Political control, subversion and survival: 
a grounded theory of the 
disempowerment of a profession

Glenn Short
University of Wollongong
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CHAPTER 3
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter I construct frameworks of knowledge from the literature which informed the formation of the study, the directions it took and the conclusions that it draws regarding the relationships between teacher preservice education, DET policies and teacher practice. The review presented here reflects only part of the influence that the literature played in guiding my analysis of data. In keeping with grounded theory process I used this review, combined with insights provided by the grounded theory I arrived at, to return to the literature to 'test' my grounded theory and to consider the implications of the theory in light of existing knowledge about literacy and language education, in what Strauss and Corbin called 'supplementary validation' of the theory. (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.52) This review, therefore, also helps to ‘set the scene’ for a return to the literature later in the presentation of the thesis, after the analysis has been laid out and the grounded theory explicated.

LITERATURE AND THE RESEARCH PROCESS

We do not want to be so steeped in the literature as to be constrained and even stifled in terms of creative efforts by our knowledge of it! Since discovery is our purpose, we do not have beforehand knowledge of all the categories relevant to our theory. It is only after a category has emerged as pertinent that we might want to go back to the technical literature to determine if this category is there, and if so what other researchers have said about it. (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.50)

The review of literature both guided and was guided by the research process of this study. The influence of literature on the study overall was represented earlier in this thesis as a recursive process (after Walsh, 1981) and it is timely here to review that diagram, reproduced below in Figure 3.1:
In contrast to other research processes the use of grounded theory procedure demanded that the review of literature remain responsive to the analysis of data, rather than controlling the direction it took. In keeping with grounded theory procedure the emergent categories and relationships uncovered during analysis of data directed searches of existing literature and theoretical frameworks. Strauss and Corbin (1990) succinctly justified such an approach thus:

with grounded theory research, rather than testing the relationships among variables, we want to discover relevant categories and the relationships among them; to put together categories in new, rather than standard ways. So, if you begin with a list of already identified variables (categories), they may - and are indeed very likely to - get in the way of discovery. Also, in grounded theory studies, you want to explain phenomena in light of the theoretical framework that evolves during
the research itself; thus, you do not want to be constrained by having to adhere to a previously
developed theory that may or may not apply to the area under investigation.
(Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.49)

In keeping with Strauss and Corbin’s advice I returned again and again to the literature
in order to better understand the contexts surrounding the emerging categories.
(Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.50) The review of literature presented here reflects that ‘interplay of
reading literature and data analysis’, which directed the ‘forward thrust’ of the study.
(Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.56)

**Theory Bases Informing the Review of Literature**

The most pertinent issue driving the review was the identification of just what types of
knowledge about language and literacy learning were suitable for informing the
relationships amongst the three areas under scrutiny. Those areas were:

- Teacher preservice education
- NSW education policies
- Teacher practice regarding literacy education in NSW secondary school English classes.

As discussed later in the analysis chapter, some of the chief concerns of informants
centred around issues of professional autonomy and a lack of consultation or
representation in policy development. The issue of professionalism in teaching also
emerged as one of the key concerns of government, bureaucracies, community groups,
teacher professional associations and teachers during the course of the study. Those
concerns manifested in two major government sponsored studies concerned with
professionalism in teaching which were conducted during the life of this study.
(Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998;
Ramsey, 2000)

It became apparent that there was a dearth of professional guidelines and other
infrastructure within the NSW education system. As discussed in the analysis of data,
established professions in NSW at the time of the study were guided by guidelines set
by professional bodies which outlined areas of knowledge, expertise and responsibilities
of members for each profession. (See chapter 5)
NSW teachers of English, or for that matter teachers of any subject, did not during the course of the study have the benefit of the guidance of a regulatory professional organisation, responsible for determining matters of professional accreditation or regulation. During the course of the study there were 43 professional teaching associations in NSW. However, membership was not compulsory for teachers and the associations had little direct input or control over policy development or professional accreditation. (Ramsey, 2000, p.31-32) That lack of professional guidelines, along with informant concerns, raised issues regarding definitions of professionalism and professional knowledge, necessitating the construction of conceptualisations of professionalism in literacy education.

As the core categories emerged during data analysis and reduction procedures searches of the literature revealed high degrees of congruence amongst the emerging core categories and established literature dealing with conceptualisations of professionalism in teaching. Eventually a close fit was determined between the three core conditions of the professional phase of the grounded theory developed by this study and the three key criteria of professionalism prominent in the literature. The three conditions of the grounded theory are aligned with the corresponding criteria of professionalism in Table 3.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Category of Grounded Theory</th>
<th>Criteria of Professionalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Political Control</td>
<td>• Client-Oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional Powerlessness</td>
<td>• Internal Accountability (Self-regulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Theory Deficit</td>
<td>• Knowledge Based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Criteria of Professionalism after Darling-Hammond et al., 1995)

*The alignment outlined in Table 3.1 is explored more fully in chapter 5.*

In addition, the absence of professional regulation also led to a need to review the literature and reconstruct a body of knowledge from the existing literature which could be considered appropriate for informing literacy and language policies and teacher practice in NSW secondary English classes. The data also suggested that no satisfactory mechanism existed which facilitated consultation of professional associations in the design of teacher preservice education programs. (Australian College of Education, 2000b; Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998; Joint Council of NSW Professional Teachers' Associations, 1999; New South
Wales Department of School Education, 1995; Ramsey, 2000) It, therefore, became necessary to review the literature and reconstruct conceptualisations of professionalism and literacy and language education capable of informing the areas under investigation. Such reconstructions were in keeping with the constructivist nature of the inquiry and sought to draw on what Guba and Lincoln described as:

constructivism’s hermeneutic/dialectic methodology aimed at the reconstruction of previously held constructions [of knowledge relating to the research question].
(Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.112)

Guba and Lincoln pointed out that, under a constructivist approach to inquiry:

Knowledge consists of those constructions about which there is relative consensus (or at least some movement toward consensus) among those competent (and, in the case of more arcane material, trusted) to interpret the substance of the construction. Multiple ‘knowledges’ can coexist when equally competent (or trusted) interpreters disagree, and/or depending on social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender factors that differentiate the interpreters. These constructions are subject to continuous revision, with changes most likely to occur when relatively different constructions are brought into juxtaposition in a dialectical context.
(Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.113)

It was necessary, therefore, to search out bodies of knowledge informing the domains under investigation about which there was at least some degree of consensus amongst educators. It was further necessary to develop ways to bring those often competing constructions into ‘juxtaposition’ with each other in order to build new and ‘more informed and sophisticated constructions’ of knowledge pertinent to the research being undertaken. (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.112) Strauss and Corbin have recommended the value of beginning with existing theories when attempting to explore new territory:

If one is interested in extending an already existing theory, then one might begin with the existing theory and attempt to uncover how it applies to new and varied situations, as differentiated from those situations to which it was originally applied.
(Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.51)

Consequently, this review of literature examines the following major domains within the existing literature:

1. Conceptualisations of professionalism in teaching
2. Conceptualisations of literacy and language education informing the NSW context
Chapter 3: Review of Literature

Such examinations of the literature required detailed analysis in order to uncover relationships of significance to the study. The review of literature is, therefore, complex and lengthy.

CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN TEACHING

Teaching has not traditionally been considered one of the ‘traditional’ professions, although numerous works and commentators have sought in recent years to argue special cases for the unique ways in which school teaching has existed as a profession without meeting the usual criteria associated with the traditional professions such as medicine and law. (Australian College of Education, 2000b; Australian Education Council, 1990; Australian Language and Literacy Council, 1995; Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998; Australian Teaching Council, 1996; Brennan, 1990; Brock, 2000; Cumming, 1996; Darling-Hammond et al., 1995; Department of Employment Education and Training, 1991c; Goodson & Medway, 1990; Hargreaves, 1997; Hoale, 1981; Ingvarson, 1998; Jackson, 1970; Jarvis, 1983; National Board of Employment Education and Training, 1989; National Council of Teachers of English, 1996; New South Wales Department of Education, 1980; Preston, 1996; Ramsey, 2000; Schools Council, 1990a, 1990b; Seddon, 1996; Sheldon, 1993; Sherwin, 1973) Views of professionalism and what constitutes a profession have traditionally been restricted to a narrow focus on the three most politically powerful occupations. The Macquarie Dictionary, in defining the term ‘profession’, emphasises the importance of the traditional ‘vocations’:

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profession \n 1. a vocation requiring knowledge of some department of learning or science, esp. one of the three vocations of theology, law, and medicine.  (Macquarie Dictionary, 1987, p.1356)
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Concerns over the low status of teaching prompted the Australian Senate, in 1998, to conduct an intensive investigation into the state of Australian teaching. (Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998) The Senate Committee concluded that, despite a need for professionalism in teaching, Australian teaching did not meet the traditional criteria defining a profession. (Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998, ch.3, p.9)
report urged that teacher professionalism be developed as a matter of urgency. It cited the following three key areas in which the Australian community expected teaching to conform to traditional criteria of professionalism:

- Standards
- Accountability
- Autonomy

(Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998, p.6)

The above traits, advocated by the Senate Committee, resonates with those expressed by other commentators and with the sentiments indicated by informants during data collection. In 2000 the NSW Government commissioned the Ramsey Report to investigate teacher education in NSW. (Ramsey, 2000) Ramsey concluded that, when tested against traditional criteria for judging professionalism, teaching fell well short of the mark. In the following excerpt Ramsey found that teaching failed to meet the key criteria of a profession:

It is difficult to sustain the view that teaching is a profession. There are no standards to describe teacher practice [knowledge-based] in New South Wales, and teachers have no accountability other than to meet minimum competency requirements set by employers. [client-centred] there does not exist a governing structure through which teachers can set, maintain and assure their standards of practice. [self-regulation] Self-regulation, so prominent in many other professions, is not a feature of the teaching profession in New South Wales.

(Ramsey, 2000, p.31-32)

It is important to note that the conditions of professionalism cited as being important in the Senate report (1998) and the Ramsey Report (2000) were similar to the ‘criteria for a profession’ set out in the Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein (1995) model examined later in this chapter.

A search of the literature revealed that there appeared to be broad consensus on particular features by which professions might be identified. Brennan cited the model used by the Association of American Professors of Higher Education (1975) as providing guidelines widely accepted in the literature as including the key ingredients of a profession. According to Brennan those conditions are:

- An organised body of intellectual theory constantly expanded by research
- Intellectual technique
Chapter 3: Review of Literature

- Close-knit association of members with a high quality of communication between them
- A period of long training
- A series of standards and an enforced statement of ethics
- Applications to the practical affairs of man
- Active influence on public policy in its field
  (Brennan, 1990)

The 1998 Australian Senate Committee claimed there was wide agreement in the literature, within the Australian context, on the nature of professionalism. The Committee cited the following characteristics as identifying professionals:

- A strong motivation or calling
- The possession of a specialised body of knowledge and skills acquired during a long period of education and training
- Control of standards, admission, career paths and disciplinary issues
- Autonomy in organising and carrying out their work
- The need for the ongoing exercise of professional judgement
- Members accept and apply a professional code of practice.
  (Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998, ch.3,p.1)

It is possible to argue that these broad characteristics involve high degrees of autonomy and control in the application of skills and knowledge in various forms. Brock (2000) claimed a key aspect of professionalism is the ability to maintain a social conscience in the execution of professional duties. Turning to one of the most powerful of all professions for guidelines Brock cited the American Bar Association, which stated that professionalism:

refers to a group pursuing a learned art as a common calling in the spirit of public service - no less a public service because it may incidentally be a means to livelihood. Pursuit of the learned art in the spirit of public service is the primary purpose.

Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein (1995) claimed that lack of teacher regulation and the idea that no specialist knowledge was required to be a teacher were major causes of a poor public perception of teacher professionalism in America. (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995) They cited the results of an extensive survey conducted by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as evidence of such a perception by the general public:
Most members of the public continue to think of professional training requirements for teachers as weaker than those of other professions such as medicine (NCATE, 1993)*. And many policy makers' suspicions lead them to create special routes into teaching that avoid teacher education and standard licensing because they believe these are unnecessary (Darling-Hammond, 1992)

(Darling-Hammond et al., 1995, p.1)

There appear to be considerable parallels between the American and Australian contexts. The Australian Senate Committee Inquiry (1998) found that there has long been a general perception about the ‘variability’ of teacher education and a general perception, even amongst teachers, that new graduates are inadequately prepared to teach, particularly in the area of literacy. The Committee noted that the situation is unlikely to change unless more resources are allocated and the lack of teacher professional infrastructures in Australia are addressed. (Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998, ch.7, p.17) The Committee acknowledged the importance of specialist knowledge for teacher professionalism and recommended that:

The Commonwealth Government facilitate the development of a national professional teaching standards and registration body to have the responsibility, authority and resources to develop and maintain standards of professional practice. The national body should work closely with State governments and peak teaching organisations. The national body will:

- Establish standards of professional practice which take into account what teachers should be expected to know and be able to do in order to facilitate student learning across the key learning areas
- Certify levels of entry into the profession, criteria for re-registration and recognition of advanced standing in the profession
- Accredit programs of initial teacher training and establish the professional development framework for the maintenance of the professional expertise of teachers...

(Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998, ch.2, p.10)

The Committee found that specialist knowledge plays a key role in informing and maintaining best teaching practice. It also emphasised the role of teacher preservice education in providing access to that knowledge. (Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998) Given the lack of professional infrastructure within the Australian context I turned to the literature for insights as to the role and nature of knowledge in professional literacy education. It serves now to briefly examine the nature of professionalism and the centrality of knowledge to
professionalism before considering knowledge specific to literacy and language education.

**Criteria of Professionalism in Education**

Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein (1995) identified three areas of agreement common amongst researchers and commentators regarding the key criteria necessary to establish and maintain teaching as a profession. Those criteria are summarised below:

1. **Knowledge based**
   
The knowledge professionals need in order to make sound decisions is transmitted through professional education and by initiation through supervised clinical practice under the guidance of experts. This process requires that organisations of professionals achieve a consensus about what is worth knowing and how it can best be transmitted and that they then use these judgements as the basis for regulating professional preparation programs and entry standards. (p. 17)

2. **Client-oriented**
   
   That is, committed to using the best available knowledge on behalf of the clients who are served. This commitment cannot be ensured when recruits do not encounter or master professional knowledge. Neither can the third characteristic of a profession be guaranteed. (p. 16)

3. **Internal Accountability**
   
   That is, members of the profession take responsibility for defining, transmitting and enforcing standards of practice based on professional knowledge and ethical commitments. Society grants professionals permission to develop their own standards of practice rather than being managed by external regulations that determine practice. (p. 16)

(Compiled from Darling-Hammond et al., 1995, p. 16-17)

It can be argued that the above criteria of a profession synthesise most of the major attributes of professionalism common in the literature. Four major reports have cited similar criteria as being essential for the development of strong, effective teacher professionalism in NSW schools. (Australian College of Education, 2000b; Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998; Australian Teaching Council, 1996; Ramsey, 2000)

The Ramsey Report (2000) made a number of recommendations for reform aimed at strengthening teaching as a profession. Many of the recommendations revolved around the three criteria summarised in the Darling-Hammond model. (Ramsey, 2000)
It is important to note that Ramsey’s report was published during the final stages of writing this thesis. The high levels of congruence between my own readings of the literature and the findings of the Ramsey Report strongly suggests the hermeneutic dialectic process in which I engaged was procedurally effective. (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) The Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein model of the criteria of professionalism in education became an influential guide, independent of Ramsey’s findings, to the emergent design of this literature review, analysis and the thesis overall.

The criteria presented by Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein highlighted the centrality of knowledge, in establishing and maintaining professional practice in education. It is argued that it encompasses the importance of experience, training, research, standards, practice and ethical behaviour, criteria generally also emphasised by other models of professionalism. It is important to now examine those criteria in more detail, in order to establish the importance of the relationships amongst them.

**Criterion 1: A Profession Must Be Knowledge-Based**

Specialised knowledge features as a key component in a number of models of professionalism in education. (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995; Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996; Hoale, 1981; Jackson, 1970; Jarvis, 1983; Preston, 1996; Richardson, 1995; Seddon, 1996; Sheldon, 1993; Sherwin, 1973) For example, Shulman (1987) suggested that teacher knowledge should include the following elements:

- Content knowledge
- General pedagogical knowledge - broad principles and strategies of management and organisation that transcend subject matter.
- Curriculum knowledge - of materials and programs that serve as the resources and tools of the trade.
- Pedagogical content knowledge - an amalgam of content and pedagogy that is the unique province of teachers
- Knowledge of learners and their characteristics.
- Knowledge of educational contexts - in the classroom, school, district and beyond.
- Knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values and their philosophical and historical grounds.

(Cited in Richardson, 1995, p.237)
Chapter 3: Review of Literature

In an attempt to capture the essence of professionalism in education Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein (1995) compiled a table showing the key knowledge bases required of the available teacher licensing, or accreditation, systems in the United States. That table is reproduced below in Table 3.2:

Table 3.2: Conceptions of the teaching knowledge base

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Licensing Requirements: Summary of fifty states' major requirements</th>
<th>AACTE Knowledge Base for the Beginning Teacher</th>
<th>Minnesota's Vision for Teacher Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Growth and Development</strong>&lt;br&gt;Human growth and learning&lt;br&gt;Learning differences</td>
<td>Knowledge About Learners and Learning&lt;br&gt;Learners and Learning&lt;br&gt;Knowledge of the learner&lt;br&gt;Meeting developmental needs of students&lt;br&gt;Students with special needs</td>
<td>Human Growth and Development&lt;br&gt;Individual development&lt;br&gt;Relationship of learning to development&lt;br&gt;Individual learning styles &amp; need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum and Methods</strong>&lt;br&gt;Subject area curriculum&lt;br&gt;Methods, materials, and techniques&lt;br&gt;Methods of teaching reading</td>
<td>Knowledge About Curriculum and Teaching&lt;br&gt;The Need for a Curricular Vision of Teaching&lt;br&gt;Subject-specific pedagogy&lt;br&gt;Conceptions of teaching&lt;br&gt;Knowledge about reading and writing</td>
<td>Knowledge of effective Teaching&lt;br&gt;Learning and pedagogy&lt;br&gt;Curriculum and resources&lt;br&gt;Knowledge about communication and language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom management</td>
<td>Knowledge About Social Foundations of Education&lt;br&gt;Classroom organisation and management</td>
<td>Organisation and motivation&lt;br&gt;Social behaviour management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation and guidance</td>
<td>Knowledge About Social Foundations of Education&lt;br&gt;Effective Classroom Guidance</td>
<td>Evaluation and assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schools and Society</strong>&lt;br&gt;School in relation to society&lt;br&gt;Human and intercultural relations&lt;br&gt;Organization and administration</td>
<td>Knowledge About Subject Matter&lt;br&gt;Social and Political Contexts&lt;br&gt;The school district&lt;br&gt;Social organization of classes and schools&lt;br&gt;Principles of sociology and anthropology&lt;br&gt;Context, code, classroom and culture</td>
<td>Knowledge About Subject Matter&lt;br&gt;Scope and structure of discipline&lt;br&gt;Knowledge and personal scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundations of education</strong></td>
<td>Knowledge About Subject Matter&lt;br&gt;Professional Knowledge</td>
<td>Knowledge About Subject Matter&lt;br&gt;Professional Knowledge &amp; Dispositions&lt;br&gt;Collegiality&lt;br&gt;Professional Ethics&lt;br&gt;Responsibility to Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy of education&lt;br&gt;History of education&lt;br&gt;Sociology and anthropology</td>
<td>Knowledge About Subject Matter&lt;br&gt;Professional collaboration&lt;br&gt;Ethical dimensions of teaching&lt;br&gt;Legal rights and responsibilities</td>
<td>Knowledge About Subject Matter&lt;br&gt;Professional Knowledge &amp; Dispositions&lt;br&gt;Collegiality&lt;br&gt;Professional Ethics&lt;br&gt;Responsibility to Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject-matter coursework</td>
<td>Knowledge About Subject Matter&lt;br&gt;Subject-matter knowledge for teaching</td>
<td>Knowledge About Subject Matter&lt;br&gt;Scope and structure of discipline&lt;br&gt;Knowledge and personal scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributional requirements: Humanities, arts, and sciences</td>
<td>Knowledge About Liberal Arts&lt;br&gt;Knowledge, representation, and quantitative thinking</td>
<td>Knowledge About Liberal Arts&lt;br&gt;Knowledge about epistemology&lt;br&gt;Knowledge of scientific inquiry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Reynolds 1989, Minnesota Board of Teaching 1986. (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995, p.36)
Notably, the above knowledge bases avoid prescriptive, rationalistic-style information, but encourage broader, eclectic constructions which might allow informed professionals to build what Guba and Lincoln called ‘more informed and sophisticated reconstructions’ of theories, more suitable to the contexts encountered during teacher practice. (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.112)

The keys to teacher professionalism in the above examples of teacher accreditation lay in broad and detailed teacher knowledge across a number of areas. Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein synthesised such knowledge into three ‘broad areas’, important for teacher education programs, necessary ‘in addition to subject-matter knowledge and liberal arts knowledge and skills’:

1. Knowledge about learners and learning, including knowledge about human growth and development, motivation and behavior, learning theory, learning differences, and cognitive psychology.

2. Knowledge about curriculum and teaching, including general and content-specific pedagogical knowledge, curriculum theory, assessment and evaluation, and counseling, as well as knowledge of scientific inquiry, epistemology, communication, and language as they relate to pedagogy.

3. Knowledge about contexts and foundations of education, including knowledge about schools and society, cultures, educational history and philosophy, principles from sociology and anthropology, legal responsibilities of teachers, and ethics.

(Darling-Hammond et al., 1995, p.35)

It is important to note that all three examples of teacher accreditation represented in Table 3.3 incorporate the need for knowledge to inform working towards what Brock termed ‘the social good’. (Brock, 2000) According to Brock a key trait of acknowledged professions has long been the use of knowledge and skills for the benefit of both the client and society generally. After reviewing established professional structures Brock asserted that notions of social conscience are a core tenet of professionalism, claiming that knowledge is the central ingredient in enabling professionals to seek that ‘social good’. Brock drew on the long held tenets of the legal profession to illustrate the point, citing Davis and Elliston’s *Ethics and the Legal Profession* (1986):

One of the tasks of the professional is to seek the social good. It follows from this that one cannot be a professional unless one has some sense of what the social good is. Accordingly, one’s very status as a professional requires that one possess this moral truth. But it requires more, for each profession seeks to social good in a different form, according to its expertise ...

Without such knowledge professionals cannot perform their social roles.

(Davis and Elliston, Ethics & the Legal Profession, 1986, p.18, cited in Brock, 2000, p.10)
Most conceptualisations of professionalism reviewed appear to require both theoretical and pedagogical knowledge. While important, subject knowledge alone is generally not considered adequate to inform the work of the competent teacher. Detailed knowledge of research, pedagogy and theoretical frameworks informing the political and social structures surrounding issues in education are also considered essential. Additionally, knowledge central to the ability to critique policies and associated social issues appear to be important components of professional knowledge. (Australian College of Education, 2000a, 2000b, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c; Australian Teaching Council, 1996; Brock, 2000; Darling-Hammond et al., 1995; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Hargreaves, 1997; Ingvarson, 1998; Jarvis, 1983; National Council of Teachers of English, 1996; Ramsey, 2000; Richardson, 1995)

**Criterion 2: A Profession Must Be Client-Centred**

A key component of professionalism, common to many definitions in the literature, is the ability to use specialised knowledge for the benefit of the client, or student. (Australian College of Education, 2000a, 2000b, 2001a, 2001b; Darling-Hammond et al., 1995; Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996; Hoale, 1981; Jarvis, 1983; Preston, 1996; Ramsey, 2000) Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein pointed out that one new challenge in education over the past twenty years, as highlighted by the changes in retention rates discussed earlier, has been ‘to reach students traditionally left behind’. (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995, p.17) Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein stressed the importance of the knowledge base of the effective teacher in meeting the ever-increasing demands of the classroom:

illuminated by education research over the past two decades. We now know that students have different learning styles and rates of development, that psychological factors - such as perceptions of self-efficacy - influence motivation and learning, and that prior experiences and learnings mediate the processing of information presented in formal instruction. In short, we know that students do not come to school as tabula rasae to be imprinted with well-defined bits of knowledge that inescapably adds up to ‘good education’. We also know that there is no simple set of easily prescribed teaching behaviours that invariably add up to teaching effectiveness. (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995, p.18)

The Australian Council of Professions pointed out that professionals must use their professional knowledge not only for their clients’ ‘social good’, but that professionals:
must at all times place the responsibility for the welfare, health and safety of the community before their responsibility to the profession, to sectional or private interests, or to other members of the profession. (Australian Council of Professions, 1993, p.1 cited in Brock, 2000, p.10)

The true professional, therefore, should place the welfare of the client and the ‘social good’, as determined through professional skill and based on detailed professional knowledge, before all other considerations. This ‘professional responsibility’ to the client and the social good should also exceed responsibility to an employer or their policies, where the policies are harmful to the ethical needs of the client or the general ‘social good’. Without mastery of the necessary knowledge-base it would be difficult to meet such onerous responsibilities. It is possible to argue that policy should also reflect the spirit of the client-centred work for the ‘social good’ expected of professional knowledge and not just the knowledge, itself.

