

STARTING POINTS: PARADIGMS IN MOTHER-TONGUE EDUCATION

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Abstract. [authors]. Mother-tongue education curriculum is in a constant state of debate. Indeed, the field may be accurately characterised as polyparadigmatic. We use three specific sets of analyses to discuss the curriculum variety of the field: ten Brinke's classification of dimensions, Matthijssen's rationality theory and Englund's concept of competing meta-discourses. We then conceptualise the field in terms of paradigm competition, specifically discussing academic, developmental, communicative and utilitarian paradigms. We finish with a case study of the historiography of curriculum paradigms in English.

Dutch. Samenvatting [translation Tanja Janssen]

Het moedertaalonderwijs staat voortdurend ter discussie. Het terrein kan waarschijnlijk nog het beste gekarakteriseerd worden als 'poly-paradigmatisch'. In onze bespreking van variatie binnen het moedertaalcurriculum gebruiken we drie specifieke bronnen: de indeling in dimensies van Ten Brinke, de rationaliteits theorie van Matthijssen en de met elkaar wedijverende meta-gesprekken van Englund. Vervolgens beschrijven wij het terrein als een strijd tussen paradigma's, waarbij we met name ingaan op academische, ontwikkelingsgerichte, communicatieve en utilitaire paradigma's. We besluiten met een gevalstudie van geschiedschrijving van paradigma's binnen het curriculum Engels.

French. Résumé [translation Laurence Pasa]

Les programmes d'enseignement des langues maternelles constituent un sujet de débat permanent. En effet, le thème peut se définir comme polyparadigmatique. Trois perspectives d'analyses spécifiques sont

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utilisées pour interroger la variété des programmes d'enseignement : les dix dimensions de la classification de Brinke, la théorie de la rationalité de Matthijssen et le concept des métadiscours concurrents d'Englund. Nous problématisons ensuite cet objet d'étude en termes de concurrence de paradigmes, discutant spécifiquement les paradigmes académiques, développementaux, communicatifs et utilitaires. Nous terminons avec une étude de cas historiographique des paradigmes sous-jacents aux programmes d'enseignement de l'anglais.

Polish. Streszczenie [translation Elżbieta Awramiuk]

Program nauczania języka ojczystego stanowi nieustanny przedmiot dyskusji. Obszar ten najcelniej charakteryzuje określenie 'poliparadygmatyczny'. Aby zaprezentować zróżnicowanie programów nauczania na tym polu, omawiamy trzy specyficzne teorie: klasyfikację wymiarów ten Brinke'a, teorię racjonalności Matthijssena i koncepcję rywalizacji metadyskursów Englunda. Następnie definiujemy ten obszar jako paradygmat rywalizacji, w szczególności dyskutując paradygmaty: akademicki, rozwojowy, komunikacyjny i utylitarny. Na zakończenie prezentujemy studium przypadku historiografii paradygmatów programów nauczania w Anglii.

Portuguese. Resumo [Translation Poulou Feytor Pinto]

O currículo de língua materna está em permanente debate. Com efeito, esta área pode ser claramente caracterizada como poliparadigmática. Nós utilizamos três conjuntos de análises para abordar a variedade curricular desta área: a classificação de dimensões, de ten Brinke, a teoria da racionalidade, de Matthijssen, e o conceito de metadiscursos em competição, de Englund. Conceptualizamos depois a área em termos de competição entre paradigmas, abordando especificamente os paradigmas académico, desenvolvimentista, comunicativo e utilitarista. Concluimos com um estudo de caso sobre a historiografia dos paradigmas curriculares em Inglês.

Key words: Curriculum, curriculum paradigm, mother-tongue education, curriculum history

1. MOTHER TONGUE (L1): A SUBJECT UNDER DISCUSSION

Models for mother-tongue education (MTE) in schools are under constant discussion, as is shown in contributions to *LI*. For example, we have seen the debates on mother-tongue education in Poland (Awramiuk, 2002), in which 'the dynamics of change' (p. 165) have caused a shift from teaching grammar to developing communicative competence. We have seen the competition between teaching grammar and language-for-learning in Australia (Sawyer & Watson, 2001). In England, we have seen the discourses of the personal growth model competing with the cultural heritage model (Goodwyn & Findlay, 2002). Bonset & Rijlaarsdam (2004) have explored a 'learning-to-learn' paradigm that has become important in The Netherlands, and discussed the consequences for mother tongue education. Starc (2004) shows this latter paradigm also in operation in the new national Slovenian curriculum for mother-tongue education, which 'is based on the communicative and pragmatic approach to teaching language and literature' (Starc, 2004: 113). In this new national curriculum, mother-tongue education 'aims to develop positive emotional and cognitive attitudes toward (students') mother tongue and literature, become aware of Slovenian as the state language, feel conscious of civil rights, form values of tolerance (and) acquire reading, writing, listening and speaking abilities' (Starc, 2004: 113). The students 'are introduced to literature through connection to their personal experience of the text and literary conversation. Language acquisition is based upon pupils' experience with non-fiction texts – pupils as researchers actively involved in the learning process. The paradigm of learning-to-learn... is crucial in the new curricula' (Starc, 2004: 113). Starc's review of Slovenian mother-tongue education

clearly shows the variety of educational objectives and social aims which mother-tongue education is supposed to fulfil.

