

INTEGRATING LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
IN ENGLISH STUDIES:
A CASE STUDY OF THE ENGLISH 100 COURSE
AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH WEST

by

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Abstract

This thesis is a case study, conducted within a paradigm of action research, of the English 100 course at the University of the North West (now the Mafikeng campus of North West University), as taught by the author in the years 2000 - 2001. Its aim is to investigate the effect of the integration of language and literature on the first year of the undergraduate programme.

The case study is placed in context through a consideration of educational change in South Africa. This includes changes taking place in the study of English as a second language at tertiary level, as well as the broader innovations to South African education brought about by government legislation. Two aspects of the latter are singled out for special attention: outcomes-based education and quality assurance.

The case study is also contextualized at an international level through a survey of the theory and practice of an integrated approach to the teaching of language and literature to ESOL students. A survey of the literature, mainly in the last twenty years, reveals a growing interest in this approach. An attempt is then made to encapsulate this research in the form of fourteen statements about the supposed benefits of integrating language and literature. Through a detailed analysis of the performance of the first-year students, the case study subsequently attempts to test the validity of these claims.

The study is presented as a process involving syllabus design, materials development, implementation of the course and an evaluation of its efficacy by the teacher-researcher. In line with the methodology of action research, a variety of methods is used to gather data. These include introspection and reflection (through the use of a teacher's journal and lesson reports), the analysis of written work produced by students, classroom observation by a 'critical friend', triangulation (through the use of questionnaires, students' journals and self-reflective tasks) and documentation from the Department of English and university administration. The analysis of these data is both quantitative and qualitative. In keeping with the philosophy of action research and current educational practice, an attempt was made to incorporate and act upon the insights of students and colleagues. Reports on work-in-progress were also published in a number of fora: references are given in the thesis. The assumptions of action research are also apparent in the way in which the study is situated within cycles of action, reflection and improvement of pedagogical practice.

The conclusion of the thesis is partly stated in terms of quality assurance: an attempt is made to assess the suitability of the integrated approach with regard to its fitness of and for purpose. It is concluded that a number of contextual factors, such as the conditions under which the English 100 course was taught and the under-preparedness of many of the students, militated against its success. The case-study is also assessed in terms of its contribution to international research in the field, and the personal development of the researcher. As is commonly found both in action research and in case study research, the findings of the study are context specific: consequently, no claim is made that they are generalizable to all other contexts.

Student number: 607-770-6

I declare that *Integrating language and literature in English studies: A case study of the English 100 course at the University of North West* is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references

.....

SIGNATURE

I. Butler

.....

DATE

For Yusuf

in memoriam

V

Iram indeed is gone with all its Rose,
And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows;
But still the Vine her ancient ruby yields,
And still a Garden by the Water blows.

Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám
trans. Edward Fitzgerald

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advice and insight have contributed greatly to the development of my own understanding of the topic.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In class I was surprised to learn that one of the “disadvantaged” universities University of North West is one of the first universities to give equal weight to both language and literature. I imagined how it would be like to study literature alone. This would be tough especially if English is not your first language. Just tough.

These words, taken from the journal of a first-year English student at the University of North West (hereafter UNW), have been chosen to introduce this study because of the way in which they encapsulate its main concerns.¹ The object of investigation is the first year of an academic programme that sought to integrate the study of English language and literature in a way that facilitated the learning of both. The student’s reference to ‘disadvantaged universities’ further highlights the educational and social context in which the syllabus development and subsequent implementation took place: a context which, as will be shown, also constantly impinged on and shaped the direction and progress of the research. Finally, in allowing the first ‘voice’ heard by the reader to be a student’s, the orientation of the study is suggested. The

¹At the beginning of 2004, the University of North West merged with Potchefstroom University and became the Mafikeng campus of a new North West University. The research described in this thesis was, however, undertaken while it was still the autonomous University of North West.

research was undertaken by a practitioner, within the paradigm of action research, with the aim of investigating and improving his practice, to the ultimate benefit of the students. The students were, however, not conceived of as merely passive (and perhaps unwilling) recipients of the products of the research: they were actively involved in the process throughout, providing perspectives that supplemented and balanced those of the theorists.