A search of a number of Australian professions’ archives revealed that mechanisms, regulated by independent professional ethics committees, have traditionally been charged with policing concerns about ethical conflicts between employer interests and those of clients. (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2001; Australian Association of Social Workers Ltd, 1989; Australian Medical Association, 1998; Australian Medical Council, 2001b; Australian Medical Council Incorporated, 1998; Australian Nursing Council Incorporated, 2000, 2001; New South Wales Nurses Registration Board, 1999; The Institution of Engineers Australia, 1999) No such professional ethics mechanisms existed for NSW teachers during the course of the study.

**Criterion 3: A Profession Must Be Internally Accountable**

A third key component, evident in all of the models of professionalism surveyed, was the notion of self-regulation. (Australian College of Education, 2000a, 2000b, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c; Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998; Brennan, 1990; Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996; Jackson, 1970; National Council of Teachers of English, 1996; Preston, 1996; Ramsey, 2000; Seddon, 1996; Sheldon, 1993) Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein made the following pertinent points regarding self-regulation after surveying established professions:
Society grants professionals permission to develop their own standards of practice rather than being managed by external regulations that determine practice. The knowledge professionals need in order to make sound decisions is transmitted through professional education and by initiation through supervised clinical practice under the guidance of experts. This process requires that organisations of professionals achieve a consensus about what is worth knowing and how it can best be transmitted and that they then use these judgements as the basis for regulating professional preparation programs and entry standards. (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995, p.16-17)

The 1998 Senate Committee stressed the centrality of self-regulation to professional power and effectiveness:

Without standards, a professional body is defenceless. A demonstrated ability to articulate standards for high quality practice is an essential credential if a professional body wishes to be taken seriously by the public and policy makers. When placed on the table in forums with policy makers about reform and accountability, established professional standards are hard to ignore. (Ingvarson, 1995, cited in Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998, ch.2,p.7)

It was in the area of self-regulation that teaching in general appeared, during the analysis of data, to fail to meet the criteria of a profession. The situation in NSW during the course of the study was that no professional body existed for the accreditation or regulation of teachers or teacher education programs. Policies and teacher education programs in NSW remained largely at the mercy of employer bureaucracies or tertiary institutions, with little true control by teachers. (Australian College of Education, 2000a, 2000b, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c; Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998; Ramsey, 2000) The Australian Joint Council of Professional Teaching Associations, in its submission to the 1998 Senate Committee, claimed:

As employees, teachers generally have not had the opportunity to define their own professional standards or to have input to their own accreditation or registration processes in the way that other professions have done. (Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998, ch.3,p.2)

The 1998 Senate Committee placed a high level of importance on the need for teachers to be able to regulate their own profession, linking professional independence to quality in education and the general status of teaching. While the Committee acknowledged the difficulties associated with establishing professional regulation of teaching, it called on governments to acknowledge the importance of professional autonomy:
In the Committee's view, these relevant professional standards are the province of the teaching profession itself, and should be established and upheld by the profession. The most desirable state of affairs for education would be one in which delivery standards (of conditions and resources, for which governments are responsible) are predicated upon standards of professional practice (for which teachers are responsible). The current economic facts of life are hardly likely to realise such a desirable state, but it is a principle which the Committee believes should inform the construction of the relationship between governments and the profession. (Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998, ch.2,p.6)

The Committee was adamant that mere government registration of teachers, as proposed in NSW, could not hope to address professional needs:

Registration of teachers by state governments is typically cited as a key quality control mechanism, and while the Committee endorses the need for registration or licensing arrangements, it believes that, by themselves, they are not adequate for assuring satisfactory teaching practice. (Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998, ch.2,p.6)

The Committee stressed the need for self-regulation to include teaching standards and the accreditation of preservice education programs. (Australian Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998, ch.2, p.8) It follows then, that if members of a profession are to regulate their own profession they must have control of the bodies of knowledge which inform their work.

Knowledge and Professional Literacy Teaching

Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein (1995) found that all issues of teacher professionalism revolve around professional knowledge. If teachers are to serve the interests of their clients and retain ethical self-regulation they also need to remain committed to the development of a career-long continuum of professional knowledge:

That is, committed to using the best available knowledge on behalf of the clients who are served. This commitment cannot be ensured when recruits do not encounter or master professional knowledge. Neither can the third characteristic of a profession be guaranteed: that it is internally accountable - that is, members of the profession take responsibility for defining, transmitting, and enforcing standards of practice based on professional knowledge and ethical commitments (Darling-Hammond, 1989). (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995, p.16)

Specialised knowledge then, becomes a crucial component of the building and maintenance of professional literacy education in English. Darling-Hammond, Wise and
Klein supported an eclectic knowledge base, rather than a formulaic, prescriptive approach for all learners:

Thus ... we believe the large body of research on teaching supports a conception of teaching that is:

- Based on the integration of many areas of knowledge. These areas comprise three major domains - knowledge about learners and learning; knowledge about curriculum and teaching, and knowledge about society and social contexts of education.
- Characterised by the use of multiple skills, appropriately applied to particular situations, rather than by the unvarying exhibition of uniform teaching behaviours in all teaching circumstances.
- Context-dependent. The uses of knowledge and the applications of skills depend on the needs of particular students and classes as defined by instructional goals; on pedagogical demands associated with the subject-matter, instructional objectives, stages of student development, and previous learning; and on characteristics of the students individually and as a class group (cognitive styles, social and cultural attributes, social organisation of the school and classroom, and similar traits).

(Darling-Hammond et al., 1995, 29-30)

It has been said that ‘literacy is a continuum’. (Christie, 1991) It must surely also be that professional literacy teaching itself needs to be considered as a continuum, whereby understandings and practices remain in a constant state of evolution, informed by emerging theories. Understandings of the relationships at work in a classroom vary with an infinite variety of contexts, and teachers must attempt to deal with such contexts and maintain an empathy for, and emotional attachment to, their charges. For, in many ways, students represent a type of ‘family’ to teachers, helping to compose what Gee might call the ‘primary Discourse’ of the classroom, within the broader culture of the school system. (Gee, 1990) ‘Naturing’ and ‘nurturing’ require delicate blends, which might well be judged from differing and contested (or agreeing) perspectives. It is in the very nature of teacher professionalism, as presented here, to be able to balance such elements of being human in the classroom.

The assertions by Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein were additionally significant to the study. They suggested that no one pedagogy or theoretical framework could hope to offer the ‘magic bullet’ of literacy education but that teachers require an eclectic mix of theories from which to draw in different contexts. If teachers do not have access to the knowledge bases that allow them to meet the needs of their clients (students) or to deal appropriately with institutions which have control of policies and teacher education (both government and professional) then the very nature of their professional work is likely to be adversely affected.
Perhaps more importantly the Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein model, combined with the insights of the other literature reviewed, highlights the potential for any loss of self-regulation of professional practice to have a cyclic effect on professionalism. Without self-regulation teachers run the risk of losing the ownership of their work and the ability to respond to shifts in knowledge or client needs, leading to a disempowered and ineffective profession. Such a situation would negatively impact on the lives of teachers and threaten the quality of service delivered in schools.

**Locus of the Study Within the Model of Professionalism**

The three focal areas of this study were:

- DET policies
- teacher preservice education
- teacher practice.

This was because these represent key areas of interaction within secondary classrooms. The Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein conceptualisation of professionalism in education described the key criteria important to professional governance of the work that teachers are meant to implement in their classrooms. That conceptualisation emphasises the importance of knowledge in literacy teaching and offers directions for the identification of a body of specialised knowledge about language education on which there is at least some consensus amongst the profession. In the absence of professional regulation regarding literacy education in Australia the criteria synthesised by Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein provided signposts for identifying some of the knowledge and literature vital for secondary teachers of literacy, especially with respect to secondary English classrooms.

Furthermore, the Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein conceptualisation of professionalism in education permitted the identification of a balanced relationship between theory, practice and policy and the profession as a whole. It functioned both as a guide and gauge, by which one could examine and evaluate the relationships necessary for a truly professional context, and for better understanding of the implications of those relationships for the teaching profession.
As such it allowed for a model of ‘professionalism in action’ to be drawn up. A model which incorporated not only the key concepts inherent in the literature, but it also provided guidelines which informed the analysis of data, thus linking the analysis to implications for the profession. In other words, it was capable of representing not only relationships which might be at work in the classroom, but also represented relationships throughout the English teaching profession.

Figure 3.2 represents the attempt to capture the nature and role of such a professionally oriented conceptualisation of professionalism in literacy which was relevant both to Secondary School English teaching and to this study as well. The shaded area locates the relationships under investigation in this study:

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 3.2:** The locus of the study within a professionally informed conceptualisation of literacy

Having situated the research project within the context of professional literacy education it now remains to identify specific types of knowledge pertinent to literacy education in subject English within secondary schools.

**Professional Guidelines for Literacy Education**

While no definitive Australian professional guidelines existed at the time of the study, to specify which types of knowledge about literacy education might be considered crucial for effective teaching, there were some guidelines provided from the American
context. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) publish *Guidelines for the Preparation of Teachers of English Language Arts* every ten years. (National Council of Teachers of English, 1996) The 1996 edition offered insights to the specific types of knowledge about literacy and language valued by the profession.

The NCTE divided the ‘content knowledge’ base required for ‘effective language arts teachers’ into nine broad categories, while the ‘pedagogical knowledge’ required was divided into eight broad categories. (National Council of Teachers of English, 1996) While much literary theory and subject content was interwoven throughout the categories, the guidelines provided clear indication of the importance of specialised knowledge about literacy and language. Table 3.3 summarises the broad areas of specific knowledge considered by the NCTE to be essential for professional teachers of secondary school English:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.3: Desirable teacher knowledge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please see print copy for images</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like other commentators the NCTE stressed the importance of the ‘interrelations’ between ‘attitudes, knowledge and pedagogy’ throughout all the work carried out by teachers of English. (National Council of Teachers of English, 1996, p.28-31) According to the NCTE, ‘content knowledge’ about language and literacy theories needed to be combined with ‘pedagogical knowledge’ to develop professional conceptualisations of literacy development. (National Council of Teachers of English, 1996, p.29)
The Australian Context

Richardson (1995) in synthesising the types of knowledge required of expert literacy teachers in the Australian context adapted the work of Alexander, Shallert & Hare (1991) to develop models of expert knowledge. Figure 3.3 shows Richardson’s diagramming of ‘prior knowledge’ for teacher expertise in literacy education:

![Figure 3.3: Prior knowledge](Alexander, Schallert and Hare, 1991)  
(Adapted in Richardson, 1995, p.237-8)

Richardson’s model incorporates the major areas of knowledge already canvassed. It compacts specific areas into three broad categories of ‘prior knowledge’. (Richardson, 1995) Broader areas of educational theory are included within the categories of ‘metacognitive knowledge’ and ‘construction’. The above model shows ‘socio-political’ and ‘tacit knowledge’ as outer layers, at all times informing all three key areas. Specific knowledge of literacy for professional expertise is shown to come primarily from the area of ‘conceptual knowledge’, although at all times interacting with and informed by the other domains of knowledge.

The model presents a complex web of informed research and specialised knowledge to be accessed, synthesised and utilised by the professional literacy educator. Richardson diagrammed the key areas of conceptual knowledge about literacy into the model reproduced in Figure 3.4:
By incorporating the essential components of the above models it is possible to identify the types of knowledge required to build a profession of expert literacy and language teachers. Such a model would incorporate the following ingredients:

- Detailed knowledge of language theories (Conceptual Knowledge)
- Psycho-linguistic knowledge about learners and literacy development (Metacognitive Knowledge)
- Critical social theories regarding the nature of language and literacy education (Socio-cultural Knowledge)
- Clear conceptualisations of language and literacy pedagogies informed by all of the above (Construction)

By using such a conceptual framework it is possible to review the literature and construct frameworks of relatively consensual conceptual professional knowledge bases aimed at informing empowered, expert literacy education. Such a reconstruction is congruent with constructivist views of the nature of knowledge. (Fosnot, 1996; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Schwandt, 1994; von Glasersfeld, 1996) This synthesis of knowledge is presented as the various conceptualisations of literacy to have dominated the NSW context since the middle of the 20th Century. For the purpose of this study these frameworks are called ‘conceptualisations of literacy’, with each presented in ‘juxtaposition in a dialectical context’ to other conceptualisations. (Guba & Lincoln, 1994)
The evolution of such conceptualisations is shown to have reflected the kinds of knowledge cited in the models of professionalism and professional knowledge reviewed and to be capable of fulfilling the criteria of a profession, after Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein (1995). I argue that such conceptualisations represent construct of professional knowledge which could inform school literacy policies, teacher practice and teacher preservice education in NSW.

**CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF LITERACY EDUCATION**

*Arguments over definitions are arguments about whose constructions of literacy will win and accordingly whose related politics of literacy will prevail.*


It has been generally agreed that literacy, along with literacy pedagogies, are ‘highly contested’ conceptualisations. (Australian Language and Literacy Council, 1995, p.7; Brock, 1998; Department of Employment Education and Training, 1991a; Gee, 1990; Green, 1996; Green *et al.*, 1997; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993b; Luke & Freebody, 1997; Threadgold, 1995) As such, the teaching of literacy in the subject English has been informed by complex, evolving and often conflicting bodies of educational theory and research. That knowledge has been reflected in both educational literature and the policy documents generated from within NSW education bureaucracies.

This review examines the evolution of the conceptualisation of English from about 1950 to the end of the twentieth century. It was not intended to investigate the popular theories of education and literacy learning or policies prior to the 1950s in this review, primarily on two grounds:

- Compulsory, uniform secondary education for all children was not introduced to New South Wales until 1962. Until then a minority of the state’s school children were enrolled in high school. It was not until the end of the second world war, particularly with the introduction of the Education Act, 1961, that the current system of secondary education began to evolve.
- It has only been since 1950 that significantly new approaches to teaching literacy have emerged, contributing to current conceptualisations of literacy education within subject English.

Historically, the teaching of literacy skills in NSW has been perceived as the role of the primary school. Early NSW Department of Education and Training secondary English
syllabuses and other policy documents failed to comprehensively address the concept of literacy learning in the high school context. Literacy strategies were not addressed directly by the Department until the publication of the Reading K-12 Document and the later Writing K-12 Document. (New South Wales Department of Education, 1979, 1987) Both those documents were rescinded shortly after publication and the teaching of literacy in the secondary school was not directly addressed again by the Department until the Teaching Literacy in ... series was published during 1997-99. In order to reveal the underlying principles adopted within the context of NSW high schools it was, therefore, necessary to examine early primary school policy documentation, in order to reveal the conceptualisation of literacy and language learning underpinning the NSW system.

The demands on the State system of secondary English education in New South Wales have been dramatic in the last fifty years.Enrolments have increased markedly and the social structure, indeed even the purpose, of the secondary school system has changed considerably. Literacy education in subject English in New South Wales high schools has been directed by a melding of constantly evolving theories of education, language and literacy development and the evolving policies of the New South Wales Department of School Education. It is shown that those theories have contributed to the evolution of a continuum of conceptualisations of English literacy education and that such a continuum reflects the knowledge base to which secondary English teachers require access if they are to remain professionally empowered.

The main organiser for this part of the review of literature is the various ways in which literacy in high schools has been conceptualised over time. These different conceptualisation's reflect (and often mask) the prevailing educational ideologies of the time. Such conceptualisations (and their adherents and critics) often compete for influence, prestige, power and control. They are, after all, socially constructed conceptualisations.

Past trends have been for literacy pedagogies to be articulated as singular theories or pedagogies, to be adopted wholeheartedly and to the exclusion of the ideas of ‘Others’. This review seeks to show that conceptualisations of literacy and language learning have thrived as evolving organisms, dependent on each other for foundations, critique and advancement. As such, the conceptualisations presented here seek to build an eclectic knowledge base, from which professionally empowered educators might draw.
The evolution of language and literacy theory in English presented is not intended as a linear account. Many of the theories, and their relevant movements, emerged concurrent and recursively, informing and critiquing each other. It is intended to show that each offers much to the professional teacher of literacy in secondary English and collectively reflect the body of knowledge which might inform both practice and policy. Accordingly, this section of the review discusses the following conceptualisations of literacy education in secondary school English:

- English As Skills
- Process Writing
- Whole Language
- Systemic Functional Linguistics
- A Functional View of Language
- Critical Literacy
- A Genre-based approach
- Text Types
- A Social View of Language

In examining the above conceptualisations of literacy, the review also examines the ideologies they have reflected and the implications they have had for teacher practice. It is possible to argue that literary theories such as reader response, cultural studies or postmodernism promote literacy learning in English, however, such an examination of literary theory is outside the scope of this study.

**English as Skills**

But every teacher is a teacher of English because every teacher is a teacher in English. That sentence should be written in letters of gold over every school doorway. Teachers are very specially the official guardians of the English language. We cannot give a lesson in any subject without helping or neglecting the English of our pupils. (Sampson, 1934, p.25)

Prior to the 1950s the teaching of English was dominated by the conceptualisation of English as a single, clearly defined subject, with clearly defined content. Such a notion of language has been referred to as the 'language as conduit' theory, whereby language is considered to be a discrete set of symbols used primarily for communication. Speech
is considered the primary vehicle for such communications and writing is considered to be speech translated to paper. In such a view, there is little connection between thought or mental processes and language. (Cambourne, 1988; Halliday, 1966, 1977, 1986; Halliday, McIntosh & Strevens, 1973)

The conceptualisation of English as a subject has a long history, based on the premise that one ‘correct’ form of English needs to be taught to all children in a set manner. A set formula for teaching and a set criteria for evaluating literacy skills was adhered to in a practice Halliday labelled as the ‘prescriptive approach’. (Halliday, 1966; Halliday et al., 1973) The educational ideology which underpins this conceptualisation of English is based on the belief that the teacher is the ‘central holder’ of information and skills within the classroom and that they transmit knowledge to students through direct instruction. This ideology values high degrees of teacher control and views the learner as a passive recipient of what the teacher transmits. (Murray, 1988, p.2-4) Students are expected to learn through repetitive exercises, taught in isolation, often without a context for usage.

English as subject instruction places an emphasis on the most socially powerful, and therefore most prestigious, forms of language use. Children are expected to adopt the more socially powerful forms, in preference to their own. (Halliday, 1966, p.82-4) The notion that English is a subject with correct forms that must be mastered inevitably creates strong attitudes to non-standard forms, which in turn impacts on learners. Research has indicated that those who came from cultures or socio-economic backgrounds which used non-standard forms are often judged to be less intelligent, less worthy, and less capable of complex learning and, in effect, are significantly disadvantaged by such views of language. (Cazden, 1988; Cazden, John & Hymes, 1972; Foucault, 1984; Freebody, 1993; Freebody & Luke, 1990; Fries & Gregory, 1995; Gee, 1990; Giroux, 1993; Green, 1996; Kress, 1985; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993b)

Educational theory during the 1950s and 60s was dominated by behaviourist psychology, with its inherent rationalistic philosophies regarding language and the structure of knowledge. Language came to be viewed as being a fixed entity, able to be broken into discreet units. Inability to master language skills was viewed as inadequacy on the part of the student, in a ‘blame-the-victim’ approach, in which students were categorised and labelled according to ability. (Edelsky, 1999)

Instead of a single subject language began to be viewed as a set of skills which could be broken down into sub-skills which, once mastered, give the learner control of
the overall systems that make up language. English was broken into four transmission modes which were broken into smaller units, or skills, to be taught independently of each other. Within the ‘English as Skills’ approach, the learner came to be viewed as a passive recipient, expected to master skills by learning ‘rules’ and by repetitive drill and practice of sub-skills. (Cambourne, 1988, p.21; Murray, 1988, p.4) Features of the Skills-based Approach can be summarised as:

**Summary of Skills Based Approach**

- Notion of one ‘correct’ form of literacy (monocultural)
- Four modes- Reading Writing Listening Speaking
- Systems broken into sub-skills
- Formula must be adhered to for success
- Teacher the central holder of information
- Student passive ‘empty vessel’ into which knowledge poured
- All students to learn in one uniform way
- Student expected to conform
- Focus on spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting.
- Learning by repetition

(Adapted from Anstey & Bull, 1996; Emmitt & Pollock, 1997)

Cambourne described the Skills-based Approach as an ‘outside-in’ model of reading, whereby meaning originates beyond the learner’s experience and is transmitted to the learner through the conduit of decoding printed language to sound. (Cambourne, 1979, p.82) That is, a learner making meaning of writing is seen as having to convert the print into speech before gaining understanding, or as having to convert speech into writing in order to make meaning in print. (Murray, 1988, p.5) According to Cambourne, in such views of learning instruction remains mostly ‘one way (from teacher to child)’, is based on repetition, or ‘habit formation’ and has little concern for the interest of pupils.(Cambourne, 1979, p.82-5; 1988, p.18-21)

A Skills-based Approach does not encourage children to actively engage in the learning process and ‘understanding’ is confused with ‘correctness’. Teachers focus on spelling, grammar, punctuation, construction of sentences and rigid replication of what appears on the page when reading. Little regard is given to comprehension of the text or the expression of ideas. Words are treated in isolation, without the benefit of examining the context in which they are used. Rather than enriching the student's involvement in
language, their understanding and involvement is restricted. (Smith, 1975) In short, in a Skills-based Approach the focus is more on complying with conventions than on meaning.

Torbe criticised the concentration on learning of skills through repetition, claiming that the approach values memory more than inquisitive learning. (Torbe, 1980, p.114-6) Goodman proposed that concentration on abstract and seemingly irrelevant (for the learner) skills acquisition by teachers makes the learners’ task of developing language skills harder than necessary and hinders the natural language learning process. (Goodman, 1986, p.8-10 & 20-22)

Both Halliday (1966 & 1973) and Cambourne (1988) have argued that a largely Skills-based Approach remains influential with many teachers today. Each has claimed that a Skills-based Approach leads to the teaching of separate, desired language skills through repetition and the sheltering of the learner from undesirable usage. Both researchers maintain that such approaches fail to take the social context of language use into account. (Cambourne, 1988, p.23; Halliday, 1966, 1986, 1996)

According to Cambourne, such ‘fragmentation’ of language skills contributes to the development of what Cambourne labelled ‘A-literacy’ - a reluctance amongst learners to engage voluntarily in literate acts, particularly writing. Cambourne linked ‘A-literacy’ to teacher knowledge and practice, suggesting that ‘textual alienation is a function of how literacy has been taught’. (Cambourne, 1988, p.23-5&27) Cambourne raised the ultimate challenge to the ‘English as skills’ approach:

Of what use is teaching a skill ... if it has such a low durability that it ceases to be used, and in some cases is actually avoided when schooling is over?
(Cambourne, 1988, p.24)

The Swing Towards the Individual

During the 1960s and early 1970s attitudes towards the role of the learner as a secondary concern in the learning process began to swing towards more student-centred approaches. The notion of learners as ‘empty vessels being forcibly filled with a predetermined number of litres of...fact’ (Cambourne, 1988, p.19) began to change, towards one where the learner was considered able to actively participate in experiences in order to better learn from those experiences. (Murray, 1988) Researchers began to see
the learner as being in need of stimulation, rather than just information. The needs of individuals in the learning experience, and the variety of individual needs, became the focus of teaching approaches, although both Murray (1988) and Cambourne (1988) found that many of the old styles of teaching by rote remained long after policies were changed.