In this contribution we try to unravel the debates on mother tongue education. We start with the inventory made by ten Brinke (1976) of possible ways of teaching the mother tongue. Although ten Brinke pleads for tolerance, sustaining teachers in their personal choices, he has to admit that curricular choices are determined by political, societal and ethical value orientations. These value orientations have implications for educational aims, content, teaching and learning. Empirical research, carried out independently from ten Brinke's conceptual framework proves these connections.

In the following section we then deal with the societal battle between different value orientations. We introduce the concept of rationalities by Matthijssen (1982) and of meta-discourse by Englund (1996). We sketch, very shortly, the different competing rationalities and meta-discourses on education and society. We then present four different paradigms of mother tongue education, illustrating how these paradigms are grounded in the different meta-discourses/rationalities.

A contribution such as this can hardly deal with all the nuances and refinements of the matter at hand. Therefore we illustrate the paradigmatic debate in a case study, hoping to present the reader the possibility of using with us the conceptual framework presented in the first half of this article in an historical reconstruction.

2. AN INVENTORY

Thirty years ago ten Brinke (1976) made an inventory of the many different ways of teaching the mother tongue in secondary education. Analysing eight different handbooks on MTE from England, Germany and the USA, ten Brinke sketched 'all of the legitimate possibilities within the mother-tongue curriculum. By legitimate I mean a curricular variant that serves educationally acceptable aims, uses teaching-learning methods and evaluation methods, and whose contents are all unambiguously consistent with their aims' (ten Brinke, 1976: 9). Ten Brinke developed a system for describing these different variants, including perspectives on MTE from a common area of educational objectives (to which all subjects can contribute, e.g. 'criticalness', or 'lingual correctness'), a complementary area of objectives (to which mother-tongue teaching can contribute, either alone or together with other subjects, e.g. 'creativity', or 'interaction') and a specific area of objectives (to be reserved for mother-tongue teaching, e.g. old texts, literary history, or a personal approach in talking about oneself). Ten Brinke's intention by describing the great many possible options for teaching mother-tongue was to sustain teachers in their personal choices for mother tongue education:

decisions about the choice of a particular strategy for teaching the mother tongue or about the position of mother-tongue teaching in relation to other subjects are always complicated. Consequently, teachers may be expected to feel more sure of themselves if they at least acquire a clear idea of the 'region' of the problems they are trying to handle. What has not been said thus far is that choices concerning curricular strategy in the field of mother-tongue teaching are very often determined by what we call value orientations, in other words by people's opinions about politics, ethics, and other personal and societal values (p. 13).

Whereas ten Brinke himself wants to plea for tolerance, he recognises that mother-tongue teaching has strong political and ethical roots. He refers, for example, to different perspectives on the functions of school for the socially disadvantaged: a conservative perspective (departing from the existing social stratification), a compensatory ('providing lower-class children with white collar knowledge', p. 14) and an emancipatory perspective (striving towards mutual understanding between the middle and lower-classes about their respective differences in norms etc, and their similarities, such as potential powerlessness). Ten Brinke also draws the conclusion that handbooks on MTE 'all advocate a single preferred strategy and do not deal seriously with strategies differing as to underlying value orientation (and consequently also to aims, content, and teaching-learning methods)' (p.15).

Ten Brinke's thoughts about value orientations and his (albeit implicitly) connecting values to aims, content, and teaching-learning methods gained much support from other commentators and from empirical and historical research. Among many others, McNeil (1977) distinguished between four different perspectives on curriculum, which he labelled as 'humanistic', 'social reconstructionist', 'technological' and 'academic'. Ten Brinke doubtlessly would label these perspectives as value orientations. According to McNeil, holders of each of these perspectives think differently about *what* and *how* to teach. Humanists emphasise personal experiences, social reconstructionists aim at social reforms, technologists are concerned with efficient ways of teaching to conform to educational ends set by policymakers and academicians see subject matter as the core of the curriculum. Different perspectives on curriculum lead also to different topic choices and different choices about teaching and learning.

Ten Brinke's connecting values to aims, content, and teaching-learning methods is also supported by empirical research. Among others, Herrlitz (1994) and Nystrand et al. (1997) prove that different teacher beliefs are hidden under the surface of classroom interaction. These are mutually connected beliefs about the school subject and its traditions, knowledge, ways of teaching and learning and the roles of teacher and student.

