and – uh - one need - you actually need literary people who've got a knowledge of applied linguistics.

EM Exactly. And once you combine those two we - we will have students, who - who even when they leave university they can use language in interesting ways.

PW Which - which the employers tell us at the moment they can't.

EM You know, perhaps the problem has to do exactly with that, that we sort of – I – I published a paper, it's called *Putting the Cart before the Horse*, in which I am arguing that in – in – in literature departments there is this tendency of just sort of taking students and assume more about their competencies in language and teach them literature and this and that and ask them to write essays and then they will just regurgitate what you are telling them in lectures and what is in readings. But they don't actually have this ability to use language on your – independent - they have few references, you know. But what you find is they use more references and what you told them in lectures and they pass at the same as a result. But they don't have actually, that conscious ability of handling language, you know, as - as an entity. And perhaps that's part of the problem why if they - when they leave university they can't actually, if they're under pressure, they can't think and be proactive, you know, because it's the way we teach them.

PW They're lacking... No, I think you're on to something, I really do.

EM In fact, you say - the paper that I - I presented at [*a workshop*], I'm sure the proceedings are - are on the way. (They're supposed to be, yes.) And then my paper is there – (Oh good) the title is *How can you not speak of English teaching in English studies?*. So it's quite an interesting question, because it's – it's a sort of – it's a two focus - how can you not - in the sense that - we have to speak about it now, but at the same time, in which way, in which conception should we speak of language, you see, so I'm sure if you read the paper you will understand where - where I come from.

PW What we do here, going back a couple of years, we had a fairly influential elderly American scholar come here for – briefly. But he said, and it's made an impact on most of us, he said, looking back over a long and distinguished career, 'The only difference I think I have made, is in those classes where I have insisted that my students write something for me every week.' (Sjoe) And on the basis of that, we instituted in first year, they write two paragraphs – because they have two – two tutors – they have two tutorial groups, as we have organised – and they have – they write two paragraphs a week. (Sjoe) At least for the first six months – people get a bit tired of it by June. (Ja, okay) But for the first six months – in addition to their four formal assessment things, they write two paragraphs a week.

EM Based on what, these paragraphs?

PW Usually based on a question – 'cause the tutorials here are linked with – if they're getting lectures on *The Crucible* – in the big lecture – they will be coming to a – a tutorial on *The Crucible* okay. And those are always based on worksheets – five or six questions. We – we've used tutorial worksheets for something like forty years in this department (Ja, okay) – it's part of the Rhodes tradition. But – um – and so the tutor will often say, 'Look, just take question six and answer that in one paragraph for next week.'

EM So when – so when they come back the paragraph is read in class?

PW Well, no, they usually hand them in. Sometimes they're read in class. But there we're giving them some basic grammar drill. Okay. (Indirectly, of course) Ja, indirectly. But – but that is where we're – we're – and it's enabled us to pick up much earlier on, because usually the first formal written piece is not due in March before the April/Easter vacation, (Right.) We're able to pick up much earlier on, people who need additional help. And they are usually directed to Dan right away as our ASP/ADP man and then he – he will get little workgroups going after that. And so, ja.

EM You – you told me that there was another colleague that I was going to speak to that was an Australian something. Remember that – (Oh – oh that's Dan. That's Dan Wiley, that's Dan Wiley.) Okay, that's him? (Ja, ja) Because he said I can – that he is free to communicate through the e-mail (Yes, yes) What I'm – what I'm, I'm intending to do is actually to e-mail him my questions. (Right) Or maybe because you have – you have it on ...

PW In fact, my thing printed out two copies, so I'll leave this – I'll leave this for him.

EM I'll appreciate – I'll appreciate it, and then I'll communicate with him to say, please if he can give me feedback on how his – section going and [*speaking*] to students. (Right, right.) Ja. Now, this is this was an interesting moment, thank

you so much for your time. (Okay) Actually I spoke to Robert, you know Robert Balfour (Yes) Ja, he said – he said he was once a student here. (Yes, yes) Ja, so he said I must – I must sort of greet you. (Please. I -) Did - did you teach him?

PW I le- No, I didn't, no, but I left - when we did the Romantics and Revolutionaries 1988 - 1998 AUXA papers, his paper was not *marked*. My most embarrassing moment at AUXA last year. He said, 'Well, where is my paper?' The trouble was that I had already started using it. I had picked it up and I was using it in one of my course handouts (Okay) and it had got missed - I had pulled out of the papers –You might be interested – [] it's very - it's quite a long way off - uh - your course, but I teach in English III, I teach a thing called *Literature and Teaching*, where I get them to look at reading - and then - and some of it - it's very lightly theoretical, because (No, I like it) It's a little bit of theory and then we look at novel, drama, poetry (Okay) and then - and they- I'll get a copy it's quite a heavy (*tape break*) but you might just find it – find it interesting.

EM Ja, thank you. So it -what - what does it have? Different readings? (Different readings, ja, ja.) On literature and teaching? (Ja, ja.) Okay. This is great. So, so thank you so much. You know I – I had to do literary theory at first year, second year and third year *and* at honours, so I think I will appreciate it. And I – I was very much surprised to find out that in other English departments literary theory is actually taught at post-graduate level,

PW Ja, ja. We don't do – we do it indirectly. We refer to it in our lectures, but we do – we don't – we don't – You went – you were a student at Durban?

EM No, no, at UDW

PW UDW. Ja, we don't do it until post-grad.

But I must say I've just been mar- we've got - our honours people can do a long essay and I've just been reading my - my two over this last week and I'm really quite disappointed that they're not - they're not thinking, they're not problematising - they're not seeing, they not problematising.

EM Is it th- You know when I was trying to write a proposal for my PhD, one of the - the first topics that I wanted to look at was - was resurrecting literary theory in English studies, you know, because when, as I told you, when I was in English I, I had to do literary theory. It was compulsory at UDW and – it - at English I and at English II and English III and and then Honours and I had to do in all the way, you know. Now, as a second language speaker of English and as someone from Bantu Education background, literary theory, if anything, it sort of gave me a metalanguage, you know, to actually engage with literary works, you see, and I was getting, I mean, seventies, eighties... because I was [] with feminism - feminist theory in critical [*indistinct what is this what is this now? Or what do you*

say – *Althusser*] or Marxism or this guy, Derrida and all that, you know. And I was able to use those theories in understanding literature, and as a result of that I survived – All the oth – I mean, most of the students, that we got in had never made the - they dropped out say after the first year and out of the second year, you know. That sort of kept me alive throughout the discipline. I don't know, maybe it works for some people and maybe for lots of people it doesn't – I mean, it did place that *Pirandello* and you know, [] such a complex text, but we did it at English I and because of the literary theory we – we - I was able to negotiate meaning when I had to write essays for that.

But for some reason when we were discussing with Michael I thought I won't go so far with it and then I sort of changed. But it – but I don't know. But the idea of teaching literary theory indirectly, to me, sort of - in a way, limits most of our students, I guess, because then they end up writing essays as they're used to at secondary school. (Ja, ja) You know. They sort of write – there isn't a distinction to me and in fact, I will mark students essays and they will say, 'But I used to get and A in English at school and then I was writing this way. What is wrong now?' Then you will see that - that they don't have that vocabulary, you know, that is relevant within the discipline, you know. And once - once literary theory is out, in my view, then what happens is that students end up not having the metalanguage, you see, that - that is necessary to actually unpack meanings in literary texts. So what they end up doing, is just writing narratives, on the main characters, the main story and all that, but without actually engaging with the text and showing, you know, in a critical way. / find you see, and we've discussed with my [] gave me a history of how literary theory came in and went out, and came in and went out and how students actually battled with literary theory and all that. Which is true, I mean most students battled, I remembered very well. But, you know, I mean, I'm interested - it was that very literary theory that kept me surviving and until I got a post as now in literary - in the [problem]. It is that very literary thing. So I don't know, maybe it maybe will be the question of introducing it in – at - up to a certain point, maybe, I don't know. Because what we used to do, is that questions will be, 'Apply, say Derrida's theory on a particular novel or a particular poem or a particular short story'. Of course, it was like pick and choose kind of a thing, but even though, even if that was the case, but when we - we were able to make that kind of connections - were able to make those connections, you see... But I – know in some contexts it may not be possible when the times may not be the same and maybe the determination on the part of students *now* - compared to determination *then*, you know. There may be problems now. (Yes, yes) Ja. Otherwise, I really enjoyed literary theory and it made me, you know, to be who I am. (Who you are?) Ja. Otherwise, thank you so much.

PW Great. It's a pleasure. I include at the back always cuttings, because I'm trying to get them to engage with the issue of education in this country.

End of Interview

Leanne's Interview Transcript

(Side One)

There will be some for the different faculties. So there will be one for Humanities and there will be one for Science. There already is one for Commerce, which I think the Commerce Faculty are quite happy with. It can probably be left as it is, but we'll start with Science and Humanities.

EMANUAL MGQWASHU:

Is this a response to the directive from the government?

HA:

Yes it is. This is the first time it actually looks as if we're going to get funding. Which means that universities are willing to invest resources and staff in developing proper foundation programmes. At the moment ELAP (English Language for Academic Purposes) is very much an add-on course. There are two posts for it, basically. We are within the linguistics department, we also teach within the linguistics department. It services all the undergraduate faculties. It's a very generalised course. If you think in terms of Halliday's circle of context of culture, context of situation, I think we see ourselves as sort of sitting in that context of culture where we help students to develop an understanding of what it is to be a good student. We can't really help at the context of situation level, which is where the disciplines really need to be involved. And so I think our new foundation course needs to encompass both part of the culture and context of situation, so that we will be drawing on the disciplines. It's going to be interdisciplinary, where we have themes and various disciplines come together and develop courses around those themes.

EM:

Is the proposal that you helped to write for the foundation course only supposed to serve Rhodes University? Not the institutions of higher learning in general?

HA:

HA:

Yes, it's supposed to serve Rhodes University.

EM:

Are you going to present this to the government?

No... Yes, in order to get funding, I think we do have to present it to the government because they're not going to fund any foundation course, it has to meet certain criteria. We have to show that we've met those criteria in order to get the funding.

That will be difficult at times.

It will.

Because how do you decide that a particular student should attend a foundation course? Are we looking at grammatical competence, in which case we are (?) students who are from ex-D.E.T. schools, or are we looking at academic literacy, in that case we are including every student who comes to university.

I've been given a brief that ours is going to be an affirmative action thing. It's not for all students. We're going to be doing admission tests. On an experimental basis we are going to be doing the U.C.T. one. What we'll do is students who get below or get above a certain percentage will be accepted, and we'll say students who get below a certain percentage won't be accepted unless they are from disadvantaged schools. In which case there will be a lowering of criteria for them. But then those students are going to be put into a foundation program. You see, things have changed because we now no longer have East London as from 2004. East London was mainly black, Grahamstown is mainly white. And as Dr. Wood said, "Grahamstown can no longer hide behind the black figures of East London." And so we're going to have to increase the number of local black students coming in. We've got hundreds from Zimbabwe and Ghana and Nigeria, but we haven't got local, South African Black students. What do you think of that? About it being an affirmative action thing?

Actually in one of the publications that I've made, a paper called "University Learning: Mode and Medium of Instruction", I'm looking at the tendencies by most disciplines, especially in the humanities, or in fact generally, to actually mystify the discourses that disciplines use. And how to see that, in the sense that, even in the teaching process that we as lecturers tend to mystify the basis through which we arrive at conclusions. In other words, we are not self-reflexive enough in our teaching. For instance if I'm doing Literary Studies the way I would have to write an essay in English 1 but never the same as a student who is doing Geography will have to write an essay. So there are particular ways of constructing knowledge in Geography that are different from the ways of constructing knowledge and arguments in English Studies. Now what we tend to do as academics is that we tend to mystify those ways of making meaning, we do not make those ways of making meaning accessible to students.

Yes, and explicit enough.

Now in that paper I'm arguing for reflexive pedagogy, to make it explicit as to how we arrive at these conclusions. Now, those kinds of knowledge, in my view, are not accessible even to students who speak English as a first language. So every student who comes from a second language school, whether private school or ex-DET school, does not have that privilege of accessing epistemologies that are produced in the academic context. So, if we speak of the foundation course, in my opinion, it should be a course that would do exactly that, it should make students competent in the language of academia.

Maybe what we should do then is make it compulsory for students coming in at a lower level, but make it also available to any student.

And make it an option for other students.

Yes, it could even be a non-credit option.

But then I wonder which students would actually go for something like that?

Well, students who need it. There are students who know that perhaps their academic literacy isn't very strong. That they don't know how to reference and they don't know how to write in different genres or disciplines. But also at the same time, the Vice Chancellor asked me to write a proposal for a writing centre, to help all students with their writing.

My conception of a foundation course will always be like that. It will never be for students who are from ex-DET schools only. Because once we introduce such things, we will go back to the eighties situation where students who have to attend such courses feel stigmatised and marked throughout their careers as university students. And we'll find ourselves having to deal with discipline problems in those classes, we'll find students not submitting in time, or even not participating at all because they are actually resenting the fact that they had to attend such a course. One of the things I am arguing for there, in the case of UND, because as I said, we have an English Language course that we are teaching at the moment, which I am part of and I was part of the design team and all that. One of the reservations I have for the course is that it is more on developing student's language competencies, but in the level of communication. Written communication in particular, but not necessarily academic literacy. Not writing academically, writing in the sense of being able to employ grammatical structures correctly up to that level. And the understanding is that then students will have to take academic learning in English. Which will then address the issues of academic writing, then they will move from there to L.T.C. which is in my opinion more complex, more complicated because it addresses the issue of language use in constructing discourses within context. And how texts themselves are actually genre based or orientated. And how many different genres are registered. So Language, Text and Context (L.T.C.) seems to be higher on the rank, in my opinion, in terms of complexity.

So, your E.L.C. just does grammar?

Grammar in very interesting ways because we have twelve weeks. And in these twelve weeks, say for the first week we look at prepositions and adjectives. For the whole four or five days that's what we do, prepositions and adjectives. Then we have a lecture for forty-five minutes and then a forty-five minute workshop/lecture (a

lecture where a lecturer talks to students, where we are giving them grammatical rules, when to use an article and when to use a preposition and why). And then we have what is called a workshop/lecture, which is a lecture yes, but that means more entirety. And then we have ninety-minute seminars where we actually sit and we have a workgroup of this kind. Where students have some exercises, they do those exercises in class, sometimes in groups, sometimes individually. Filling in gaps, that sort of exercise. And then, thirdly, we have an ordered component where we have a video which we show to students and then that component goes with its own hand book. So there are questions that would be related to the video that they are watching, checking on whether they have listened, whether they can hear English. They'll have to respond to that. Articles, prepositions and then types of sentences, complex, simple, compound sentences, and then we move on to clauses, independent clause and all those things. And then we move on to tenses and then each tense has its own week. There is a whole week on past tense, the second week will be present tense, the other week future tense. Then we move on to direct/indirect speech, and then we move on to concords, all those things. What we do is we move from the small and then we extend until we've entered the bigger picture.

And does it help? Do you think the students gain something from it? It's difficult to say, I know.

Well, you see, we are going to review the course this year actually. This is the review year. But what I can say is that you cannot actually do anything much within three and a half months. You just basically cannot. That is why I hope that the foundation course will actually go on for at least a year, not just one semester.

Well that's what we are hoping to do, ours will be over a whole year.

That will be great.

Do you think that's better?

Yes, I think so.

I see that everything's one semester.

Yes, everything.