Perhaps most notable amongst theorists was Jean Piaget whose research, into how young children developed intellectually, revolutionised the role of the learner in educational institutions. Piaget argued that students were capable of learning ‘naturally’ and at their own pace, through various stages. Most importantly Piaget placed the child, rather than the instructing adult, at the centre of the learning experience. (Piaget, 1969; Vialle, Lysaght & Verenikina, 2000)

The focus on the experience of the child contributed greatly to language and literacy theory. The role of the teacher became more than one of just pouring knowledge into the ‘empty vessel’ and teachers began to see the importance of creating experiences that lead to learning and cognitive development. (Murray, 1988, p.6) Gradually a swing to more naturalistic approaches to literacy education emerged, whereby a broader view of education was taken. Rather than merely teaching facts, the emphasis began to be placed on teaching learners how to learn, so that the learning process was not limited to set skills taught in isolation. Input was sought from learners and their interests and needs began to be taken into account in the development of the curriculum. (Wheeler, 1971, p.1-16 and Murray, 1988, p.6)

**Shifts in Linguistics**

While educational theories were undergoing radical shifts in focus so, too, were theories of linguistics. In order to better understand the evolution of conceptualisations of literacy education it is also necessary to consider the parallel developments in linguistics, particularly the evolution of traditional and transformational grammars, which greatly influenced the emergence of the ‘new’ theories of literacy and language education.
Traditional Grammar

Central to development of the English as Skills-based Approach was the sanctity of traditional grammar. The rules of traditional, Latinate grammars were the cornerstone on which both English as subject and English as skills were built. Such grammars break language into two distinct areas, vocabulary and syntax. Vocabulary represented the words in the language and their suitability to a task, while syntax represented the grammar, or rules by which the words should be organised within the sentence. Concern with vocabulary was strong at the turn of the 20th century, particularly regarding notions of ‘correctness’ of form. Skill in language use was closely linked to moral fortitude, as indicated in the following excerpt from a school text book of the time:

In the local examinations of the Oxford and Cambridge Universities, almost as many candidates fail to satisfy the examiners in Orthography as in any other of those subjects that come under the head of their preliminary examinations. The evil, too, appears to be on the increase.
(Coutie, 1908, p.v)

Traditional grammarians soon became aware that syntax appeared more important than word choice in sentence building, given that any number of words could serve the same purpose. Linguists began to re-examine syntax and develop grammars, or rules, which prescribed the ways in which words should, or in the structuralist case - could - be used to create sentences.(Britton, Bray & Rowland, 1970, p.192; Fowler & Fowler, 1931)
The rules of grammar were considered absolute and departure from the rules was perceived as a fault on the part of the individual. (Fowler & Fowler, 1931, p.326)
Traditionalists considered that language should conform to the rules constructed by grammarians, rather than the rules being devised to conform to the ways in which language was used.

By 1944 the influence of new ‘scientific’ methods, guided by the evolving modernist philosophies which influenced educational research, dictated a more structured, rationalistic approach to teaching language. Linguists attempted to refine the rules of grammar into a more accurate hierarchy and the new grammars were quickly adopted into school policies. Traditional grammars are rule-governed, prescriptive attempts to set out just how language should be structured, what Kress called ‘setting out a formal account of its rules ... rather formal and sterile’. (Kress, 1993a) The rules of traditional grammar provided the framework with which skills could be fragmented into
sub-skills within a grammatical hierarchy, providing the structures on which skills based approaches could be based. Traditional grammar is also based at the level of the sentence and involved conceptualising and labelling fragmented clauses and words within the sentence, providing rules governing such structures. The notion of context was relatively unimportant. Martin and Rothery summarised the characteristics and weaknesses of traditional grammar in the chart reproduced in Figure 3.5:

**Traditional Grammar.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerned with the sentence -</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a severe limitation since most of the things people write are more than a sentence long.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Set out to teach parts of speech -</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(names of word classes) noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defined semantically -</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘a noun is the name of a person, place or thing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘a verb is an action word’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.5:** The nature of traditional grammar (Source: Martin & Rothery, 1993, p.140-1)

According to Martin and Rothery, ‘although helpful, definitions of this kind are fundamentally inadequate’. (Martin & Rothery, 1993, p.140) The rules often did not work in use and could be misleading. The potential for breaking the rules of traditional grammar was almost as great as it was of meeting them, particularly in speech. Martin and Rothery offered the following examples to illustrate the point:

‘There was lots of commotion’ -

verb was is not an action word and the noun commotion is not the name of a person, place or thing.

*So,* you can’t begin a sentence with a conjunction.

*A preposition is something you should never end a sentence with.*

It is quite wrong *to carelessly split infinitives.*

*eg. ‘the Starship Enterprise, its five year mission ... to boldly go where no man has gone before...’*

*And you should never begin a sentence with a conjunction.*

(Martin & Rothery, 1993, p.140-1)

As is discussed later in this chapter, traditional grammars have been widely analysed as favouring white, middle class culture and as acting as a tool for maintaining power.

**Structural Grammar**

During the post-war years linguists developed ‘structural’ grammars in an attempt to develop more precise, prescriptive rules. Structuralists broke language down into its most basic unit, the phoneme, in an attempt to create grammars based on language ranging from the most basic component to the most complex sequences. (Britton *et al.*, 1970, p.198-200; Edelsky, 1999, p.8) Structuralists linked language to function and attempted to describe the ways in which language operated. Function to structuralists was linked to how language was believed to reflect the structuring of thought within the human mind. Meaning was fixed within language structure and access to those structures was believed to give access to meaning. McLaren and Lankshear (1993) described structuralist views of language thus:

> Structuralists typically conceive of language as an arbitrary system of differences in which meaning is guaranteed by the linguistic system itself and the values given to signifying practices within particular linguistic communities. In other words, given the signs and linguistic practices, meanings follow. (McLaren & Lankshear, 1993, p.384)

The early structuralists’ conceptualisations of the ‘functions’ of language were significant in that they represented the beginning of a shift away from traditional grammars. During the 1950s Chomsky emerged with an alternative view of language and grammar. (Chomsky, 1957) Chomsky challenged the notion that language was fixed and conveyed meaning in and of itself. His transformational grammar was generative and reflected the influence of psychological theories of the day. Chomsky viewed language as a ‘fundamentally psychological phenomenon’. (Chomsky, 1957) Transformational grammars sought to create universal rules which applied to all languages, given the ‘sameness’ of the human brain across cultures. (Edelsky, 1999, p.9; Kress, 1993a, p.23)

Transformational grammars gained much prominence in linguistic studies and have emerged as alternatives to traditional grammars, particularly in the USA, where they dominate language theory and are often referred to as ‘formal’ grammars. (Martin
& Rothery, 1993, p.141) They have not gained such prominence in Australian circles and the terminology has often been confused within policy documents, generally with ‘formal’ referring specifically to traditional grammar. Green has argued that such labelling and arguments between theoretical orientations generally involves an ideological battle for control of pedagogy and literacy practices. (Green, 1996)

With transformational grammars the ability to produce language structures is viewed as innate and grammars seek to explain the rules by which the human brain constructed it. In this way, although linking language to the mind, the new ‘modern’ grammars remained rule-based and prescriptive. Roberts (1967), in introducing his new formal grammar, expressed distinct similarities with traditional grammars:

One must know how to assemble words in sentences and how to pronounce sentences. Grammar is the particular knowledge which enables us to do this.
A language is in fact a very complicated mechanism for the production of sentences. ... To say that a person speaks English is to say that he has built into him, as it were, a set of rules that enable him to produce, or generate, English sentences as he needs them. The rules allow him to come out as occasion demands to buy a bar of candy, tell a stranger how to get to Fifth and Main, plan a picnic, describe the causes of the Revolutionary War. They also enable him to understand the sentences of another person speaking the language.
(Roberts, 1967, p.1)

The emphasis in formal grammars remained on correcting mistakes, favouring the most socially powerful forms of language use. The influence of a rationalistic view of reality remained strong. As Roberts stated:

An explicit grammar aims at showing just what is wrong with such a sentence and how it can be put right.
(Roberts, 1967, p.2)

Formal grammar also remained concerned with the sentence, taken in isolation from a text. Martin and Rothery have compared formal grammar to traditional:

like traditional grammar, formal grammar is concerned with rules. In a sense, because of concern with neurological limitations on possible grammars, the formal grammarian’s rules are also prescriptive ones. But they don’t prescribe what one should say, as in traditional grammar; rather they prescribe what is impossible to say.
(Martin & Rothery, 1993, p.142)

Educational researchers during the 1970s acknowledged the inadequacy of established grammars for explaining the ways in which language conveys meaning:
There can be no general opposition between grammar and usage, but there may be points of conflict between a particular theory of grammar and a particular mode of usage. (Britton et al., 1970, p.192)

While Chomsky’s transformational grammar retained similarities with traditional grammar, and all grammars retain conflict between theory and use, Chomsky has been credited with introducing the focus on the concept of meaning in the study of language:

Meaning came into fashion. Whereas structuralists defined parts of speech on the basis of their formal properties, generative grammarians could define them on semantic grounds... it was part of the movement to value human agency, to trust people to think and know, to recognize, and in so doing, to give power to people. (Edelsky, 1999, p.9)

The new focus on meaning greatly influenced work on grammar and impacted not only on Process and Whole Language approaches, but also influenced the emerging Systemic Functional View of Language and its Functional Grammar.

**Systemic Functional Grammar**

Just as ‘new’ theories influenced educational research so, too, did they influence linguistic theories. Chomsky introduced the concept of meaning to linguistics but not all linguists agreed with the underlying principles of transformational grammar, which decontextualised language. During the 1960s socio-linguists began to look at the social settings in which language occurred, rather than at language as an object, taken in isolation. (Cope et al., 1993; Edelsky, 1999, p.9)

M.A.K. Halliday’s socio-linguistic research had an enormous impact on Australian education. Halliday was an ex-teacher with a strong interest in language education. His work at the time involved the development of a new ‘Functional View of Language’, building on the shifts towards meaning and the social construction of language of the 1950s and 1960s. Halliday was active throughout the 1970s and early 80s and actively opposed the old Skills-based Approaches to teaching language. (Halliday, 1966, 1977, 1985a, 1985b, 1986)

While not agreeing with all the principles of Process Writing, Halliday stressed the intertwining of language and learning and the need for a much broader acceptance of the role of literacy in education. Halliday’s ‘triptych of language and literacy’ formed the basis of a ‘Functional View of Language’ and has remained extremely influential in
Australian literacy education into the 21st century. Figure 3.6 represents Halliday’s ‘triptych’ model of the relationships between language, literacy and learning:

![Figure 3.6: Halliday’s triptych of language and literacy](source: Anstey & Bull, 1996)

Central to the new Systemic theories of language and learning was the influence of culture in creating meaning. Halliday stated, at the Australian Writing Conference, Sydney, in May, 1986:

> Speaking and writing are different ways of meaning, but behind both is the common system we call language. Writing evolved not simply to duplicate the functions of spoken language but to carry out the new functions that arose in advancing cultures ... Successful interaction in a classroom is a mixture of spoken and written words ... In every subject, each complements the other.  
> (Halliday, 1986, p.6)

Halliday developed a Systemic Functional Grammar, aimed not at prescribing rules but meant as a ‘rhetorical’ grammar capable of discussing the ways in which language functions. (Halliday, 1978, 1985a; Halliday & Hasan, 1976, 1985) Systemic theories and Halliday’s Functional Grammar are dealt with at length later in this chapter.

### The Discrediting of Grammar Drills

One of the key influences of the new focus on meaning in language was the discrediting of grammar drills as a teaching methodology. Following Chomsky’s work of the 1950s, researchers in the 1960s and 1970s questioned the reliance on grammar drills as a means of teaching literacy. A number of studies showed that students who practised writing in real contexts improved grammar and punctuation skills at greater rates than students who were given drills in isolation. (For a brief overview of the major studies see McCormick Calkins, 1981; Watson & Sawyer, 1998) Watson and Sawyer have
claimed that studies comparing traditional grammar with transformational grammar show that the explicit teaching of:

English grammar, whether traditional or transformational, has virtually no influence on the language growth of typical secondary school students.

After reviewing the literature regarding the efficacy of grammar studies in developing writing skills Watson and Sawyer concluded:

The evidence in this area throughout the century has been so conclusive that it led Andrew Wilkinson to write in 1986, after summarising the key research, that ‘there is no point in (any further research). It is, after all, centuries since anyone took the trouble to demonstrate that the earth moves round the sun’.
(Watson & Sawyer, 1998, p.312)

A recurring theme in modern Australian literacy debates has been the suitability of Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar as a more able ‘meta-language’ (grammar) than traditional grammar and that students should have the frameworks of Functional Grammar made clear to them through explicit teaching. After reviewing the literature Watson and Sawyer concluded that, despite Systemicist claims that learning Functional Grammar aids children’s writing, the necessary research to support such a view ‘has yet to be done’. (Watson & Sawyer, 1998, p.312)

On the Shoulders of Giants

It is important at this point to acknowledge the links between Chomsky’s psycholinguistic views of language and the Systemicist focus on the social creation of meaning. Many Systemicists, particularly the Genre School, have been scathing in their criticisms of what they have called ‘progressivist’ pedagogies, particularly Process and Whole Language, which sprang from psycholinguistic views of language. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Christie, 1990a; Cope et al., 1993; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993a; Gee, 1990; Hammond, 1990; Kamler, 1995; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993b; Martin, Christie & Rothery, 1987b; Martin, 1992; Ravelli, 1996; Rothery, 1996; Threadgold, 1995) It is important, however, to note that the psycholinguistic views of language prompted theorists such as Labov, Hasan, Bernstein and Halliday to explore alternative avenues of thought. Arguments over pedagogy have often skewed views of the evolution of
knowledge about language as being either / or debates, creating a dichotomy rather than a recursive continuum of theory and critique. (This point is discussed in Chapter 7.)

When viewed historically the evolution of linguistic theories, with their inherent grammars, can be seen to have greatly influenced modern conceptualisations of literacy and language education. Psychology, sociology, education and linguistics have all played complex roles in shaping current understandings about language and learning and in influencing NSW literacy policies. These evolving theories represent a complex body of knowledge from which teachers might draw and to which they require access, in order to function as informed professionals.

**THE ‘NEW’ THEORIES**

Shifts in psycholinguistic views of language and in educational psychology facilitated dramatic developments in the conceptualisation of literacy education in Australia and the United States during the 1970s and 1980s. A major change of focus saw a closer examination of how children learn spoken language and the implications for literacy education. Chomsky raised the question earlier of how children learn the complex rules involved in spoken language and manage to make meaning without direct or explicit instruction. (Chomsky, 1957) Chomsky proposed that learners are ‘prewired’ by nature for language acquisition, with inborn linguistic ability. (Santrock & Yussin, 1978, p.248; Wood, 1988, p.99)

By arguing that children are able to analyse and utilise ‘rules’, or structures, of spoken language prior to instruction, Chomsky raised the notion of the learner as an active participant in the language learning process. (Wood, 1988, p.96-7) A link between oral and written language had been made and the path towards a ‘whole’ language approach began to emerge.

Murray claimed the most significant turning-point in teaching practice of the period stemmed from the 1972 National Seminar on English Teaching, where Britton and Shuy espoused the view that language should be learned ‘by using it’. Their basic assumption was that children in English classes should learn language skills through the use of language modes, rather than sub-sets of skills taught in isolation. (Murray, 1988, p.10)

The ‘new’ approach to English, however, was still unclear for many teachers and a survey of teachers in the early 1970s revealed that many were uncertain about how to
implement the new approaches in the classroom. More than half the teachers surveyed claimed that they believed the English curriculum needed to be relevant to the learners' experience, yet most agreed they still used teacher-centred, Skills-based Approaches, such as the teaching of grammar, spelling and 'correct' forms, in isolation, in their day-to-day teaching. (Murray, 1988, p.8-10)

**Language and Learning in Context**

Central to the new focus on natural language acquisition was the realisation that spoken language is dependent on context for meaning. Research with young children indicated that they often speak using 'holophrases', 'overgeneralisations' or 'telegraphic speech', yet adults are able to understand their intended meaning. (Woolfolk, 1987, p.75)

Research also established that infants learn to correct their own speech, despite the fact that parents rarely correct the structure or content of their early utterings. (Brown & Hanlon, 1970, in Woolfolk, 1987, p.74) Moskowitz (1978) also found that adults involved with younger children continually adjust the complexity of their speech to stay slightly ahead of the learner, which challenges the learner to improve their skills. (Moskowitz, 1978, in Woolfolk, 1987, p.75)

Language gradually came to be seen as far more than a means of communicating and was linked to the entire learning process. Vygotsky claimed language is at the core of a child's cognitive development, rather than being dependent on it. Vygotsky also established language as a social activity, even from the earliest age. (Vygotsky, 1962)

Britton (1971) contended that as we use language to interpret our experiences and store them in our personal banks of knowledge it shapes the knowledge we bring to each new experience and directs the way we learn. (Britton, 1971, p.206-8) Britton emphasised the importance of exploration of expression for the individual, as a means of enhancing learning generally, regardless of the subject area. Walshe pointed out that the work of Vygotsky and other psycholinguists established that writing was not so much a 'tool of learning' but that 'writing is (or can be) learning itself'. (Walshe, 1986, p.165)

One researcher of considerable influence has been Halliday, whose research of the mid-1970s expanded on the importance of the natural social contexts within which language develops. Embodied within the notion of social context is the central issue of the culture of the learner. Halliday asserted that students must be shown the way in
which language works to allow them to interact socially and explore and express
meaning. (Halliday, 1966, p.84-7; Halliday et al., 1973, p.220-224)

Halliday proposed that the drive for development of language comes from within
the individual naturally and that adults help to guide the process in youngsters, but
rarely attempted to just pour information into the ‘empty vessel’. Halliday emphasised a
need, not for ‘prescriptive approaches’ to the teaching of language but for what he
termed a ‘descriptive’, or ‘rhetorical’ approach. (Halliday, 1966; Halliday et al., 1973)
Halliday’s research, particularly in the form of his Functional Grammar, has had a
profound impact on language and literacy education in Australia and is dealt with in
detail later in this chapter.

Smith combined theories of cognition, vision, memory, education and linguistics
to develop new, Process-oriented views of reading. (Smith, 1978) Of particular
importance was Smith’s assertion that a focus on the letter-sound relationship was
misguided. Smith challenged the traditional tenets of skills-based teaching methods
with his ‘nine myths of teaching reading’. (Smith, 1978, p.138-143) By showing that
humans were capable of recognising whole words and chunks of text, rather than
merely piecing together letters, Smith laid the foundations for the Process and Whole
Language approaches that followed. Smith pursued a focus on meaning, through useful,
meaningful exchanges, as the core of language learning and argued that:

the only books that should be read to children or that they should be required to read for
themselves are the ones that genuinely interest them, that contain fascinating rhymes and stories
rather than the bland and unnatural prose to which many children are expected to attend, whether
recounting a boring day in the life of an insipid pair of children or relating that Sam can fan the fat
cat.
.... Children may learn more of the basics of reading from the brand name above a garage, the
words on a sweet wrapper, or the experience of their own names on a pair of boots, than from any
number of books and exercises.
(Smith, 1978, p.145)

Evidence also emerged, showing similarities between the way speech and writing skills
are learned. Using new naturalistic research methodologies, in classroom observations,
Goodman established that context was important for children developing written
language skills. Children were often unable to read words when shown alone, or in lists
that did not make coherent sentences. The same words were found to pose few problems
when placed within a coherent sentence and the children were able to make meaning of
the words, based on the words and meaning around them. (Goodman in Gollasch, 1982)
The child came to be seen as an active participant in the language development process, actually seeking out required knowledge and making the cognitive ‘connections’ required to piece together meaning. Researchers became much more concerned with the social contexts within which language developed. The concept of using language within contexts involved more than merely prescriptively instructing children on fragments of sentences or words and involved a major paradigm shift for most teachers. The new approaches asked teachers to step back and facilitate rather than instruct. McCormick Calkins (1981) described the new focus thus:

When children ask the questions and raise the dilemmas, skills are learned in context. But this requires a pace which is qualitatively different from most of American education ... Young writers need time to run into their own problems, to ask their own questions. Only then can skills be learned in context - for the context is not the subject matter, but the child’s question, the child’s need ...
(McCormick Calkins, 1981, p.90)

By the end of the 1970s teachers’ traditional views of language and literacy acquisition had been challenged by psycholinguistic and socio-linguistic research that refuted many commonly held misconceptions. As the 1980s began the ‘new’ approaches to the teaching of English, with a new focus on the needs of the individual and a new emphasis on meaning, social context, the links between modes of language and the overall cognitive development of the learner began to exert a great deal of influence on the development of new conceptualisations of literacy education.

**PROCESS WRITING**

The new theories of language and learning eventually led to a conceptualisation of writing as a Process, rather than a product. Graves argued that ‘writing should not be seen as something to be produced once a week in composition classes, but rather as a Process of composing meaning’. (Brown & Mathie, 1990, p.1) Like other educators of the day Graves saw danger in adhering to prescriptive approaches to language education, particularly with young children. Graves coined the term ‘Process Writing’ and summed up the beginnings of the approach during an early trip to Australia:

Children want to write. For years we have underestimated their urge to make marks on paper. We have underestimated that urge because of a lack of understanding of the writing process. ... Our research has established that all children can write at 5-6 years old, can enjoy doing so, and
can make at this time some of the most rapid and delightful growth in writing of their entire lives. We should look at the system which imposes meaningless topics and not at the children for the reasons why so many are turned off writing.

... When people own a place, they look after it; but when it belongs to someone else, they couldn’t care less. It’s that way with writing.

From the first day of school we must leave control of the writing with the child - the choice of topic and the writing itself. Then children write more and care more, even about the appearance of the writing on the page.

We teachers must become totally aware of our awful daily temptation to take control away from them, whether by too much prescription or correction or even advice. (Graves in Australia, cited in Walshe, 1981a, p.5, 8&9)

Models of ‘the process of writing’ emerged, attempting to set the stages of writing ‘in concrete’. The processes, themselves, then became prescriptive and limiting. Walshe claimed that this soon gave way to a more liberal approach, where ‘processes of writing’ emerged, which allowed individual flexibility. (Walshe, 1981b; 1986, p.200)

Process writing was soon seen not as a single, systematic approach, but as:

a large number of interwoven composing behaviours or, as John Dewey might have put it, a ‘sequence of intermediate acts’, between deciding to write and presenting the writing to readers. (Walshe, 1986, p.201)

Walshe argued that ‘composing behaviours’, or ‘sequences’, in writing vary constantly, comprised of ‘not a smooth forward flow but rather spurts, pauses, retracing of steps, new starts, crossings-out, and so on’. (Walshe, 1986, p.201)

Process writing was introduced to New South Wales Schools in the early 1980s by the Primary English Teaching Association and soon became popular with many teachers. (Brown & Mathie, 1990, p.1) The approach remains popular in NSW primary classrooms today. The most widely accepted model of the approach to emerge has been the evolutionary model based on the work of Walshe (1981) and devised by Turbull. Figure 3.7 reproduces Turbull’s representation of Walshe’s Process model:
Walshe maintained there are two ‘sub-processes’ involved in Process Writing:

learning-to-write, which comes with the efforts to craft the given piece; and
writing-to-learn, which comes with the efforts to understand, select and clarify subject matter...
Not only do they learn to write by writing, but they simultaneously learn to learn through writing.
(Walshe, 1986, p.203)

The aims of teaching using a Process approach were outlined by Walshe as:

The long-term aim is conscious, confident individual control of
‘process’ [writing].
(Walshe, 1986, p.204)

The Process Writing approach had a huge impact in Australian education, winning
many teacher devotees who felt liberated from the prescriptive, product oriented
practices of the past. Kamler (1981) made the following observations while researching
Process oriented classrooms:

The extraordinary thing was the process, a process that gave Jill room to pull herself out of a rut; a
process that helped her develop an inadequate beginning into a competent end; a process that
allowed her to emerge from the completion of one publishing cycle to the next. Egan’s classroom
allowed Jill to experience her own writing process and develop as a writer ... her behaviour during
the publishing cycle indicated that she had come to value process over product.
(Kamler, 1981, p.88)
The popularity of Process Writing and further developments in psycholinguistics saw the rapid development of the next, closely linked, conceptualisation of literacy education. Whole language incorporates Process Writing into its pedagogy and has endured as a popular conceptualisation within the NSW context.

**Whole Language**

As naturalistic methods of inquiry gained acceptance during the 1980s a picture of the 'Whole' language model gradually emerged. Newman (1985) claimed that Whole Language was difficult to define, being more a philosophy of learning and language than a single theory:

> Whole language activities are those which support students in their use of all aspects of language; students learn about reading and writing while listening; they learn about writing from reading and gain insights about reading and writing.  

Altwerger, Edelsky and Flores defined Whole Language as:

> The whole language view is that reading / writing are whole activities, that any separate skills or sub activities used outside the total activity are different from that subactivity used within the total activity. Moreover, the subactivity is merely the behaviour. It has a role to play in the total activity; it interacts with other subactivities; it engenders consequences. If the role, relationships, interactions and consequences are taken away, what is left in only behaviour - meaningless in itself.  
> (Altwerger, Edelsky and Flores, cited in Wille, 1989, p.59)

Whole language approaches came to be seen not as a set method of approaching the teaching of individual language or literacy skills but of fostering them through facilitation of learning based on natural language development. Whole language was not restricted to English as a subject but attempted to include the entire learning process, across the curriculum.

Goodman argued that the Whole Language approach needs to re-produce the conditions in which language develops naturally and that students need to become involved in meaningful use of language in order to gain control of its power. Goodman also claimed that such approaches to language and learning need to be applied to all subjects, as students rely on language to make sense of the world in all learning
situations. (Goodman, 1986, p.21-3) Table 3.4 reproduces Goodman’s summary of Whole Language principles:

Table 3.4: Goodman’s principles of whole language

Please see print copy for images

(Goodman, 1986, p.8)

At the 1986 Australian Writing Conference, Cambourne suggested that Whole Language needed to be based on both natural language acquisition and the classroom environment:

I would advocate the development of a theory of literacy education based on the principles that underly the natural learning of language as exemplified in the ways that children have been learning to talk since time immemorial.