The field of mother-tongue education may be accurately characterised as polyparadigmatic. Paradigms form 'a basic set of beliefs that guide(s) action, whether of the everyday garden variety or action taken in connection with a disciplined inquiry' (Guba 1990: 17). The concept of paradigm has probably been furthest developed by Kuhn (1962). His concept refers both to the structures of communication which produce a community of scholars with common goals, and to the concerns and contents of those goals, the 'disciplinary matrix' and 'symbolic generalisations' which constitute the shared commitments of the community. Kuhn argues that a paradigm governs, in the first instance, not subject matter but rather a group of practitioners. Any study of paradigm-directed or of paradigm-shattering research must begin by locating the responsible group or groups. Because a paradigm can be qualified as a 'meaning-creating context' (Englund, 1996), members of different paradigms may use the same concepts, but give these concepts different meanings. 'Literature', for example, is not the same seen from an academic or from a social reconstructionist perspective. This often results in misunderstanding. Furthermore, because the attention of different scientific communities is focused on different matters, professional

communication across group lines is something arduous, and may, if pursued, evoke significant and previously unsuspected disagreement.

Histories of mother-tongue education in different Western European countries show these debates on change from the beginning of mother-tongue education as an official school subject in educational legislation from the 19th century (see Van de Ven, 2005 for a list of references). Several paradigms have arisen, proclaimed by different social, academic and political groups, each new paradigm arising at some period to dominate older ones, but never taking over totally.

Van de Ven (2005) distinguishes at least four different paradigms. They arose in the 19th and 20th centuries and are competing with each other, whether openly or covertly. They are labelled differently by different authors, but there are striking similarities in what they stand for: a certain value orientation on education, with strong implications for content, teaching-learning activities and the legitimacy of mother tongue education. In the battle for dominance between paradigms and paradigmatic groups, more general value orientations can create strong social pressures which more or less promote and support a certain paradigm.

3. COMPETING VALUE ORIENTATIONS

In most Western European countries there have been hard debates on the structure, the content and the function of education. These debates strongly influence the debate on mother-tongue education. In order to understand such debates, we can refer to conceptual frameworks such as Matthijssen's rationality theory (Matthijssen, 1982) and Englund's (1996) concept of competing meta-discourses, which has a number of elements in common with Matthijssen's theory¹. Matthijssen distinguishes with Hirst (1974) some seven or eight discrete forms of knowledge 'each of which involves the making of a distinct form of reasoned judgement and is, therefore, a unique expression of man's rationality. This is to say that all knowledge and understanding is logically locatable within a number of domains, within, I suggest, mathematics, the physical sciences, knowledge of persons, literature and the fine arts, morals, religion and philosophy' (Hirst, 1974 quoted in Matthijssen, 1982: 19).

Matthijssen's concept 'form of knowledge' refers to different domains of reality. Each domain has its own way of knowing, with its own standards for what within the domain counts as valid knowledge in terms of 'truth', but also in terms of ethics and research methodology. These domains can be seen as different types of discourses. Matthijssen analyses the ways in which powerful social groups try to impose their world-view as the only valid one, and how this pursuit leads to the dominance of certain forms of knowledge, which become 'rationalities'. A 'rationality' is, according to Matthijssen, a form of knowledge that has reached such a level of development that its standards for valid knowledge reach so far as to count for other forms of knowledge as well. Such a form of knowledge then is 'materialised'. Matthijssen uses the example of the religious form of knowledge, which is materialised

¹ Matthijssen only published his theory in Dutch. In developing his own conceptual framework, Englund had no knowledge of Matthijssen's work as became clear when one of the present authors met Englund in 2002.

in churches and the literary form of knowledge which has led to many ‘temples of beauty’. Such a rationality shows itself by self-evident ways of being and seeing and of perceiving society.

Matthijssen’s analysis concerns the battle for educational change in England, Germany, France and the Netherlands. His analysis elucidates what in a certain period is accepted as valid knowledge, what role education plays in the diffusion of that knowledge and how the struggle for the definition of valid knowledge can be understood. To summarise the argument briefly: what passes for valid knowledge, for legitimate educational objectives is the reflection of the world-view of an elite which manages to formulate vital social problems in such a way that it pretends to solve those problems by means of its world-view and the related definition of valid knowledge. This problem-solving pretension is an important aspect of a rationality. The dominant world-view, the dominant elite, demands from education that pupils should develop themselves according to that view. Matthijssen argues that three successive rationalities have been dominant. A literary-religious rationality was dominant until the beginning of the 19th century (in which texts are the basis for knowledge). In the 19th century a technocratic rationality became dominant (the ways of knowing from natural sciences became dominant). This rationality has been challenged since the 1960s by a communicative rationality (with knowledge based upon interaction and participation).