You're A.L.E. is also one semester.

But the difference with A.L.E. is that it is also offered in the second semester.

Yes, I see that, but it's just the same one, it's just if people fail or if they didn't take it in the first semester.

Basically all of these are just twelve weeks, so what can we actually do within twelve weeks?

Yes. No, ours will definitely be a year.

But you see, I also have my own reservations in as far as the way we approach grammar. Because I've done my masters in applied language studies, but I happened to join a team within which there was someone with a PhD and had more influence academically. But I still have my reservations, and also because it tends to be taken by students who are from ex-DET schools. You know this segregation thing, I still don't like it. Because in some ways I have a belief that a second language speaker, or someone who speaks English as an additional language, needs to have someone who is a first language speaker within the context for the meaningful learning of the language. Otherwise, if you put all second language speakers in a group, there is something that they are missing because there is no first language speaker amongst themselves. I feel that they lose a lot by just being by themselves. And what happens is that it will be myself, of course there are marginal staff, but students who are tutoring are also second language speakers of English. So at the end of the day, they've spent three and a half months, which doesn't necessarily do much. They just have to make sure that they pass the course and it's labour intensive in terms of marking because at the end of the week they have to submit one and a half a page and a ten mark task with its focus on grammatical structure. Even that task has to focus on the particular grammatical structure that we were focussing on during the week.

How many credits do the students get for those courses?

Sixteen.

Sixteen. Is that the equivalent to a first year semester course?

Yes, L.T.C. is sixteen credits. They are all sixteen credits.

So four sixteens, if you do four courses in a year, no it would be four in a semester.

It would be sixty-four.

And then sixty-four and sixty-four is one hundred and twenty eight, which is a full year?

Yes.

Okay, I was reading this and I couldn't work out what one hundred and twenty eight was, and sixty four... Well, that's interesting. So it's sixteen credits. And that's equivalent.

But what I would recommend would be that we go for eight credits so that we divide this into segments. But this is another discussion. But I think it would have to be eight credits so that we look at grammar on the one hand and then we would look at grammar in the context of making meaning, not just as grammar, as we are doing at the moment. Just grammar, grammar, grammar all the way without actually locating that grammar within meaning making, and again within the context of constructing meaning in an academic way. It's just meaning making but not necessarily within an academic context. So if it's broken into eight credits, the one will be just grammar and then the other will be linking whatever the students have learnt. But that is a different discussion all together.

Okay, that's great. You've given me lots of information.

You think so?

Yes, and Ralf, of course, has given me lots of information on this. And then I've actually got the old A.L.E. book here. This one here. Presumably that's quite old though, but it doesn't matter, though. It's worth looking at though. Oh, two thousand, it's not too bad.

I teach in A.L.E. as well.

Oh, do you?

Yes, I do. I don't think the difference is that much actually between this and the two thousand and two course.

Oh, and how is A.L.E.?

That one has its own problems as well because it doesn't have lectures. The lectures were abolished two or three years ago.

Lectures?

Yes, lectures. And what happens is students have contact through the practicals and tutorials: ninety minutes for the practical and forty five minutes for the tut and that's it.

And what do they do? Just learn to write?

Just learn to write.

Why did the lectures get abolished? Was that because it was difficult to coordinate?

No, not necessarily, it was just that staff weren't interested in teaching a new course.

Are they interested in this one?

Interestingly enough, perhaps because this is a dirty job. Teaching students to write language is for juniors, you know that attitude with academics? And then this is more complex and challenging and perhaps interesting to some other people's views. So people weren't interested, in fact, it's in crisis as we speak. As to whether it should come in next year or not. In fact, not just this one, all of them. Because what happened with the change, when we moved from departments to programs is that people did away with one A's and we introduced first level school. And so people ended up focusing on the one B's of their disciplines.

What is one B?

One Bs are courses that are discipline specific, like English 1B, Sociology 1B, History 1B, so there is no longer History 1A and then History 1B.

There's only 1B?

Only 1B.

But they have to have done A.L.E. in the first semester?

Yes.

Okay, so it's like a prerequisite.

It seems, yes.

How many do they have to take? Just one?

No, two. In fact, we have six core courses all in all.

Yes, I know, there's reading here. You have lots of them.

But I mean these that are language specific, you have to take two.

I see that it's recommended, they say that you've got to choose two out of these and then they give A.L.E. and they give this one and they give the English Language... and the research methods one.

The one called I.S.S. (Individual, state and society) which is a core course, but very much related to sociology. And so that course doesn't have problems with staffing because people who are from the sociology department are comfortable because it has to do with their concepts and terms. But this one is all over the place, and this one is more on literary studies, people from English studies and Language and History. So what is happening is that people lose interest in anything that doesn't touch on their disciplines.

Fair enough...

Why should I go back and teach something I've never even researched in the first place?

That's right.

That is why there has to be a (?). I wonder about the place of this foundation at U.N.D.

Okay, now you get on with your questions.

Thanks for asking these questions.

You'll be here for a few more days?

I'm leaving on Saturday morning.

If I need to get hold of you, have you got a cell phone?

Yes.

Maybe if I think of other questions or something. So it's Emanuel Mgqwashu?

Yes. In fact I should give you my business card.

Oh, yes, sure. Mgqwashu.

You pronounce it very well.

I wish I could speak Zulu. You know, I learnt it. I'm from Maritzburg. So I learnt it at Maritzburg University. My lecturer was terribly impressed with my accent. But I mean the accent was fine, because I've been listening to it all my life, but I still couldn't speak it.

I'm impressed by the way you pronounced it. You just pronounced it once.

Well, I've been teaching African students for fifteen, nearly twenty years now. Here and then I was a school teacher in Boputetswana at an ex-DET school. And so I got used to getting my tongue around all the names.

Oh, that's interesting. Well it seems as though I will have to skip part of the questions.

Why? Shame, I don't want to short change you.

Really? Okay...

Are you in a hurry?

Well, you see, our dinner starts at half past five and finishes at half past six. And we are just here at Founders' Hall, so it's not too far.

Why don't you come another time? Can you fit in another time?

No. In fact I want us to... and then I'll know from tomorrow, I'll try to prepare for WITS. Because did you know that I started at work. I saw Stella Grenville and then

someone from the English department as well, Jennifer Stacey. Then I went to U.C.T. and I met Lucia Thesen. So I thought I should finish it all up by today and then tomorrow, Thursday and Friday I should try to make sense of everything. So if I leave on Saturday, at least I've covered everything.

Okay.

Yes, so in terms of the credits of the courses of the major that you are teaching, is this the only one? Or do you have other courses at this University?

It's the only foundation based course. There is, in the commerce faculty, there is a commerce based foundation program. And my course that I teach is the only language component that they have. And so it's compulsory for their students to do my course.

They come here? To the faculty?

Well, yes. So I teach the students we have at the moment, we only have forty-eight. We've got about seventeen art students, we've got about seven science students and then the rest are commerce students. We have quite a large group of them. **And they do, apart from ELAP, they do accountancy, but it's slow stream. So it's a different model of foundation from the one that we want to go into. They do accountancy 1, but they do it over two years.** And maths as well. And then they do a stats 1D course, which is a mainstream course. And they do computer literacy 1B, which is a special course for them.

Okay. So all of them have to do this course. This is the only course.

Yes. And the way they get selected is a terrible process. But in a way I had to do it because the process was so bad when I first came in ninety-six. We had ninety students and there were so many students who just should never have been there. There was no filtering process saying, "Look, don't waste your money." And so I said, "look, I'm happy to interview students". So what I've been doing for the last five or six years is. I interview students in

Grahamstown, East London and I go to Jo'burg. There are two of us who do it. The Deans, you know when they get their applications, they decide whether a student should be interviewed or not. And it's usually a D.E.T. school, or a township school that they don't know. There are some township schools that are excellent and then those students are taken into the mainstream straight away if they pass. So I'm happy with it. I feel as though I'm playing god, but also it does work. I interviewed about forty students last year and I think six of them are in our program.

Tell me about the factors that led to the introduction of this particular course... (Tape becomes blurry.)

Okay. So those are the basic competencies. Obviously writing we concentrate on, reading, those are our core skills, grammar. So, in the first semester we concentrate on very basic skills, like note taking, and then we get visiting lecturers in to lecture and they practice note making. We do writing paragraphs, very basic things, building up paragraphs, support sentences, topic sentences, reading... we haven't really developed a good reading program I don't think. Our writing program's good, but we tend not to have broken the skill of reading down into manageable bits. We have a theme for each term. For instance our theme in the first term is usually language issues. And this year we did language ecology. We looked at the death of languages globally and also in South Africa. That they found very interesting. We sometimes do (?) construction issues, we do code switching, we do general language policy issues. Then, in the second semester, we go on to do, usually, human rights issues. For the last couple of years we've looked at circumcision-both female circumcision and male circumcision. It gets them very hot under the collar, but then, what we're saying through that is that there are no holy cows in academia. You've got to be prepared to accept that your point of view and your attitude is going to be criticised, and you've got to learn how to defend that even if it's quite an emotional issue. And then in the third term, we step up the abstraction of the course. We've been quite basic up until now, and then we start pushing them into higher levels of thinking. So we look at culture, but we look at culture as an abstract concept. And then we look at what it means

to their lives. And that, often, they find a very interesting course. We look at a video, A Reasonable Man , which is a South African video, do you know it?

No, I don't know it.

Yes, they love that.

In fact at WITS university, Jennifer Stacey, uses that as well in their foundation course.

Oh, really?

It's quite interesting.

Oh, that's fascinating. So, we use that, we get somebody to come and lecture, in fact we're getting a guy from philosophy to talk about certain abstract ideas about culture that have been formulated by a South African philosopher in Cape Town. So every term we get a guest lecturer in, we get video's, we try and create a very rich learning environment for them so they're exposed to lots of different media, I suppose, as well as lots of different ideas. And in that third term, we really concentrate on the synthesising, that's a very difficult skill for them. Well, we do that in the first semester as well, because we don't just read one thing, we read lots of different things. And each term they write an essay. And then in the fourth term we have a research term where this is where I try to make it more discipline focussed. Set in the discipline, so my commerce students get help from the economics lecturers and the management lecturers and they give me topics, and then the students choose. They get into groups and they choose a topic and we've broken the process down and they work through the process. And then at the end they individually write their own research, they write it up.

So when you assess that particular report, what is it that you actually focus on? Is it content, is it...

It's everything, I suppose, it's content, it's the way it's been written up. Have they stuck to all the different parts of a research article, referencing, technical things as well as the content. We try and include a literature thing, although last year, last year was the first year we did it, last year it wasn't terribly successful. Mainly because the topic that my students were covering didn't really have any literature, apart from their textbook. So I didn't really want to do that. But the humanities students did some nice literature.

So when you are going through these assignments, I mean these reports, these research reports that they give back to you, to what extent is grammar actually hampering that which they want to communicate through their report, grammatical incorrectness perhaps?

They're not too bad. As I was saying, our students tend to be better, I don't think our students are that bad. They do make grammatical mistakes, but I don't consider them grammatical errors really, in a way they are black South African English, it's just a different way of saying something.

But it will make sense?

Oh, completely. No, I mean they would be writing drafts all the way through. They have written up sections, so it's a matter of putting them together for their final piece. And typing it neatly.

In terms of the theory, did you identify a particular theory that informs the course?

It's eclectic in a way. I think we do, we've been meaning to move more in a genre approach, but we haven't as yet, although methodologically I think we follow a genre approach where we model and then we do joint construction and then they do individual construction of texts. We do a lot of modelling. We do a lot of looking at other texts. For instance, if we're doing introductions, I would show them five or six introductions and conclusions. I would show them how paragraphs work in lots of different texts. I suppose the theory behind that is that although we are giving them a sort of paint by

numbers, you know, this is how you write an introduction, you've got to have a thesis statement, you've got to have structuring and all the rest of it. I also feel that not all introductions are written like that. Language isn't that static. So by showing them lots of different examples you are in a way showing them that not all introductions are going to have every single one of those attributes. But also that there's a difference, you know, what I'm saying to them is that there's a difference between production and reception. When you produce your introduction, you make sure it's got all of these bits, when you're in second year, or third year, you can change, it doesn't make a difference. And in fact some of our best students are writing completely differently, but perfectly acceptably from the way we taught them by the end of the year. And that reception, when they're reading, they will read and they will see that Helen said that all introductions have to have this, and yet this is a fantastic article written by some famous person and there are none of those attributes. So what we are showing them is that we're asking you to produce this because it's neat and easy, but, remember that not all texts will follow this.

So it's a way in, basically.

It's a way in. I think I'm not too theoretically bound. I'm not bound to one type of thing. I just instinctively feel that that's going to work and that's not going to work.

Yes, from experience of course.

From experience and obviously I do have theoretical underpinnings. I'm just trying to think what they are. The genre pedagogy would certainly be one of them. Explicit teaching, explicit criteria when we're assessing. I do believe that grammar is important to teach, so we have a grammar period once a week. At which we look generally at things that I used to teach, tenses and all the rest of it. We use CAMESE, which I think is excellent, and we try to teach in conjunction with that. So the students do CAMESE on their own, we monitor it, but we try and also teach. So if we're doing time and coherence, for

instance, which is one of the programs, in class we would be doing coherence and how to create coherence in texts, cohesive devices and ...

And then they move from class to ...

And then they'll do that in their own time, and we'll give them time limits. By the end of the first term they've got to have done the dictionary module and time and coherence. And then we just make sure that we also teaching in tandem with that so it's not completely isolated. I think that's the problem. In previous years it's been a totally separate thing and we are trying to feed into it now.

And do you actually help them write exercises from CAMESE and then mark them?

No, they do that and then we check and if they've got below a certain amount, then we ask them to do that exercise again. If they are really very weak in that exercise, I'll sit and do it with them, they'll come here and do it with me.

Because you have the program as well?

Yes, because I have the program as well.

Because one of the things I said in my M.A. was that CAMESE was a standard text for students who are in first level school. They had to do it voluntarily, they had a choice basically. They were just sitting there and no one was reading it. So what I was suggesting was that it becomes part of the course.

It's a D.P. requirement for our course. Again, its part of ELAP course, it's just another wing. I suppose ELAP is in a way I can't understand why there are so many separate courses. When to me ELAP is doing quite a lot of that with in one course. And there's only one credit for that course.

So what specific competencies do you think are necessary to teach your particular course on the part of the tutors and lecturers?

Well, there's only two of us teaching. I think an interest and a knowledge of language. I've got a masters in ESL and Penny's got an honours in ESL and she's busy doing her masters at the moment. So I think that's obviously first and foremost the most important thing.

And the guest lecturers that you invite, are they also prepared in these competencies?

No. They are just disciplined people. But we go and talk to them beforehand. We just say, look, this is what we want, we want you to be highly structured. Particularly our first lecture, make it very explicit, make it very structured, because we're telling students good lecturers are going to give you lots of queues And we tell them that, so we say. And they usually use OHPs and they are linguistics department lecturers always and they're very, very good about making everything very clear so it's easy to take notes. And then as we go on we say, look, just give a lecture like you give to your normal mainstream students because they must get used to that. They mustn't be molly coddled all the way through. So, we try and step up the skills and the abilities of students as they go on.

It's quite interesting that if I ask you a particular question, as you answer, you answer the questions that I would ask later. It makes things easier. So, has your course remained the same over the years?

No, we change it every year.

From ninety-six?

No, we change it every year. This is very different from ninety-six! Every second week there was another theme and there was a lecture every week by a guest lecturer. And I just found that completely exhausting, I just found you could never do anything in depth with the students.