I know this sounds a little paradoxical. How can the principles which underly a ‘natural’ process like learning to talk be applied in ‘unnatural’ settings like classrooms? To an ‘unnatural’ form of language like writing? I’ve found that it can be done by arranging classrooms so that they do for the written form of language what the real world does for the oral form.

In such classrooms I’ve been trying to develop what the experts in epistemology would call a ‘grounded’ theory, ie. a theory which has its roots in what teachers do with real kids in real classrooms. I believe that this is where such a theory should originate - not from psychology, not from linguistics, but from what teachers and children do in the complex ebb and flow of classroom life.


After observing teachers at work with children, Cambourne concluded that many teachers adhere to Skills-based Approaches, based on repetition, rote and a notion of ‘correctness’ in the use of literacy skills. Cambourne referred to this as ‘the fragmentationist theory of learning language’ and claimed, that while the approach may
well have produced ‘functional literacy’ in learners, it also promotes what Cambourne labelled ‘A-literacy’. (Cambourne, 1988)

Cambourne suggested that while many school leavers are able to engage in literacy skills, to what society has deemed as acceptable levels, most people feel ‘alienated from’ engaging in literacy. In short, despite being able to read and write, most people appeared not to unless absolutely necessary. While the available research suggested that language was learning and learning was language, Cambourne concluded that many learners missed out on the benefits that engagement with literacy might offer due to their ‘A-literate’ attitudes. Cambourne also suggested that the various contexts in which literacy skills might be used were not taught and few people were aware of how to ‘actively engage with the text in order to learn from it rather than be entertained by it’. (Cambourne, 1988, p.23)

Goodman viewed the written word as more than a mere representation of the spoken word and advocated treating the teaching of reading and writing across the curriculum, rather than as a subject only dealt with in isolation. (Goodman, 1986, p.21) Goodman also stressed the need for learners to be immersed in genuine ‘speech and literacy events’, rather than concocted, isolated rules and repetition. (Goodman, 1986, p.21-22) Cambourne agreed with such an approach, declaring:

the oral and written forms of the language are only superficially different’ and should be approached in much the same manner. (Cambourne, 1988, p.29)

Cambourne’s model of Whole Language has been extraordinarily influential in the Australian education scene and remains popular with primary teachers in both Australia and the United States of America. Cambourne’s model of the conditions of literacy learning based on natural language acquisition is reproduced in Figure 3.8:
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Figure 3.8: Cambourne’s model of literacy learning
(Cambourne, 1988, p.33)

Cambourne claimed the ‘conditions of literacy learning’ were the basic principles of Whole Language, interconnecting and leading to ‘durable engagement’ in literacy. According to Cambourne:

These principles are not new. They constitute the core of a movement in literacy education which has been around in various guises for a long time but which has started to gather momentum over the last decade. Currently, it conforms to what is known as a whole language approach.
(Cambourne, 1988, p.203)

Cambourne linked the traditional modes of language: speech, listening, writing and reading into one process. Each was sited in a ‘whole’ language context, reinforcing, expanding, explaining, reducing, (and a host of other vital learning activities) each other. The ‘whole’ process was seen as inter-connected, with each aspect of language inseparable from the others involved in the process.

Within the conceptualisation of literacy as Whole Language literacy came to be seen as much more than merely writing and reading. Cambourne described the more complex notion of literacy thus:

To me, literacy is a word which describes a whole collection of behaviours, skills knowledge, processes and attitudes. It has something to do with our ability to use language in our negotiations with the world. Often these negotiations are motivated by our desires to manipulate the world for our own benefit. Reading and writing are two linguistic ways of conducting these negotiations. So
are talking, listening, thinking, reflecting, and a host of other behaviours related to cognition and critical thinking.
(Cambourne, 1988, p.3)

Cambourne's model has had far reaching implications for teachers, not least its influence on the NSW DET *Writing K-12* policy document. As pointed out by Cambourne, the model of Whole Language challenged everything teachers, learners and parents had previously presumed about learning. (Cambourne, 1988, p.205)

There has also been bitter and vociferous opposition to Whole Language approaches from some sectors of Australian education. Educators aligned with poststructural theories, particularly Systemic Functional Linguistics, have claimed that Whole Language pedagogies preclude the teaching of ‘specifics’ about language, particularly knowledge about grammar and convention. Indeed some researchers have claimed that such teaching was prohibited under a Whole Language approach and that learning was meant to occur by a process somewhat akin to ‘osmosis’. (Barcan, 1988; Callaghan *et al.*, 1993; Carr, 1996; Christie, 1986; Christie, 1991, 1990b; Cope, 1988; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993c; Green *et al.*, 1997; Hammond, 1990; Kamler, 1995; Martin *et al.*, 1987b; Ravelli, 1996; Threadgold, 1995; Wright, Cranny-Francis & Winser, 1992)

Such readings of Whole Language approaches appear to have been misinformed. A check of the literature revealed that Whole Language theorists did not propose that specifics such as grammar, phonics or spelling not be taught, rather that they not be taught in isolation. Rather, Whole Language proponents have argued that specifics about language needed to be taught in the contexts in which they were encountered. In that way the learner receives instruction at the point of need. For example, Watson and Sawyer, noted supporters of Whole Language, nominated areas of grammar requiring attention from Whole Language practitioners. Figure 3.9 represents the 7 areas they argued constitute a ‘minimal intelligible school grammar’:
Numerous researchers and authors have offered practical advice about how teachers might implement the principles of Whole Language, incorporating such practices as the teaching of grammar, spelling, conventions - even Genres and Text Types. (Bean & Bouffler, 1987, 1997; Brown & Mathie, 1990; Butler, Turbill & Cambourne, 1998; Cambourne, 1988; Cochrane, 1992; Mulcahy-Ernt & Stewart, 1994; New South Wales Department of Education, 1987; Turbill, Butler, Cambourne et al., 1991; Walshe, 1998; Wing Jan, 1991a, 1991b)

The Whole Language paradigm appears intended to adapt and evolve to incorporate aspects of other methodologies. Proponents of Whole Language argue that its holistic approach allows teachers flexibility to develop eclectic methodologies to meet the individual needs of learners in a variety of contexts.
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POLICIES AND THE ‘NEW’ THEORIES

Brock (1996) has argued that after the Second World War a Skills-based Approach to literacy, with its focus on the explicit teaching of traditional grammatical rules, exerted far more influence on NSW syllabus documents than it had earlier in the century. Brock cited the following excerpt from the 1944 primary syllabus:

A knowledge of the structure of the sentence and the function of words in the sentence, involving simple parsing, analysis, synthesis and the rules of syntax, should be progressively imparted during the first three years of schooling.

(Board of Secondary Studies (1944) cited in Brock, 1996, p.47)

NSW was quick to embrace the new, emerging structuralist views of language and the 1953 syllabus adopted a focus on:

form rather than substance, with ideas [function] rather than feelings, with analysis rather than imaginative response.

(Brock, 1996, p.47)

Brock has argued that assessment procedures, in the few senior high schools that existed, were controlled by the University of Sydney and ensured that close ‘textual analysis and dissection’ based on structural linguistic theory dominated literacy education in the secondary school until the 1960s. (Brock, 1996, p.48-9) The 1961 primary syllabus placed a high emphasis on repetitive, fragmented, Skills-based Approaches:

Drill, practice and revision are indispensable to success. A fundamental principle of revision is that it should precede the introduction of new work, and that, where it is designed to revise an old lesson, the interval between the old lesson and the revision lesson should be short.

(New South Wales Department of Education, 1961, p.29)

Green (1996) argued that there has been a fluctuating obsession with grammar in the teaching of English in NSW since the turn of the century. (Green, 1996) According to Green the focus on traditional grammar declined during the mid-twentieth century but was given renewed emphasis by the introduction of compulsory comprehensive secondary education with the Wyndham Scheme in the early 1960s. The renewed emphasis coincided with the emergence of Skills-based Approaches. Green pointed out that Wyndham, the architect of the NSW compulsory comprehensive high school
system, was a firm advocate of rote learning the rules of grammar as a means of improving literacy skills:

> the almost automatic and unconscious application of the test of grammar in speech and writing will come only if the pupil has, in the primary school, been thoroughly grounded in its rules. (Wyndham, 1957, p.91, cited in Green, 1996, p.219)

The swing towards learner-centred approaches impacted almost immediately on NSW education policies. Perhaps the most significant shift in policy in NSW education history was the introduction of the ‘Wyndham Scheme’ of compulsory, uniform secondary education in 1964. The new policies implemented with the new system began to reflect the emerging theories:

**Nature of the Language Arts.**

In recent years the term language arts has gained widespread acceptance as a description of those fields of study traditionally known as English Literature and English Language... The term is appropriate because it implies in the adjective language a sound teaching in the basic communication skills of listening, speaking and writing, and in the noun arts that these skills of speaking and writing in their most highly developed forms become literature to be appreciated as arts throught the developed skills of listening and reading. So from listening and reading critically in order to learn from his fellows, the child turns naturally to creative story. Furthermore, from this stimulating experience of literature arises the desire to use his language skills not only for the effective communication of everyday thought and feelings but also for the creative expression of his own aspirations and imaginative inner life. The value of the language arts programmed, for pupils and teachers alike, is that it stresses the integration of skills in English studies and their use in effective communication.

(New South Wales Department of Education, 1967, p.2)

The organiser presented in the syllabus also reflected distinct shifts in the roles of both the learner and the teacher:

In the selection of content this syllabus is concerned with:

- The Child’s Inner Needs
- Social [language] Experience
- Enrichment of Aesthetic Experience
- Acquisition of Skills and Knowledge
- Development of Right Attitudes and Habits
- The Nature of Learning and the Learning Process
- The Teacher’s Freedom and Responsibility

(New South Wales Department of Education, 1967, p.2)
Experience with use of the four modes of language was explicitly emphasised for the first time. (New South Wales Department of Education, 1967, p.3) NSW policies began a long trend of incorporating new educational theories into policies almost as quickly as they were being developed. Such responsiveness to emergent theories placed great demands for major paradigm shifts on the part of teachers' understandings of language and literacy.

Prior to publication of the Reading K-12 Document (1979) secondary school teachers received little direction from policies about which of the new approaches should be implemented and, if so, how to go about introducing the new concepts to the classroom. (New South Wales Department of Education, 1979) Murray (1988) has argued that the new Reading K-12 document offered no easy formula for instant literacy learning but rather a generalised introduction to various approaches, based on psycholinguistic theories. (Murray, 1988, p. 14) Reading K-12 and its support documents placed emphasis on the reconstruction of meaning by the learner, rather than the mere function of reproducing sounds in either speech or writing. The document recommended the use of texts that children could relate to and would find relevant, the use of whole texts, rather than words or letters in isolation and a personalised approach, where the reader could become involved with the text. It also established a focus on context in the creation of meaning. (New South Wales Department of Education, 1979)

The swing in theories, towards a more holistic approach to the teaching of English and the importance of literacy for learning, continued to be absorbed into, and reflected in, the policies of the secondary education system. The Secondary Schools Board Syllabus in English: Years 7–10, (1984) avoided earlier skills-based, fragmented approaches, stating that it was based on the following principles:

1. Growth in language is integral to the student's personal growth as a thinking, feeling person.
2. It is mainly through language that human beings explore their public and private worlds, organise their experience and form their values.
3. Language is best developed by having all students engage in an abundance of purposeful language activities that are appropriate to their needs, interests and capacities.
4. The contexts in which students should engage in language learning activities are personal expression, literature, mass media and everyday communication, formal and informal.
5. While students do learn in other ways, learning for the most part occurs as students use language: as they talk, listen, read, write and observe. Hence English is central to the achievement of the aims of the total curriculum.

(Secondary Schools Board NSW, 1984, p.2)
The syllabus contained sections dealing with the four modes of language: speaking, listening, reading and writing, as represented through the contexts of literature and the media, with guidelines for assessment and evaluation. The 1984 syllabus remained in force during the course of this study.

In 1987 the New South Wales Department of Education released the *Writing K-12* document, emphasising the need for writing to be taught as ‘a process of composing meaning for an intended readership’. (p.6) The aims of writing in schools were stated as ‘help[ing] students [to] become better writers and better learners’. (p.4) Fundamental to those aims was a ‘recognition of [learning’s] relationship to talking, listening and reading’. (p.5) The fact that ‘language has a cultural context’ was stressed and the booklet stated that children's own dialects and language forms should be valued when attempting to teach standard forms of English. (New South Wales Department of Education, 1987, p.4-6)

Perhaps the most important aspect of the document was the acceptance of the role of literacy in the learning process. Emphasis was placed on writing ‘across the curriculum’, in all subject areas, as a means of learning. Guidelines were presented for teachers in each subject area in secondary and primary schools. (New South Wales Department of Education, 1987, ch.4) The document did not set compulsory levels or content for students, but stressed the need for each child's needs to be evaluated independently. *Writing K-12* clearly embraced the innovations in language education brought about by both Process and Whole Language approaches, which in turn reflected the trends in psycho and socio-linguistic theories. The document also incorporated much of Cambourne’s model of Whole Language. (New South Wales Department of Education, 1987) Although the document itself was short-lived, its impact remained. A study by the Australian Language and Literacy Council concluded:

*Writing K-12*, prescribed in NSW in 1987, set international benchmarks in establishing a coherent set of principles for writing, a primary school syllabus for writing, writing in the secondary school and-perhaps above all - clear strategic and practical curriculum frameworks for writing across all the subject areas of that time.

...*Writing K-12* was produced after an exhaustive process of consultations, workshops and conferences involving classroom teachers and curriculum specialists from throughout NSW over several years. It was not implemented beyond 1988. But it remains a splendid prototype or exemplar of teaching literacy in writing within and across all subject areas throughout the K-12 school curriculum.

(Australian Language and Literacy Council, 1995, p.11)
Chapter 3: Review of Literature

Psycholinguistic theories of language development, influenced partially by socially constructed views of language, dominated literacy policies in NSW until the emergence of the next major conceptualisation of literacy education – a Systemic Functional View of Language. Much of the innovation had been achieved through near-revolutionary research methods and placed huge demands on teachers to manage dramatic paradigm shifts in the ways they perceived learners, learning and language.

The Battle for Ideological Control of Policies

During the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s a number of heated debates emerged in a blatant struggle for control of literacy pedagogy in NSW schools. It has been widely argued that those debates represented blatant battles for ideological control of policies rather than intellectual attempts to refine theories. (Brock, 1998; Cambourne, 1995; Coles, 1998; Green, 1996; Lee, 1997; Sawyer, 1995; Sawyer, Watson & Gold, 1998)

Cope and Kalantzis (1988& 1993), praised the basic philosophy towards literacy stated in Writing K-12 but were critical of the inclusion of Process Writing and Whole Language, what they termed ‘progressivist’ pedagogies, in the document. Along with other members of the Systemic Functional Linguistic movement they claimed that ‘progressivist’ pedagogies lacked direction and had no concrete guidelines for teachers to follow in areas such as spelling, grammar, Genre and evaluation. Added to this, Systemicists claimed that Process and Whole Language pedagogies perpetuated dominant language forms and social structures. They argued that ‘progressivist’ pedagogies did not allow the development of a ‘Critical Literacy’. (Callaghan & Rothery, 1988; Christie, 1996, 1997, 1990b; Cope, 1988, p.15; Cope et al., 1993; Gee, 1990; Hammond, 1990; Kamler, 1995; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993b; Martin et al., 1987b; Martin, 1993; Martin & Rothery, 1980; McLaren & Lankshear, 1993; Ravelli, 1996; Rothery, 1989; Threadgold, 1995) The alleged lack of teaching ‘specifics’ has been a constant in the criticisms by Systemicists of Whole Language pedagogies.

Members of the Genre school have long held that Whole Language approaches rely on the condition of ‘immersion’ (Cambourne, 1988) to provide examples and modelling of appropriate Genres for students. They hold that Whole Language methods prevent teachers from addressing issues such as grammar, spelling, punctuation and modelling of Genres and that Whole Language teachers expect students to learn such
Chapter 3: Review of Literature

skills by ‘osmosis’. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Christie, 1990a; Cope et al., 1993; Martin, Christie & Rothery, 1987a) Such an argument clearly fails to take account of the other conditions presented in Cambourne’s model, particularly ‘demonstration’ (accompanied by ‘engagement’), ‘expectation’, ‘use’, ‘approximation’ and ‘response’. (Cambourne, 1988) The host of teaching resources available incorporating Whole Language approaches in the teaching of specifics, including grammar, punctuation, modelled writing, phonics and spelling also appears to contradict the assertions made by critics of psycholinguistic theories.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s a group of Systemic theorists embarked on a campaign of political lobbying and succeeded in having the Writing K-12 document withdrawn. (Cope et al., 1993, p.239) Since that time social views, particularly Systemic Linguistic conceptualisations, of literacy education have dominated NSW school policies.

**POSTSTRUCTURALISM AND THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF LITERACY**

As new theories of language and literacy learning emerged during the 1960s and 1970s poststructuralist social theories began to infiltrate the study of linguistics. The new foci also prompted critique of psycholinguistic theories, particularly regarding meaning and cultural context. New examinations of the cultural creation of meaning within various ethnic groups soon led researchers to examine the social functions that language serves. (Cazden et al., 1972) Thus, a new focus on cultural context and the social creation of meaning emerged concurrent with, and in opposition to, psycholinguistic educational theories.

During the 1970s Bernstein developed complex theories about relationships between linguistic ‘codes’ and the particular social settings, especially those of families, in which they developed. By using notions of ‘restricted’ and ‘elaborated’ codes Bernstein argued that these codes were linked to social class and access to power in society and constructed a person’s reality. (Bernstein, 1977)

‘Elaborate’ codes came to be associated with the middle and upper classes and ‘restricted’ codes with the working class. The more elaborate the code an individual could access, the greater their power and mobility within society, particularly in accessing knowledge and other ‘social goods’. (Bernstein, 1977, 1990, 1996)
Bernstein’s codes promoted a ‘cultural transmission’ view of literacy pedagogy, whereby dominant culture was the valued objective. Bernstein became associated with the ‘cultural deficit’ view of language acquisition, whereby ‘restricted codes’ meant that an individual’s discourse was inferior to that offered by ‘elaborate’ codes. Restricted codes came to be viewed as underdeveloped uses of language, often referred to as ‘deficit theory’. (Bernstein, 1977; Halliday, 1978; Street, 1995) Social theorists soon questioned the application of values to language use. Thus, Bernstein has often been credited with prompting others, particularly Labov, to move beyond the ‘cultural deficit’ notion of restricted codes, and expand the traditional view of discourse from ‘the deficit hypothesis into the difference hypothesis’, after Labov (1973). (Anstey & Bull, 1996; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993a; Giroux, 1993; Halliday, 1978; Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Lankshear, 1996; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993b; Luke & Freebody, 1997; Misson, 1998; Muspratt, Luke & Freebody, 1997; Street, 1995) Educators embraced the notion of difference over deficit, the influence of which is evident in Process, Whole and ‘Systemic Functional Views’ of language.

A Social View of Language came not only to accept differences in discourse but also sought to address issues of social justice. Critical social theory demanded that it was not enough to merely accept difference, rather that educators should challenge the social structures which establish barriers to social mobility. Debate has raged, however, about which pedagogy is suitable for critiquing social structures and processes and for teaching what Giroux termed ‘the politics of difference’. (Giroux, 1993) According to Giroux passive acceptance, albeit benevolent, merely perpetuates power imbalances in favour of those already in power. Giroux articulated the views of many critical social theorists when calling on educators to challenge social structures through literacy education:

I want to explore a number of issues about the importance of redefining literacy as a form of cultural citizenship and politics that provides the conditions for subordinate groups to learn the knowledge and skills necessary for self and social empowerment, that is, to live in a society in which they have the opportunity to govern and shape history rather than be consigned to its margins. Literacy in this sense is not just a skill or knowledge, but an emerging act of consciousness and resistance.
(Giroux, 1993, p.367)

Critical social theorists challenged cultural theorists’ traditional views of language as cultural transmission and developed social interpretations of discourse. Literacy was
linked to ideology, power and social mobility. Street defined traditional views of
language as ‘autonomous’ and ‘Critical Social Views’ as the ‘ideological model’:

‘autonomous’ literacy ‘exponents studied literacy in its technical aspects, independent of social
context, and an ideological model employed by researchers whose concern has been to see literacy
practices as inextricably linked to cultural and power structures in a given society.
(Street, 1984, re-examined in Street, 1995, p.161)

Arguing against the traditional notion of cultural studies, critical theorists combined
technical models of language structures with evolving notions of the social creation of
meaning. Street argued that in the ‘Critical Social View’ of literacy the ideological view
incorporated the two approaches into one:

I see the ideological model as itself providing a synthesis between ‘technicist’ and ‘social’
approaches, since it avoids the polarisation introduced by any attempt to separate out the
‘technical’ features of literacy, as though the ‘cultural’ bits could be added on later. ... The
ideological model ... does not attempt to deny technical skill or the cognitive aspects of reading
and writing, but rather understands them as they are encapsulated within cultural wholes and
within structures of power. In that sense the ideological model subsumes rather than excludes the
work undertaken within the autonomous model.
(Street, 1995, p.161)

Power in literacy came to be seen as rooted more in hidden ideologies than in explicit
functions. Merely learning to read and write did not, according to critical social
theorists, lead to literacy. Lankshear and McLaren (1993) articulated the evolving view
of the social construction of language thus:

Literacy must be approached as discursive practice, as discourse or, more accurately, as many
discourses which in inscribing meaning are crucially involved in the formation of human subjects.
Literacy researchers must uncover the relational manner in which meaning is produced, unveiling
the interplay between subjectivities, objects and social practices within specific relations of power.
Literacies, and knowledge more generally, are identified as forms of discursive production
which organise ways of thinking into ways of doing and being. As discourse, literacies shape
social practices of which they are mutually constitutive. This makes literacy inherently political.
... Meaning, and hence being and human subjectivity, are constituted within and through discourse.
(Lankshear & McLaren, 1993a, p.10)

Poststructuralism and Literacy Education

Central to the emergence of both the Systemic Functional View of language and a
Critical Social View of language has been the alignment of both schools of thought with
poststructuralist views of language, along with an avowed opposition to postmodern
pedagogies, such as Process Writing and Whole Language. Postmodern approaches
have been realised in Australia through Process and Whole Language approaches, which some theorists aligned with poststructural theories have derided as ‘progressivist’ pedagogies. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Cazden, 1988; Christie, 1986; Christie, 1990b; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993c; Martin et al., 1987b)

Poststructuralists built on the work of earlier structural linguists in focusing on meaning in language but have sought to include the ways in which social systems contribute to the creation of, and access to, meaning. For the poststructuralist meaning is not fixed in language but is a politically ‘contested event’ between participants and social structures. In that way, literacy becomes literacies, with multiple constructions competing for dominance. (McLaren & Lankshear, 1993, p.385) McLaren and Lankshear (1993) offered the following view of the philosophical framework underpinning a poststructuralist view of literacies as social processes:

Poststructuralism is less deterministic. Much more emphasis is placed on meaning as a contested event, a terrain of struggle in which individuals take up often conflicting subject positions in relation to signifying practices. Poststructuralists acknowledge explicitly that meaning consists of more than signs operating and being operated in a context. Rather, there is struggle over signifying practices. This struggle is eminently political and must include the relationship among discourse, power, and difference. Poststructuralists put much more emphasis on discourse and the contradictions involved in subjective formation. They regard transcendental signifiers as discursive fictions.

In addition, poststructuralism draws attention to the significant danger of assuming that concepts can exist independently of signifying systems or language itself, or that meaning can exist as a pure idea, independently of its contextual embeddedness in the materiality of speech, gesture, writing and so on. (McLaren & Lankshear, 1993, p.385)

Of central significance in influencing directions of Systemic Functional Linguistics theory and policy in Australia has been the notion that the language system controls the meanings those engaging with it are able to make or take from language:

Poststructuralism does not locate the human subject within the structure of language, that is within the rules of signification. Rather, the subject is an effect of the structure of language and the signifying system. (McLaren & Lankshear, 1993, p.385)

In this way the structure (signifying system) of text assumes a primary position in the creation of meaning and ideology and a persons’ position within that ideology. (Misson, 1998) Misson has argued that poststructuralist views of the discursive construction of subjectivity demand examination of the ways in which texts position individuals and the construction of their beliefs. (Misson, 1998) Poststructuralist views of the social construction of meaning in language greatly influenced the development of Systemic
Functional Linguistics in Australia and saw the emergence of the most influential conceptualisation of literacy and language learning to affect NSW literacy policies in the 1990s, a Functional View of Language.

**SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS**

While Chomsky’s focus on meaning in the 1950s was hailed as a breakthrough in linguistics not all theorists agreed that language could be understood by the deconstruction of sentences. New social theories and Chomsky’s focus on meaning in language use inspired socio-linguists to examine the broader social contexts, in which language was used, as a means of understanding language development. A new, major movement in linguistics, with a focus on the social functions of language, was formed – ‘Systemic Functional Linguistics’.