Englund (1996) analyses the ongoing ideological struggle in education, mainly in Sweden. He perceives three different meta-discourses on education, related to power and knowledge: a patriarchal conception of education, a scientific-rational and a communicative. They in turn lead to three different rationalities: a value rationality, a technological or instrumental rationality and a communicative one. Englund describes rationalities as ‘different meaning-creating contexts based in different choices of content with which teaching can be arranged’ (1966: 19). Englund’s concept of rationality is much more restricted than Matthijssen’s, but his concept of ‘metadiscourse’ comes close to Matthijssen’s concept of rationality, as will be shown in the next section. Other differences between them are beyond the scope of this article.

4. COMPETING PARADIGMS

Van de Ven (1987, 1988, 1989, 1996) studied the history of MTE in the Netherlands, comparing this with the histories of MTE in England, Flanders, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, and also to some publications from the USA, France, Denmark and Finland (see Van de Ven, 2005). In these countries new perspectives on mother-tongue education arose, in more or less the same periods, sustained by similar groups and/or institutions. This historical and historical-comparative research resulted in the discovery of different ‘patterns’ of mother tongue education – patterns in which topics, activities and legitimacy are connected to different conceptions of language and literature. Each pattern can also be characterised by more or less different, albeit often hidden, perspectives on teaching and learning. For this kind of pattern we use the concept of ‘paradigm’: a system of val-

ues, prescriptions, theories, competing coalitions. From the histories of mother-tongue education we can reconstruct four dominant paradigms:

4.1 *An academic paradigm*

In the 19th century the school subject ‘mother tongue’ gains a dominant position in the curricula of secondary education. It is to a large extent *discipline* based, supported by groups of teachers with their academic degrees in university language and literature studies. Mother tongue is defined as in the university studies: ‘written language’, particularly in terms of grammar, and High Literature. The teaching of writing, for example, aims at the reproduction of grammatical and literary standards. Reading is taught in a step-by-step approach. The didactic/pedagogical approach is monologic (Nystrand et al., 1997), characterised by imitation, memorisation and completing exercises on small ‘bits’ of language. We can see in this the principle of elementarisation: mastering small language tasks (parsing) leads automatically to controlling whole language tasks (writing) (cf Thavenius, 1981). The objective of language education is the correct use of the national language (the national language having an important value in itself –Englund, 1996). Literature teaching serves both the national cultural heritage and a morally sound socialisation. The teacher is the expert, who introduces the pupils to the standards of written language, using the methods based on exercises on the small ‘bits’ of language. In short, the curriculum is a very closed one.

The new technical rationality caused in the 19th century a strong debate about education. This debate ended with a new, modern, secondary curriculum, with modern utilitarian school subjects like sciences, modern languages and mother-tongue education. Still mother-tongue education remained less ‘modern’ – its construction showed a compromise with the old rationality, based as it was on a long tradition of Latin schooling. It was legitimated in terms of the Classics’ division into language and literature study. Its dominant value orientation was an academic one (McNeil, 1977). It was characterised by a social perspective of stability and represented the old aristocratic world-view, with its absolute and permanent standards of ‘true, good and beautiful’. We can perceive this paradigm representing ten Brinke’s (1977) conservative value orientation, Matthijssen’s (1982) literary-religious rationality and Englund’s (1996) patriarchal conception of education.

4.2 *A developmental paradigm*

In the first decade of the 20th century, a ‘child-centred’ paradigm was promoted, influenced strongly by supporters of the Reform pedagogic and by modern scientists, carrying out empirical research on language. They emphasised that education should stimulate the development of language use by children; living, spoken language was to be the main topic for language education. Language was no longer a written ‘collective’, but a spoken individuality. Normative grammar teaching was to be replaced by descriptive language reflections. Teaching writing aimed at individual expression in one’s own and ‘authentic’ language. Reading, too, served personal

development. Literature no longer formed a model for narrow imitation, but a model of how individual expression can gain a form. The curriculum was less closed. The pedagogical approach was exploratory and creative, emphasising learning by doing. The teacher was an expert in pedagogy. This paradigm was legitimated from a new paradigm in language studies, viz the empirical study of living, spoken language, of language variation, of dialects. Important too was attention to language psychology.

These trends can be seen as influenced by the newly dominant technical rationality. There is a strong connection, both in language and literature studies, to the successful natural sciences with their emphasis on empiricism and positivism. The social perspective is a perspective of change, of climbing the social scale by one's own individual merits. Mother tongue education still serves the cultural heritage, but it also serves social progress. In the end it is no longer a relic of an aristocratic worldview, but it represents a new meritocratic perspective. It is partly McNeil's (1977) 'humanistic' perspective, but also partly Matthijssen's technocratic rationality, because in this paradigm much emphasis is laid on the individuality of the student.