Because it was just one piece and then they disappeared and then there was another ...

Yes, and then there's another theme, you know.

Themes such as?

Well, there'd be language and then there'd be different little mini themes within that. And there'd be a different lecturer each time. And I kept losing the thread and I thought well students must be as well. There was a writing assignment every single week as well. We didn't have time to teach students how to write a paragraph, let alone a whole essay, so I kind of slowed the whole thing right down. And I suppose I still do also teach quite a few skills.

(Side Two)

But we try and do it in a context. You know, we're not teaching skills that are decontextualised. We're teaching skills within a context.

But in terms of the course changes, you said that it had to do with the fact that (tape becomes blurry.)

Yes, I didn't think at the beginning that there was enough development of academic skills in a well thought out, coherent way. It was just that, that, that, that. And students were writing essays, **but in a way we were testing all the time, rather than teaching.**

Not giving them time to absorb and internalise?

Yes. So, I've slowed the whole thing down, and as I say, we have four distinct themes. And then in those themes we explore academic literacies. Reading,

writing, note taking... Everything is geared towards that, everything is on that theme.

Four themes over the year?

Yes, over the year.

Okay, so it's two per semester?

Yes, so it's language, and then in the second one we do human rights, sometimes we look at circumcision, sometimes we do the death penalty and abortion...

Under human rights?

Yes, under human rights. Every year it's slightly different.

You never repeat something that you did before?

No, we do. The female circumcision one has always been very popular, so we've done that about three times. But obviously we try and change the assignment, so that's different every year.

In terms of the design of the course, what role do the teachers play in terms of the design of the course?

We design it completely. It's up to us completely.

So do you think the course you've designed meets with student expectations?

We always do a little thing at the beginning of the year, and we say, "What are your expectations?", put them up on the board and then say, "This is what the

course is about.”, these expectations we can deliver, these ones we can’t and we explain why.

So right from the start you sort of get a sense of what is expected.

Yes.

Yes, that’s great.

And our evaluations are usually quite positive. I think sometimes students say, “We want to do our own topics, we want to discuss sex, or... And, um, I’m a bit of an old teacher about that, I think that we know the themes that will support a learning of academic literacies. But the students do find our themes interesting.

Okay. But they do have their opinions at the end.

Yes, sometimes. And another thing that they say is that it should only be one semester. But we know that one semester isn’t long enough.

It’s not, no. It is quite surprising they say that.

Actually this wasn’t true this last year when we introduced the research topic. Because I think they just felt that they were doing the same thing every term. And that’s another thing that we’ve changed, is that each term builds on the term before it. So we start very simply, very basically, and then we move to the second term and we build on what we’ve learnt. **We don’t try and teach everything, all the academic skills, in the first term, which is what we used to do. You know, so we’d be killing ourselves teaching referencing and different genres and how to write a paragraph and how to write an essay, and everything would be crammed in the first term. And then the rest of the year would just be repeating that, and building on it, but they just saw that as quite boring.** So we now just start very simply and we build on it, but we don’t repeat. So once we’ve done referencing, we don’t repeat it again.

But it comes in?

Yes, we just say to them, “remember, we’re not teaching it to you again, go back to the notes that we did in the first term on referencing, and make sure that you’re referencing is accurate.” And we try and build up the conceptual level as well, ending with the research project.

So the research project would be, sort of, everything together that they’ve done.

Yes, it’s everything that they’ve done. **Another big thing we have to put together is oral work. Every term we do oral work. We have debates, we have presentations. We try and give everybody, well, you can’t give everybody, but a good fifty to sixty percent of the class have a chance to debate an issue or two to present something. We also have a poster presentation where they make fantastic posters and then they present them. They put them all over the classroom and then they present them like a poster presentation at a conference. We are building those kind of academic skills as well.**

That’s interesting, because you are not just focussing on writing and argument, but also speaking. So that when a student goes and puts it on paper, he or she has already practised. So it’s a bit of skills transference basically.

But it’s also that that’s what students are supposed to do, they’re supposed to be able to go to conferences and speak. They’ve got to present their work to an audience. And so that’s another skill that we are trying to get students to practice. That context of culture that we’re trying to fit students into, and that’s just part of it.

And in the workplace they have to present their thinking.

Yes. They're generally pretty good at that and they enjoy it. We do assess it. That's another change that we've brought in.

Oh, that's great, changes are coming in.

Yes, oh no, we've made a lot of changes.

To think of new elements...

Oh, they love it!

Because we never think of bringing those things into universities. We have this sort of unseen core that we think has been done at high school. It doesn't need to be done at university because university is another level, we have to focus on higher things. But if you look at it, really, to be honest, bringing in debates within university is quite good in terms of developing skills in argument construction.

Oh, absolutely. That's one of the major skill that we do in the first semester is argument. We look at argument structure and how to develop an argument and then they write two essays which are argument essays, and the debate is an argument as well.

Yes, but when is the debate? Is it in the first semester, or the second semester?

Well, we have one in each term, actually.

Oh, each term...

Yes, so we have two in the first semester. And we have one in the second semester and then we have their oral presentations of their research. Each group has to present their research orally.

Every student?

Well, each group. But they must all say something because remember I said that they get into groups to do their research projects, to gather their data, to think about their research and then they have to present it orally with overheads... So just getting them into the way of like they would have to do it at a conference. And then they present it as a written work individually. And their group presentations, they must each do something. They must each spend three minutes presenting some aspect of their research.

Their contribution... In terms of the debate, does every student get a chance to...

Yes, we have a debate preparation lesson. The debates are always on Monday, because that's the only session that all the ELAP students have the same class together. It's timetabled, it's a double period. So we always have our debates and our videos and our guest lecturers then. Then on the Friday, in our separate classes, we get them into groups, we give them the statement, the debate topic and we say debate this issue, and then we say, in your groups choose. From my group and from Penny's group, we've got to choose two people who will be against the topic and two people who are in favour of the topic. And then Penny's group have two in favour, two against, so we have eight speakers all together. Four on each side, four from her class, four from mine. And then we take them through the debate procedure, and they have the weekend to prepare their contributions. And then in the first period, or twenty minutes of the first period, the debaters go off and with either Penny or I, they get together, so all the people in favour get together and they go through their arguments and they try and make it coherent (so they're not repeating each other in other words.). And the concluding person sums up everybody. And the same for the other side. And then in the last period we have the debate. And then we have audience participation. We open it up to the floor. And it's always highly successful.

It must be. And then don't you find a situation where the same students actually lead the debate?

No, we rotate it. We say, "You can't choose anyone who was in the last debate." So, there will be at least twenty students who've debated. Fifteen or twenty.

And you allocate marks for that?

No, we don't actually mark that. We only do one oral mark at the beginning where they keep a journal. It's actually an extensive reading program that we started a year ago. She's developed that. We've asked people on the staff to give us Reader's Digests, we keep them in the library, and the students have to read one article a week. It doesn't have to be Reader's Digest, it can be Time Magazine, it can be the Mail and Guardian. But it can't be a news item, it's got to be an extended opinion piece. **Then they've got to summarise it and they've got to respond to it, they've got to say what they liked about it, what they didn't like about it, what it meant to them. And we mark that. They hand that in every week for the first semester.** Then in the second semester, we get them into reading books. They've got to do two book reviews for the semester. We make them join the library in town, we take them down and we sign them up and they each take out a book, and we just say to them, "If you don't enjoy the book, take it back and get another one." This is an enjoyment thing. It's extensive reading, and then in class we do intensive reading, which is more academic. **But, we're wanting them to get into the habit of reading.** Some of them do. This next term, we're starting a completely different thing, we've got about fifty copies of Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart. We're going to issue them with that and they're each going to read that. It fits into the theme of culture. And then there's all the African Writers series in the library. So they can choose other ones of that. I find that because they haven't grown up going to the library since they were little, they find it very difficult to choose books that they're going to enjoy. They get down to the library, and they'll pick out a book, and we teach them about

reading the blurb and evaluating the book and seeing if it's going to be interesting to them.

At the back?

Yes, at the back or inside on the front cover. But they find it very difficult.

To make decisions?

To make decisions. They'll take out a book, and then it's boring. They'll go back five times, and they just can't find the book for them. And it's difficult to know how to teach them.

But you see, those very activities that you give them are activities that are no longer given, actually, in schools. But because you've been a teacher and you know very well that those activities were never done in their schools, so you are introducing them here, which is very much interesting, and actually creative, in my opinion.

I think that another competency for tutors is a knowledge, I think I've used my knowledge of the school situation enormously.

That's what I was about to say...

I mean I just know, because I was a subject advisor, I tracked around all those schools, that was my job. I could see what was happening in schools. I could see, students never write, their literature lessons were appalling! The only thing I saw teachers do well, was teach grammar. And they never taught writing, they never taught reading. And I must have gone and visited at least two hundred schools.

It's quite interesting, because the kinds of things you are doing with your students are actually done in my daughter's school. My daughter is in grade seven and she will say to me, "I have to go to the library

and get a book, we were asked to read a book. And review it. In grade seven she has to learn to review a book. Exactly the skills that I was not exposed to within the D.E.T. schooling system. It's quite interesting.

I just think that that's where my knowledge of what goes on in the schools has helped. That I know that those students aren't getting that enrichment, and that's what makes the D.E.T. schools different from the Model-C schools. Because as you say, your daughter is doing that sort of thing.

Yes, and at grade seven!

Yes, so they don't need that and to my mind, a foundation program that has those things is relevant to D.E.T. students, but not relevant to your Model-C school kids who are just struggling. So, how do you bring those together? You see, that's what I feel enriches our teaching and enriches our student's experience at university. **We're filling those gaps, but we're also, we're not just looking back, we're also pushing them forward.**

It's quite a complex...

It's quite a tension, actually. **I think there are two types of academic support, there is the kind of bridging courses where you're looking back at the things that they haven't done at school and you're bridging those gaps. And there's the academic support where you are pushing students forward into what they are supposed to do at university level. And we're trying to do both. *We're trying to meet the student where they come from and push them forward.* I think a lot of academic support at university doesn't meet them.**

Yes, it doesn't go back.

It doesn't go back *enough*.

Just start here and go forward.

Yes. I think a lot of students just get left behind. I think, that's my feeling.

Well, it's true.

I mean I haven't, like you, you're in a wonderful position because you're really looking into what goes on.

Well it's interesting from a D.E.T. background and what you are saying is exactly what I want to know. It's a matter of swimming against the tide, and most of us actually sink very, very early, they just disappear, drop out or change degrees. This is interesting. This is the real question, how do you then design a foundation course, what do you do then with students who are from ex-model C schools?

Who are going to be completely board by that kind of thing. I've always struggled with this because we always have foreign students, Asian students: Taiwanese, Japanese, who want to come and do our course because they think it's just a language course. But it isn't just a language course. And they are completely out of it, completely marginalised, they don't generally enjoy it. There have been a couple who have got along but they are usually students who are post-graduate students, and they come and they're very mature. They realise what we're doing. I tell them from the beginning that it's not just a language course, it's not really designed for you. But I just want to know how you design a course for a student whose needs are so completely different?

And actually meet his needs at the same time. That's my research.

That's why I want to make this course an affirmative course. It's for students who have been disadvantaged educationally. And it's not for anyone else because then you're going to have to change our teaching. I think, I mean I

grapple with that problem all the time, but I realise there's no theoretical basis for what I'm saying, it's instinct.

You know sometimes, one doesn't always have to theorise. I mean there is always a theory behind something but I don't think it is necessarily the case of actually explaining a theory as such. So that you will sort of justify what you are doing, I don't think really. But this is interesting.

Yes, I suppose also another theory that we've used a lot is process writing. Seeing writing as a process, but also realising that that's not all. You know, it's all very well to teach people how to edit their work and that writing is a recursive process, but it doesn't help them write a paragraph, it doesn't help them structure a paragraph. So that's why I say I'm eclectic in a way, I'm taking...

Yes, so there's something evident that you can bring in that will compensate for that...

Yes, I take, I think, from different theories of writing. And language teaching, I don't teach things like articles and tenses, we teach more holistically really. You know, we teach coherence. We do teach sentence structure, because I find that that's a big problem with students. They really battle to get the sentence structure right. And that's often, I find, a reason for breakdown in communication. When you can't understand what someone is saying and it's usually because their sentence structure is wrong. It's not because their concord is wrong, or their tense is wrong. I can understand it.

Or articles, or prepositions...

It's the sentence structure, it's the sort of ...

The bigger...

Yes, the bigger element.

Well, my supervisor said to me, you know, one of the characteristics of any research is that you get in with a particular intention, but when you move out of it you realise that you dropped all those things.

Yes, it's terrible!

And I think that's why the draw is in doing research. And he also advised me that you must take off your hat of the educator, and just be a researcher.

And don't ask leading questions.

Exactly, just be objective and ask questions and after that you'll see...

Well, I think you've been very good at that.

Have I? I don't know...

What exactly are you looking at?

Let me say, as I'm continuing with my research, that very thing that I sort of think I'm looking at is constantly shifting. It'll shift, and then I'll go back to it and then for some reason I'll have to move. At the moment I'm not sure. But this is what I'm looking at basically, at this stage, I don't want to say it's now as we are continuing our discussion. But I'm looking at the academic literacy programs that are in place in the historically white universities in particular. That's why I went to U.C.T., I went to W.I.T.S, and I'm here. White English universities, because there are Potchefstroom and R.A.U., but I chose English speaking universities. I'm looking at those and the extent to which students which weren't thought of when these universities came about had benefited from those initiatives or from those developments. And to what extent has academic discourse been made accessible to those kinds of students. That's basically what I'm looking at, but also, because I'm from the English department, from the department of English studies which looks at literature, the focus of my discipline is

discursive critique. A way of looking at language as a manipulative entity. You can use language to establish power, you can use language to control, you know, those kinds of things. That's what English studies is all about, and we try to expose students to such understandings through literary work, through novels, through poetry, through short stories. How experience is presented through texts and how those constructions or those constructs are in fact subjective. I'm then intending to argue for a language course that won't just teach grammar for grammar's sake, but a language course that is going to teach grammar, yes, but for the purpose of constructing meaning. And how grammatical choices, for instance, I chosen to organise a clause in a particular way, I have to be conscious of that. Why maybe my dependent clause is the first one in the sentence and then the independent clause is the second one. Why did I choose to do this? In other words, how does one make grammatical choices so that one will say something that is really what one wants to say. That's what I'm looking at basically. Grammar teaching that will be more on meaning making, than just grammar for grammar's sake, which is the case at the moment in the courses.

Yes, that's what I found, I must say, when we taught grammar for grammar's sake, we had an isolated grammar, and we taught tenses and we went through all the tenses and articles, it actually didn't transfer to the student's writing. It was too isolated.

So that's one part and then what I'm looking at in terms of my university, I'm looking at L.T.C., A.L.E. and then E.L.C. And I'm questioning the articulation among these courses. To what extent is E.L.C. complementing A.L.E. and A.L.E., L.T.C., and also E.L.C. and the program of English studies. The discipline, English 1B, English 2a, English 2b, English 3a... that articulation. I'm looking at this English Language course that we have, does it articulate to English 1b and to these other courses?

Yes, or are they all just isolated, working by themselves?