Halliday worked in the school education system in Britain before entering into linguistics and eventually taking the Chair in Linguistics at the University of Sydney in the late 1970s. (For an overview of the evolution of Systemic work in Australia see Cope et al., 1993) Halliday’s Functional View of Language and Systemic Functional Grammar have underpinned all NSW English Syllabus and policy documents since 1994. (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1994, 1997, 1998b, 1998d, 1999c; New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1997a, 1997b, 1998e, 1999b; New South Wales Department of School Education, 1997a, 1997b) A ‘Genre’ approach to writing, based on Systemic Functional Linguistics, has also dominated NSW policies since 1994. (Genre Theory is dealt with later in this chapter)

**Influences of Systemic Thought**

Halliday’s Functional View of Language has come to act as an umbrella term, within the NSW education system, for frameworks devised by other theorists aligned with
poststructural theories, the most influential in the NSW context being Genre-based approaches to writing. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Callaghan & Rothery, 1988; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993b; Derewianka, 1990, 1996, 1998; Martin, 1992, 1997) Figure 3.10 represents the positioning of conceptualisations of language and literacy education which utilize a poststructural framework and their hierarch within the Systemic Functional framework:

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 3.10:** Conceptualisations of literacy operating within a postructuralist Systemic Functional framework

The above diagram is not meant to represent a strict hierarchy of influence, but rather to symbolise the close relationships each school of thought has shared with the others and to assist a linear presentation of their often recursive influences.
Halliday’s Functional View of Language

Systemic Functional Grammar: the theory of grammar developed by M.A.K. Halliday and his colleagues which interprets the structure of the clause with respect to the meanings it makes in text (which is by definition always situated in context) (Kress, 1993b, p.254)

As developing psycho-linguistic conceptualisations of literacy education placed greater emphasis on the interconnectedness of language and learning, poststructural linguists also sought ways of developing conceptualisations of language education which emphasised the centrality of language to the learning process. Halliday was at the forefront of such attempts. At the 1986 Australian Writing Conference Halliday raised the point:

I don't think we need a theory of literacy education but rather a theory of learning based on language ... The psychologists haven't given it to us. It won't come out of linguistics without the help of the classroom, nor vice versa ... I'm ending with a commercial: my colleagues and I have been working for some years with teachers towards a theory of language which is at the same time a theory of learning - of learning through language. (Halliday, 1986, p.6)

As examined earlier, Halliday was involved in the early evolution of ‘language as learning’ approaches of the 1970's. Like other theorists of the late 1970's and 1980's Halliday opposed traditional, ‘prescriptive approaches’ to the teaching of English. (Halliday, 1966, 1986; Halliday et al., 1973) Halliday focused on language as a social semiotic and considered the implications for literacy education. (Halliday, 1978; Halliday & Hasan, 1985) Halliday’s ‘triptych of language and literacy’ (Figure 3.6) has become the cornerstone of the Systemic Functional View of language.

Halliday built on the work of Malinowski (1923), Firth (1935 & 1950) and Hymes (1967) in developing the concept of ‘context of situation’ in the creation of meaning. Concern for relationships between ‘social structure’, ‘social system’ and the ‘adult language system’ led Halliday to develop a theory of the functions of language as social semiotics, or ‘systems of meaning’. (Halliday & Hasan, 1985, p.3-18) Halliday also examined relationships between speaking and writing and developed a grammatical framework for discussing the relationships he found. (Halliday, 1978, 1985b)

Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar, published as Introduction to Functional Grammar in 1985 had an immediate and immense impact on linguistics and
language education in Australia. Collerson (1997), an educational linguist in the Hallidayan tradition, has claimed that Systemic Functional Grammar:

treats language as a social phenomenon. It begins not with phonemes, words or sentences but with the social context, because this is the basis for the functions of language and their associated meanings. A functional grammar accounts for how these are realised in texts through the choice of grammatical structures and vocabulary. It also treats variation in language usage as an essential aspect of language and gives due recognition to the grammar of both spoken and written language. (Collerson, 1997, p.25)

Martin and Rothery have compared Halliday's Functional Grammar with other types of grammar in relation to ‘their social purposes and goals’ in the diagram replicated in Figure 3.11:

![Figure 3.11: The three major kinds of grammar](https://example.com/image)


Derewianka combined Halliday's views of a Functional View of language with those of the 'Genre School' to form a definition, part of which was later shortened and adopted by the NSW DET as official policy in literacy education:

A functional approach to language looks at how language enables us to do things - to share information, to enquire, to express attitudes, to entertain, to argue, to get our needs met, to reflect,
to construct ideas, to order our experience and make sense of the world.

It is concerned with how people use real language for real purposes. At the heart of a functional model of language is an emphasis on meaning and on how language is involved in the construction of meaning. It sees language as a resource for making meaning.

A functional approach to language is not concerned with a set of rules which prescribe correct and incorrect usage.

Language in real life is not a complete, ideal system conforming to neat, pre-determined categories. Language is dynamic and ever-evolving.

We develop language to satisfy our needs in society. Language is functional when it fulfils those needs effectively.

(Derewianka, 1990, p.3-4)

Halliday claimed that answers to the successful teaching of English lay in a functional and explicit understanding of the structures and functions of language, as framed within his Systemic Functional Grammar. (Halliday, 1985a) Such linguistic analysis, according to Halliday, offers insight to a wide range of language-related behaviours, including:

- initial literacy
- children's writing
- foreign languages
- analysis of textbooks
- error analysis
- teaching of literature
- teacher education

(Halliday, 1985a, p.xxx)

Systemicists in the Hallidayan tradition see the learner as central to the learning process and believe that ‘language is best learnt in the context of actual language use’.

(Collerson, 1994, p.144) Collerson represented Halliday’s model in the diagram reproduced in Figure 3.12:
Context and Language as Social-Semiotic

Functional Grammar is concerned with texts, rather than sentences and examines language from ‘within the broad context of culture (or cultures)’ and from the ‘perspective of grammar’. (Collerson, 1994, p.2; Martin & Rothery, 1993, p.144) In this way the focus is on language as a social-semiotic, the way in which language achieves meaning, or social purpose. As such the traditional views of language and text broaden considerably under a ‘Systemic Functional View’:

In their simplest forms texts are taken to be language that is doing some job in some context, as opposed to isolated words or sentences ... So any instance of living language that is playing some part in a context of situation, we shall call a text. It may be either spoken or written, or indeed in any other medium of expression that we like to think of. (Halliday & Hasan, 1985, p.10)

The context in which language is created, and in turn attempted to be understood, is held by Systemicists as central to the creation of meaning. Collerson explains the Hallidayan Functional View of context thus:
A Systemic View of Context.

In the broadest sense context is the whole culture in which we live, but we are always operating in more specific situations, which can be described in terms of three components:

- the tenor of the human relationships involved
- the mode of language use (e.g. active or reflective, spoken or written)
- the field of activity or subject matter involved.

These three components of context, taken together, largely determine the kind of language or register we use on any occasion. In this way, the social context can be seen to shape the language system itself: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and everything else. (Collerson, 1997, p.4)

Where a listener is present, to interpret the full range of context available in the creation of spoken language, Systemicists believe that a reader is dependent on the context created by the writer to assist in making meaning of written text. The context that the reader takes to a reading situation, or the physical context in which it is read, matters external to the text, are not considered central:

Written texts ... are typically produced in contexts removed by time and distance from those in which they are read. Consequently the writer cannot depend on a shared context to convey any of the meaning. The meaning must be contained in the text itself. (Hammond, 1990, p.32)

In this way, Systemicists claim that a skilled writer requires the ability to ‘decontextualise’ their writing as they create it,

that is, a written text must be independent of the context in which it is created. It must be decontextualised so that it makes sense in another time and place for a reader who may never meet the writer. (Hammond, 1990, p.35)

Systemicists believe that earlier approaches, including the use of traditional grammar and Whole Language approaches, did not provide educators with the means to make the processes involved in making meaning in written text explicit to learners. Kamler claimed that, without reference to a Systemic analysis of language, teachers did not have adequate tools available to us to help our students learn about language. (Kamler, 1995, p.3)

One of the key criticisms Systemicists have made of earlier conceptualisations of literacy and language learning has been the claim that Whole Language and Process-
based approaches treat spoken and written language in the same manner. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Christie, 1990a; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993a; Hammond, 1990; Martin et al., 1987b) By using Functional Grammar, to analyse text, linguists have concluded

there are real and significant similarities in spoken and written texts in English, these arise because spoken and written texts draw on the same linguistic system.
(Hammond, 1990, p.32)

While Systemic Functional linguists believe there is a link between oral and written language, they do not accept that the two are best learned in the same manner. Systemicists believe:

a more conscious, deliberate and analytical effort is involved in learning to read and write than in learning to speak.
(Hammond, 1990, p.51)

Central to Systemicists' opposition to Process and Whole Language approaches has been their assertion that both approaches suggest that writing is best learned without direct instruction and that written language is learned in the same manner as spoken language For example:

it is suggested, [in whole language] literacy will be best learned through a mainly unconscious adoption of the features of the written mode.
(Hammond, 1990, p.26)

In contrast to the 'process' learning model (where language is seen to be learnt naturally, almost by osmosis, given the right experience)
(Callaghan et al., 1993, p.180)

Such readings of what Systemicists have called 'progressivist' approaches appear to ignore assertions by 'progressivists' that spoken and written language are, indeed, quite different. For example, Cambourne stated:

The oral and written forms of the language are only superficially different.
By 'superficially different' I do not mean 'trivially different'.
I'm using superficial in the sense of 'on the surface' not in the sense of 'unimportant'.
Of course the two modes of language differ in many complex and interesting ways.
Of course the two require different kinds of knowledge which learners must acquire in order to operate with and on them.

Of course there are certain aspects of the use of the written mode which require specific knowledge which can't be carried over from the oral mode and vice versa.

... Reading, writing, speaking and listening, while different in many respects, are but parallel manifestations of the same vital human function - the mind's effort to create meaning.
(Cambourne, 1988, p.29)
The focus in Functional Grammar is not on ‘correct sentences’ complying with arbitrary rules of usage but on whole texts, with a text being ‘a stretch of language that hangs together and is appropriate to its context.’ (Martin & Rothery, 1993, p. 144) Martin cited Halliday’s concern with register and structure, through the concept of cohesion, as providing the nature of ‘appropriateness’:

A text is a passage of discourse which is coherent in these two regards: it is coherent with respect to the context of situation, and therefore consistent in register; and it is coherent with respect to itself [structure], and therefore cohesive.


Halliday’s model represents register as a creation of ‘cohesion’ between the language system (adult linguistic system) and ‘social context’ (expressed in field, tenor, mode). The learner is meant to move through phases of language development in mastering the creation of social meaning. Halliday’s representation of language as social semiotic and the way in which the language system is mastered by children is reproduced in Figure 3.13:

Figure 3.13: Halliday’s schematic representation of language as social semiotic and child’s mode of access to it
(Halliday, 1978, p.69)
In a Hallidayan Functional View of Language the social construction of meaning is considered at two levels, the context of situation (realised through register) and through the organisation of language (realised through the metafunctions of grammar). (Collerson, 1994, p.3; Halliday, 1985a; Martin & Rothery, 1993, p.144) Hasan aligned relationships between Halliday’s components of ‘semiotic structure of situation’ [register] and ‘functional components of semantics’ in Table 3.5:

**Table 3.5: Components of register and their functions**

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(Hasan, 1995, p.222)

**The Location of Genre Within Halliday’s Model**

In the Hallidayan Functional View of Language control of the metafunctions of language are the ultimate goal, towards which the learner strives. Of central importance is Halliday’s assertion that the components of context of situation typically combine with the components of the adult linguistic system at the level of register, within field, tenor and mode, as illustrated in Figure 3.13. Cultural context, social context and the linguistic system meet within register to affect and influence one another in the creation of ‘text in situation’, in a ‘didactic’ relationship. (Halliday, 1978, 1994; Halliday & Hasan, 1985; cited in Hasan, 1995, p.183)

In this way the structures of text ‘types’ are determined by the combination of the adult linguistic system and the cultural and social contexts, combining to establish the social purpose of the text at the level of register. Each component of context and language system instruct and influence each other in the creation of language in context. In this way Genre, according to Halliday is situated within mode (in the realisation of the textual metafunction) which is imbedded within register. (Halliday, 1978, p.61-2; Halliday & Hasan, 1985, p.24)

In presenting the model of Genre dominant in NSW policies Martin (1992) claimed that Halliday had been vague about the location of Genre, allowing Martin to hypothesise about Genre as a controlling agent in language structure, placing it at a
higher level than did Halliday. (Martin, 1992) However, Halliday’s writings appear to be clear about his positioning of Genre within mode. Hasan, Halliday’s partner and close colleague in semiotic research, added weight to this interpretation by confirming that both Hasan and Halliday remained convinced that Genre within a Functional View of Language must remain firmly located as a component of mode, standing in ‘didactic relationship’ to the other components of language. (Hasan, 1995, 221-222) (The issue of inconsistencies between Systemic theory and Genre theory are explored further in Chapter 7.)

**Register and Genre Within a Hallidayan Framework**

The concept of register is central to the Hallidayan view of language. It is the ‘triadic formula’ of register, with its components of tenor, field and mode, that Halliday claimed is responsible for:

> determining rather than as including the text; they represent the situation in its generative aspect. (Halliday, 1978, p.62)

According to Halliday the three components of register combine to form the context of situation and the context of situation in turn ‘generates’ and ‘determines’ both the structure and content of the text. (Halliday, 1978, p.63-5) Halliday established the following definitions of the components of register,

- **Field** - the ongoing activity and the particular purposes that the use of language is serving within the context of the activity;
- **Tenor** - the interrelations among the participants (status and role relationships);
- **Mode** - covers roughly Hymes’ channel, key and Genre.

... The categories of field, tenor and mode are thus determinants and not components of speaking; collectively they serve to predict text, via the intermediary of the code, or (since ‘code’ has been used in a number of different senses) to predict what is called the register. (Halliday, 1978, p.62)

It is important to note that, as the above quote illustrates, Halliday has been clear that a Functional View of Language places Genre as a component of mode, within register. Hallidayan Systemic theory considered Genre to combine with the ‘adult linguistic system’ at the level of register, where the combined categories of register determine
which aspects of the language system will be employed to function in the social occasion. In this way Genre is argued to be but one aspect of the processes which determine linguistic structure. For Halliday mode is a small but important part of register, which ‘activates’ the textual component of language. (Halliday, 1978, p.63)

Halliday’s view of Genre appears to conflict with Martin’s model of Genre as an overriding social process, which controls register. Martin’s model is dealt with in the section titled Genre Theory but it is important to note here that as late as 1996 Halliday asserted that generic structures are represented within register, a very different focus to that of Martin. (Halliday, 1996, p.366-7) (This point is explored further in Chapter 7.)

It is also important to note that, according to Halliday, social actions [including purpose] and relationships are realised through the components of field and tenor, which form a ‘didactic’ relationship with other components of language at the level of register. (Halliday, 1978, 1996; Hasan, 1995) This directly conflicts with Martin’s model, which places social purpose and role outside register, within Martin’s conceptualisation of the stratum of Genre. (Martin, 1992, 1997) It is this divergence that Hasan has insisted makes Martin’s model inconsistent with the Systemic framework. (Hasan, 1995) These differences and their implications for NSW literacy education are examined further in Chapter 7.

**Functional Grammar and Literacy Education**

Halliday’s Functional Grammar appears not to be aimed at prescribing formulas or rules for language use, but at providing a descriptive, rhetorical language with which to discuss the ways in which language is used to achieve social functions. A tenet of Halliday’s teaching has been that language must be taught through functional, meaningful use. (Halliday, 1966, 1977, 1986, 1996; Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Halliday et al., 1973) Those who follow a Hallidayan tradition do, however, call for scaffolded, explicit teaching of meta-language to enhance conscious knowledge about the possibilities of language use. Within Australian education in recent years Halliday’s Functional Grammar has become the meta-language of choice.

The importance of the role of grammar, the degree to which it should be taught or the manner in which it should be taught are all issues subject to dispute amongst Systemicists. Those aligned with the Hallidayan school see Functional Grammar as a useful tool, but do not necessarily argue that it be taught in explicit, systematic ways to
students. (see, for instance: Collerson, 1994; Halliday, 1977, 1985a, 1985b; Kamler, 1995, 1997; Kress, 1993a; Threadgold, 1997) Collerson explained the rhetorical nature of Functional Grammar and its role in language education thus:

The reason teachers should know something about grammar is not so that they can teach it all to their students in a systematic way - or not necessarily. There is a difference between what a teacher knows and what the teacher might teach to students. Furthermore, it is not necessary for children (or anyone) to know the grammar in order to be able to use the language. But if teachers have some knowledge of grammar, it can help them to understand how language is being used and to talk with children about their use of it. And as teachers develop their own understandings of the language, they can gradually move from the commonsense terms in which they might at first talk about language towards a more informed, refined systematic understanding. The teacher’s systematic knowledge of the grammar then becomes a resource to draw on in talking with children about their writing or other uses of language.

(Collerson, 1994, p.vii)

Problems with Functional Grammar

Collerson has pointed out that, while many of the features of traditional grammar including some terminology remain in Functional Grammar, it is far more complex and difficult to learn than previous grammars.(Collerson, 1994, p.10) One of the chief concerns regarding implementation of approaches based on Systemic Functional Linguistics has been the difficulty of training teachers in the intricacies of Systemics. Carr (1996), while commenting on efforts to introduce policies based on Systemic theories to the Australian State of Queensland, contended that:

The root problem remains the comparative complexity of Systemic descriptions of language ... Systemicists know that functionally-based approaches to curriculum require substantial inservice. In the real world, therefore, we are caught in a dilemma: If we demand a Rolls Royce model of curriculum and inservice programs, governments will either refuse to deliver or, having promised support, will not be willing or able to deliver in the long term; if we settle for a Goggomobil model, teachers will not develop deep understanding of language and learning and will implement simplistic programs. This is not only a matter of curriculum content; it is equally a matter of pedagogy.

(Carr, 1996, p.42)

Carr claimed that Systemics remains in its formative stage and that much work is needed to overcome problems with the complexities of the language of Systemic theories:

Generally we have not yet found the language to explain the advantages of Systemics to others. There's some irony in that, though it's equally true of other linguistic traditions.

(Carr, 1996, p.42)
Threadgold, a Systemic theorist, has expressed concerns about the appropriateness of expending resources on implementing such complex theories in schools. (Threadgold, 1995, p.69) It is important to note that Threadgold also expressed concerns about the ability of ‘technical explicitness’ becoming an ‘end in itself’:

It is not possible to take in the complicated and difficult metalanguages of either Systemic-functional linguistics or Genre theory or recent critical theory without considerable time and effort. The technical difficulty of the metalanguage of the linguistics is a particular problem. (Poynton 1993) and I do not believe that the benefits of teaching it explicitly and in detail warrant the time and energy involved at primary or secondary levels where there is always a danger that the technical explicitness may become an end in itself and actually stop students and teachers from asking the questions that need to be asked. (Threadgold, 1995, p.69-70)

Threadgold’s concerns about the teaching of ‘technical explicitness’ regarding grammar echoed those of other critiques of a strict focus on the use of Functional Grammar in the classroom. Debate raged during the 1990s within the Australian context about the potential for Functional Grammar to become what Threadgold called ‘an end in itself’ and that such focus had the potential to lead to the re-introduction of prescriptive teaching in classrooms. (Brock, 1998; Callaghan et al., 1993; Cambourne, 1995; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993b; Green et al., 1997; Grover, 1995; Jones, 1996; Kamler, 1995; Kress, 1993a; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993b; Martin et al., 1987b; Martin & Rothery, 1993; Morrow, Smith & Wilkinson, 1994; Mulcahy-Ernt & Stewart, 1994; Ravelli, 1996; Reid, 1987; Richardson, 1994b; Sawyer, 1993, 1995; Sawyer et al., 1998; Watson & Sawyer, 1998) Martin and Rothery have offered an explanation for the abstract complexity of the language used in Functional Grammar, as well as an opinion as to its unsuitability for use in the classroom:

Because they deal comprehensively with meaning, systemic functional grammars are very complex - much more complex than traditional school grammars and including many more labels than formal grammars (which are more concerned with rules). This is an obstacle for teachers and their students; functional grammars take time to learn. The pay-off is that once you have learned a functional grammar it can do a lot of work. Because of their complexity, we can only hint at the kind of work a functional grammar does here basing our work on Halliday (1985) and Matthiessen (1990), which are grammars for linguists and their apprentices, not for teachers and their students in schools. [emphasis added] (Martin & Rothery, 1993, p. 144)

For Martin and other members of the ‘Genre School’ it remains the responsibility of linguists to develop theories and approaches for teachers to implement in schools.

Despite difficulties with the language of Functional Grammar in the school context it is widely held within Australian language circles that, compared with other
grammars, Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar is a superior grammar for language analysis. Few scholars involved in language education within Australia today would favour a return to traditional grammar over Functional Grammar. Collerson sums up the overall view current in language education today:

A functional grammar is more appropriate for teachers than traditional grammar (even though they have a good deal in common) because a functional grammar can be more directly related to the ways in which students use language.
(Collerson, 1994, p.viii)

Functional Grammar remains the most influential grammar within linguistics in Australia today, being the favoured grammar with linguistic departments in universities and having made some inroads into linguistic studies in England but only minor impact in the USA. (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993c; Derewianka, 1996)

**The Master / Apprentice Model of Pedagogy**

According to Systemic linguists school is a unique setting, where language learning requires specific instruction in ‘meta-language’ to build better control of ‘meta-knowledge’ about language. The key to success in acquiring such a meta-language is argued by Systemicists to reside in explicit instruction by the teacher in their role as language ‘master’, or language expert, and the student role of language ‘apprentice’, or language novice. (see section dealing with Genre theory and explicitness) (Callaghan et al., 1993; Christie, 1991, 1990b; Cope, 1988; Cope et al., 1993; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993b, 1993c; Derewianka, 1996; Hammond, 1990; Kamber, 1995; Martin et al., 1987b; Martin, 1992; Martin & Rothery, 1993; Ravelli, 1996)

Gee claimed that students need to be taught mastery of new, more powerful Discourses than they would otherwise be able to access, claiming:

If you have only partial control over a Discourse, you are not a member of the Discourse; you are an ‘apprentice’, an ‘outsider’, or a ‘pretender’.
(Gee, 1990, p.155)

Such a view of the teacher / learner relationship values the explicit teaching of skills and sub-skills in developing student knowledge about language. According to Gee, effective literacy education requires:
'overt teaching', teaching that leads to learning ... by a process of explanation and analysis that breaks down material into its analytical 'bits' and develops 'meta-knowledge' of the structure of a given domain of knowledge. While many 'liberal' approaches to education look down on this mode of teaching, I do not. (Gee, 1990, p.154)

Systemicists argue that by making as much as possible explicit the learner has access to the skills required to master new Genres and Discourses. It can be argued that, despite minor claims of allegiance with Bruner and Vygotsky, this view of language reflects a linguistic view of language and learning and devalues psychological views of learning and teaching. The following summary, by Luke and Freebody, bears striking resemblance to views of the learner and of language acquisition espoused by language as skills practitioners:

We argue instead for a social practice hypothesis: that one learns to do with reading what one is taught to do and what is valued and encouraged and useful in cultural, interpretive communities, and sites. Reading requires institutional supports, and social institutions set out sites and procedures for practice, and metalanguages for practices, ways of talking about and around texts. (Luke & Freebody, 1997, p.212)

That learners need to be taught to construct language forms has also become a tenet of Systemic pedagogy, particularly in a Genre-based approach to writing. Systemicists generally hold that Genres are rarely fixed but most often appear in blended, or 'multigeneric' forms. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Christie, 1996; Christie & Martin, 1997; Collerson, 1988; Derewianka, 1990, 1996; Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Hasan, 1995; Kress, 1985, 1993a; Martin, 1992; Wing Jan, 1991b) Despite attesting to the blended nature of Genre construction in real language members of the Genre School have argued that generic Genres must first be mastered before blends can be successfully negotiated. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Callaghan & Rothery, 1988; Christie, 1997; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993a; Martin et al., 1987b; Martin & Rothery, 1980, 1981, 1986) Kalantzis and Wignell summarise this position thus:

Some of our greatest intellects, like the scientist Albert Einstein and the writer James Joyce, were successful because they broke the expectations and conventions of their respective areas of knowledge and writing. But they could only do so once they knew them and could work within them.