During the 20th century this developmental paradigm lost its dominance based on complaints about 'standards' (see Sawyer, 2006) The old academic paradigm came again to dominate debate on mother tongue education. One must understand this renewed dominance against the background of social and economic crisis, of complaints about society, in which education does not fulfil its 'holy' task. One also must consider the growing participation in the non-compulsory years of schooling of children from low socio-economic (SES) backgrounds. This also leads in much of Western Europe to new perspectives in which the more utilitarian functions of mother-tongue education are expressed – such as the use of referential texts in reading and writing instead of 'literary' ones.

4.3 *A communicative paradigm*

In the 1960s and 1970s a new paradigm was promoted, known in Western Europe as the 'communicative' paradigm. This paradigm highlighted a two-sided perspective on language: language after all is communication; children should learn to communicate to function in society. But language is also for insight into society and, thus, potentially, for emancipation. This paradigm is society centred, and is characterised by a rather open curriculum and its pedagogical/didactic approach is dialogic (Nystrand et al, 1997), giving room to the experience and knowledge of students and giving them opportunities to 'negotiate' about school subjects and their own needs.

In the communicative paradigm, the skills-based approach, 'from small to whole' is replaced by 'whole language' teaching. Learning to read and to write is based on the use of language in real life situations. Training in skills is legitimated when children appear to need some skill training, when their language use shows some problematic aspects. Students' reflection on language becomes very important. Students learn how language is used for manipulation. Students learn to write a broad range of different kinds of texts, using writing to understand their own individuality and also the world. Reading should be based not only on reading school-books, but also on the texts written by students themselves. In the teaching of read-

ing, texts not only should be used for training reading skills, but attention should also be paid to the content of the texts, to the often unspoken world-view. Literature too serves both individual development and the pupils' understanding of the society. Spoken, living language is again important. The teacher is the one who creates communicative situations, who stimulates the use of language and who may not rely on textbooks.

The communicative paradigm must be seen against the background of a rising sociological perspective in language and literature studies (such as sociolinguistics and the sociology of literature). It is clear that the communicative paradigm represents McNeil's social reconstructionist perspective, Matthijssen's communicative rationality, Eglund's democratic conception of education and ten Brinke's emancipatory perspective on education.

Despite the arguments against a communicative paradigm from the New Right (see Sawyer, this volume), its social perspective is double-edged. There is a strong emphasis on emancipation (of those children who thus far have had no chance in education and society: working class children, children of dialect-speaking regions, ethnic minority children). Social equality is seen as an aim of education. At the same time there still is a meritocratic perspective: education should teach children to communicate as efficiently as possible in their adult daily life. It also should try to raise average schooling standards because increasingly complex societies need well-educated citizens. This in turn leads into a more utilitarian perspective on mother-tongue education.

4.4 A utilitarian paradigm

In the 1980s the meritocratic aspect of the communicative paradigm won the struggle for dominance over the emancipatory aspect. The already long-existing utilitarian perspective on education became dominant. Supported by complaints about language abilities, supported especially (but by no means exclusively) by Right wing politicians and by new institutions whose main interests are the development of psychometric studies on language education and on the development of national tests and examinations, a utilitarian perspective on mother tongue education is dominating debates, clearly representing the technical rationality. Englund sees in Sweden in the last decade of the 20th century 'a restoration of traditional education' (1996: 20), representing a technical rationality.

Language is still seen as communication, but nowadays the communicative perspective is much restricted compared to that of the 1960s. Communication is mainly defined as 'transactional' use of language. Pupils should be educated for a future contribution to the development of the society, especially for economic progress. The curriculum is more closed again. This paradigm combines a skills-based approach with a more 'whole-language' approach, so that training skills leads into reading and writing whole texts. The pedagogical/didactic approach also is more normative, more monologic than before. Grammatical standards and standards derived from transactional communication dominate. Texts to be read and to be written mainly represent transactional communications. Fiction, creativity and exploratory

texts are less important. Literature education is valued in terms of national heritage, where the discussion is about canonical texts but its self-evident position in school is more open for consideration.

This paradigm arises against a backdrop of neoliberal ‘reform’ and a ‘no-nonsense’ approach to social problems. There may be an aspect of emancipation in this paradigm – immigrant children for example, may get better chances, if only because the economy needs them. There remains, however, much discussion about the multi-ethnic aspect of Western society and the role of the national culture’s mother tongue.

In the preceding sections, we have described general trends which are not necessarily finely nuanced and we do not suggest that at any one time, only one paradigm will be present, nor that any individual teacher or any individual curriculum will be subject to only one paradigm. It is impossible to deal with all the nuances and contradictions one perceives in studying the history of MTE in an article of this length. Nevertheless, we hope that the discussion offers a plausible reconstruction of the debate on MTE during the last two centuries across a range of cultures, nationalities and languages.