Exactly, and if isolated, then, what are the implications in terms of resources, in terms of economic viability and all those things? And then, this is what's in my head now, what do you need actually at all universities, to have a centre, like they have at U.C.T., where you have academic program development centre, where there is a dean, there is a director, and as a lecturer who is entrusted with academic development, academic literacy, language issues, there is a department of a sort. And then have these individuals relating with other disciplines and those would be relating maybe with sociology or history, and then, how is academic literacy conceived within those disciplines? So that these individuals will get in, come to assessment strategies for each and every discipline, you know, curriculum developments... These people will be at the centre, relating with every other discipline in the faculty, instead of having L.T.C., A.L.E., E.L.C., which are not linked, where we know nothing about what is happening between disciplines, and the disciplines know nothing about what is happening here. Now the skills that we hope that we are developing in students through these courses are not actually seen when students move to 1b's. What is happening is with third year students, we have lecturers having to address the same problems that we thought we had already addressed with English Language Course, A.L.E. and L.T.C. Why? Because there is no communication between these three and then the actual disciplines. Why? Because individuals within a discipline think this is somebody else's business. And so those who are doing these courses are isolated, because even the structures themselves are not allowing that negotiation. There's no dialogue, in other words, between the English core courses and the disciplines themselves. So the skills that we hope that we are developing in students here, they can't transfer their skills to the various disciplines.

Oh, that's interesting. You're finding that, then?

Yes, and then I follow students. As I told you, I'm teaching in the English Language Course and ALE in the first semester, English 1b and English 2b in the second semester. And I will often find that a student who passed English Language Course and Academic Learning in English in the first semester, now doing English 1b battling with the things covered in the latter two. I would expect that such a student doesn't have a problem with grammar because he has done E.L.C., and this student doesn't have a problem with writing academically, say, because he has done Academic Learning in English. But I'll find myself having to mark his essays and speak about tenses, and there is no coherence in this, **and yet these very things were attended to.**

Or should have been...

Yes, **supposedly** attended to when a student was doing A.L.E. or E.L.C.

What about things like academic skills like referencing? Do you find that students do transfer?

Those are even appalling. They don't. Perhaps the problem being exactly what you said, that when you started with your course, you sort of tried to start them with a lot of things at once. The same thing is happening here. What I'm looking at then, I've sort of shifted from the platform of being an English department person to a faculty person who is concerned with the faculty as a whole. And I'm concerned that resources are wasted in these things, where students can transfer their skills.

Well then there's no point in having it...

In the first place. Hence my argument for something that would be like a centre of sorts. Where there would be a dean or a director and everybody who is interested in such issues may develop a relationship with disciplines. And then have these individuals delivering lectures if

possible. Say I am interested in sociology, then I would be given an opportunity within the sociology department to deliver things that are related to academic literacy but within sociology. And someone who may be interested in geography as well could deliver, say that is related to assessment, how do you construct an argument as geographers as opposed to historians, as opposed to philosophers, those kinds of things. It's a bit scattered at the moment, but it's here, it's a question of organising myself and actually saying it and articulating exactly what I want to articulate. That's what my research is all about.

I think that's what's so good about U.C.T., actually, is that they've really, even their writing centre, which is also part of the same unit, they're working with staff all the time, sort of an outreach.

There's that healthy communication between the centre and the disciplines. Which is a total contrast when you look at our situations. It is totally different. People are defensive, insecure, that sort of thing. I'm asking for something along the lines of what is happening at U.C.T. Now, we are speaking about foundation modules that the government is speaking about, now one has to think around where is the place of this in the context of all this digital equipment, how do we situate it, how do we place this foundation course? Who should attend it? All those sorts of things. Are we looking at academic literacy when we speak of foundation, or are we speaking about under-preparedness, school under-preparedness?

You see, even at U.C.T, they have different programs for different students. I mean they have economics and science foundation courses which are open to everybody which gets below a certain...

They told me, below C, actually.

And they can be from any school, but then they have a specific course for second language students. **Which is a semester course. So they are catering... I just really don't think you can cater for everybody under one**

course. Not if you're going to be effective. Otherwise, you're going to be splitting yourself, and...

And achieving nothing.

And achieving nothing, not really giving anything to anyone because you're trying to give too much to everybody.

Let me ask the last question, and then I'll go. Now in terms of, because I'm sure you have a course outline...

Would you like to see it?

If it's at hand I'd appreciate it. Because I think this is the key question.

This is a daily thing of what we do and this is our workbook here. And here's our course outline. You see we start with an introduction, we look at reading theory, we do tenses, not making, then we had a lecture on naming practices, we got them to write notes, we looked at their notes, we gave them feed back, note making and summarising, summarising practice on a longer text. Because I think that that's a very important academic skill being able to summarise the crux of something. Then we had another lecture, again, our emphasis in this first term was on note making, and reading. Another lecture, we actually finish questions o texts, we read Vanishing Voices, questions, they did oral presentations on it, we did oral work, they had to prepare a short speech, we didn't assess them there, then we assessed them here. So pedagogically we don't assess them until we've given them a chance to practise. And it's the same with assignments. Written assignments, there's a draft, which we comment extensively on, and then they can go and redo it and edit it. So they did orals there that we did assess. There's their debate. There's a test every term, or an exam. So that term was very much that sort of thing and then, you see this is the kind of thing we do, we look at articles in the newspaper, try and point out the argument, somebody's argument. This is term two. Again here, now this is more writing. We look at the difference between speaking and

writing and language in different contexts, so this worksheet for instance takes them through where you're speaking politely you use certain language forms, but when you're writing academically you use particular language forms as well.

Now tell me, can you make a copy of just this page and the other one as well?

Sure. So it's all writing here, referencing, paragraph structure, that kind of thing.

...If you don't mind, of course.

No, that's fine. Completely, in fact, I can just take them off my computer. If it'll be easier for you.

Oh, that's great. Now tell me, in terms of my attempt to actually answer your question as to what is it I'm doing, am I able to articulate it clearly? Did you find it clearly articulated? Could you make sense of what Emmanuel is doing, if someone were to ask you, "What is it that Emmanuel is doing?" Would you be able to say it?

You mean in your research?

Yes, exactly. Because you asked me a question, what is it I'm doing, I sort of said a lot of things.

I think you seem to have a two pronged purpose. The first is to find out what's going on at historically white universities in terms of academic support, and then, your second purpose is to evaluate, in the light of what you've seen at other universities, evaluate what's going on at U.N.D. So this course, English Language Course, and the A.L.E. course, the courses that you're involved with... and, yes, I think that's it, in a nutshell. Is that right?

Yes. So it's quite a task, hey? Isn't it?

It's um, well...

Isn't it too much? Am I not choosing too much?

Is this a PhD?

Yes.

No.

Am I not chewing too much that I might not be able to swallow later?
In your opinion.

What does your supervisor say?

Well, I'd say at the moment, he's sort of on the same level, sort of agreeing that this is good. But you see, I also enjoy getting views from what I would refer to as outsiders. Because you see, your supervisor is someone that's always around. And maybe if you get an opinion from someone else, especially a person like yourself, who spent most of her time in schools.

Um, no... I mean, I'm in the same position in a way, I'm not trying to write a PhD, but I'm trying to look at what other people are doing in order to assess what we should be doing at Rhodes and proposing a course of action. And it is, it's confusing too because you've just got so much information coming in.

And while you are getting that information, within your own environment, everything is in a state of flux. Everything is challenged, everything has to be rethought, everything has to be changed and even the institutions that you are visiting, you find people saying, because you see there is this book, a collection of essays which give access to success. And when I was speaking to one of the people who has a chapter there, she says, "But you know, when I read this, I sort of ask

myself was it me that thought like this? But this was published in 98, that's near 2002, that's very interesting, those ideas took my attention."

Is now saying, she wonders if it was her who wrote like that.

People can move so fast.

Very, very fast.

But I think U.C.T. is like that. That group of people are very... They work incredibly hard, and they interact with each other, and they're continually changing each other and I think, they grow incredibly fast. It's a very challenging environment, I don't think you could ever stay the same if you were working there.

And they are more research orientated.

Yes, they're very research orientated.

And I think part of the reason is that they started getting together as people who had one interest, and saw it's very easy for them to grow. Which is why I think that the ideas that they have there, maybe we should look at implementing them ourselves. Thank you so much, I think this was a... I don't think I'll ask any questions now, because we've covered all of them in a way.

You're sure?

No, it's fine. Because you have only second language speakers, you don't have first language speakers.

It's a very homogenous group of students and in that way, easier to teach and I think that we do have results. We do see students who go out into mainstream courses the following year better equipped. They feel it. Funny enough, it's usually our better students who feel the benefits of it. The ones who aren't

strong students, who go out with 50, 55, 58% for ELAP, I just know they're never going to graduate. And they generally don't.

And the ones also who maybe complain about the course?

They complain about it and they don't learn as much. It seems that they've got to be at a certain level before they can really benefit from our course.

Oh, I see. So then the situation will be even worse.

Yes. We've just had some really bright students who've gone on and done masters and PhD's and that, who were originally ELAP students. And they talk incredibly highly of ELAP. They say how incredibly worthwhile it was and what a good course it was. But I worry that we don't reach the lower, but maybe to me a university is an elitist institution, and it should be that. It's not for everybody.

Yes, but again, people should put effort in as well. If you just sit and expect people will just do things for you...

I think there is that to it, but I also think there are students who shouldn't be at university. Who should be in technickons... They're not good enough for university.

Regardless of what we sort of do to sort of accommodate them.

Yes, so you could sort of work yourself to death, but they're never going to be decent students.

Otherwise, we'd turn universities into glorified high schools.

Exactly, and we've got to be very careful, that's a problem that I'm always very... you now, we do fail students, we don't just say, "Oh, I'm so sorry, I feel sorry for this guy, push him through." We don't.

Because it reflects badly...

It reflects badly on us in the end.

Because lecturers have certain expectations, you know.

Yes, and I think, a problem with us, also is that in the foundation year, the only course that is in fact a foundation course is ELAP, because the other courses that students do are mainstream courses.

(12Hrs)

Lyn's Interview Transcript

EM ...background -

JS Background to the course? Okay. Well, I came in to the department when Wits University decided to extend its academic development programme from a centralised, non-specific study skills course into discipline-based courses. So my first job here - first responsibility here - was to provide supplementary help for first year students in the discipline of English literature. And I had been here for about eighteen months and decided that students would benefit from a preliminary course before they went into English I, but a course that focussed on the skills needed for literature – for the study of literature. So, although the aims were twofold: to give them another year in which to improve their English language skills, because English proficiency is in fact very important for the study of English literature - you know. The nuances and the subtleties of the language are something that a second language student may not pick up when they have come straight from a rural school with very little study of English literature (Ja.) So the idea was that we would have a foundation course – a year long foundation course - which would teach the skills of English literature -okay. There obviously would be attention to language skills in the form of writing essays, of developing confidence to speak in seminars, and tutorial situations, but there wasn't a specific focus on grammar teaching. (Right) Okay? So if you – and, and that course ran for about six years. Simultaneously there was another course running in the university, which is the one Stella runs - which is why I think you may need to speak to Stella - which is called A Course in Academic Literacy, which has - takes in students from a number of different disciplines within the faculty. And the emphasis there is on writing skills, on reading skills, on speaking skills; so there is a lot of oral work, there're some research projects that they do, and so forth. But there is always a problem with making that relevant to students from different disciplines, because they don't see the relevance of what they're doing. And it is again not a grammar course: it's not – it doesn't focus on the teaching of grammar. Although there is language work in it - there's language work on how - what are the markers - the grammatical markers of comparison and contrast. (Okay)The kind of language structures that students need in the writing of essays. So that course is a full year's course. When we got moved into this school, which happened at the beginning of last year, where a number of different departments dealing with language or literature were put into the School of Language and Literature Studies, we were told, or - or it became evident that we couldn't afford to run two full-length foundation courses, so we were asked to combine them. So what has happened is that for the first six months the students do the general academic literacy course, then for the second half of the year they can choose to continue with the general academic literacy course or just transfer into what is now our truncated foundation course for literature. So they do literature for the second half of the year if they want to (Hmm) Okay. And that's the course that I'm responsible for, although I teach in the first half of the year in

general academic literacy courses. (Okay) So do you underst –(I do understand...) see what we are doing?

EM ... what you are doing. Actually I'm sort of clicking parallels between what you are telling me and what is happening at UND. I see there is an interesting comparison between the two. So it is not a grammar– you don't have a grammar course as such?

JS We don't have a specific grammar course. We don't teach grammar. You know, I think in the belief – you've got one of your questions – I don't know if you want to go through the questions at all (Ja, perhaps ja) maybe you want to do it –

EM I think – ja, ja, maybe let's just - and everything will come out. I think the first question is covered – you are currently teaching on the language proficiency course in this university *have because you teach only language proficiency in your faculty* - is it the only one, or?)

JS Well, there's the general one. It has now become part what was the larger academic literacy course – it's now an option within that. When we talk about the course I teach, I teach on both the general one and the specific literature. So – so it is not the only language – it's - there are a number of different foundation courses within the faculty: there is a foundation course for international relations; there is a foundation course for sociology (Okay, so disciplines have their foundation courses?) Discipline specific, discipline specific foundation courses, where the concepts and skills necessary for that particular subject are focussed on - and taught.

EM Ja, right. Now say a student is doing a three-year B.A, does that mean the student will have to do four years? [Yes] For every discipline in the faculty)

JS No, no. It does mean that students have to take four years for their B.A. What happens is that the students who go onto the foundation courses are normally the students who would not have made it into the university on their matric points. So they write what's called an admissions test which the university sets and depending on where their interests are, they are steered into a particular foundation course and then they are put on a four-year curriculum. So for the first year they would be required to do two foundation courses and one first year course.

EM Alright. One, yes, okay. It sounds like the extended curriculum that we have at UND exactly the same technicalities maybe - maybe different. Okay, okay. So the one that you are teaching in now for the first semester is the one that is discipline specific?

JS No, the first six months is not discipline specific. We get students from a number of different - we get law students from the law faculty, so it's not even

faculty specific. (Oh, okay.) And a couple of students from Architecture once wanted to come in, or their faculty wanted them to come in. Um, but the majority of the students in the course seem to be social science students, so the material that we use tends to be social science type material. So that we try to make it a bit more relevant to their -[*telephone*] Excuse me...[*tape break*]

EM Ja, so the second semester you are teaching the one that is discipline specific?

JS Yes, that's right, although a number of students can continue with the general one and most of them do in fact, because most students seem to be frightened of literature. (Ja, ja and all over the place) Pity about that.

EM Ja, ja. I think the second one is already answered: How is this different from other faculties? Ja, then what factors lead to ... because you teach –I think you've said that as well. Let's just concentrate on - you said six years ago?

JS The literature course was introduced – no, 1993, so that's nine years ago. And the general one had been running before that. (Ja) It had been running longer, so if you talk to Stella she'd be able to tell you ...

EM And student numbers are always the same ...

JS Well, the general course the numbers have been increasing substantially, so it's quite a lot over two hundred now - in the general course. In the literature course the numbers fluctuate. The biggest number we've had in the literature course is about eighty-three. (Right). But last year it was down at forty-four, so ... (Okay) And who knows what it'll be this year. We don't know yet.

EM In terms of who decided that this particular course was necessary?

JS Ah, the literature course? (uhu) Well, as the AD tutor in the faculty - this department – I spoke to a number of others. I was fortunate in that this department had a number of people on the staff, who before I arrived, had been very concerned about second language students and their difficulties with English literature and who had been working in their own time to help those students. So they were very supportive of what I suggested. So people like **Lorraine Chasperson, Caryn Lazar** – and the professors in the department at the time when I put the forward the proposal for the new course -the preliminary new course- they took up the advice of the group of us who felt it was a good idea. Not always considered a good idea by students, of course (Ja, well, I know, they tend) there was some resistance (Tend to regard such courses as sort of demeaning.) Yes, and it is such a pity, because, you know, if they would just see it as help, rather than demeaning...