In this introductory chapter, the issues touched on impressionistically in the previous paragraph will be developed in a more systematic way. In Sections 1.1 to 1.5 a general statement of purpose for the study will be presented; in Sections 1.6 to 1.10 relevant background details and an account of the events leading up to the case study are sketched. The study having been placed within its context, Section 1.11 then provides an outline of the chapters in the thesis. The last section suggests the gap in the field that it hopes to fill.

1.1 The aim of the study

The aim of this study is to describe and evaluate the English 100 course in the context of the integrated language/literature undergraduate programme at UNW, developments in tertiary education in South Africa and international developments in ESOL² methodology that explore the interface between language and literature.

The description of the course will involve an account and justification of the English 100 syllabus (including the materials and methodology employed to translate it into classroom practice) designed by the present writer to give expression to the principles underlying the integration of language and literature and an action research case study of the implementation of the English 100 syllabus by the present writer³ and colleagues in 2000 and 2001.

Evaluation will involve measuring the extent to which the general orientation of the

²The acronym ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) has been used as a general term to include EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and ESL (English as a Second Language). The latter terms will only be used when quoting or if it is necessary to distinguish between these two branches of ELT (English Language Teaching).

³Action Research involves a conflation of the roles of practitioner and researcher. In the role of researcher I shall be reporting on actions I performed in the role of teacher. To do this I have decided to avoid what seems to me to be the false objectivity of writing about myself in the third person; instead, I shall, from this point, use the first person pronoun when referring to myself.

undergraduate programme and the outcomes of each of the first-year modules match the students' expectations and perceived needs and assessing the extent to which students are able to achieve the stated outcomes of the individual modules through an analysis of their performance in graded written work (tasks, assignments, tests, examinations).

The assessment will include measuring the students' acquisition of those skills that relate specifically to the language/literature interface. This involves noting the extent to which pre-literary language activities promote students' literary competence, and the extent to which an integrated language/literature approach promotes students' grammatical and writing skills.

1.2 Statement of the problem

A number of factors contributes to making the English 100 course at UNW a significant object of study and evaluation.

Firstly, the course was part of an undergraduate programme developed in response to a particular set of circumstances. These included a decision within the Department of English to integrate and streamline elements in the existing programmes, which coincided with an external fiat from the South African Ministry of Education to reconceptualize and reorganize academic programmes to conform to a projected new model for tertiary education. The consequent changes effected through the introduction of the new programme point to wider developments, nationally and internationally, in the fields of education and more specifically, English studies. The integration of language and literature, which lies at the heart of the programme, represents a response to a debate that has raged in South African academic circles for some time, and continues to be a topic for discussion in international ESOL fora. Conformity to the new educational dispensation is, at the same time, indicated in the adoption of outcomes-based education in a modularized format. Equally, this study, using action research as its tool, represents a response to the Ministry's call for institutions to monitor the quality of the instruction that they offer.

Secondly, the first year of university study has long been identified as being of crucial importance for its potential to provide a bridge to tertiary studies, particularly for educationally disadvantaged students, such as form the majority at a rural, historically black university like UNW.

A third factor contributing to the significance of the study relates more specifically to UNW, but is equally applicable to universities elsewhere. Many students who register for first-year English are ‘conscripts’, compelled to take it as an ancillary requirement for programmes of study such as the BA in Communication. Few intend continuing to the second and third years of undergraduate study, and even fewer to postgraduate study.⁴ The first year of the English programme must therefore serve a double purpose: give a grounding in the discipline for the minority who intend to continue their studies in English and at the same time provide a self-contained course that is both interesting and useful to the majority. The course also requires the teacher to reach a (sometimes uneasy) compromise between meeting students’ practical linguistic needs and the demands of academic respectability.⁵ Dissatisfaction – expressed both by students and lecturers in other departments – had, in the past, often been voiced about the first-year English course, especially the literature component, which was regarded as ‘irrelevant’. The new, integrated programme, and in particular the first-year modules, were, in part, an attempt to address objections such as these, attempting to strike a balance between the students’ instrumental needs and the demands of the discipline, while at the same time distinguishing itself from the English and Academic Skills course also offered by the Department of English. The possibility of its inclusion in future inter-departmental programmes was also a factor to be considered.