In order to come closer to some nuance we present a case study in paradigm conflict through the history of mother-tongue education in the journal’s own language, English. The second half of this chapter, then, will discuss the historiography of English-as-mother-tongue education, by reviewing those histories of the subject which have attempted to place paradigm conflict within the context of larger political and social forces. We will begin by reviewing the historical work of Stephen Ball on the teaching of English in England itself because Ball is centrally concerned with the place of paradigm within these larger political and social forces. Other historians will then be briefly discussed.

5. ENGLISH IN ENGLAND

Ball’s sociological orientation has taken the historiography of English education in new directions from earlier histories (for example, Shayer, 1972; Homer, 1973; Hodgson, 1974; Mathieson, 1975; Hamley, 1979). Ball examines the reasons for the emergence of competing paradigms in sociological terms, with emphasis on the conditions, structures and relations of change. Ball’s ‘social interaction model of curriculum change’ essentially combines traditional historical narrative with a view of subject change as competition between opposing groups (Ball, 1982, 1983, 1985, 1987).

In a 1982 case-study of four English departments Ball and Lacey argued that subject disciplines were not undifferentiated academic communities. English in fact could be characterised as representing at least three major paradigms which they classified as ‘Creative/Expressive’, ‘Grammarians’ and ‘Sociological’, with the latter corresponding most closely to the ‘growth’ model of John Dixon². In the terms we have used above, these paradigms correspond most closely to the ‘developmental’,

² For a discussion of the ‘growth’ model, see Sawyer, *this volume*.

the 'academic' and the 'communicative' respectively. Ball has further traced this theme of a differentiated subject community with competing paradigms from territorial disputes in the earliest days when English struggled to establish itself and to differentiate its teaching from that of the Classics (Ball, 1982, 1983, 1985). He sees the essential dispute in English teaching as being over the competing importance of, respectively, grammar, the place of literature and the place of pupil-self expression (Ball, 1983) – a competition in the terms we have used earlier between the 'academic' and 'developmental' paradigms

Despite the debates at the level of educational elites and decision-makers, within classrooms themselves, argues Ball, the dominant paradigm up until the 1940s was a grammarian-classicist (our 'academic') one (1982: 9; 1983; 1985: 60). By the 1970s, however, the political and social radicalism of the 60s and the 'rediscovery' of poverty and social deprivation (1982: 18; 1985: 69ff; 1987: 20ff) had led to a dominant paradigm which stressed both the functional uses of language and the central relevance of the child's social experiences of life (1985: 70-71). This paradigm represented a mix of the 'communicative' and 'developmental' and the key figures in this socio-linguistic paradigm were James Britton, Harold Rosen, John Dixon, Michael Halliday, Douglas Barnes and Nancy Martin.

Ball, Kenny and Gardiner specifically investigate the rise of English to its very central position in education within advanced capitalist British society. This opens the issue of the politics of literacy and the role of literacy from the late nineteenth century in the social control of the emergent urban working class mass population. In this view, literacy becomes a way of teaching the masses to 'behave' (1990: 49). Along with the mechanical skills of reading and writing came also the values and morality of 'literature' in reinforcing national solidarity. Literacy became seen as both technical skill and 'moral technology' – thus the similarity between its discourse and that of religion, reinforced by the work of the poet and social commentator, Matthew Arnold (pp. 49-50). The influential Cambridge critic, F.R. Leavis, is seen as emerging against a background of working class political and social unrest in the 1930s to champion a moral role for canonical literature against the evils of cultural impoverishment in mass industrial society. In this view, teachers emerging from the Cambridge school were to become custodians of conservatism and a discourse of orthodoxy (pp. 53-55). This represented a victory for the 'academic' paradigm.

The 1960s and 1970s saw a break with this view with the coming of a number of changes in education itself, such as the arrival of the comprehensive high school. Broadly, argue Ball, Kenny and Gardiner, as the grammar school gave way to the comprehensive, 'literature' gave way to 'language', the 'elite' to the 'mass', 'cultural heritage' to 'cultural relevance', transmission to participation and the Cambridge school of Leavis and his followers to Britton's London school (pp. 57). As Ball had earlier, Ball, Kenny and Gardiner here see the essential differences between Cambridge and London as the difference between two opposed knowledge bases – elite knowledge and the knowledge of the masses. They also recognise a split within the London school itself between 'progressive' and 'radical' versions of English. In the 'radical' version, teachers 'went beyond (...) interest in social issues (...) tried to inject into the English curriculum the kinds of knowledge and experience which

would give working class pupils an understanding of inequality and its causes; the emphasis would be on solidarity rather than upward mobility' (M. Simons and M. Raleigh in Ball, Kenny & Gardiner, 1990: 60). The attitude to the dominant culture in this view is not 'alternative' but 'oppositional' (Ball, Kenny and Gardiner, 1990: 61; Ball, 1987: 22-23).