... We may sometimes want to go beyond the conventions and expectations for writing and presenting information, but to do that we have to work effectively with them in the first place. (Kalantzis & Wignell, 1988, p.63)

A search of the literature failed to reveal any research to support such conclusions. Systemicists hold that Functional Grammar can succeed where traditional grammar
failed. The teacher, utilising Functional Grammar rather than traditional grammar, is meant to explicitly instruct students on the structure of appropriate language forms, in order to:

scaffold their growing ability to, say, do value believe, within that Discourse, through demonstrating your mastery and supporting theirs even when it barely exists
(Gee, 1990, p.154)

While stating that no socially equitable pedagogy ‘has yet been developed’, Kress (1993) also argued that the key to successful literacy instruction lay in a master / apprentice relationship between teacher and student:

It starts with an acknowledgment of the teacher as a figure who has valuable and therefore valued knowledge, a figure whose authority derives from that knowledge.
It situates the student as the person who will need to be, and become, linguistically productive in the face of relatively unstable future situations, and can be successful in that only out of a productive knowledge of relevant cultural and social factors, of their most common convergences in social situations, and of their linguistic production and realisation in specific textual forms, in genres.
(Kress, 1993a, p.31)

The argument for direct instruction in powerful Discourses appears to parallel Bernstein’s notion of ‘cultural deficit’, whereby it is argued that access to social power requires adopting the most powerful forms, as taught by the socially most powerful person in the classroom. (Bernstein, 1977) This view of equity in education is challenged later in this chapter in the section dealing with the emerging conceptualisation of literacy as a ‘Social View’ of language.

The use of the master / apprentice analogy has also been applied to the role of linguists and teachers. Martin contended that Systemic theory is too complex a task for teachers to concern themselves with and advocated that teachers become the apprentices of linguists, while students become the apprentices of teachers. (Martin, 1993; Martin & Rothery, 1993, p.144)

Lee has raised concerns about the positioning of the teacher as the apprentice to Systemic linguists, as advocated by Martin. While critiquing shortcomings of Systemic approaches, Lee pointed out that without ownership of the knowledge which informs their work teachers can never be true experts regarding language:

these processes might have been predicted by the very complexity and unwieldiness of the conceptual and techno-analytical apparatus of systemic-functional linguistics itself. ... It takes a great deal of time and effort to gain even a modicum of control yet teachers would often appear to
have little choice but apprenticeship to (read dependence on) linguistically credentialed masters in front of whom, so long as only linguistic knowledge is the knowledge that really counts about literacy, a teacher will not and cannot ever be ‘one who authoritatively knows’. (Lee, 1997, p.427)

The emphasis on a master / apprentice role approach to teaching literacy inherent to a Functional View of Language raises questions about equity, power relationships between teachers and students and the very ability of teachers to become masters of linguistically based approaches. (These issues are addressed further in the section dealing with a Social View of language.)

A Functional View of Language and NSW Policies

The NSW education system quickly and thoroughly adopted a Functional View of Language as the official approach to teaching literacy in schools. In 1994 the Board of Studies, NSW, introduced the new *K-6 English Syllabus* (1994). The document was the first syllabus to state that it was based entirely on one conceptualisation of literacy and language learning. The syllabus was intended to underpin all the years of schooling and stated:

> This syllabus is based on a functional view of language which provides a comprehensive description of how language works.
> (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1994, p.4)

The syllabus and support documents included large components of complex Hallidayan Functional Grammar. (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1994) In 1997, after much public debate the BOS launched an inquiry into the new Syllabus and its use of Systemic Functional Grammar. The Committee’s findings supported views that the language of Functional Grammar was difficult for application in schools and that teachers lacked sufficient knowledge of the framework to be able to implement the syllabus in classrooms. Amongst its findings the Committee stated:

> The amount of grammar and complexity of terminology incorporated in the syllabus represented something very new to teachers, principals and parents. In practice it has proved to be over-elaborate and excessive in its detail. It is more than what is required for teachers engaged in using it as a tool to improve students’ reading, writing, talking and listening. The Review Committee found that teachers have adopted a range of practices with respect to the teaching of grammar, including in some cases its omission. Relatively few teachers are able to explain the role of grammar, either traditional or functional, as a tool for
learning about language and as a resource for making meaning. Many teachers find the terminology dealing with grammar in the syllabus new and difficult to work with. Teachers are also asking for a clear explanation of the relationship between traditional and functional grammars. As a result, there is currently an array of grammars and associated terminology being used in schools in NSW.

(Board of Studies New South Wales, 1997, p.14)

After intervention by the Premier of NSW the teaching of the terminology of Functional Grammar was banned in NSW schools. This was announced in the popular press and by some theorists as a return to traditional grammar. (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1997; Editorial, 1997; Kamler, 1995; Ravelli, 1996) So extreme had reaction to the complexities of Functional Grammar been that it prompted one Sydney newspaper editor to comment:

No more modifiers, classifiers, determiners, modal adjuncts, dictagloss, numeratives, rhemes, describers, relational processes and generalised participants for NSW primary school students. That is the welcome outcome of the revised K-6 English syllabus that has been approved by the NSW Board of Studies to be introduced into NSW schools next year. The Premier's determination to put an end to the nonsense of inflicting Functional Grammar on young children which was the key factor in encouraging the board to produce a user-friendly and effective English syllabus for primary school students, has been justified. Students will now be saved the pain of trying to understand the inexplicable.

Teachers, too, will be spared the impossible task of trying to teach the inexplicable.

(Editorial, 1997, p. 16)

These comments support the notion that the general community believed that the new English K-6 Syllabus meant that Functional Grammar was no longer to be taught at all in primary schools. In addition, policy documents released by the DET in 2000 clearly state that traditional grammar is meant to be used in DET schools as the metalanguage for discussing language structure. (New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 2000a, p.12)

In fact, the old syllabus had been re-written, imposing traditional grammatical terminology over Functional Grammar definitions and frameworks and all traces of reference to Functional Grammar removed, despite the fact that the grammar remained a Hallidayan Systemic Functional Grammar. (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1998b, p.72-5) The grammar was unique to NSW and appears not to be in use anywhere else in the world.

The removal of Functional Grammar terminology from syllabus documents led to the curious situation where no trace of the terms ‘Functional Grammar’, ‘Systemic Functional Linguistics’, or ‘Functional’ appear anywhere in the new 1998 K-6 English Syllabus, Stage 6 English Syllabus, (Years 11 & 12) or their support documents. This is
despite all the documents being based heavily on Systemic Functional Views of language, which rely heavily on the use of Functional Grammar as a metalanguage for analysis. (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1998d, 1998e, 1999c) (Issues surrounding the writing of the new syllabus and its grammar are pursued in Chapters 5 & 7.)

Despite BOS documents failing to declare their theoretical orientations, the Government bureaucracy responsible for administering Government schools, The NSW Department of Education and Training (DET), quite openly declared that a Functional View of Language was official NSW policy. All Agenda ’97 Literacy Initiative documents all carry the statement that:

In the NSW Department of Education and Training, all literacy activities are based on a functional view of language, which emphasises the way language is used to make meaning.

A functional view of language looks at how language enables people to do things: to share information, to enquire, to express attitudes, to entertain, to argue, to make needs met, to reflect, to construct ideas, to order experience and to make sense of the world. It describes how people use language for real purposes in a variety of social situations. All these language exchanges, whether spoken or written, formal or informal, are called ‘texts’.

A functional view of language takes account of the ways in which the particular language choices which we make in any situation influence, and are influenced by, the people involved and what the subject matter is. The roles and relationships existing between the speaker and the listener or the reader and the writer influence the words which will be used and the ways in which the text will be structured.

(New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1998e, p.14)

Additionally, all NSW policy documents relating to the teaching of literacy in English call for teachers to explicitly teach the structure of ‘Text Types’, a variation of a Genre-based approach to the teaching of writing based on a Hallidayan Functional View of Language. (Genre and Text Type approaches to literacy are dealt with later in this chapter)

Discourse Analysis within a Systemic Framework

Systemic Functional Grammar, by analysing text at the levels of experiential, interpersonal and textual functions, allows for theories to be developed about how social relationships are constructed by and within texts. By merging work from ‘such diverse writers as Chomsky, Bernstein, Hymes, Labov, Althusser, Foucault and Marcuse, broadly set in a Hallidayan framework’ Systemicists developed a ‘critical sociolinguistics’ as a means of examining the social construction of discourse. (Cope et
This ‘deconstruction’ movement, in its many forms, has come to be known broadly as discourse analysis.

According to Systemic critical theorists such discourse analysis allows a closer examination of how texts position readers in certain ways, in other words it examines power relationships, or ideologies, implicit within texts. (Cazden, 1988; Gee, 1990; Gilbert, 1994; Kress, 1985; Luke, 1993) Systemic views of the social construction of meaning became concerned with hidden ideologies within texts and ways by which these ideologies exert influence on text participants. Kress described this positioning of the reader thus:

The construction of the reader in discourse is an instruction to the reader about who, what and how to be in the larger social institutions (rather than on specific occasions within those institutions) in which she or he is placed.

(Kress, 1985, p.40)

Discourse came to be seen as the knowledge or information a person needs, often implicitly, in order to function within a community, the norms observed and expected by a particular social context. How a person functions within a context determines their role and position within that community. Critical theorists claim that gaining literacy in different disciplines or social settings involves far more than merely mastering the ways in which words and sentences are constructed within various discourses. Kress has argued that literacy within discourses involves the very construction of an individual’s social identity:

The implication for learners is that through a text they learn value system, system of norms and modes of behaviour which characterise being a geographer, scientist, etc. In this the child learns also what kind of social being he or she would need to be in order to be a member of this community.

(Kress, 1985, p.40)

In this way literacy in various discourses becomes inherent to learning. Equitable access to content is reliant on control of discourse. Influenced by critical theorists, and particularly Foucault’s work on discourse and discursive practices, Gee has argued that there are different levels of discourse and that many are deeply embedded in social practice and, therefore, not easily identified:

Any moment we are using language we must say or write the right thing in the right way while playing the right social role and (appearing) to hold the right values, beliefs and attitudes.

What is important is not language, and surely not grammar, but saying (writing)-doing-being-
valuing-believing combinations. These combinations I will refer to as ‘Discourses’, with a capital ‘D’ (discourse with a little ‘d’, I will use for connected stretches of language that make sense, like conversations, stories, reports, arguments, essays; ‘discourse’ is part of ‘Discourse’ - ‘Discourse’ with a big ‘D’ is always more than just language). Discourses are ways of being in the world, or forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, social identities, as well as gestures, glances, body positions and clothes. (Gee, 1990, p.142)

The social creation of meaning encompasses all that contributes to the text, much of which includes a ‘tacit theory of what counts as a normal person and the right ways to think, feel and behave’. (Gee, 1990, p. xix) Discourse analysis has, therefore, led to notions of multiple literacies, rather than one version of literacy.

The role of ideology in the social construction of language and the power relationships created by and manipulated in texts has been of primary concern in Critical Literacy studies. Critical theorists, therefore have been concerned with the hidden power relationships deeply imbedded within textual practices. (Cazden, 1988; Christie, 1990b; Cope et al., 1993; de Castell, Luke & Luke, 1989; Gee, 1990; Gilbert, 1994; Luke, 1988) Of key concern for critical theorists has been the identification of bias and favouring in the selection of texts in schools. Anstey and Bull (1996) have summarised the implications for education thus:

The selection of literate texts and the ways of engaging with those texts are made by those who use and value the dominant Discourses. Particular individuals or groups may be advantaged or disadvantaged by the texts and pedagogies selected. The problem is that as teachers we have all learnt particular Discourses ourselves. If we have not thought about these, then our Discourses are likely to be covert and therefore not obvious to us. We may simply teach literacy a particular way because that is the way it has always been done. (Anstey & Bull, 1996, p.154)

Gee (1990) claimed that in order to function in various segments of society learners must acquire or learn mastery of ‘Primary’ and ‘Secondary Discourses’, rather than one fixed notion of literacy as merely reading and writing. Gee maintains that:

All humans, barring serious disorder, become members of one Discourse free, so to speak. This is our socioculturally determined ways of thinking, feeling, valuing, and using our native language in face to face communication with intimates which we achieve in our initial socialisation within the ‘family’ as this is defined within a given culture. This initial Discourse is used to signal our membership within a particular local community (‘people like us’). (Gee, 1990, p.150)
For Gee true mobility and equity in literacy is achieved through the acquisition of ‘Secondary Discourses’, which give access to power and status within society:

Beyond the primary Discourse, there are other Discourses which crucially involve social institutions beyond the family (or the primary socialisation group as defined by the culture), no matter how much they also involve the family. These institutions all share the factor that they require one to communicate with non-intimates (or to treat intimates as if they were not intimates). ...Discourses beyond the primary Discourse, are developed in association with, and by having access to and practice with (apprenticeships in), these secondary institutions. Thus we will refer to them as ‘secondary Discourses’.
(Gee, 1990, p.151)

It is the acquisition of ‘secondary discourses’ that Gee sees as the key to acquiring multiple ‘literacies’, as opposed to one form of ‘literacy’:

Thus, I define ‘literacy’ as: mastery of, or fluent control over a secondary Discourse. Therefore, literacy is always plural: literacies (there are many of them, since there are many secondary Discourses, and we all have some and fail to have others).
(Gee, 1990, p153)

Lankshear (1996) argued that Discourses act as a ‘medium for cultural process’. Like Gee, Lankshear claimed that Discourses are comprised of:

combinations of linguistic and non-linguistic behaviours, values, goals, beliefs, assumptions and the like which social groups have evolved and which their members share.
(Lankshear, 1996, p.21)

Learning or acquiring a Discourse, for Lankshear, then includes:

‘cultural transmission’ (initiation into Discourses); and of ‘learning how to do culture’, through initiation into Discourses which provide ‘raw materials’ for cultural engagement.
(Lankshear, 1996, p.22)

Lankshear argued that, given that discourses provide frames of reference for interpreting our social worlds, there is danger in one person’s interpretation of another’s Discourse. Meaning might be distorted across the Discourse divide, given that different learners have differing social worlds and frames of reference (primary Discourse) for interpreting meaning. (Lankshear, 1996, p.22-3)

Gee (1990) has highlighted the importance of teachers holding an array of pedagogical tools to assist learners in their mastery of discourses. Gee stressed the importance of the principles of Process and Whole Language conceptualisations of
literacy in educating for 'multiple literacies' in what Gee termed 'The Acquisition Principle':

The Acquisition Principle
'literacy (fluent control or mastery of a secondary discourse) is a product of acquisition, not learning; that is, it requires exposure to models in natural, meaningful and functional settings, and (overt) teaching is not liable to be very successful - it may even initially get in the way. Time spent on learning and not acquisition is not time well spent if the goal is mastery and performance.
(Gee, 1990, p.154)

However, the key to successful 'literacies' for Gee remained embedded within the explicit teaching of Functional Grammar. By drawing a distinction between 'acquisition' and 'learning' Gee highlighted the major difference between Systemicists and 'progressivists' (Process and Whole Language oriented practitioners):

The Learning Principle
One cannot critique one Discourse with another one (which is the only way seriously to criticise and thus change a Discourse) unless one has meta-level knowledge about both Discourses. This meta-knowledge is best developed through learning, though often learning applied to a Discourse one has to a certain extent already acquired. Thus, 'liberating literacy', as defined above, almost always involves learning, and not just acquisition.
(Gee, 1990, p.154)

It has been the emphasis on the explicit teaching of 'meta-language', (Functional Grammar) as the key to accessing multiple discourses (or literacies), that has seen an intense struggle for control of pedagogy emerge in Australian educational circles.

CRITICAL LITERACY

A distinctive conceptualisation of 'Critical Literacy', aligned closely with discourse analysis, has gained much support within Australian school education. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s theorists sought to meld post-structuralist critical social theory with Systemic frameworks of language in attempts to develop 'critical' conceptualisations of literacy. 'Critical Literacy' has sought to meld the work of social theorists, such as Bernstein, Fairclough, Cazden, Foucault, Giroux with modern language theory, in search of a new 'Social View' of literacy.(Bernstein, 1977, 1990, 1996; Cazden, 1988;
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Cazden et al., 1972; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993c; Foucault, 1984; Fries & Gregory, 1995; Hasan & Williams, 1996b; Kress, 1993c; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993b)

Proponents of Critical Literacy claim it is not only important that learners gain access to Discourses but that they also learn to challenge the ways in which those Discourses manipulate power within society. Gee (1990) claimed that, as specialists in the use of language for the manipulation of power in society, English teachers have a special role in challenging social and cultural structures within society:

We should not fool ourselves into thinking that access to essay-text literacy automatically ensures equality and social success or erases racism or minority disenfranchisement. Nonetheless, English teachers are gatekeepers: there is, short of radical social change, no access to power in the society without control over the social practices in thought, speech and writing of essay-text literacy and its attendant world view. The English teacher can cooperate in her own marginalisation by seeing herself as ‘a language teacher’ with no connection to such social and political issues. Or she can accept the paradox of literacy as a form of interethnic communication which often involves conflicts of values and identities, and accept her role as one who socialises students into a world view that, given its power here and abroad, must be viewed critically, comparatively, and with a constant sense of the possibilities for change. Like it or not, the English teacher stands at the very heart of the most crucial educational, cultural and political issues of our time. (Gee, 1990, p.67-68)

In this way conceptualisations of Critical Literacy skills not only allow access to the Discourses of power, but should be designed to also challenge them. Rather than the English teacher acting as the guardian of language, language is meant to become the guardian of society. Morgan (1998), a noted theorist in the Australian context, has contended that Critical Literacy pedagogies should replace traditional concerns with form with concern for developing a ‘social conscience’:

Critical literacy preserves nothing more sinister - or trendy - than an active social conscience. But it’s also quite uncompromising about the centrality of social conscience in educational practice. (Knoblauch and Brannon, 1993, p.49 cited in Morgan, 1998, p.154)

Morgan claimed that notions of geography, rather than history, are more appropriate in considering the ‘terrain’ of Critical Literacy and that understandings of literacy must be challenged and ongoing, ‘to be critiqued and redrawn, with greater detail’. (Morgan, 1997, p.1) This conceptualisation of literacy, as an evolving and contested term, has been widely accepted by practitioners of Critical Literacy. Kamler put it thus:
Developing critical literacies is a project with no predetermined scripts; it needs, rather, to be defined and redefined in practice (Comber and Kamler, 1997).
(Kamler, Cousins, Jonas et al., 1997, p.24)

The moral agenda of Discourse Analysis is one of the cornerstones of Critical Literacy. In the following ‘mud map’ Morgan set the agenda for Critical Literacy as one of ongoing social challenge and change:

Critical theories of literacy derive from critical social theory and its interest in matters of class, gender and ethnicity. Both share the view that society is in a constant state of conflict, for the possession of knowledge (hence power), status and material resources is always open to contest. Struggles to define the world and claim its goods are carried out by unequally matched contestants, for certain social groups have historically controlled the ideologies, institutions and practices of their society, thereby maintaining their dominant position. But since these are socially and historically constructed, they can be reconstructed. One of the chief means of such re/construction is language. Therefore:

- critical literacy critics and teachers focus on the cultural and ideological assumptions that underwrite texts,
- they investigate the politics of representation, and
- they interrogate the inequitable, cultural positioning of speakers and readers within discourses.
- They ask who constructs the texts whose representations are dominant in a particular culture at a particular time;
- how readers come to be complicit with the persuasive ideologies of texts;
- whose interests are served by such representations and such readings;
- and when such texts and readings are inequitable in their effects, how these could be constructed otherwise.

They seek to promote the conditions for a different textual practice and therefore different political relations that present social, economic and political inequalities as these are generated and preserved by literacy practices within and beyond formal education.
(Morgan, 1997, p.1-2)

Proponents of Critical Literacy in the Australian context have focused on a mix of linguistic and critical social theory to inform the development of pedagogy, or as Morgan stated:

the scrutiny of the linguistic and visual forms of representation and the implicit or explicit struggle over meaning within the available signifying systems.
(Morgan, 1997, p.23)

The use of Systemic Functional Linguistics, and particularly Functional Grammar, has been popular as an analytical tool amongst proponents of Critical Literacy, with a number calling for the explicit teaching of Halliday’s Functional Grammar to students to foster language analysis skills. (Christie, 1996, 1997, 1990b; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993b; Gee, 1990; Kamler, 1995; Kamler et al., 1997; Kress, 1993a, 1993c; Lankshear
McLaren, 1993b; Lee, 1997; Macken & Rothery, 1991a; Muspratt et al., 1997; Rothery, 1996; Threadgold, 1995, 1997) It is argued that, by making students aware of language structures and the ways in which they manipulate meaning, learners might become more ‘resistant’ users of language.

Morgan has identified three closely linked ‘strands’ in the ‘Australian emphasis’ on Critical Literacy:

1. ...the feminist and political or ‘resistant’ poststructural work carried out by by Annette Patterson, Bronwyn Mellor and others. [Morgan aligns herself with this group]
2. The second and closely entwined [with the first strand] is cultural studies ... by means of imported resource and workbooks: ILEA (Inner London Education Authority) English Centre ... The Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies ... the Australian Studies work of Graeme Turner and others...
3. ... the sociolinguistic work of the likes of Gunther Kress (1985), Terry Thredgold (1987) and Barbara Kamler and Claire Woods (1987). As functional linguists they declare allegiance to Hallidayan grammar ...
(Morgan, 1997, p.23)

Morgan pointed out that the third strand of Critical Literacy, the ‘Genre School’, with its emphasis on the use of Functional Grammar as the ‘signifying system’, has had the most influence on Australian education policy. (Morgan, 1997, p.23) Central to Genre-based Critical Literacy has been Kress’s notion of ‘resistance’, the idea that explicit knowledge about the structure of the text, generally from the Systemic Functional perspective, can assist a learner in ‘resisting’ their positioning. (Kress, 1985, p.39-41) In calling for development of Critical Literacy Kress stated:

Clearly the best reader will be critical, a resistant reader, one who both sees the constructedness of the text and of the reading position and who can at the same time reconstruct the text in a manner useful to herself or himself.
... The aim of the teaching of reading in school should be just that: to train effective readers, who are active in relation to the text, able to be distanced, able to resist, and able to construct the text to their benefit.
(Kress, 1985, p.40)

Morgan’s representation of Critical Literacy Reading Skills has gained wide acceptance amongst literature-oriented secondary English teachers in NSW and is represented in the model in Table 3.6:
Chapter 3: Review of Literature

Table 3.6: Morgan’s reading skills for critical literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Situating the Text</th>
<th>2. Locating the Text</th>
<th>3. The Writer, the Reader &amp; the World in Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the topic and why is this topic being written about?</td>
<td>Overlap with the first, but perhaps focus on matters of context:</td>
<td>How does this text construct a version of reality and knowledge?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the topic being presented?</td>
<td>Where does this text come from? (Historical and cultural context)</td>
<td>What is left out of this story?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What themes and discourses are being used?</td>
<td>What kind of text is this? (How texts resemble other texts in Genre and convention)</td>
<td>How does this text represent the reader and set up a position for reading?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is writing to whom?</td>
<td>What meanings and contexts of meanings are possible from this text? (focus on versions of reality constructed in text)</td>
<td>What other position might there be for reading?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whose voices and positions are being expressed and whose are not?</td>
<td>What social function does this text serve? (Language might have power to offer certain ‘truths’ with consequences for our lives and others)</td>
<td>How does this text set up its authority and encourage your belief?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the text encouraging you to think and respond?</td>
<td>What kind of reader does this text propose and what position is afforded to him/her?</td>
<td>How can you deconstruct its authority?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What other ways are there of writing about the topic?</td>
<td>What wasn’t said about the topic and why?</td>
<td>* Note that these questions guide the teacher’s planning; they are not always to be used directly in interrogating students, but may instead be ‘translated’ into activities which strategically develop understanding of the issues. Such activities may be followed by deliberate reflection to permit the more conscious articulation of these understandings. (Morgan, 1998, p.159-60)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another model of Critical Literacy practices which has gained popularity amongst teachers in NSW has been the ‘Four Roles of the Reader’ model, conceptualised by Freebody and Luke. (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1999) A measure of the popularity of the ‘Four Roles’ model with teachers was illustrated by the dedication, in 1999, to an entire edition of the journal Practically Primary to the exploration of the importance of the model. (Australian Literacy Educators’ Association, 1999) In that issue Freebody and Luke switched their terminology from ‘roles’ to ‘practices’ of the reader, with an elaboration of the theoretical justification for such a shift. (Luke & Freebody, 1999) The 1999 revised model of Luke and Freebody’s ‘Four Practices of the Reader’ is presented in Table 3.7:
Table 3.7: Elements of reading as a social practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing your resources as a code-breaker:</td>
<td>Developing your resources as a text participant:</td>
<td>Developing your resources as text user:</td>
<td>Developing your resources as text analyst and critic:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I crack this text? How does it work?</td>
<td>How do the ideas represented in the text string together?</td>
<td>How do the uses of this text shape its composition?</td>
<td>What kind of person, with what interests and values, could both write and read this naively and unproblematically?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are its patterns and conventions?</td>
<td>What cultural resources can be brought to bear on this text?</td>
<td>What do I do with this text, here and now? What will others do with it?</td>
<td>What is this text trying to do to me? In whose interest?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do the sounds and the marks relate, singly and in combinations?</td>
<td>What are the cultural meanings and possible readings that can be constructed from this text?</td>
<td>What are my options and alternatives?</td>
<td>Which positions, voices and interests are at play? Which are silent and absent?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Discourses, Critical Literacy and NSW Policies

The NSW primary education system has incorporated conceptualisations of Discourse analysis and Critical Literacy in policy documents. The new 1998 NSW English K-6 Syllabus stated:

The syllabus emphasises the development of critical literacy. This involves students in questioning, challenging and evaluating the texts that they listen to, read and view. Critical literacy enables students to perceive how texts position readers to take a particular view of people and events.