EM Ja, okay. Ja, but you said they are credit-bearing courses...

JS It is a credit-bearing course you get full credit towards a degree.

EM Sixteen credits. Sixteen or eight?

JS Eight. First year courses carry eight.

EM Okay, alright, okay. Now in terms of competencies - I mean- the question is: what competencies do you think your course is designed to develop?

JS Well, it is design to develop specifically those skills and competencies necessary for the study of literature. So it would be close reading of texts, understanding how texts create meaning, understanding particularly for literature, underlying the meanings and nuances – the fact that, in literature while you are reading stories, stories are obviously being used to convey concerns and wider issues. We try to develop the understanding of the links between texts and contexts; you know, the importance of historical surroundings and backgrounds for the production of a particular meaning of literature text. Maybe the difference – the way different literary texts work, you know, the fact that poetry works differently from drama, you know, from novels, that sort of thing. But we also work on developing competencies for writing coherent, well-structured analytical essays, which contain an argument. And I believe quite strongly, that students pick up those skills for effective essay writing when they are struggling with a content that they need to get on top of – you know, that they need to – master. Excuse the - sexist language. (Ja, Okay) You know, which is why to some extent, I have my concerns about these general academic language proficiency courses, which don't have their own content base, because the students know they don't have to learn anything in particular – they don't have to struggle to understand the content. And so there isn't quite the same motivation for them to struggle to shape it coherently which there is, if they are working with a content that they have to – to... (Ja, from a particular discipline) Yes, (okay) Yes, so you know, as far as competencies goes there's reading competencies, there's competencies for literature itself and there's competencies for writing. And you know, just the general academic skills of analysis and argument are developed, I think, through all disciplines obviously. (Definitely, ja) And general language improvement, I believe, is developed simply through working with the language so closely. (Ja)

EM Okay. So you leave grammar and other things with the - other people?

JS Well, no, there's nobody who teaches grammar particularly in this university, but there are times when I will focus on a particular grammatical problem if I think it's a general problem - you know, that everybody could benefit from a bit of work with. Concord is always a problem, for example. So I will do a bit of work on concord and in our tutorials we'll do a bit of concord, but it never seems to make any difference. It never seems to lead to any improvement. But you know, maybe

there is some value in highlighting an area and making students more aware of it.
(Telephone – tape break)

EM Okay. Now tell me about maybe your thoughts around the theory that informed the course, you know, that you are teaching.

JS Yes, I've been thinking about that, because I'm not sure how one would pigeonhole it in a particular theory. I suppose what informs it is the whole idea of academic literacy. You know -who're those two Australians – the names've just gone out of my head. But you know Brian Street is doing a lot of work at the moment on discipline-specific academic literacy (Right) and it's -. Oh, and it – and the two Australians are **Cope and Kalansis** (Okay) their particular focus on – is it **Cope and Kalansis**? It isn't – Anyway. It's not **Cope and Kalansis**. I'll think of the other- The idea that each discipline, with its own epistemological foundations, has also particular ways of writing, ways of thinking which students need to learn. So I suppose *that's* what 's behind our thinking - is this whole idea that there isn't such a thing as a general academic literacy. I mean there may be certain general skills, but that each discipline, in fact asks for its information to be organised in particular ways, its particular understandings of what knowledge is in its discipline, and wants essays to be written in a particular way and they have particular ideas of what an argument consists of and what kinds of evidence is valid for a particular discipline. So - I would say that maybe the strongest theory behind it, is this idea of discipline-specific academic literacy (I see then its *indistinct* English studies and literature teaching).

But I suppose also the fairly old fashioned communicative theory that, you know, the more you work with it the more you (Yes, okay) I think that that's really...

EM Ja, that's the one, because there isn't something called - what? - a particular theory of academic literacy that one - Ja, ja - Disciplines approach things, you know, differently. Okay.

So, in terms of why you have this particular language theory chosen and obviously you've said we can come back to that, you know.

But as a discipline of English studies this is what, you know – this is how we figure the discipline language should be gathered up and skills in literature.
(Yes, Yes)

But in terms of people who are teaching in the course, what specific competencies, or qualifications perhaps, do you think are necessary to teach your particular course?

JS Okay, so do you want me to talk just about the literature course, not about the general one? (Well, you can-) If you talk to - want me to talk separately about them -

EM You can, if you feel comfortable to speak about the other I will appreciate, but if you want to stick on the discipline-specific -

JS Well, I think for the teaching of the literature course people do need to have a certain level of understanding of literature – they do need to be competent in literature and understand literature. It's just that that's what we're trying to teach our students. If in addition, they are people who have worked with second language students, or second language theory – additional language students I should be saying (Yes – ja) that helps and we have managed to have such- been lucky enough - to have such tutors in our department: people, who straddle both linguistics or applied linguistics - or academic development theory, you know, who are interested in academic development theory and academic literacy as well as literature. I think that having an understanding of discip- of- of the main concepts of both of those, of all those areas is [*indistinct*] useful. But for example, in the teaching of our literature course, we have drawn on our staff members (Ja, right) and it's quite interesting that our staff members – our heads of department have made a point of teaching on the course, because they want it to be seen as politically important within the department. They want to give the course some status, so that they have *not* relegated it to the junior members of staff; that they have actually come in and taught a particular text, for example, in the literature course. So that input is given by literature specialists, but then that would be followed up by a tutorial which focuses more on the acts - actively involving the students with the text. So that in fact we develop materials. (Right, worksheets?) Worksheets that the students work through, you know, as a kind of follow up the actual input. Some of these are modest. [*indistinct*] as tidy as they could be. (Okay) But, um...

So, you know, our focus is on active learning as much as possible, on getting the students involved in thinking and working with the text, and doing things. So there's conceptual input and then there's working with that conceptual input in an active way with the students, involving them in the texts. And very often we will use a **bursus** for example, who worked for me with the materials in smaller groups – we break up into smaller groups (I see) and we work...(Okay) Oh and I must mention, - and I didn't - when we first started this literature course - foundation course,-it was just the English Department, but after it had been running for about three or four years the African Literature Department came in with us, so it is a joint course run by English and African literature.

EM I see. Okay. Ja – you told me about competencies... And when you were selecting people to participate, you were looking for these competencies - you didn't just take anyone?

JS As far as the staff is concerned? (Yes) I looked for people who were good teachers - who had a reputation for being good teachers; who were interested in teaching and patient enough to teach on a foundation course (Yes, okay). Okay. I

think that 's the main...- tutors who were patient. Not that there are many who are impatient, but I mean there are some tutors who are more prepared to adapt their teaching methods to a foundation course (Okay) Those were people we encouraged to teach on the course.

EM And so how did you determine that, or [*indistinct*]

JS Well, one - you know, as the AD tutor, I sat in on a number of lectures given by members of our staff. One just knows from the way students respond to teachers as well, which ones they find clearest and most accessible and friendliest, you know, and that - So and all those – it is not just teaching ability and patience, it's also accessibility and approachability.

EM And so you sat actually and observed the materials and lectures, okay ... Right. So tell me about the course, has it remained the same since its inception?

JS No, it hasn't. Well, you know how – the major change is that it's been reduced to a six-month course and amalgamated with the (general course) general course. The way in which it has changed otherwise, as I said - mentioned, is that it became a joint course between English and the African Literature departments (Okay) and that influenced the content to some extent - they introduced more African literature. We had a lot to start with anyway, but they introduced a lot more. Otherwise it's really just changed in terms of the texts that are used. One of the other changes is that when the course got too big – because when we started we had only twenty-five students and when we got to eighty-four students in the course, it was no longer possible – I used to do all the tutorial work: we used to break the class into groups and I used to move from one group to the other, working with them, but when we had eighty - you know it was fine when there was twenty-five students, but when there were eighty four students it was too many, so then we brought in **tutors** to help us work – honours students – honours **tutors** or masters bur-students - to help with the small group work. So that's another way in which it has changed. But otherwise it's really just that sometimes we used a text that didn't work very well – a literature text, you know, and we found that we had to change it.

EM But not fundamental, conceptual changes as such?

JS Not really.

EM Even the coming in of the African literature - the department, in terms of [*indistinct*] understanding and approach?

JS No, because they were happy with what we were doing and they put their students in on the course as well. So it was students who were going to study African literature as well as students studying English literature who came on the course. They were pleased with the idea of teaching literature specific skills. We

do have a writing workshop, by the way, once a week. That's part of the course. (Oh, okay) A writing workshop. (A part of assessment?) Well, we have - it's to help students with whatever writing tasks they have to do and whatever essays they are writing. We devote one of our periods a week to focussing on their writing – discussing the essays, brainstorming the essays -and other tasks.

I mean - I don't know if you have a section for assessment.

EM Yes, I do, I do. Ja, okay. No, I'm on section B: the design; the design (We've travelled around a bit) Ja, no, thanks.

Okay. So what role do the teachers of this course play in the design of the course, or designers are different people?

JS No, no, no, they're the same people. Originally there were three of us who designed the course: myself, Lorraine [indistinct] and Caryn Lazar and we worked it out together: we designed it together; we decided on - from our experience of working with the students what skills we wanted to focus on (Right) and the fact that we wanted to include a weekly writing workshop and so on, so that structure was more or less set out by the three of us then. Since then, as you say, it hasn't changed all that much. What we have is a – what we *try* to have, but it does not always work - is a weekly meeting with the tutors and the lecturer who is teaching the course or the particular text to talk about what tutorial work he or she would like done, you know, in accordance with what he or she will be teaching in the next week or so. And sometimes those tutors will design their own material, sometimes I design the materials, sometimes the **bursus** students, who are very innovative and enthusiastic might come up with ideas for worksheets as well. (Ah, so they have that independence to ...)

Well, you know, they can produce a worksheet that everybody will use the next week. (oh, okay not that different -)

They all do different things. No I think the students feel more secure if they're all doing the same thing (EhmHm definitely.) So that sometimes if the students have produced wonderfully innovative – because when you're younger and they are more in touch with the students with music and pop. Yes, yes, I mean there was one **bursor** who produced a wonderful worksheet linking Shakespeare's sonnets to modern day pop songs. You know, it was splendid, it was a wonderful thing and the students loved it.

EM Okay. Alright. Now do you think the course's design met your students expectations?

JS Ah, that's a problem, because - if they are students who are planning to continue with literature, I think it does, but some of these students are here simply because they have been put into a foundation course and they have to do it and they are not interested - they find the general course or academic literacy course quite boring. And there's bit of literature now has been introduced into the first six months, okay, and they quite enjoyed the literature, so they decide to do

the literature for the next six months simply because they've enjoyed the literature, but they don't intend to carry on with it. So, I don't know if they've got any expectations out of the course, if they've chosen it for that reason. If they are choosing it because they expect grammar help, then obviously it's not helping – it's not meeting their expectations (I see, okay) It - it's quite a difficult one because (Oh ja, okay – continue...) sometimes we get students from law doing the course and they do it because they find the literature more challenging – maybe - than the academic literacy side of the course. But it's certainly not relevant to their course if it's a literature - and they're going to carry on and do law.

EM But in terms of skills that are developed perhaps -

JS Well, you know, I think you have to work very hard at showing students how what they are learning is relevant to their own context, to their own discipline. And you can't always do that for everybody with all their different disciplines. They don't always see the connection.

EM You know with our English I B, the study of English I in the second semester, we are teaching the novel - it's called *Snow Falling on Cedars* and it's a - we've sort of put that text in specifically for law students, because it's about a case and all that- (interesting) Have you read it? (I've [indistinct] I haven't read the novel.) So that I find it very interesting that they find the text you know sort of very thick and they say they can't read it all (Is it?) But that's one of the ways in which we've tried to accommodate the interests of the students.

JS In fact, what has happened as a result of the law students in particular saying that they don't see the relevance of the course is that I'm working with people in the Law Faculty – I'm working with the AD tutor in the faculty who wants the students to carry on with the first half of this general course, but then for the second half of the year we will develop a law specific language or academic literacy course and what we're planning to do there, is to start with the way law matters are reported in the media. So we'll look at the newspapers, TV - specials, documentaries, news, whatever it may be. Then we'll move on to looking at a novel. Okay. Look at the law in literature and then we'll go on to look at a film maybe *A Reasonable man* - you remember that South African ...(Yes , That) [indistinct] and then finally we'll look at legal language in a legal case. So that we'll move through (language and power, okay ... - it is interesting. Maybe you'll want to look at *Snow Falling on Cedars*) Yes, it sounds like an interesting possibility (How the judge uses language ; how the court becomes an inquisition and the - . Ja, it's one of the interesting sections of the course) Who wrote it and I'll get it out the library? (Oh shame, I'm very much poor, I don't remember the names of people, but I'm sure of the title) You can give me a call –send me an email. (Ja, I'll try to get that.)

EM – Okay. Expectations - So basically you sort of said as a teaching team and the designers of the course you aren't really sure as to what are the expectations. You sort of think through how they think it could be their expectations, but you never actually had research as it were -

JS Well, every year we have an evaluation questionnaire which the students fill in and we ask them about their responses to the course and to the particular texts and to the teaching methods and there's always a section at the end for general comments and sometimes the students have said, 'I don't see why I have to do this course.' (Ja, they are very blunt) Yes, but a lot of the time they are very positive – they have enjoyed the course, but there's not – really, a sense from the students who are going off to other disciplines that they have made the link between literature and law, or literature and history, or whatever it is, you know. But then, that's not a question I've asked particularly

EM I see, ja. It's one of the questions that I've asked, you know, to my students at the end as I say. I ask, "What did you expect from this course? Did you get that? Explain." And the students will be honest. JA. JA. But how do you think your students have benefited from the course that you teach?)

JS Well, I think they benefit from the intensive working with the language – I think they benefit from that. That their language must have improved and we certainly see an improvement in their writing ability (Oh, yes) and of course those who are planning to study literature, I think they do benefit from gaining some of the basic skills. One of the problems though, is that when we move into English I it moves much faster, it's much less supportive than the foundation course - the foundation course is very much supportive - there's a lot of interaction with tutors and I think they expect that when they get to English I and it's not the same. I'm not sure whether the supportive atmosphere is enabling or disempowering. (Ja) And that's a bit of a problem.

EM Ja. Because I was going to ask exactly that question: How is your work discipline specific foundation course different from English I, in terms, I mean, of content and exactly as you part [*indistinct?*

JS There's a lot more reading in English I. You have to read many more texts. They read in the first quarter probably as many as they read in the semester

EM Ah, it reminds me of my English I in 1994. We had to read twelve texts - twelve novels. It was a nightmare from high school - from the township high school - and twelve novels to read and a test after three months and I got 34% Ja. But I saw. So you are saying that in terms of the quantity in terms of the text

JS And then the teaching is – the students are expected to work much more on their own. They don't get as much interactive support as they do on the foundation course.

EM Ja, so there's more attempt – I don't know if this is the right way to talk of this question – to actually meet those needs - that continuity between that and English I perhaps for the first three months and then –

JS No, you see in English I we have over three hundred students, so that you can't restructure the course for maybe the twelve or fifteen who come through from the foundation course, because we don't get many more than that you see (Oh okay so it is very few that actually go on to) Very few, very few. We don't have a big pull through, which is one of our worries. Anyway. You know a lot of the students who are doing English I these days are coming from private schools or model C schools and they don't need the foundation courses (At all, ja) So. But we do provide an English I academic development support classes (As an addition?) As an addition - which a lot of students don't like to go to. Again, because they see it as demeaning and they see it as eating up their time so that is unpopular.