1.3 Research question

Carter and Long (1991:101) suggest that the integration of literature and language studies can do ‘as much for the language development of the student as for the development of capacities for literary understanding and appreciation’. McRae (1991b:120) echoes this view, with particular reference to tertiary studies. He argues that language learning and literary study

⁴The situation can be ascribed to two contrary forces currently operating in South Africa. On the one hand, an increasing emphasis on science and technology in national planning has resulted in a corresponding neglect of social sciences and the humanities. This, together with a sharp drop in the number of students training to be teachers in recent years, explains the low number of senior students in the department, and indeed of students at *any* level in other language departments within the faculty. On the other hand, the prestige that the English language enjoys in South African society and its position as a national *lingua franca* mean that it has an important instrumental role in education. This factor explains the relatively large number of first-year students.

⁵Compare Shanahan (1997)’s discussion of the conflicting aims of a university ESL course: on the one hand, developing students’ communicative competence, and, on the other hand, exposing them to culture and literature.

are ‘interdependent and, in a specialist context, should be seen as complementary at all stages in the educational process’. The methodology of such an approach, he insists, ‘is wholly applicable to the context of academic English study – say for a degree in English, or for a teacher-training qualification’. In similar vein, Stern (1991:330) advocates an approach ‘which integrates literature study with mastery of the language (vocabulary and grammar), with further development of the language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking)’, suggesting ‘that study of a single literary work can combine all the language skills with one another ... and with increased literary understanding and appreciation’. She argues that activities ‘focussing on each area can build upon and complement one another, contextualizing all aspects of language learning’.

These statements represent the assumptions underlying the integrated English programme at UNW. They are also implicit in the materials and methodology that I designed and used in my teaching of the first-year modules. The question that this study attempts to answer is whether such statements – indicative of a widespread international trend in the field of EFL/ESL – hold true in the context of UNW, a historically disadvantaged institution undergoing profound (and often traumatic) changes in the context of the transformation of South African higher education. Stated more bluntly, the question to be answered is: how relevant is the current international trend towards the integration of language and literature in a historically black South African university, one of those aptly described by Ruth (2001:1) as ‘marginalised institutions usually in marginalised areas in a marginalised country on a marginalised continent serving marginalised communities’?

1.4 Field of study

The thesis encompasses a number of academic disciplines and areas of study. Within a framework of curriculum development and quality assurance, various fields within the study of English language and literature will be touched on. These include discussion concerning the interface between language and literature; its possible applications to the teaching of English as a second or foreign language, and approaches to the teaching of literature, language awareness, grammar and writing skills. The aim of this study is not to provide an exhaustive account of all or any of these but rather to touch on only those aspects that are germane to its particular concerns. In the context of a syllabus that consciously seeks to integrate the disciplines of language and literature – and, by implication, all their sub-disciplines – disentangling, isolating

and explicating all the various strands of knowledge would, in any case, be beyond the scope of the study.

1.5 Research methodology

The main focus of this thesis is a case study conducted within the paradigm of action research. This empirical research is given its theoretical underpinnings through a review of the literature on the relevant academic disciplines and research methodology.

Yin (2003:13) defines a case study as ‘an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident’. He then phrases his definition in more colloquial terms: ‘In other words, you would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions – believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study’.

The relationship between research and the context in which it is sited is also implied in the definition of action research given by Cohen and Manion (1994:186): ‘small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention’. Action research conflates the roles of practitioner and researcher: research questions emerge from the practitioner’s immediate concerns and problems. The aim of the research is not merely to analyse and explain, but also to improve on the practice.

The raw data on which the case study description and evaluation will be based will be drawn from:

- responses to questionnaires administered to students;
- responses to questionnaires administered to colleagues;
- an interview with a colleague;
- students’ language-learning journals;
- my own journal (in my capacity as lecturer/researcher);
- lesson reports (in my capacity as lecturer/researcher);
- students’ graded written work (tasks, assignments, tests, examinations);
- proficiency tests administered to students;
- various unpublished letters, memoranda and reports.

These methods of data collection are consistent with the methodologies associated with case studies and, more specifically, with action research.

Qualitative and quantitative data relating to the students' performance will be limited to those taken from what has been designated the 'core class' (that is, those students who registered for all four of the English 100 modules in 2000). A representative 'focus group' of nine students (10% of the core class) will be selected for detailed in-depth longitudinal study. Selected data from students registered for the course in the second semester of 2001 will also be used.