(Board of Studies New South Wales, 1998b)

The syllabus advocated a Systemic Functional view of language, particularly the use of Functional Grammar for analysis of text structures. The document implicitly aligns Critical Literacy with both Functional Grammar and a Genre-based approach to writing and the use of ‘Text Types’. (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1998b)

The Agenda '97 Literacy Initiative, a state-wide DET policy initiative, adopted the Freebody and Luke model of the ‘Four Roles of the Reader’ as official policy in the teaching of literacy in all NSW schools. (New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1997a, p.13) The Teaching Literacy in English document, issued as part of Agenda '97, cited the Freebody and Luke model as the framework for the teaching of Critical Literacy in English in NSW high schools. (New South Wales Department of
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Education and Training, 1998e, p.11) Inherent to the Freebody and Luke model used in the policy documents was the need for access to, mastery and critique of a variety of discourses in all subject areas. None of the documents gave a detailed account of the theories of society, language or culture which informed either Discourse analysis or Critical Literacy as advocated in the policy documents. The *Teaching Literacy in English* policy document also quoted Kress’s assertion that:

> the role of English is to explore and assess the dynamic and interactive properties of language, the structures of evaluation of texts, develop understandings about the competence in the major modes of communication and address issues of individuality and social responsibility.


(New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1998e, p.13)

NSW policy documents clearly tie the teaching of Critical Literacy to the explicit teaching of Functional Grammar. Systemic Functional Linguistics underpin all NSW school policies relating to literacy. The following statement, taken from policy documents published by the NSW DET Disadvantaged Schools Program, serves to illustrate the DET view of the role of Functional Grammar in educating students in Critical Literacy:

> Critical literacy involves readers and writers in deconstructing and critiquing the meaning of texts as well as constructing alternative perspectives on various issues, both in community matters and specialist fields. It takes readers and writers into the world of reflexive knowledge - knowledge based on dialectic. It involves questioning - even resistance - on the part of the reader and it presupposes high levels of literacy. The development of critical literacy is, in fact, intrinsic to gaining control of any specialist area of knowledge and activity.

Such a view of literacy stems from a particular theoretical perspective which sees language as both a socio-cultural phenomenon and a resource for meaning (Halliday 1978, 1985; Halliday and Hasan 1976, 1985; Martin in press). This perspective is the basis of systemic functional linguistics.

> In systemic functional linguistics meanings are seen to be shaped by contextual factors outside language (its contexts of culture and of situation) but such meanings are constructed through choices in the language system, which are described in functional terms. Using this model of language as the basis for teaching and learning literacy means that teachers and students can engage with texts as socio-cultural constructs whose meanings can be critiqued or can be used to critique existing socio-cultural practices or bodies of knowledge.

(Macken & Rothery, 1991a, p.3)

The policy documents relating to Critical Literacy cover only a few pages and offer simplified models of the Freebody and Luke model, yet such policies clearly call for teachers to possess, and impart to students, detailed knowledge of extremely complex social and linguistic theoretical frameworks regarding Critical Literacy.
GENRE THEORY

Genre - a term used by linguists to refer to a particular form of language used for particular purposes and context. (Emmitt & Pollock, 1997, p.221)

Halliday’s explorations in the social construction of meaning and work with register led other Systemicists to build on earlier notions of Genre. For Genre theorists, Genre came to mean much more than the traditional definition of a literary style.

Systemicists’ focus on whole texts, rather than isolated sentences, led them to examine Halliday’s register components more closely. Members of the Genre School became convinced that social processes and structures are imbedded in each text and sought ways to express those relationships utilising the Systemic framework. Kress (1985) justified the new focus on Genre and textual structure thus:

In texts the resources of language are always organised in systematic ways deriving from the structures and processes of the social occasions in which the text originated. (Kress, 1985, p.33)

Just as Discourses are believed to create ‘reading positions’ and ‘facilitate’ and ‘constrain’ social behaviour, permitting and impeding access to ‘cultural and social knowledge, values and ... distribute power’, so too, Systemic Genre theorists have argued that Genre structures ‘position readers’. (Kress, 1985, p.33) Christie described Genre theory thus:

To be literate in the contemporary world is to understand the very large range of written forms, text types or - as I shall call them here, Genres - which we all need for both the reading and the writing essential to participation in the community. Incidentally, the term Genre is used here, and elsewhere in the book, to refer, much as in the conventional sense, to the manner in which different patterns of language are built up to establish different kinds of meanings ... Genres may thus be the relatively ‘prestige’ ones found in literary pursuits, but in addition the term is used to refer to many ‘non-prestige’ Genres of both speech and writing which are so essential to much of our lives as human beings, functioning in all kinds of situations. Genres of speech include job interviews, casual conversations, public speeches, to name a few obvious ones ... Genres of writing include items as various as recipes, reports, newspaper articles, different types of essays, and so on. (Christie, 1990a, p.3)

Using Halliday’s Functional Grammar to analyse texts used for various purposes, Kress has argued that both lexical and syntactic features of text contribute to this positioning. In this way social purpose was argued to contribute to, even direct, choices in structuring texts during writing. Genre theorists, therefore, came to see the creation of
text structure as a means of controlling the positioning of the reader. Kress described the manner in which structure manipulates the reader thus:

On the one hand, it positions readers precisely in a text, instructing them what role to assume in reading, what stance to take. On the other hand, it constructs readers as certain kinds of linguistic and social beings. In this latter effect it is quite like the discursive construction of the reader. (Kress, 1985, p.39)

Genre theorists argue that Genre and Discourse go hand-in-hand in the creation of meaning. By considering the two, using Functional Grammar as an analytical tool and meta-language, Genre theorists argue that a linguistic account of the social construction of language can be created. Kress’s views on Genre were influential in the Australian context during the early 1980s and so it is fitting to consider his definitions and interpretation of the roles of Discourse and Genre: (For Clarity the order of the following quotes is the reverse of the original text.)

The construction of the reader in **discourse** is an instruction to the reader about who, what and how to be in the larger social institutions (rather than on specific occasions within those institutions) in which she or he is placed...

The construction of the reader in **Genre** is an instruction about who, what and how to be in a given social situation, occasion, interaction;

Texts are constructed in and by both discourse and Genres; and so are readers. In the text the two intermesh, often inextricably. In a medical interview it seems as though medical discourse and medical Genre are one, inseparably. However, when we look at interviews outside of the area of medicine, we discover that interviews have significantly similar features, which are due not to discourse but to Genre. Similarly when we look at discourse across a range of different texts we find that medical discourse has significantly similar features across a range of Genres; these are due therefore not to Genre but to discourse. (Kress, 1985, p.39)

It is important to note that the views of Kress were broadly in keeping with those of Halliday, in that Kress has argued that structure cannot be placed hierarchically above the other components of register or the lexicogrammatical language system. (Kress, 1993a)

Just as Systemicists involved in Discourse analysis claim that explicit analysis of Discourse allows for ‘border’ crossing between Discourses, allowing greater social mobility, so Genre theorists have argued that explicit knowledge of Genre structure allows access to more varied and empowered social lives, through access to the social purposes and uses of language. By making Genre structures for specific purposes explicit, Genre proponents argue that students can be given access to a wider range of social activity through mastery of a wider range of Genres. (Cazden, 1988; Christie,
Genre encodes and presents a set of possibilities to the reader; possibilities of being a certain kind of social agent, with all that entails. The text presents, simultaneously, the resources of language which are necessary in order to be a competent agent, organised in a systematic way appropriate to a competent performance of the social linguistic role encoded in the Genre; and it presents the sets of values, indication of modes of actions and behaviour appropriate to being a competent social agent in a given social occasion.

(Kress, 1985, p.40)


We believe it is absolutely essential that teaching grammar must be a fundamental part of an effective genre-based approach to reading and writing. Without grammar, we will not be able to deal with the language issues which are so much a part of the concrete-abstract knowledge continuum. Grammar also enables us to break out of the reductiveness of the genre as end-product problem. Finally, it gives both teachers and students a way of talking about and dealing with language as an object that can be manipulated and changed to do particular things both in communication and expressing and organising knowledge.

(Callaghan et al., 1993, p.201-2)

The Genre School

During the 1970s and 1980s Halliday and Martin, both of the Linguistics Department at the University of Sydney developed a large network of postgraduate students, many of whom were school teachers. Through a series of postgraduate subjects, workshops and conferences the study of linguistics merged with educational research and a theoretical alliance, known as the ‘Genre School’ was born. This new ‘Genre School’ held aspirations to gain access to, and control of, the literacy policies of the school education system. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Christie, 1991, 1990b; Christie & Martin, 1997; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993c; Kamler, 1995; Martin et al., 1987b; Martin, 1992; Ravelli, 1996; Threadgold, 1995)
Martin began to work with teachers in developing Systemic Genre theories, especially in conjunction with postgraduate research students. (Cope et al., 1993) Martin’s conceptualisation of Genre has been particularly influential on the work of the Genre School and, combined with work with Rothery, Callaghan and Derewianka, greatly influenced the conceptualisation of Text Types in NSW schools. (Callaghan & Rothery, 1988; Derewianka, 1990; Martin et al., 1987a; Martin, 1992, 1997; Martin & Rothery, 1993) Researchers such as Joan Rothery, Frances Christie, Mike Callaghan, Peter Knapp, Mary Macken, Ann Cranny-Francis, Louise Ravelli, Janet Jones, Clare Painter and Jenny Hammond became associated with the Genre School, largely through either postgraduate study, DET funded research projects or both.6

Using Systemic Functional Grammar members of the Genre School set about analysing various texts to determine their grammatical structures. Through that process they were able to identify and label grammatical structures common to particular types of texts which achieved particular social purposes. By identifying the ‘generic structures’ of texts for particular social purposes the Genre School claimed to be able to identify explicitly just how texts achieve those social purposes. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Callaghan & Rothery, 1988; Cope et al., 1993; Derewianka, 1990; Macken et al., 1989a; Macken, Kalantzis, Kress et al., 1989b, 1989c; Macken & Rothery, 1991a, 1991b; Martin, 1984; Martin & Rothery, 1980, 1981, 1986) Eventually an initial list of specific generic ‘Text Types’, or ‘Genres’, relevant to school education were identified as:

- Recounts
- Instructions
- Narratives
- Information Reports
- Explanations
- Arguments


Broadly speaking members of the Genre School, most notably Martin and Rothery, hypothesised that textual structure, as identified by Genre, takes a major role in the

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6 For an historical overview of the development of the Genre School see, (Cope et al., 1993, p.231-247)
creation of meaning and positioning of the language user. Rothery and Callaghan represented the positioning of Genre, within a Systemic Functional View of Language, in the model reproduced in Figure 3.14:

Figure 3.14: Rothery’s conceptualisation of Genre theory (Callaghan & Rothery, 1988, p.34)

In discussing the nature of generic structures and Genres Derewianka re-modelled Rothery and Martin’s conceptualisation of a Functional View of language to include components of Halliday’s conceptualisation of language as ‘Social Semiotic’. Derewianka’s model of a Functional View of Language, and the positioning of Genre within it, is reproduced in Figure 3.15:
Derewianka’s model of Genre has been extremely influential in the NSW context, as evidenced by the sales of her original text, *Exploring How Texts Work* (1990), which was in its tenth print run at the time of writing. By comparing the above models to representations of Halliday’s (Figure 3.13) or Collerson’s (Figure 3.12) models of a Functional View of Language it is possible to note the removal of Genre from the components of register and its subsequent placing, in the Genre School models, at a higher, controlling stratum. In this way structure is claimed to control register variables and certain register variables are excluded from the process of contributing to structure.

It is important to note that, in the spirit of Halliday’s aim of providing a ‘rhetorical grammar’ rather than a prescriptive one, Derewianka stated that the Functional View of Language guiding a Genre-based approach to writing:

> is not concerned with a set of rules which prescribe correct and incorrect usage. Language in real life is not a complete, ideal system conforming to neat, pre-determined categories.

> … A functional approach to language does not advocate teaching about language by handing down prescriptive recipes. Rather it is concerned with providing information about the development of effective texts for particular purposes, and providing it at the point of need within the context of real, purposeful language use. A functional mode of language can be drawn upon during classroom activities based on a ‘process’ or ‘whole language’ philosophy – wherever children are engaged in the construction of texts and opportunities are created for explicit discussion of these texts.

(Derewianka, 1990, p.3&5)
Derewianka’s attitude of building on earlier Process and Whole Language approaches appears not to have been shared by many other Genre theorists, with a number vociferously denouncing Process and Whole Language pedagogies. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Christie, 1986; Christie, 1991, 1997, 1990b; Christie & Martin, 1997; Cope, 1988; Cope et al., 1993; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993a; Hammond, 1990; Kamler, 1995; Kamler et al., 1997; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993b; Martin et al., 1987b; McLaren & Lankshear, 1993; Rothery, 1996; Threadgold, 1995, 1997; Wignell, 1988) It is later argued that Genre theory has evolved into forms where a Hallidayan, holistic view, of language has not been maintained.

Most Genre theorists hold that the explicit teaching of grammar and generic structures holds the key to successful literacy education and that each generic structure should be taught to children, who need to become familiar with the generic Text Types before moving on to work with more complex Genres. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Christie, 1986; Christie, 1990a; Cope, 1988; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993a; Hammond, 1990, p.35; Kamler, 1995; Macken, 1990) In a similar way to how Gee has claimed that ‘secondary Discourses’ (Gee, 1990) must be learned, rather than acquired, so too do Genre theorists hold that unfamiliar Genres need to be explicitly taught and that natural learning is inadequate to the task:

This movement has attempted to provide explicit linguistic descriptions of the main ‘stages’ in educationally developed texts. The aim behind this enterprise was to develop a literacy pedagogy which might help learners in gaining access to educationally valued discourses of the type which they might otherwise not become familiar with in the natural course of their life.
(Hasan & Williams, 1996a, p.xv)

As such, proponents of the Martin/Rothery ‘Genre School’ believe it is necessary to analyse and identify the various Genres evolving in language use, in order to incorporate the new Genres into the everyday teaching of English. Such an approach requires an on-going project of analysing the types of text typically produced in various school and community contexts and identifying their generic structure. Rothery recently completed a lengthy analysis of Text Types commonly required in secondary English. Figure 3.16 represents Rothery’s analysis of the Genres, or Text Types, commonly used in secondary school English:
The Curriculum Cycle

During the 1980s Martin supervised a research project with the Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) of the NSW Department of Education (now DET), whereby a model was devised for the implementation of the teaching of generic structures of texts to school students utilising Functional Grammar and Genre theory. By using Halliday’s Functional Grammar each Text Type was analysed to identify the stages and features by which they were typically comprised. (For examples of the textual and grammatical structures of those Genres see Callaghan & Rothery, 1988; Derewianka, 1990) These structures have often been referred to as the generic Genres, or ‘Text Types’. Functional grammar provided the metalanguage by which these structures were labelled and explained. The Genre-based pedagogy developed by the Genre School was represented by the three stages of the ‘curriculum wheel’ or ‘cycle’, as represented in Figure 3.17:
This ‘curriculum wheel’ or ‘cycle’ has been extremely influential in Australian circles and was adopted by Derewianka in her popular book *Exploring How Texts Work*. It was later modified by the NSW BOS to develop a preferred model of literacy and language pedagogy for the *English K-6 Syllabus*. (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1994, 1998b)

The curriculum cycle model shows clear incorporation of Whole and Process oriented approaches in each of the three stages. Indeed, it could well be considered a melding of Cambourne’s ‘conditions of learning’ and Walshe’s models of Process Writing and ‘A minimal school grammar’. (Cambourne, 1988; Walshe, 1981b, 1986) The concept of process and product also echoes the work of Bob Walshe and his assertion that literacy requires both process and product. Walshe identified components of both process and product, which he claims together ‘sum up to the Craft of Writing’. (Reprinted in Walshe, 1998, p.257) Despite the apparent incorporation of earlier approaches, the Genre School remained avowed critics and opponents of earlier ‘progressivist’ approaches to literacy. (Christie, 1990a; Cope, 1988; Cope & Kalantzis,
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1993c; Hammond, 1990; Kamler, 1995; Martin et al., 1987b; Martin & Rothery, 1993; Reid, 1987; Sawyer, 1995)

The original aim of the methodology advocated by the curriculum cycle was for the use of Functional Grammar to remain ‘rhetorical’, in order to ‘unpack’ the texts in question. Through specific instruction during such processes it was hoped that students would progress from joint construction to independent construction of texts with similar, if not identical, generic structure. (Callaghan & Rothery, 1988; Derewianka, 1990) The various steps recommended in the two teacher-focused stages leading to ‘independent construction’ are summarised below in Table 3.8:

Table 3.8: Stages in the curriculum cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage One Modelling</th>
<th>Stage Two Joint Construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Useful for introducing genre</td>
<td>Teacher and class work together to produce a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link to unit of work (context)</td>
<td>Research topic (field)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td>Teacher guides with questions that focus on the stages of the genre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Introduce a model to class</td>
<td><strong>Step 1 Preparation for Writing: Researching the Topic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Display and give each student a copy</td>
<td>* Choose new topic for writing. Research topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Share comments about text</td>
<td>* Prepare for genre eg. observe, read, notes, film, video.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td>* Discuss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Discuss social purpose or function of text</td>
<td>* Examine issues and hypotheses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Examine issues and hypotheses</td>
<td><strong>Step 2 Pooling Information</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong></td>
<td>* Revise structure and features of genre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Ask for suggestions about what this type of text could be used for.</td>
<td>* Organise structure of information to be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Who could use it?</td>
<td><strong>Step 3 Jointly Constructing the Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 4</strong></td>
<td>* Teacher acts as guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Demonstrate to class how text achieves its purpose.</td>
<td>* Teacher links ideas where needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Introduce same text broken into the stages of the genre and labelled accordingly</td>
<td>* Discuss various possible meanings of words in various contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Explain function of each stage</td>
<td>* Teacher assists students with ‘generalizations’ and ‘transforming’ meanings into more appropriate forms for the genre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Also:</td>
<td>* As members of class add points they are linked to form a skeleton of a paragraph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Refer to grammatical features of the genre</td>
<td>* Teacher helps students to modify ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Refer to features of technical language common to the genre</td>
<td>* Teacher helps students to modify ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| * Refer to the patterns of language distinctive to each genre | (Compiled from Callaghan & Rothery, 1988)

It should be pointed out that the original approaches of those aligned with the original Rothery / Derewianka version of Genre theory did not focus on the use of text structure scaffolds as entities in themselves, or as ‘answer sheets’ to be distributed to students. Rather, scaffolding was seen as a teacher-directed practical journey through stages of modelling and joint construction. Scaffolding for these Genrists was guided by theories on scaffolding developed by Bruner. (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993a, p.20-21; Hasan & Williams, 1996a, p.xiii) Later versions of Genre theory, under the guise of Text Types,
altered this approach considerably. (Text Types are discussed later in this chapter. See Anderson & Anderson, 1997a, 1997b; Callaghan et al., 1993; Gazis, Slattery, Simon et al., 1998)

Genre and Prescriptive Teaching

When the curriculum cycle was implemented in DET schools, during a Genre School research project, Callaghan, Knapp and Noble (1993) observed a number of problems being experienced with a Genre-based approach by both teachers and learners. A key problem was the tendency of the ‘product’ oriented curriculum cycle approach to Genre to become prescriptive and deteriorate into a ‘transmission’ style of teaching. (Callaghan et al., 1993, p.190-1) The researchers found that the focus on structure, on which Genre pedagogy is based, led teachers to revert to prescriptive, Skills-based Approaches to teaching literacy:

The cycle also appears to make some simplistic assumptions about language learning ... The problem here is that speech and writing are quite different and separate modes, and writing is not speech transcribed. Students are simply being told that we speak one way but write another and then the teacher writes it down for the students. This is not a pedagogy, it is a demonstration to students in how to write correctly.

Texts from whole classes of students who ‘independently produced’ their texts after having participated in the practice of ‘teacher scribing’ often show a monotonous similarity to their ‘individual’ writing. In other words this practice of ‘teacher scribing’ has the potential of being a very efficient model of ‘reproduction’ pedagogy.7 (Callaghan et al., 1993, p.190-1)

One of Callaghan and Knapp’s chief concerns was the need for direct instruction for learners from non-English speaking backgrounds. (NESB) In response Callaghan and Knapp developed their own model of ‘teaching / learning Processes’, claiming to have incorporated ‘natural learning conditions’ into their ‘highly interventionist approach’. (Callaghan et al., 1993, p. 180-199) Their modified curriculum cycle is reproduced in Figure 3.18:

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7 Data collected and analysed during the course of this research project confirmed these assertions. Work samples collected during lessons utilising a Text Type approach clearly showed a remarkable uniformity in style and content of students work. This is discussed further in Chapter 5.
While the above model has had little impact on NSW policies another innovation by Callaghan and Knapp – the separation of product and process – has had a profound effect both on policies and in schools.

**Genre into Text Types**

In a claimed attempt to address the tendencies of Genre-based approaches to revert to prescriptive practices Callaghan, Knapp and Noble devised a model for ‘a process-based orientation to Genre’. (Callaghan et al., 1993, p.192) That model is reproduced in Figure 3.19:
One of the aims of developing the above model was to distinguish between ‘product’ and ‘process’. (Callaghan \textit{et al.}, 1993, p.192) The model presents Genre as ‘process’ and introduces ‘Text Types’ as a ‘product’, for the purpose of showing ‘the relationship between Genres and Text Types’. (Knapp \& Watkins, 1996, p.iv) Callaghan has argued that such an approach is a contextual, process-oriented pedagogy, rather than a prescriptive one:

\begin{quote}
This approach enables the teaching-learning of language to be a dynamic social process that encourages the development of creative and independent writers. Rather than thinking of genres as things to be replicated, such as reports, procedures and discussions, they become processes to be thought through, for example, describing, explaining and arguing.
\end{quote}

(Callaghan \textit{et al.}, 1993, p.192)
Callaghan, Knapp and Noble argued that this focus on process, over product, is achieved by concentrating on a rhetorical examination of social purposes of texts, using complex abstract linguistic frameworks, as they are created with students and using the ‘process’ level in their flow chart as the guiding framework when addressing the ‘product’ level of Text Type scaffolds. (Callaghan et al., 1993, p.192) They argued that the use of uniform ‘Text Type Scaffolds’ across the curriculum and throughout the school years allows for sequenced development of student skills:

That is, the generic features (grammar and structure) of the genre of describing, for example remain consistent for all writers, from the experiential-based descriptions of early writers to the scientific descriptions of senior secondary students.