EM Oh well, okay, it's quite interesting that fifteen, ten fifteen people actually go to English I - so there is no point ... Now ja okay. So now in terms of roles, jobs, occupations, you know, that you maybe would think after finishing this course – competencies, skills that they will have had -

JS (Students need to) competencies that they would have had like How do you mean? How does it link to jobs? (Ja) To work ? To occupation?

EM Ja, well maybe the question is very clear: do you think your students will most likely use the competencies that you develop in your course? You know, what roles, jobs, occupations do you think the students -

JS Obviously the most relevant one would be teaching, if they're going on to be teachers of English and English literature. Or Lecturers – but - in English. But otherwise I'm not sure what... I imagine the writing skills and the facility with language will be of use if people move into the media and into journalism, but of course that is a struggling profession at the moment anyway. (Ja) It was quite interesting that when we were having these discussions with the law faculty, one of the women there said that the course she found most useful for her legal studies was her English Ia- literature, because of the insight it gave her into the subtleties of language. (Ja) So, you know, but of course that's not a measurable thing, that's not a tangible thing.

EM No ja, it is quite interesting – I mean I liked your point about us working hard to actually make students see the value in studying literature, because it's there you know. But how do you actually make it explicit – do you see the challenge?

JS And it's often that students only realise it when they -

EM Later, Ja. I mean, how do you actually make it clear at the beginning? I think it's a struggle – it is a challenge that will remain for – for decades to come. Ja. So do you think the discipline of English studies has changed significantly since you began teaching this course - the discipline now of English studies. Has it changed since you began teaching this course?

JS Not essentially in – in the- its content maybe, but it has broadened and it certainly introduced – you're talking not about the foundation course, but about the general discipline - I mean, cultural studies is starting to impact on the study of English - English literature, I mean, it's broadened the study of English literature. We – we're looking at different media now, so there's an introduction of film as part of our courses – first year courses. We study not just written texts – printed texts- but visual texts as well. And I try to do a bit of that in the foundation course to prepare them.

EM You do as well in the foundation -

JS Well, we do the films of some of the texts. You know, like one of the texts we study is *Of Mice and Men*. And we look at the film of that and when we had a full year's course we used to look at the film of *Macbeth* to go with the *Macbeth* play. And there are different films of *Macbeth*, so it was possible for me to take the same scene from different films to show how there had been different interpretations of the characters and, you know, so that they could - it got the point across that it's possible to have different interpretations. That there's not just one interpretation, that it also it was interesting to see how the different characters – how the characters had been dressed differently in the different films; how the lighting was used differently, you know, just so that they got an understanding of the way in which you create characters or meaning.

EM Ja, but now since cultural studies there's a lot influence of discipline, you don't have much Shakespeare. Do you still have Shakespeare?

JS Oh, they still have Shakespeare, I mean, in first year they do *Romeo and Juliet*, but they do that wonderful modern film. They do the Baz Luhrmann film, you know (Ja, ja) So. As well as the older film of *Romeo and Juliet* and you compare the differences and different representation. So yes, cultural studies is one, the internet and cyber studies and I then - I suppose it's not cultural studies - somebody who does a whole course on – I can't remember what it 's called now. I've forgotten what it's called now. So serious. Cultural studies. Maybe some of the different ways of teaching writing have influenced the discipline - not the discipline so much as the pedagogy, I suppose. So it's not, so it's – because in the foundation course what we do is we involve -. We work very much with the idea of process writing. (Right, okay) So that students with their small groups and our writing workshops must produce a draft, which is then worked on, and commented on, and handed back for them to work on, and improve before the final draft. So that that sense of process writing, you know. One of the things we

are going to do in the foundation course is send the students off to do a bit of research. We are doing an Ngugi novel to start off with. (Which one is it?) *Weep, my Child*. They go in groups to research different aspects like Ngugi's writing and attitudes, Ngugi's childhood, pre-colonial Kenya, Colonial Kenya, post colonial Kenya, Mau Mau and resistance, you know, and all that kind of thing. (Ja ja) And then we will make them write an essay which - they do a presentation on their research, but then we have an essay which is attached to their research. So it's the process of an essay and then it goes through a number of different stages. (Okay) Yes, Yes, so - what happened is that we managed to introduce this idea of process writing into the first year course as well (Oh English I) Yeah, but just for the first essay. And it was a *lot* of work, as you can imagine, with just over three hundred students. We had to mark draughts and everything. So we did it last year. we changed it a bit this year. (Hmm, I suppose...) So we didn't mark full draughts, but what we are trying to get them to do - we're trying to introduce the idea of process writing into English I, so that at least students are writing paragraph on different aspects for their essay, if they don't write the full essay. So, as I say the pedagogy's changed quite a bit. (Yes, okay)

EM And so, I'm- I'm - I think - I also think that change in the discipline of English studies that it has impacted on the course that you are teaching. Ja, now you see, I didn't get the course - what the course outline and the expressed outcomes and all that.

JS I'm not sure that we've got the outcomes. (Okay) I don't - we haven't actually done that. This is last year's (Hmm) Last year's. [*indistinct*] If you want to look at it. But this year's books are not - are not printed yet. They will be later on this week, but that is last year's. (Okay) We do tell the students what we think they will learn in this course, (right) but it's not actually outlined in the - (*-the course indistinct*)- ja.

EM How long is this in the [*indistinct*] Alright, okay.

Maybe -I don't know. Do you mind if I can make a copy ... (No take it, take it ...) Oh thank you so much Alright. So, [*indistinct*] because I don't know. Because my question is in the expressed [*indistinct*] of this course, specific competencies are outlined; which of these do you think your students are most able to achieve and least able to achieve? So in your case, maybe - because - you said 'this is what you will learn obviously this what you hope you will learn. Perhaps you may - you may sort of identify a particular aspect that you think your students are most likely to actually achieve and the least likely and um - I know it is quite diff- (*telephone - tape break*)

I sort of identify at least four things: in the first paragraph you say -you say it will be English language skills and "teach you skills for writing academic essays", number two, and then at the bottom, "during the course you will develop a sense of what literature is and of how it operates". I sort of identify those four.

JS Well, in fact these are more - ja, ja - more specific (Okay...)

I think what they do well is that they pick up - they learn well is the relationship between literature and the socio-political context. (Right) Students are very good at that. And they relate to the time and place, especially if it's African literature that they're studying. I mean, it may not be quite the same with American literature, if they've got to switch to another culture and another context, but - that will do well. And their writing skills do improve; they're not - they don't become faultless and their language does not become error-free, by any means in one year. But there is an improvement in coherence and in argumentation and that - and that. Maybe what they still find difficult by the end of the foundation course - specially when you only have six months now, is how to analyse literature. (Okay) You know, they - they're very good at identifying, obviously, the story and identifying the major concerns and issues in a work of literature - they pick that up well. But how that is being conveyed through the literature itself is not always something that they - that they are able to expound on very easily. (I see)

EM you have a sort of section in your course on literary theory? (No) So that will offer them a metalanguage - [*indistinct*]

JS No, no, we certainly teach them the vocabulary, the basic vocabulary of literature - of literary terminology, (Okay) but we don't go into literary theory.

EM Ja. I remember we had to do it at first level. In fact, we did literary theory as a course, you know, when I was doing English I. It was one of the things we had to swim against the tide. So you either swam or sank, ja.

JS Even our English Is don't do it. I'm not sure that they do it in English II ...

EM Okay. So I get what you're saying. So in terms of their writing skills, you said there is that development [*indistinct*] correlation. Of course their grammar may actually obscure the meaning entirely so ...

JS Yes, but by the end of the year there is not a lot of that - not in their essays. Their grammatical control and that still break down in exams you know when they're working under pressure... (under pressure , ja...) and that's always a worry, (Ja) because very often they are students who one knows are - have improved a lot and are thoughtful students, who have interacted well with the texts, but under pressure in the exams they often become a bit obscure and a bit difficult to understand. Anyway.

EM Ja. Alright. Now, I'm on the questions of pedagogy section, but to finish... I can see - What particular teaching approaches do you employ in the teaching of this course?

JS Well, uh, well I think we talked a little bit about it. It is, you know, varied. They're varied approaches. We try to be student centred, so that we try to involve

the students as much as possible, actively, in responding to the texts and thinking about the text.

EM And group work - ?

JS Oh yes, yes, there's group work, there's lecture input, because I do think that there are some aspects of any discipline which are best conveyed – best through a lecture. There is certain information that has to be got across and often the lecture's the most effective way. But there is never any lecture that is *just* talking for forty-five minutes. There will always be some kind of interaction. (So, like work-shopping - like work shop lectures?)

Yes, and the students, because it's a smaller group are very open about asking questions and interjecting and so forth. Certainly with the drama, for example. I mean, when we do plays, one of the things I think works best is to get the students involved in acting the play. So what we do is we get students to direct their own group in certain extracts from the play, because direction is interpretation. (Okay...) You can't direct something unless you've interpreted it and understood it - so it's interpretation in action if you like, you know. Certainly they will work on presenting a certain aspect of it. We've tried to encourage research skills as I've told you. (Ja, okay) But we certainly involve – [*end of the side*]

JS I think.. I. I couldn't pinpoint a particular pedagogical approach, but certainly the approach is to encourage thought and analysis in an interesting way - in a way that involves the students and what they're doing.

EM Imhm, ja, I know, I know; I see - I see what what you mean. In terms of assessment strategies how how do you assess them? With essays?

JS Well, we have - we certainly have some essays these students have to learn how to write essays so there are some essays, but as I said they're a process approach so they get a lot of support in the writing of essays. We have some group work and some oral presentations and they get assessed on that as well.

EM Oral presentation...

JS Yes, yes - and then we also have for the poetry writing - because students find poetry most difficult - we have what we call continuous assessment. So the students will write short pieces on the poems that they are dealing with every week or every second week and then the best three per quarter are - go into their portfolio for assessment at the end of the semester. So there're different methods of assessment and that would make up their fifty percent classwork: the continuous assessment, the oral presentations and the essays together make a fifty percent component. (Hmm) And then of course there is fifty percent for the exams.

EM Okay so they -

but what do they – do you call it exam or writing under constraints, because there is this continuous assessment? Do you call it exams still?

JS No, no, there's only continuous assessment on one of the sections of the course: on the poetry section. On the other sections of the course they write essays or they do oral presentations. So, uh - I mean the difference between continuous assessment and the essay, for me, is that they have the chance to write smaller pieces of work in their own time and improve and then select the best ones to submit, you know.

Ja Ah but the essay- the exam is just an ordinary straight forward exam.

EM In which you cover everything or just a particular section?

JS No, there - we we give them questions on everything, but they only do some of them - they don't have to do them all. They do three questions in three hours.

EM So you still have exams, as it were, okay.

JS But the questions might vary: they may not be all essay questions in exams. For example, we may have – um - especially on poetry, because it is such a bugbear for the students, we may have smaller paragraph type questions - a number of paragraph type questions

EM Okay, - Not the full length, four page essay type questions?

JS Not on poetry usually, but on others on the others we would.

EM You would - The last section. Do you want us to take a break or um..

JS No I'm fine and I know how [*indistinct*] I've another meeting coming up too soon

EM Okay, I will rush this part. How did you select the students?

JS Well, as I told you at the beginning, they normally are students who have come through the assessment test - the entry test.

EM Uh - who sets that test by the way?

JS The faculty - I'm not quite sure who sets it now, but there used to be people – Stella was involved at one stage in setting the admissions test. So there were language people involved... (Okay.) They tended to be people from the languages.

EM Ja, Alright. But it is only for the faculty not the larger university?

JS It is only for this faculty, although at one stage law students used to write it as well. (Okay, all right.) And I think what the university is moving towards is a university wide entrance test.

EM And you are moving to that as well - ja. It is quite interesting that ... there are interesting comparisons between this university and... I know. Uh and er how are your classes compared in terms of race and linguistic orientation?

JS Well, uh mostly they are black South African students, who have come through what used to be DET schools, but of course they're not anymore. But we also have had students in our classes from Japan and Taiwan and we had a German student once and we had an Israeli student once. (laugh) So it's any student who is wanting to - spend a bit of time improving their English before they get into (cough)(the mainstream) the mainstream and who chose to do it through a literature course. (Okay, alright.) But the majority of students are black South African students - with a variety of South African languages.

EM Right. Yes, I understand. Okay. So do you think the content of the course and mode of teaching it lends itself to diversity ?

JS Well, there isn't that much diversity in terms of the student, you know, student composition, but I think that what one does try to do is start with content that the students are more familiar with. So that from that point of view one's taking diversity into account within terms of content. We start with African literature which we think is likely to be more familiar in its context for students and then move from there. As far as diversity goes, I hope that working in smaller groups gives all the students more of a chance to participate. They don't feel as intimidated as when there is a large group and I hope that some of the group activities, like the acting and so forth, allows for particular talents to emerge. [*indistinct*] You know. So the diversity there is catered for in the different kinds of teaching.

EM But do you have any specific issues of diversity that arise in your classes in particular? That you can say, "Oh this is a diversity issue." That come out, you know, as it were, in an explosive way that you can pick it up (Clicks fingers) just like that... or you never had such an experience?

JS Uh... Well, there have been different ones. When we were studying Macbeth in Ninety way back just before the - in ninety four. I think it was ninety four- there was a lot of violence in the townships and the whole issue of violence in Macbeth was something that the students got really involved in, you know, and when can violence be sanctioned and legitimated? And what does it do to a society if it is sanctioned and legitimated? How is it ever then going to be controlled? You know those kinds of issues, but they're not really diversity issues they're political questions. (Ja JA)

And then later in Macbeth - years later- we were studying the whole - you know when there were all those witch killings in the Northern Province - that became a real issue in - in Macbeth with the witches and students arguing against what they saw as prejudice and superstition and other students maintaining, "No it wasn't superstition, it was an act that happened." We had a German student in our class that year and he was completely taken aback that there were people who still believed in witches, you know. So, you know, at a very basic level like that - and there are gender issues that arise. (Yes, Yes.) Very obviously, if that what you are thinking of.

EM Ja, it includes ... [indistinct]

JS Certainly gender issues... One of the interesting diversity issues which are not coming out of the content of the course, but coming out of the demographics of the university are that when you are getting black students coming from private schools and model C schools, there's -not friction so much- but almost friction between those students and the students from deep Soweto and the rural areas, so what we're getting now is not so much a race issue as a class issue.

EM And that is why grammar classes, as it were, in university will – will ultimately fade away, because we are no longer getting those kinds of students who actually make grammar grind as such , ja. Very interesting, so it's a class issue now (It's a class issue.)more than a race issue, ja okay.

EM So in terms of opportunities and difficulties that arise out of this diversity () then you are going to take any opportunities, or well, you sort of mentioned opportunities, but when they have to sort of act then others are able to say something... But in terms of difficulties -

JS Well uh the difficulty is that you may have students who are simply much more confident, because they may have had a better education -um - even if they are black students and they *do* tend to dominate in the classes. So that you're still getting your less confident, under-prepared students not getting the exposure and - that they need – I mean, not taking the leading roles, you know, they tend to sit back and and tend to let the students who have more fluency in English take the lead. So, that's a big difficulty.