Ball, Kenny and Gardiner go on to trace the history of Right-wing attacks on comprehensive schooling beginning with the Tories' *Black Papers* in 1969, which linked Britain's economic decline with a decline in literacy standards. Progressivism was linked with egalitarianism, trade unionism, student radicalism, sexual permissiveness, the decline of the family and general moral decay (Ball, Kenny and Gardiner, 1990: 63ff; Ball, 1987: 24-25). The *Black Papers* linked Britain's economic decline with three key areas: academic decline, politically motivated teaching, particularly in English, and standards of behaviour and discipline. The result was the Bullock enquiry and Ball, Kenny and Gardiner see the Bullock Report as an attempt at social control. They see it as controlling the 'unacceptable' in progressive teaching and reinforcing the economic and political role of English teaching in relation to capitalist society. Part of this was Bullock 's reinforcing literacy in terms of a skills-based vocational orientation (Ball, Kenny and Gardiner, 1990: 62-69; Ball, 1987: 26-28). Indeed, in the 80s, 'standards', 'functional English', 'correctness' and 'grammar' again became the dominant conceptions in English teaching. Ball, Kenny and Gardiner see this in terms of the orthodoxies of the Classical tradition being re-established. With the dominance of the 'utilitarian' paradigm, there comes a return to the 'academic'. In 1990, Ball, Kenny and Gardiner see the politics of literacy as creating a space in which various versions of literacy play themselves out and can be represented in a matrix as in Figure 1.

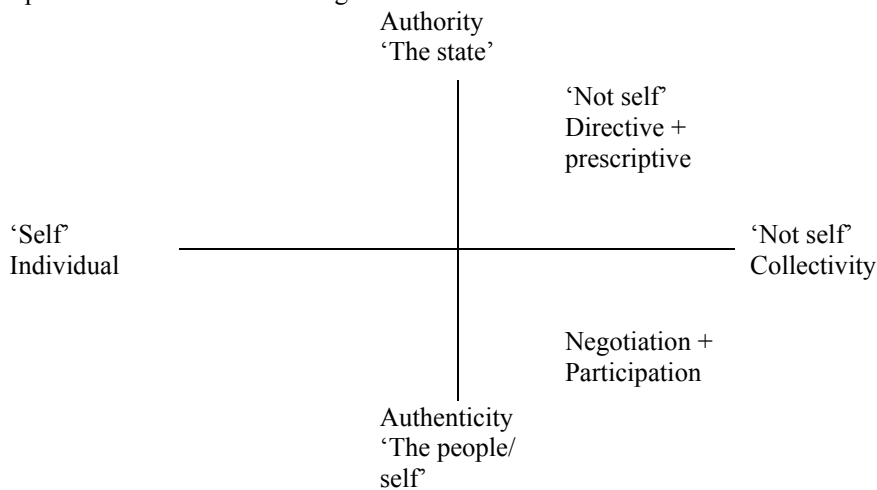


Figure 1. Ball, Kenny and Gardiner, 1990:75.

Various forms of literacy fall on different places on the matrix according to whether the emphasis is on the needs of the individual, or the needs of social institutions.

They argue that four major versions of English can be mapped directly onto this matrix (Figure 2).