This enables a developmental approach to teaching where writers are building on and developing from what they already know about each of the genres. Teaching aspects of genres, such as structure and grammar, becomes more a part of the process of writers realising the generic purpose of their texts, rather than being fragmented and rule governed. (Callaghan et al., 1993, p.192)

Despite this reliance on prescribed Text Type structures, they hinted that any focus on the structure itself, in preference to the theoretical Systemic framework behind it, would incur a focus on ‘fragmented and rule-governed’ teaching. (Callaghan et al., 1993, p.192)

Text Type Scaffolds

The separation of Text Types, as an entity in themselves, also led to the establishment of prescriptive scaffolds outlining the desirable generic form each should take. As discussed earlier, research throughout the 1980s identified the dominant forms of writing demanded of school students, largely based on work in NSW primary schools. (Callaghan & Rothery, 1988; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993c; Macken & Rothery, 1991b; Martin & Rothery, 1980, 1981, 1986) Members of the Genre School began a process of labelling the generic components of Text Types and creating graphic outlines of Text Type structures, which eventually became known as ‘Scaffolds’. (Callaghan & Rothery, 1988; New South Wales Department of School Education, 1992b, 1992c, 1996b)

The term ‘Text Type’ has gradually replaced ‘Genre’ in NSW secondary schools and a number of texts have been published providing teachers with Scaffolds for the various Text Types. (For example, Anderson & Anderson, 1997a, 1997b, 1998; Gazis et al., 1998) Scaffolds have taken a number of forms but most remain fairly similar,
outlining the structural layout and sequencing of the generic Text Type in a simple graphic outline. (Anderson & Anderson, 1997a, 1997b; Gazis et al., 1998; New South Wales Department of School Education, 1996b; Winch & Blaxell, 1994) The ‘generic scaffolds’ of each Text Type have appeared in a number of workbooks aimed at the NSW market, indeed many high schools display posters of these scaffolds on the walls of their classrooms and staffrooms. Figures 3.20 and 3.21 reproduce examples of typical Text Type Scaffolds found in school resource books during the study:

Please see print copy for images

Figure 3.20: Sample of response to narrative Text Type Scaffold
Figure 3.21: Sample of procedure Text Type Scaffold
(Anderson & Anderson, 1997b, p.55)

Perhaps one of the most significant examples of the extent to which the use of these Text Type scaffolds have been simplified is highlighted in the workbook Literacy Links. (Gazis et al., 1998) The authors of this workbook were the President, Vice President and Secretary of the English Teachers’ Association of NSW during the course of this study. A sample of Text Type Scaffolding from the book is reproduced in Figure 3.22:
The textbook, designed as a student workbook across all KLAs, has gained widespread popularity throughout NSW secondary schools. A sample text of each Text Type, for each ‘appropriate’ key learning area is provided with an analysis of the structure using a blend of traditional and Functional Grammar terminology. Each Text Type in the book is accompanied with a comprehension exercise for students to complete. The presentation is not at all unlike traditional skills-based conceptualisations of literacy and language. The stated aim is for students to complete the exercises until all KLAs and all Text Types have been covered. The most obvious observation about Text Type scaffolds is that they appear to be prescriptive regarding the structure of particular texts and that they appear to decontextualise language from real usage.
Genre, Text Types, Scaffolds and NSW Policies

The development of Text Type Scaffolds during research projects in NSW schools has led to a separate conceptualisation of literacy and language as ‘Text Types’ in the NSW school system. The situation regarding Text Type Scaffolds appears to be rather unique in the history of the conceptualisation of literacy and language learning. Policy makers seem to have developed, perhaps unwittingly, a pseudo-theoretical approach to literacy which has emerged as a major force within schools.

The conceptualisation of literacy and language as Text Types has seen a focus on particular Genres, with a specified structure and sequencing. Such structure and sequencing has been realised within the NSW bureaucracy as what I will call ‘Pro-forma Text Type Scaffolds’, although they are commonly just called ‘Text Type Scaffolds’ within the school system. (New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1997a, 1997d, 1998d, 1998e, 1998f, 1998g, 1998h, 1998i, 1998k)

The 1994 English K-6 Syllabus and Support Documents introduced the compulsory teaching of a Genre-based approach to writing and the use of Text Types to NSW schools. The section outlining Text Types and their grammatical structures consisted of some 72 pages of grammatical deconstruction using Hallidayan Functional Grammar. (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1994, p.96-166) The Genres presented in the syllabus consisted of those prevalent in the literature dealing with Genre-based approaches to writing and are reproduced in Table 3.9:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Types</th>
<th>Literary Texts (including media texts)</th>
<th>Factual Texts (including media texts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>Information Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>Recount</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the revised K-6 English Syllabus (1998) was released all references to a Functional View of Language had been removed from the document, although
Functional Grammar remained, with traditional grammatical terminology imposed over it. The new syllabus, however, retained the compulsory use of Genre-based approaches to writing and the use of Text Types. The grammatical terminology was reduced and replaced with traditional terms but the structural overview remained informed by Hallidayan Functional Grammar. The section dealing with Text Types was reduced to nine pages but remained focused on the same Text Types as the 1994 syllabus. (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1998b, p.66-75)

The DET *Agenda ’97 Focus on Literacy* (1997) document stipulated that the *English K-6 Syllabus* (1998) was intended to underpin the teaching of literacy in all subjects throughout NSW secondary schools. (New South Wales Department of School Education, 1997a, p.12) As such, it established the use of Functional Grammar and Genre-based approaches to the use of Text Types as official policy in all subjects in all NSW high schools. In addition, other documents issued under *Agenda ’97* called for the teaching of specific Text Types in each of the key learning areas. (New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1998d, 1998e, 1998f, 1998g, 1998h, 1998i, 1998j, 1998k) The *Teaching Literacy in English* (1998) document cited the following Text Types as the core approach to texts in secondary English:

**Literary Texts**
- narrative
- literary description
- personal recount
- literary recount
- personal response
- review

**Factual Texts**
- factual description
- information report
- factual recounts
- procedure
- explanation
- exposition
- discussion

(New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1998e, p.8)

The document also stipulated that students learn the structure of the Text Types in their classwork, stating:

students are asked to create and respond to texts by narrating, describing recounting, responding, persuading, arguing, instructing and explaining.

(New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1998e)

The document contained a number of Pro-forma Text Type Scaffolds for students to use in achieving mastery of Text Type structure. Activities within the document
included the dissection and identification of the ‘stages’ of each Text Type and its grammatical features. (For example see p.142) The following example was given for teachers regarding the use of the response Text Type Scaffold:

For example a scaffold of a response given by the teacher assists students in communicating their responses to a literary work or performance. The teacher would outline and discuss the following points emphasising the structure and the language features.

Text Type: Response

Purpose:
To respond to a literary work or performance

Structure:
1. Write about the context of the work or performance
2. Describe the work or performance
3. Make a judgement about the work or performance

Language features:
Words which express judgements, descriptive language.

(New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1998e, p.19)

The document contained over one hundred pages of lesson ideas for teaching the structure sequencing and grammar of various Text Types, using the curriculum cycle model as a lesson sequencing guide. The emphasis throughout the document was teaching students to conform to the stipulated Text Type structures and sequences. For example, the photocopiable blackline master Pro-forma Text Type Scaffold provided for student drafts for a ‘response text’ is reproduced in Figure 3.23:
The NSW DET Curriculum Directorate also developed and distributed packages of Pro-forma Text Type Scaffolds, presented as photocopiable worksheets, to be handed to and filled in by students, to all state secondary schools with the 1997 Literacy Strategy package. (New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1997a) A Pro-forma Text Type Scaffold was produced for each of the following Text Types:

- Narrative
- Description
- Recount
- Response
- Description
- Report
- Procedure
- Explanation
- Exposition
- Discussion
- Various Poetry Forms

Samples of a variety of the worksheets are reproduced in Figure 3.24:
Chapter 3: Review of Literature

Please see print copy for images
Figure 3.24: Samples of DET Pro-forma Text Type Scaffolds
(New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1997a & 1998e, p.60)
The origins of such Scaffolds appear uncertain, but a search of the literature revealed that Pro-forma Text Type Scaffolds emerged as a small part of extremely complex and detailed professional development packages compiled by a number of NSW DET District Offices and special program units. (New South Wales Department of School Education, 1996b) Callaghan, Knapp and Noble (1993) also made reference to a reliance on set Text Type structures to ensure progressive movement through ‘developmental’ stages of Genre mastery. (Callaghan et al., 1993, p.192) Those issued by the DET appear to have been prepared by their team of Literacy Consultants at the DET Curriculum Directorate. These departments of the DET are the very ones which members of the Genre School have stated they have planned to gain influence over by attempting to ensconce their members in positions as consultants and managers. (Cope et al., 1993)

It would appear that the Pro-forma Scaffolds were intended as only a small part of a much wider strategy to implement the curriculum cycle, particularly during the modelling and joint construction phases. (New South Wales Department of School Education, 1996b) A stated aim of the use of Scaffolds in DET policies, however, appears to be the mastery of particular Text Type structures, including the ability to identify specific, individual Text Types by generic structure. (New South Wales Department of School Education, 1996b, p.77)

The issue of generic Pro-forma Text Type Scaffolds clearly indicates an official valuing of particular generic forms over others within the NSW system. The point that conformity to dominant language forms runs the risk of favouring particular Discourses over others appears to be lost on NSW policy makers. It is possible to argue that such a situation contradicts the NSW education system’s emphasis on Critical Literacy and education for social equity. (This point is examined further in the section dealing with a ‘Social View’ of language.)

**Policies Drive Professional Practice**

The extent to which Pro-forma Text Type Scaffolds have been adopted in NSW high schools is illustrated by the fact that, besides the numerous types circulated by DET agencies, the English Teachers’ Association NSW (ETA) has also published a package of Pro-forma Text Type Scaffolds as blackline masters for photocopying and distribution to students. (English Teachers' Association NSW, 1998) The intent is
clearly to have students complete their work in the spaces provided, ensuring that they conform to the structure laid out in the Scaffold. A sample of the ETA Scaffolds is reproduced in Figure 3.25:

![Figure 3.25: Sample of NSW ETA Text Type Scaffolds](English Teachers' Association NSW, 1998, p.27)

**Scaffolds and Conformity**

A key component of the use of both types of Scaffolds is the presentation of preferred ‘correct’ sequencing of the components of texts, as determined by their purpose. The aim in using Scaffolds appears to be for students to adopt preferred ‘correct’ forms of Genres, or Text Types, or what Halliday might refer to as ‘register’. The presentation of exercises within textbooks and DET policies regarding the use of scaffolds repeatedly promote the analysis of Text Types based on ‘correct’ forms for specific purposes. Scaffolds are used to specify sequence and content for each Text Type. (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1998b; Hough, 1999; Matthews, 2000; New South Wales

Such use of Text Type Scaffolds appears to have reduced Halliday’s rhetorical Systemic Functional Grammar from a framework for discussion and analysis to implementation as formulaic prescriptions for success. The potential for blanket conformity and domination by culturally powerful Discourses over less powerful, different Discourses, is obvious. Clearly, if children are taught that particular structures are the only Genres to be valued for particular purposes, they are less likely to challenge that Genre or the nature of Discourse inherent within the Genre.

While there has been very little research or debate on the use of Scaffolds, some Genre theorists have expressed concerns about the conceptualisation of Genre and Text Types. (Hasan, 1995; Kamler, 1997; Kamler et al., 1997; Kress, 1993a; Lee, 1997; Reid, 1987; Richardson, 1998) Reid has claimed that a reluctance to debate theoretical inconsistencies in Systemic theories appears to be a deliberate tactic to deflect criticism on the part of the Genre School. (Reid, 1987) More recent critiques within the Systemic movement have, however, signalled shifts in Systemic thought in an attempt to develop a new, more inclusive conceptualisation of literacy and language education, that of a ‘Social View’ of Language.

A SOCIAL VIEW OF LANGUAGE

Some critical social theorists have called for broader social views of the construction of language and for a focus on ‘multiliteracies’, where multiple social realities are taken into account in the social construction and deconstruction of literacy activities. (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Lankshear, Gee, Knobel et al., 1997; Lo Bianco & Freebody, 1997)

Lo Bianco and Freebody have claimed that the changing nature of the global economy and the information age dictate that traditional views of fixed social realities will be inadequate to meet the demands of the future. They argue for pedagogies based on eclectic knowledge bases but where explicit knowledge about language structure remains a cornerstone of ‘multiliteracies’ education. (Lo Bianco & Freebody, 1997)

Similarly, Cope and Kalantzis (2000) have proposed that, within the modern era, it is more fitting to develop ‘multiliteracies’ so that students might better meet the rapidly changing demands of language. They argue for an approach to literacy and
language education which incorporates key aspects of a Functional View of Language, Discourse Analysis, Critical Literacy, a Social View of Language and which is informed by a need for encouraging social action. Such a view of language education, they argue, would require an evolutionary Functional Grammar for use as a metalanguage, along with a flexible, cross-cultural evolutionary pedagogy, which could remain self-critical and responsive to social change. A cornerstone of their argument is the perceived need for broader based social views of language, given the burgeoning nature of a single ‘global’ economy. (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000)

Some theorists have challenged the ability of Systemic approaches to address issues of social equity. Lee (1997) critiqued the focus on Genre and structure from within a critical social perspective and summed up the Genre-based approach to social equity thus:

Theoretically and institutionally, the educational work based on systemic linguistic theory owes much to Halliday’s long-term connection in Britain with Bernstein’s work of the 1970s, that supplies what the genre movement has by way of a social theory, and it is via selective citations and partial readings of Bernstein that the genre linguists have categorised (in characteristic binary manner) major predecessors to genre pedagogy collectively and pejoratively as ‘progressives’. The projected outcome of a pedagogy of apprenticeship is the notion of mastery of powerful forms of specialised language. Through mastery, it is argued, students gain power to control their world (Christie, 1987). According to this account, the genre movement argues for what Luke and Freebody (Chap. 1, this volume) characterize as quantitative educational change, projecting, via pedagogy of access to and mastery of secret English (i.e., through the acquisition of linguistic capital), individual social mobility. The argument is, in essence, that it is via individual social mobility that social change is achieved. (Lee, 1997, p.415)

Lee contended that individual social mobility could not hope address issues of inequity in social structures, arguing that mastery of a Discourse does not alone control access to power. Lee argued that other powerful social interactions and structures must be accounted for in an ongoing project of critical literacies. Such a notion of constantly evolving literacies has become popular with proponents of a Social View of Critical Literacy. (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Kamler, 1997; Kamler et al., 1997; Lankshear et al., 1997; Lee, 1997; Lo Bianco & Freebody, 1997; Luke & Freebody, 1997; Morgan, 1997, 1998) Kamler has argued that refining and redefining such Critical Literacies needs to be an ongoing process which is informed by educational practice. (Kamler et al., 1997, p.24)
Lee was also critical of Genre and Scaffolds as a means of reinforcing social structures, rather than challenging them. After studying the use of Genre pedagogies with girls in senior geography classes, Lee stated:

I also argue that the genre pedagogic project is theoretically and politically naive. Despite the espoused Left orientation of the project, and the origins of the informing linguistic theory in a Marxist position, its access politics is, as I suggested earlier, a liberal politics. Among its effects is a de facto endorsement of the official discourses of schooling, a reification both of curriculum and of genres of writing and the assimilation of difference into curricular discourses of the same. (Lee, 1997, p.415)

Lee argued that the establishment of preferred Text Types in education was itself a battle for power between Discourses, whereby the more culturally powerful forms win and are enshrined within the school system through Genre pedagogy. (Lee, 1997) Lee also claimed that Genre, with its focus on Text Types, is a ‘pedagogy of deferral’ whereby the student remains an ‘apprentice’ under the tutelage of the master teacher, who assumes a position as the holder of knowledge. (Lee, 1997, p.415) Kress (1993) voiced similar concerns earlier while critiquing the Genre School view of the value of generic structure in developing Critical Literacies:

Given that there is now a relentless attempt on the part of reactionary forces to reimpose the older pedagogies, one needs to be wise in attempting to establish what kind of pedagogy will produce young adults who will need to find their way in an uneven more difficult set of social and economic circumstances in the next two or three decades. A simplistic choice between process or product (content) oriented pedagogies will not do.

Skills, knowledges, habits and dispositions needed will be those of analysis and critique; understanding and acceptance of heterogeneity and difference; the ability to respond to social changes by producing the requisite linguistic forms, or conversely to affect social changes by productively using the resources of language to produce forms which aid the production of social change.

A pedagogy which is satisfied to leave knowledge of forms - even where this is accompanied by explicit discussion of the social and cultural effects and effectiveness of forms - as a sufficient goal will fail in terms of the larger pedagogical and social aims. (Kress, 1993a, p.31)

Lee has argued that without detailed knowledge of the critical social theories underpinning Systemic theories, particularly Functional Grammar, teachers are likely to revert to the prescriptive practices of the past:

Without the possibilities offered by the analytic technologies of systemic functional grammar ... it is difficult to see how teachers and their students can be in any position other than that of reproduction, reification and rigidity in the teaching and learning of writing. (Lee, 1997, p.427)
Given the complexity of Systemic theories and the nature of teacher preservice education in NSW it is reasonable to deduce that few secondary English teachers could hope to be well informed about Hallidayan Functional Grammar or other Systemic theories. Regardless of teacher knowledge, Kamler has argued that the Genre School’s focus on structure represents a corruption of the original aims of Halliday’s Systemic Functional View Of Language. For Kamler, there exists a:

distinction between genre pedagogy (Christie, 1989), which uses understandings of systemic grammar and Halliday (1985) which focuses on grammatical structure, on clauses and how they are structured to mean.
(Kamler, 1995, p.9)

Kamler claimed that a Hallidayan approach to Systemics as more appropriate for teachers and cited the ‘enormous difficulties with the Genre-based work’ as being:

• formulaic implementation;
• narrow focus on language and text;
• lack of attention to institutional and disciplinary contexts in which texts are constructed.
(Kamler, 1995, p.9-10)

Kamler also disputed claims that a Genre-based approach addresses questions of equity in education. According to Kamler, similar problems exist with the teaching of Genre as the Genre school have argued exist in ‘progressive’ pedagogies and that such methodologies encourage writers to construct:

• gendered accounts of experience,
• a gendered range of genres and
• masculinist discourses of violence
(Kamler, 1995, 1997; Kamler et al., 1997)

Kamler offered evidence that conformity to Text Type structure is possible without realising the Genre School’s broader aims of Critical Literacy. Kamler’s research showed that students could conform to Text Type structure but that teacher analysis of the generic structure failed to reveal blatantly violent and misogynous content within student’s writing. (Kamler et al., 1997) According to Kamler a Genre-based approach to teaching literacy fails to provide teachers and students with a theoretical framework capable of critiquing such meanings and making them apparent. (Kamler, 1995, p.11)

Kamler concluded that the focus on linguistics in education had failed to develop a suitable pedagogy for literacy and language learning, stating:
Following Lee (1993) I argue that linguistics is an insufficient theoretical and methodological base from which to derive a pedagogy for writing: ‘What is missing is, among other things, a social theory of discourse which acknowledges simultaneously the complexity and materiality of the negotiation of power relations in social practices’ (p.32) (Kamler, 1997, p.392)

Kamler advocated an eclectic melding of theories, used by informed teachers to develop critical classrooms, although Kamler continued to argue that Systemic Functional Grammar remains a far more ‘useful tool’ for discussion about text than other grammars:

The systemic functional grammar offers a more useful tool, I would argue, for intervening in students learning in useful ways, but it is not sufficient in itself. The focus should not be on mastering the systemic grammar per se, but on using it selectively in conjunction with other important critical frameworks such as poststructuralism, feminism and critical theory to help our students become critical and competent readers and writers. (Kamler, 1995, p.14)

Threadgold also expressed concern that a Genre-based approach has failed to address issues of gender:

The kind of genre pedagogy which uses the [genre] theory whole, that is which accepts ... a version which is a considerable reduction of the potential of the original Hallidayan theory of language as social semiotic (Threadgold, 1993), has failed totally to deal with the gender issues that should have emerged from the research it has undertaken. (Threadgold, 1995, p.67)

Threadgold has also raised the point that recent poststructural work has called both Martin and Halliday’s understandings of social context, upon which Systemic approaches are dependent, into question:

... poststructuralist feminist work which has made use of systemics, in the ways I suggested in the first part of this paper, has rejected much of the contextual theory of the Hallidayan and Martin [genre] models, using more recent and more complex theories of the social, taking up the questions of subjectivity, of discipline, institution, and of power and control raised by recent critical theory and using only the grammatics, the functional theory of grammar, as its analytical tool. And even here the grammar has needed to be rewritten. (Threadgold, 1995, p.67)

It is in its dependence on social context that Threadgold has argued that Systemic Functional Linguistics falls short of providing a suitable analysis of the meanings and influences of text. Threadgold argued that a Systemic Functional Linguistic approach
fails to take into account a flexible views of the nature of reality and relies on rigid, more rationalistic, notions of the constructions of language:

Once the grammatics is disjoined from the original contextual theory and reworked in the light of poststructuralist positions it becomes very clear that the structuralist separation of the three functions of language, which is central to the theory and to the links postulated between language and context, is actually not nearly so clear cut as the linguists would argue (Threadgold 1991; Poynton, 1993). So the version of the grammatics which is evolving in this context is a very different one to that in use by the genre pedagogy. This needs to be kept in mind when we are considering when, why and how to use the functional grammar. We also need to be asking which functional grammar or whose social theory.
(Threadgold, 1995, p.67)

The implications for educating for social equity, should such work prove valid, are quite far-reaching. Systemic Functional Linguists remains dependent on social contexts, the understandings of which are constructs, which are re-invented, or re-interpreted, depending on particular viewpoints. In calling for more work in the area of a Social View of Literacy Threadgold pointed out the dangers inherent to allowing any theoretical shortcomings of linguistic views of language to go unchallenged:

if these common assumptions about texts and their appropriateness to context are theoretical fictions, if they are constructed in someone's interest, and if we go teaching them as if they were facts, then there is a considerable potential for doing harm. Nor, if they are fictions, would it be surprising that we should find that we often do not know what appropriate linguistic behaviour is or that we do not succeed in teaching it, in making it explicit.
(Threadgold, 1995, p.67)

While there has been some movement amongst critical social theorists, proponents of Discourse analysis, proponents of Critical Literacy and Genre theorists towards conceptualising a 'Social View of Language' capable of developing eclectic pedagogies to meet their espoused aims, such work remained in its infancy during the latter stages of this study. There was, however, evidence that such views were flowing quite quickly into NSW policies.

A Social View of Language and NSW Policies

Once again NSW education policies appear to have incorporated new theoretical frameworks almost as quickly as they have been articulated. Despite relatively little work having been done to work towards a conceptualisation of literacy as a Social View of Language at the time of writing, the NSW DET released documents in 2000
declaring a Social View of Language as DET policy in all subject areas. (New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 2000a, p.7)

Once again there appears to be some subterfuge in NSW education policies regarding the use of terminology of Systemic Functional Linguistics. While openly stating that NSW policies are based on a Social View of Language the language of the document suggests that the term may be used to hide the fact that the policies are clearly based on a Systemic Functional View of Language. The document states:

This view of language is based on insights gained from developments in sociology and linguistics. It can be called a social view of language or a functional view of language.
(New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 2000a, p.13)

The above quote is the only mention of a Functional View of Language within the document. The advocated approach is referred throughout the policy document as a Social View of Language. This is despite the approach being obviously based on a Hallidayan Systemic Functional View of Language. The policy advocates the use of a Genre-based approach to writing and a modified version of the curriculum cycle model of pedagogy, as advocated by prominent Systemicists. (Callaghan et al., 1993; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993c; Derewianka, 1990; Macken & Rothery, 1991a) Despite the obvious reliance on Systemic theory the document also states that the grammar which underpins the policies is traditional Latinate grammar:

The benefits of traditional approaches are seen in the current emphasis on knowledge of traditional grammar.
(New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 2000a, p.12)

In fact there is no reference to traditional grammar in any NSW policy documents and all grammar included in the policies is Hallidayan Functional Grammar, merely with traditional terminology imposed over it.

The use of a Social View of Language, while generally informed by Hallidayan Functional Grammar, is somewhat different to a Functional View of Language and seeks to place far less emphasis on textual structure than Genre theorists have sought to impose. A distinct Social View of Language has yet to fully emerge from the research but it clearly is not the same as a Functional View of Language. The Chief Education Officer, English, of the DET also published a paper on the adoption of a ‘social View
of Language’ in the new policies but also remained vague about just which theories or approaches informed the new document. (Hardage, 1999)

The new policy documents appear to use the terminology ‘Social View of Language’ to camouflage the use of Functional Grammar within NSW policies. Certainly, the bibliography provided with the new policy document does not include any references to the research in the field of a Social View of Language and does not make such a theory base explicit.

Conclusion

This review of literature suggests that a detailed body of knowledge exists capable of meeting the demands of professional knowledge outlined earlier in the chapter. DET policies appear to have reflected that professional knowledge-base over the past fifty years, although the evidence suggests that policies are often unclear as to which theories underpin the approaches advocated. However, the literature examined reveals that NSW DET policies relating to literacy education in subject English have been informed by the professional knowledge-base and the various conceptualisations of literacy and language education to have emerged since the 1950s.

Importantly, the conceptualisations of literacy and language education examined appear to satisfy the criteria of a profession, as outlined by Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein (1995) and reviewed at the beginning of this chapter. Educators appear to have a long history of research and development of that knowledge-base to meet the metacognitive needs of individual clients through the conceptualisations of Process and Whole Language pedagogies, while the conceptualisations based on Systemic Functional Linguistics provide detailed frameworks for the analysis of language structures. Discourse Analysis, Critical Literacy and a Social View of Language seek to further the ‘social good’ by addressing issues of equity and social justice.

Educational researchers also have a long history of self-critique and development of theories and pedagogies aimed at furthering their disciplines. Such a history, as evidenced by this literature review, also indicates a desire for internal accountability and a propensity for self-regulation and internal accountability for the professional knowledge-base.
Chapter 3: Review of Literature

The review does raise issues which, when considered in the context of the findings of this study, have serious implications for the knowledge-base of the profession. An additional critique of literature and discussion of the implications for the profession is addressed in Chapter 7, after the grounded theory developed by this study has been explicated.

It remains now to consider the methodology and theoretical frameworks which guided the collection and analysis of data during this study.

* Please note that Chapter 7 returns to the reviewing of literature in validation of the grounded theory developed by this study. Chapter 7 seeks to critique and consider issues regarding the theoretical frameworks of Genre theory and Pro-forma Text Types in light of the grounded theory developed during the analysis of data, as presented in Chapter 5.