EM Ja ja. So in other words those students sort of tend to struggle, that's what you are saying?

JS They certainly struggle. (They) They certainly struggle more. Their English is very often not as fluent, but there is also less world knowledge. You know, there's less understanding of - of culture –cosmopolitan culture, if you like - international culture (Ja.)

And there is also an interestingly - you know with the new introduction - with the introduction of visual arts for example, of film and so on, the students who have had better education or just more varied education are also more visually literate, you know. They are able to pick up and understand the development of films, and so forth, faster than students who haven't had that exposure. The students are more aware... I mean there is that visual literacy (Ja) you often - all students haven't developed it to the same level.

EM Ja. And do you think you must continue having such students in your class?

JS The students from [*indistinct*]? I think we're more likely to have them in the foundation class than the others – the others. I mean - we do still get students who've been to model C schools and so on, coming into the foundation course.

EM Why? Because they failed that test or...

JS Often because they just didn't get a very good matric. (Okay) You know, their points weren't very good in matric. So either they fooled around at school or whatever it is, and they're paying the price...but their English is very often very good and they very often are quite sure of themselves and, you know, confident. (oh) But there are - they still need help with basic skills –study skills or whatever...

Em And they have to come... Ja. In terms of the particular aspects of classroom work, do you find some students actually battling and then others finding it – finding it easy. But especially those that are coming from township schools – oh well you said it eh – the visual literacy (And writing) And writing, ja. The background that include- even the culture of reading itself and their homes.

JS That's, oh yes, that's reminded me. That's a problem. Students very often tell me that they've read one novel in their lives (Ja) and some of them haven't. And they've never read poetry, because their teachers try to avoid poetry as well. So yes, getting students to read - literature is a problem. Although some of them enjoy it, which I'm grateful for. (Right.) But it is a difficulty. Somehow the [*indistinct*] speaking out. Although by the time they get to the second half of the year they -(Okay) about speaking. Just coping with the amount of work, I think, is something students continually complain about (Right) They just say they've got too much to do.

EM You know when they say that, I just say, "But this is an institution of higher learning (Yes, yes) what do you expect?" I often say that when they complain. I mean, I, will just say to them, "Do you expect this to be the same as it was in your secondary school? No this is not matric. You [*indistinct*] not in an offensive way at

all, but I just make them see that the very fact that it is an institution of higher - higher – underline higher again (Yes)

JS Yes, that's a good one. I usually try to tell them that university is a full time job – you don't come here to take the afternoons off. (Yes)

EM Ja. Do you have some students that require a firmer hand than other students? You know: "Don't do this." "Keep quiet." "You have spoken a lot."

JS Not really, I've not really found *that* a problem. There's some of them – there're not many of them either – don't put in the work that they need to. Some of them don't take the foundation course as seriously as they need to. So they – they try to skate and do as little as possible and I think that's just because it's a foundation course. They think they don't have to put in so much work. But there're very few of them actually. On the whole I've found the students very cooperative and don't really have a problem with keeping them quiet or ...

EM Okay. So when you design the tutorial groups what – how do you design them?

JS No, I don't try and be too prescriptive there. I tend to let them (chose) chose their own groups. (Oh, alright.) It usually works well enough. They work with people they know a little bit from earlier on in the year (Alright) and

EM You sort of don't employ the "You sit there...". (No, no, no) I had the experience – where you're actually told that you can't sit at someone's – you must sit at that place there, you know.

JS I think that just causes resentment.

EM Ja, it does you know. So, in terms of mixing first - and first language speakers and speakers of English as a foreign language - the Japanese students for instance and all those – do you mix them or ...?

JS Well, they do mix because the Japanese students would always be in the minority. So they need to be in a group with others. I mean, I can see that they – when you've got more than one Japanese or Chinese student they will go together, but then they will join a bigger group as well, so...

EM Ja, okay. But they tend to stick together. I always noticed the [*indistinct*]. Ja, otherwise that's it. Thanks you know.

JS Well, I hope it's been useful.

EM Ja, it's been and I'll have to sit down and actually transcribe this and get it through what we talked about. But – maybe did you think there's anything that is relevant here that we didn't talk about?

JS Well, we seem to have covered so much (ja) I'm not sure that there's anything else

EM But generally speaking how do you find are there any identifiable differences between the two courses that you have had to be made eventually?

JS Oh, very big differences and I'm not sure that they've merged successfully actually, because the – the non-discipline specific course is really on discourse and text analysis and sort of text analysis, reading and writing skills, on information – how to get information out of a text, how to convey information. That sort of thing. It's an academic literacy course. It's aimed at developing the skills for academic literacy, whereas our course is very much focussed on literature and what we have tried to do is bring in some literature into the original course and it hasn't worked, because – well, I don't think it's worked very well, there hasn't really been very much integration – I tried to select materials that would tie up with the skills they were doing at that stage of the literacy course. So it meant choosing literature materials that were able to be used for a particular skill, rather than literature materials that one would choose for itself. I don't know – necessarily know that the students see that there isn't a very close meshing, because to them it's just a course and they're used at school to doing both language and literature. (Okay) So I don't think that they see a terrible disjunction, but I feel that the literature is not really – is just on sufferance almost in that other course. (Ah, okay) It's not given a lot of space although Stella has tried to be very obliging, you know, and she is in favour of literature, because she thinks it's fun and interesting for the students to do. But it's made the course even more jam-packed than it was before and there isn't really time to do the literature properly.

EM And did you have things that you've taken from the general course into the [indistinct] specific as you did, or it wasn't advisable **resuscitation**?

JS No. no

EM It seems like this merging was imposed,

JS Yes it was. It was an economic imperative.

EM Ja, Ja, I was about to say that. (We're all subject to it) To date, you know. Without taking into consideration the subjects, you know – the recipients. Would you argue for a grammar course maybe – say you were having an authority in the university and then you had to decide – would- do you think a grammar course is actually [indistinct]

JS I don't know that that grammar courses on their own work. (Ja) I mean, I don't know that there is any evidence anywhere that grammar courses on their own. I think if you can integrate some language work and grammar work into the discipline specific areas, you might have more chance of it being seen to be relevant. You know one of the things that I find very interesting with the law people, for example, is this colleague of mine who is working in law says that different grammatical structures in legal writing can change the meaning of something quite substantially. Even a comma in the wrong place can change the meaning. So that there, if you are actually working with legal students who can see how important it is to use the grammar correctly, because of this meaning that it carries, then I think you have a reason for dealing with grammar (Right) And I'm not sure that that's because legal language is so and used in such a - uses grammar and terminology in such a specific way. (Ja, ja) But I'm not sure that you get quite the same - links with other disciplines. (Okay) I think you can make it interesting if you use critical linguistics, for example.

EM Ja, **Hillary James**

JS Yes, yes you know, she makes the link between meaning and grammar quite interestingly (Ja, ja) in her critical linguistic courses, but I don't if you can do that with students all the time. Maybe you can, maybe would be an approach -

EM Because I am intending to see **Hillary** as well. It was just that I want [*indistinct*] Professor Michael Green – do you know Michael Green? (Yes) Ja, he met her two or three weeks ago and he spoke about me - that I was coming and she was interested. But you see - that's exactly what I'm hoping to achieve at the end of this project: that we have a course that will sort of teach grammar- not for any reason except for meaning. That how grammatical choices contribute in meaning-making, you know and how (*knock at the door*) Okay . (No, carry on.. come in – *tape off*) You see, that is why I need to meet her as well – **Hillary James** – to speak about this, because I do think that grammatical competence and accuracy go together. I mean, you may find that a student is fluent, but is not correct in terms of grammar and so the whole fluency is like - you know- it's a waste and tha- you know. I also believe that you can teach grammar to both first language speakers and speakers of English as an additional language – you know for - (Together?) Ja, together, in one group.

JS I'd be very interested to see what you come up with.

Em Ja, ja from their secondary schooling they – I don't think they were taught grammar (First language speakers?) Ja.

JS No, no, I think they can't articulate the rules by which they speak or write. (You know) Ja.

EM And then you find them- if you mark their essays, you see but the punctuation is wrong here –clauses - you know those kinds of things - the main clause – they sort of, but they’re fluent. Even students from model – ex-model C schools- black students - they’re fluent, they can talk with an American accent and all that. But when they actually have to write an argument then you sort of find - they actually - they’re not conscious of why I’m using this particular grammatical form; how [indistinct] what is it that I want to achieve, because I’m choosing –I’m- I’m sort of deciding to take this main clause, this [] and I’m shifting this to– that consciousness, you know. That ‘s what I’m trying to do and I’ll be very much interested to see **Hillary James**. It’s just that I don’t know if I can see her, but I’ll try to. But thanks for your time – it was useful. It was interesting.

JS Well, thank you Emmanuel. It is a very interesting project that you’re involved in. I’d like to see what comes out of it.

EM You know, I’m trying to do that, because at UCT I’m – in fact as I’m leaving on Wednesday – I’m going to UCT and then on Saturday I’m flying to Rhodes University, because I’m looking at the historically white universities And [indistinct] particularly from us to - are there any initiatives in terms of combining that first [indistinct] or whatever, you know. In terms of language.(That would be very interesting) Because I do think that we sort of need such things, you know. But I’m sure you will see my PhD when it’s over and then ... I may decide... Thank you so - [*Tape ends*]

End of Interview

Martha's Interview Transcript

- EM:** I see, so the focus was on applied language studies: how to read..., reading and writing as a process, more like being prepared to be a specialist.
- SG:** They taught the skills as well..., they still did autobiography, and they still did comparative essays.
- EM:** But what did you find as problematic in that?
- SG:** They were too abstract issues, so students couldn't relate to academy that is why we tried to incorporate that with education, with topical issues that would engage them, and it work much better....
- EM:** I see, so it sort of sounded like all of these students were going to be applied linguists the moment they got into the university.
- SG:** Basically, we did not end the whole course, we sort of adopted various aspects.
- EM:** I see, I don't know if you have read about genre approach.... To what extent do you see this module as drawing from that?
- SG:** Oh!, we were very explicit about the genre, especially those two...we do Comparative and Argument because it's all here....
- EM:** It sounds like it...you know...because I wanted to ask you about it....
- SG:** Here it is, it talks about the...it defines the aspects of the essay, it....
- EM:** It talks about the purpose...and how the purpose informs the grammatical choices. So, you basically use the term: Process Approach, did you say approach or just...
- SG:** It is not a basic, it is very integrated with issues of genre and process, and an

understanding of natural literacy and academic literacy. It is very much located in that field; I think the whole department is social literacy.

EM: Social literacy...?

SG: Yes.

EM: I see, so the pass rate in terms of percentage? We are talking about 80% and 90% or something like that.

SG: Yes, we get few of those, because you see, in the class we have got 10% failure rate, 10% of ...I mean 10 to 15% As and Bs, and about 30% Cs and Ds. So, that will be 50 to 60% pass rate. We have got the bottom last, the middle and the top. Unfortunately we have lost trace with these students after the completion of their degrees, and has been a great weakness.

EM: And students who struggle in terms of grammar at the beginning of the module...in terms of those autobiographies. Do you notice any change?

SG: Yes, some become the bottom last, which about 10%, but most do change.

EM: And the majority is speakers of English as an additional language...or you do not have speakers of English as an additional language.

SG: Well, they do English literature course....

EM: So...so they just go straight to English One.... So, does this module have a stigma, like this is a module for second language speakers of English?

SG: I suppose it does, because when it was first a grammar based course, there was a lot of resistance and they used to say it is English for students with..., and there was quite a lot of anger from students.

EM: There was anger from the students because they were writing tests, and on the

basis of their performance, they were

SG: No, there were no tests in those days.

EM: Or may be the interviews....

SG: Well, I don't know because I was not here in those days, but what I know is that students accepted the module because they did not get automatic admission into the university because of insufficient points, so they would be accepted if they write access test and if they agree to do a foundation course.

EM: So, it was a kind of they didn't have a choice.

SG: Yes, they did not have a choice.

EM: But you do get surprise in terms of their performance isn't?

SG: Yes, yes, very much surprised, we have got a list of ...unfortunately we don't have stats, but we tried to check how many students have completed their degrees in the end, and we have got a lot of those who've graduated.

EM: So matric results aren't that....

SG: We have got something about that in the questionnaires and I think it is good, because you see, they do standardized English test, but they also do what we call a....

EM: They kind of interview all of these students?

SG: They don't interview them, they write tests, and it is about yourself, what your goals are, and their opinion about Mr Zuma, so it is that kind of general knowledge.

EM: So, the combination of this autobiographical test and the English test...both of

them are kind of decide whether...rather than the matric results. I see, you don't have students given the task to go and research on

SG: Oh, Sorry, I did not even begin to tell you of our second module, that is a research module. So we take them through all the research practices.

EM: So the second semester is more on research?

SG: It has got different angles on it, in fact, what we can say is that it focuses on reading academic texts, and the genre that students write is a research report. So there is a switch in the genre because this one is on research report writing. So you can see, for instance, that this is on sociolinguistics. It is a research on language in District Six ...so we do a lot of introductory stuff.

EM: S you move from skills to content.

SG: Yes, then, we turn into research process: qualitative and quantitative research design, methodologies and methods for collecting data, then, they do oral presentation at the end of the course and write a research report.

EM: So this is also compulsory for foundation students.

SG: Yes, but some of the students go into the English Literature module.

EM: I see, so this has its own credits and the second semester also has its own.

SG: Yes, but the important thing is that most students get credits from these courses.

EM: But the switch is very drastic, wouldn't you say? I mean from comparison and argument, and in the second semester, content and very dense academic texts....

SG: No, they are not very dense, I mean, they are so accessible and they all stretch up to the whole semester.

EM: So for the actual readings you run lectures on each reading; I mean do you have

- lectures or you just have
- SG:** No, we just run tutorials, we only have lecture on other sections such as code-switching. So we do about...say...between 5 and 10 readings.
- EM:** Drawing from these, they do research?
- SG:** Yes, they choose their own topic: Literacy Practices, and something like that.
- EM:** And the use of African languages as medium of instructions, and they choose their own topics, you don't give them your own topics....
- SG:** No, we don't give them topics, they choose their own, but we encourage them...we guide them and they work in groups. We work so close to them to ensure that their research questions are answerable questions, their interview questions.... So they sit in class in groups the same way as in a normal class with one tutor, one class.
- EM:** So overall, in the first semester in terms of marks you have two marks: you have got three things in the first semester which are compare and contrast assignments, oral presentation, argument assignment. So you have got three marks and the exam.
- SG:** And an autobiography does count, there is a short assignment in which they compare and contrast between school and university. So this is a short thing 1 page, 2 pages.... Then, there is a big essay 1st and 2nd draft, then, the argument essay.
- EM:** And after that it is the actual examination; and in the second semester there is only one, which is research report writing.
- SG:** There is also oral presentation and a shorter task....

EM: Which constitutes marks as well? So the idea of running this course for 1 year as opposed to 1 semester so that whoever wishes to continue can continue was....

SG: Well, it was a compromise...because of the restructuring of the faculty where the English Dept. was required to downscale...because they had few students and we had hundreds of students.

EM: So the English Dept. was running only in the first semester?

SG: Yes, but over the year the English Dept. also taught cognitive skills and it was a small department.

EM: So now you are a bigger department in terms of students numbers, hey.

SG: Not really, because over the year we use to have about 300 students but now we only have about 65 for the whole course.

EM: So this means that you are getting students who are not necessarily foundation-type.

SG: No, they are still foundation -type.

EM: But the number is dropping...