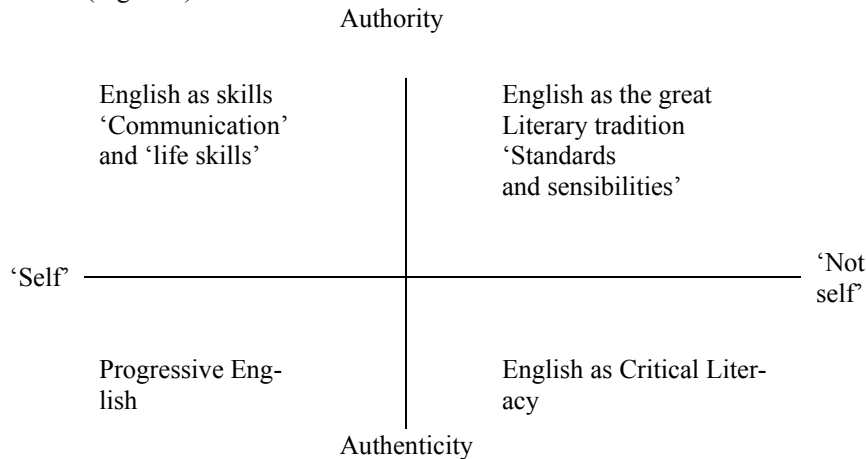


Figure 2. Ball, Kenny & Gardiner, 1990: 76

This structure enables different forms of literacy to be identified with the different kinds of relationships between the subject and the state. The literacy of skills serves to provide docile and effective workers and acquisitive consumers. Ideal social relations in this view are those based on the market. In the version of English as 'great literature', the notion of what is 'literature' is not regarded as problematic, but posits a morality that transcends differences of race, class and gender. Thus English teaches the inevitability of the state, the virtues of citizenship, the demarcation of power. Ideal values here are nation, heritage and tradition. This is 'academic' English. Progressive English is child-centred, the English of creativity and self-expression. Self-discovery, personal growth, feelings, individual responses, participation and interaction are valued. This is closest to the 'developmental' paradigm. 'Radical' English, on the other hand, as defined by Ball, Kenny and Gardiner, is assertive, class-conscious and political. It is aimed at resisting existing inequalities of structural power (see also Ball, 1987: 29-35) and is closest to the 'communicative' paradigm. Concluding their description of this matrix, Ball, Kenny and Gardiner declare:

Each version of English contains and informs a particular political epistemology, the learner is placed differently in relation to subject knowledge, their teachers and the state. Each produces different kinds of students (and citizens) with different kinds of abilities and relationships with peers. In each version the root paradigm of meanings *within* and *about* English differs (p. 80).

To affirm the contested notion, not just of the paradigms, but of the historiography, we present now a very different view of the history of English in England in the 1960s. Medway rejects the 'London vs. Cambridge' dichotomy presented by Ball

(1982, 1983, 1985). He sees 'London' and 'Cambridge', on the contrary, as having much in common, especially common Romantic values in the authority of individual response and the priority of an intelligence of feelings over thought (1990: 22-23). A construction of English in the 1960s that was preoccupied with 'feeling', and a certain anti-intellectualism (1990: 25), he argues, was the result of a fusion of the London and Cambridge schools : an alliance of F.R. Leavis and literature with a particular construction of John Dixon's model of 'growth' and valuing of 'personal experience'. In our terms, this is closest to a fusion of the 'academic' with the 'developmental'. Why did 'personal experience' enter the curriculum? Medway attributes the causes of these shifts at just this time to changes in the institutional environment – particularly comprehensivisation – and to cultural changes such as the countercultural emphasis on the individual's self-determination and self-discovery and to economic changes that created a consumer society seeking impulse gratification (1990: 29-31). He concludes thus:

Instead of transmitting a legitimated and authorized set of values English now helps students with the 'identity work' inescapably demanded of members of a plural society and required by a consumption-based economy (1990: 33).

Most recently, curriculum theorists of English writing from a post-structuralist perspective have been critical of the 'growth' model represented by the London School because of its failure to approach questions of ideology in any radical way. Under these views of history 'growth' pedagogy is seen as 'individualist', 'liberal', 'progressive' 'naturalising' and 'expressive', rather than 'social' or 'radical' (Ball, Kenny and Gardiner, 1990; Griffith, 1992; Patterson, 1992, 1993; Peim, 1993; McCormick, 1994). These theorists reject a 'developmental' view of the subject.

Green stresses the essential difference between post-1960s English and the preceding views of the subject. At one level, he agrees with those views which stress the 'literariness' of both the 'London' and 'Cambridge' schools (1988, 1990). At the same time, he emphasises the internal struggles within the 'English-as-Language' (or 'London') paradigm between the more linguistic orientation of M.A.K. Halliday and the more educational orientation associated with James Britton (1995a). Green, too, emphasises the view that as the population's characteristics as consumers became more important than their characteristics as a labour force, then English helped students with the 'identity work' required by members of a pluralistic, consumption-based society (1995b: 394-95). Green, however, goes further than Medway and argues that this latter notion can be understood in terms of the emergence of a 'post-modern subject' and moreover, that this movement coincided with a growing curricular interest in popular culture. Green comes to a view of post-60s English as postmodern. This is manifested in its commitment to process, experience and pleasure, its fluid and dynamic sense of disciplinary and social boundaries and its attitude to concepts of difference and marginality (1995b: 395-403).

A key conclusion from Ball, Medway and Green in this brief case study of the historiography of English in England is that the dominant forces behind the paradigmatic debates are political groupings as much as academics or teachers, however much the latter represent subject communities. The rationalities, meta-discourses and paradigms which manifest around the issue of mother-tongue education gain a

degree of urgency largely absent from debates about other school subjects³ because of the perceived role of the subject in the formation of much more than competent writers or readers – its role in citizen-formation, in creating national ‘identity’ through literature, or even its dangers when generations of critical citizens are possible. As we asked in the Introduction, ‘Who actually owns mother tongue education?’ may be the most crucial question of all as paradigm competition leads into struggles over such ownership.

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³Despite this statement, in Australia during 2005-6, strong debate has broken out over the role of History as a school subject in the formation of citizens.

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