SG: Yes, it is because there is another...and this really has a great resent in it. It is because of the new university administration. This has come with the appointment of the new vice-chancellor, because they wanted it to be a top-research institute; they wanted it to be the world's class university, and they also made a new mission statement. Another thing is that in the past we used to have a lot of students who were under financial aid, but for the past three years, the university pulled out funding....

EM: So this means, in terms of your intake through your tests and all that, you need to be very selective....

SG: Yes, and we only take students who've got financial support elsewhere...because the university has reduced a package, but we still have a few.

EM: In fact, what we are saying is that there are students who would, otherwise, be here, and there are those who have passed the tests, but whom you couldn't accept?

SG: Yes.

EM: Sure, it is sad. So this money now is sort of pumped into research and those kinds of things....

SG: Yes.

EM: So where does the Dept. get students in the second semester, because if you have got 60, they either go to this literature thing or they come here. So you are kind of get less or even lesser students.

SG: Yes, so we've got three classes this semester and it hasn't been like this for the past years, the past three years.

EM: I see, it such a precious module not to have students.

SG: It is very sad and very disheartening.

EM: Because it is an important contribution to the

SG: Yes, we think so, but the university doesn't think so.

EM: But it is.

SG: And as a result of this withdrawal of fees, we have got lots of foundation modules

that closed. There was Geography Foundation that closed, and the three year extended curriculum done through the college of science that closed too because they had quite a few students, and the International Relations course closed.

EM: So with you being the only survivors, to what do you ascribe that?

SG: Well, it was because this is a foundation course, and mostly because we run access, so it is a more generic course.

EM: Well, the fact that I came here Stella is that, you know you can't believe that I was here in 2002, and I was here to see you but I couldn't because you were still in the main campus. So I ended up interviewing Jennie. It is because in my study, although the focus was on English Dept., the external examiner felt that there was a particular aspect of history that was missing. In fact, something happened before this Dept., so I needed to find more of what happened this Department was formed. It's like the same thing happened with Rodes University, something...I mean a particular aspect of history was missing.

SG: Well, I don't know much about the history of this Dept. because I joined Wits in 1998 and a lot has happened before I joined. I hope the right person to help you with that is Pipa Stain or Hillary. But what I know is that before the university restructured, this Dept. was part of the Linguistic Dept. and Pipa and Hillary were originally in the English Literature Dept. So this Dept was located within the linguistic Dept. And at that time, the English Literature Dept. also taught academic literacy skills. So we kind of amalgamated our foundation courses in 2000, round about the time when the university decided to restructure, and they decided that we had too many courses. So the English Dept which Jennie ran had

a foundation course which consisted of two modules and they were specifically targeted at academic development in preparation of students who wanted to study literature. And Jennie's own PhD is based on the work that was done in that course which she designed. But when the restructuring happened in around 2000..., they were kind of amalgamated with our foundation courses which AELS developed since around 1990 or 1989. So AELS had its own foundation course which was specifically focused on academic writing...academic literacy, it was first coordinated by Norman Blant who was in the AELS at that time, he devised the course that was a very grammar based. Subsequently, Prof. Romany took over from that and they re-designed a course around the more specific discipline with specific approach.

EM: Across disciplines or just....

SG: No, just English...not English literature, but just academic literacy. They called that Foundation in Academic Literacy.

EM: So they moved from a grammar orientated module to academic literacy.

SG: Yes, to academic literacy in line with social theories.

EM: And this was in 19....

SG: In the beginning of 1990s, 1991 or 1992. I was not there so I only really know the history from 1998 when I joined. So by the time I joined, there was a very well-developed module by Pro Ester Romany and other members of the AELS. But then, in 2002 we introduced English literature into our course as well.

EM: I see.

SG: So English literature became integrated into the AELS.So English literature

used to be a whole-year module designed for students who were to major in English. It was specifically focused on English literature discourses, because around the beginning of the 1990s, there was a shift away from skill to discipline and discourses.

EM: But for now, it has changed as you are saying, it is no longer designed for students who want to do English literature, but, in fact, it is for the faculty.

SG: Yes, it is for the faculty, so what happens is that students who are taken into the course are identified in the access exam at the beginning of every year, and that's organized by the faculty.

Teresa's Interview Transcript

EM I would like you to tell me your names....

ST I'm Susan Thomas in the Department of English at the University of Sydney Australia and I teach reading and writing.

EM Okay, so do you want to tell me about your expertise Susan?

ST Well, eehm..., my PhD is on Rhetoric in composition and is a discipline widely known in Australia as it is in North America. I am interested in the history of rubric in centuries B.Cs, and how we use language in contemporary societies and context.

EM Alright, it's good, so in terms of this new era in Australia as you put it, what is your vision?

ST I think there are a lot of people here who are interested in the same thing that I am, and who are working in this area, but may not necessarily calling it Rubric. Some people may call it Critical reading or Communications. I find it having something in common with Linguistic Department or Communications Department and even Social Anthropology; all these areas are emerging from this area which I considered a discipline of Rubric and Rhetorical Studies.

EM So... do you see it as part of the central concern of the English Discipline?

ST I think it is a multi-disciplinary area in that I can see choices of Rubric in the English Department, Linguistic Department, Department of Communications, and Department of Social Sciences. And I think in terms of defining it as a discipline, it is the study of human communication and human interaction and more so than just a study of language or just a study of writing. I think it is a broader context, and I have noticed there are more and more disciplines in the departments concerned about the ways that we write and the ways we communicate. So I think it is beginning to move, whereas writing was once seen as the business of the English Department ...eehm... or Linguistic Department. I think it has a broader ridge.

EM So... in practice does that mean that every discipline in your school has... is kind of coming out with a programme that will address students' writing skills?

ST I think they are trying because lot of people who were concerned about writing sent students to us to take the English 1000 class, but some departments have felt that they can do it themselves, and some are more successful than others because a lot of them do not have the expertise, the necessary training which the Linguistic and English Departments might have.

EM Yes, I see, so as far as you are concerned, what then would you regard as the central concern of the English Department now? In other words, taking out Linguistics and other disciplines, just English's central concern?

ST You mean just English Department; my main concern is that I think for years in Australia the tradition in the English Dept. has been based upon literature and upon fiction. And what we are seeing now is that students are very interested in looking at writing, looking at non-reading areas classes and context and dealing more and more with the language side, more so than literature. So my vision is to see language as in writing classes offered to students as literature classes.

EM So that somehow, ehm... is kind of reshaping in the face of the discipline if you want.

ST Exactly, it's almost like what's happening in the North America in the 50s and 60s after the war when more various types of people in diverse communities were enrolling for a higher learning education, which was no longer the world's Whiteman's education. There was a mixed of people, people from other cultures, other classes, women were enrolled for higher education for the first time. So there was plenty of diversity, with that diversity came a greater need to challenge education. It was just for the rich and the gifted who wanted to study literature; it was for the people who wanted to know how to communicate in context.

EM I see, and so ...you kind of identified similar trend....

ST Yes, I think something is happening now in that although we don't have the same social phenomenon actually, war, but I think the same is happening in that the new generation of students is more interested in special disciplines or inter-disciplinary practices like English education that would help them in real life activities such as writing memorandum, writing reports, sending e-mails to their colleagues in today's market place, in today's work force. Students need good linguistic verbal and wiring skills.

EM ...which Literary Studies in itself cannot offer,

SM That's right, that's right...because I mean students are prospective employees who have to give a writing sample, but I have never heard someone here asking a student to analyse a piece of literature. So...so I guess what I am saying is that the English Dept has a more practical approach.

EM So should we do away with literature?

ST No, absolutely not, we just have a choice, the two should just co-exist, and ideally students will be exposed to all of it or they can choose.

EM Eehm..., the trend in South Africa has been that the English Dept. has relegated its concerns of developing students' writing skills, English language skills to either...either junior members of staff on the one hand, or suggested that such concerns be given to the Dept. such as linguistics because they did not regard themselves as having that as their business. Do you identify the same thing here?

ST I think that's true, for a long time literature has been privileged, the study of writing has been seen, has been believed to be the business of the English Dept. it was like that in America for ages, and for years and years and slowly the integration of the English –Education studies has become...has situated itself in the same line, it is as well respected now like the study of literature. So I think the two can co-exist harmoniously, I don't think one should be more privileged than the other, and that one should be seen as the business of the Department.

EM Yea, yea.... So your course is English 1000?

ST Yea, yea...

EM So are you in the position to identify few areas in it in some ways in response to these issue which you have just raised right now, in other words, to what extent is what you have designed responds to these dynamics which you have just raised right now?

ST Well..., I think that..., I will say it is just a bridging class, in which students who enrolled for this class will be better equipped to go on to a more advances class in writing or more advanced classes in literature. Because what I see is real weakness that when students have taken basic literary curriculum, they become analytical but they are not really thinking critically. I think in other words, the teaching is prescribed, whereas with writing they are responsible to creating a piece, they become critical on how these is

gonna be, the outcome will be, ...against the consequences and the repercussions. I think writing is very important in that in that it helps.... I think it goes hand in hand with critical thinking, and prepare them as critical thinkers, and the more critical they can think, the better they can write. And I think that translates to studies in writing and studies in literature.

EM So there is mutual dependency?

ST That's it, absolutely, absolutely.

EM How was your training as a prospective lecturer, I guess, was it when you were a student, in other words, was it, was it ...what kind of experience did you have in the English Dept. Was it literature all the way or exactly this kind of a rhetoric and all that?

ST Well, my masters degree was on the 19th century English in American literature, and I have only learnt about the field of Rhetoric in Composition studies at the end of my Masters degree, that was at the end of the mid-90s and I began to take extra classes and getting more interested in that, and on the other side I wanted to pursue a PhD on that field. But the requirements for PhD in the university were that students would have a core in literature, they would have at least other few courses in the Middle English, Old English, in each major period because a person was seen as well versed But when I was completed that was a heaviest part of my degree and that was in my major area and I had to sit for three exams after having course work where they were the required core in literature and there were the required core in their writing as well, so with the remaining courses I had to choose, so that to sit for three exams to actually have the degree as a whole.

EM I see, wow, so that was quite heavy.

ST Yes and those courses were history of Rhetoric, Academic and Professional Writing and courses in teaching, the 3rd exam was for a pedagogic purpose, teaching writing was the 3rd exam.

EM So you had to read and read...?

ST Earnestly! (Laughter)

EM You have mentioned that in the US after the War the enrolment in terms of demographic was kind of changed compared to before the War, you may have had to...Universities had to receive students from different classes, so I'm sure in Australia or any part of the world there are similar occurrences. In terms of your course now, I'm sure you do have students who aren't necessarily coming from the reading culture, white-internet culture, white-different backgrounds culturally even economic status and all that who happened to use English as an additional language or not as their mother tongue.

ST Absolutely, we do, we do.

EM You do, are they minority, majority?

ST Now they are the minority, we have got a disclaimer or a probation attached to this class that students should have a native or near-native competence in English or they should undertake the unit, and if they don't we advise them to undergo some kind of media training, we have the centre for English language training here and Learning Centres which is continuously visited by the Faculty of Education to help them with teaching major skills because we do not teach skills, we kind of assume that students have a fair command of English, so we can do some kind of more and more critical thinking

EM Higher...higher-order

ST Higher-order issues exactly.

EM Ok, so in no way you refer to any particular students you deal with who actually couldn't cope with the course, you don't have that experience.

ST There are some who enrol in the course who cannot, completely, we advise them, we do a diagnostic writing exercise and we can tell through the writing sample that the student do not have a good command of English to finish the class, that's where we refer them on, and we hope that they will come back to the class once they have completed their linguistic graining, because a lot of students come here having never studying English, they cannot speak a word in English and they are here in the English-speaking University, so it becomes really difficult.

EM Yes, it does...so these writing...you said it is a diagnostic test, so what...what is the content of this diagnostic test?

ST Well, it is not really a test, we...we want students to be comfortable, we just tell them to write about why they are in this University and something like, what are things they do during summer vacations (laughter), that kind of a narrative, we ask for a page so that we can be able to identify particular problems. And in some cases, some of the international students who come from non-English-speaking backgrounds are very very bright, very well equipped, great thinkers so they just need an extra bit of help, so that why we would consider a near-native competence, and they are not coming from anywhere near that, we still feel that they still need a more structure, more rigid language acquisition and that is not what this class offers.

EM Yea, I see, and ...and there is no need for such a course if there are set-ups such as language centres and other places.

ST Right, right, we are talking now about dealing with... we have to work with the department of linguistics.

EM Earlier on you referred to Rhetoric as central to your training. In terms of the module you coordinate, what is the role of Rhetoric?

ST Rhetoric has three elements to it: ideology, practice, and method. Ideology tells us something about what human (or academic) relations should be or about how humans should relate to each other through writing. Practice tells us something about how people actually do relate to each other and/or how they actually write (in a given situation). Method tells us something about how people enquire their tactics, heuristics, and procedures for invention (including research).

EM What is it about Rhetoric that meets education needs of your students?

ST Research has taught us that writing complications for many of our students arise as a result of unfamiliarity with specific ways of writing acceptable within a group to whom the writing is addressed. These dilemmas remain a challenge for all students, but are felt particularly strongly by those students who speak languages not used as mediums of instruction. At this university these concerns have encouraged the English Department to introduce courses which draw from Rhetoric to assist students acquire both knowledge about academic discourses and knowledge about the language used as a medium of instruction, both at undergraduate and graduate levels. I think that English Studies over the years has mistakenly been understood as a Discipline that deals with fictional texts or canonical literature. But there has not been clarity in terms of what exactly in this literature the Discipline focuses on. For me the discipline's focus is the ways in which language use in these texts raise our awareness of the extent to which it [language] plays

a role in the construction of our societal identities and the extent to which its discursive character and fluidity renders what we consider as reality temporal. My vision in this Department is to see more attention paid to this aspect of the Discipline, and more and more students getting exposed to the centrality of language in any discipline. We can do our students a great service by teaching them to be critical and flexible in how they construct their...essays, think clearly, complete a task and sometimes solve a problem. Otherwise the study of literature has been privileged and the study of writing has been as beneath the English Department and as something outside the mission of English departments. It was that way in America for ages, for years and years, but then slowly, the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition Studies has become a situated self on the same plane and is as well as respected now as the study of literature. I think the two can co-exist harmoniously and there are advantages of both and I do not think one should be privileged over the other and be seen as not part of the business of the Discipline (Interview, 2005).

EM So your course attempts to bring an aspect of language which is traditionally not considered to be part of English departments?

ST I will say my course bridges the gap between school education and university education and a student who does it gets prepared for advanced reading and writing of texts, regardless of field. What I see with students who study literature is that they can become analytical but not necessarily thinking critically. I feel in other words that literature teaching is prescribed, whereas with writing students are responsible for creating a piece and think consciously what goes into it...For me the kind of teaching that focuses on writing with grammatical choices as a focus on understanding how we make meaning is important as it goes hand and hand with critical thinking. If people can become greater writers they can become greater critical thinkers, and the more critical they can think the more they can write, and I think that translates to studies in writing and studies in literature alike (Interview, 2002). What is of prior importance to me is helping students see that various disciplines act through discourse, and that their ability to be successful in these disciplines is related to an ability to understand their chosen discipline and its linguistic and academic practices. My hope is to produce students who can become aware of how grammatical choices have to be made consciously, thereby becoming intellectuals in the academy, and later, professionals who have the practical wisdom to act intelligently.

EM I think hee. I do not think I have any other question.

ST OK...heee

End of the interview