In the following sections, an attempt will be made to sketch the historical background against which the development and implementation of the English 100 course at UNW should be seen. This will primarily involve an examination of debates and discussions that had been taking place in departments of English in South African universities in the decade prior to the introduction of the new syllabus. No claim is made that the account that follows represents an exhaustive survey of all developments in the field of English studies in South Africa in this period. Rather, the aim is to select and highlight important milestones in the process of transformation that have a special significance for the concerns of this study.

1.6 The context of the study

The appropriateness of the case study method to the present study became increasingly apparent in the course of the research. Contextual factors – to which Yin (2003:13) draws attention in his definition – became important considerations. In a very obvious way, they were the driving force behind the conceptualization of the integrated syllabus in the first place. But perhaps even more significant was the impact that they had on the research process itself.

A headline in the *Mail & Guardian* (December 15-21, 2000) describes the year 2000 in retrospect as '[e]ducation's year of turbulence'. The writer of the article, David MacFarlane, suggests that the year 'will be remembered for the ways in which talk for several years of necessary "rationalisation", "transformation" and "reform" began to translate into turbulent practice – and when the real bite concealed within these comforting euphemisms became painfully clear' (MacFarlane 2000b:14). He cites numerous examples of how tertiary institutions had experienced the effects of these changes: fears of closure by the government,

lack of confidence in the university's management, overdrafts, lack of funds, apprehension at rumours of mergers with other universities, cutbacks and downsizing within universities and faculties.

UNW was no exception: all of the problems cited by MacFarlane (2000b:14) were present in one form or another. Morale was low among academic staff, frustrated at the lack of clear direction from the government as well as by the university management's apparent inability to implement even those innovations – such as outcomes-based education – that had already been approved as part of the overhaul of the national higher education system.

The mood of 2000 should not, however, be seen in isolation. Many of the problems that MacFarlane identifies had, and have been, symptomatic of most historically black universities (hereafter HBUs) in South Africa for some time. In another article in the *Mail & Guardian* in the previous year, Robbins (1999:22) had asked: 'Are universities in turmoil or in ferment? Are they collapsing or merely in flux?'. Similarly, in presenting the background to her action research at the University of the North (now the University of Limpopo), McCabe (1999:250) paints a depressingly familiar picture. The history and development of UNW (or the University of Bophuthatswana, as it was originally known) are in many ways different from those of the University of the North: the difference is, however, probably a matter of degree rather than of essence. Both have, in common with other HBUs, a history of political protest, class boycotts, limited resources, under-prepared students and, especially in more recent years, power struggles, racial antagonism, and gross mismanagement. All of these factors have contributed, in various ways, as McCabe (1999:250) rightly points out, to a 'low culture of learning' and a 'culture of entitlement' among students.

That contextual factors such as these affect the quality of teaching and research carried out at HBUs is undeniable and has been attested to in numerous sources, the public media as well as scholarly journals. As was indicated earlier in this chapter, one of the sources of data in conducting the case study was a personal journal in which I was able to reflect on my practice as a lecturer. On numerous occasions, I used it to express my frustration and anger at the administrative chaos that constantly bedevilled attempts at effective teaching, let alone systematic research. Similar feelings also surfaced in the journals kept by students.

A specific incident, anticipating the more detailed narrative that will be presented in

Chapter 5, may capture the mood of UNW in 2000 and so lend weight to the generalizations made so far. The following passage (Butler 2000c) is the text of a memorandum (dated 8 March 2000) sent by me to the Dean of the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences:

In the course of this week, the penultimate in the first module of the academic year, I have had a number of students presenting themselves at my office to inform me that they have just registered for and attended their first lecture in ENG 101, and to ask how much work they have missed “so far”. In one case a student is still only *considering the possibility* that she *might* register for the module. These students are, however, only the latest in a steady trickle of late-registrations since lectures commenced four and a half weeks ago.

The course description for ENG 101 specifies that assessment should be “continuous assessment in the form of a personal journal”. If this requirement is to be taken seriously, students who attend less than a third of the course are at a serious disadvantage. Alternatively, the lecturer has to apply a different set of standards in assessing late-comers, giving them an unfair advantage over the other students.

The university’s policy of on-going registration is clearly at odds with the modular system.

I do not appear to have any control over when students are allowed to register for the module that I am teaching. Consequently I am unable to carry out my task of assessing my students’ attainment of the outcomes specified in the description of the module.

I would like guidance from your office in this matter. In view of the fact that there are less than ten teaching days left in this module, a prompt response would be appreciated. I would also like the matter to be tabled for discussion at the next meeting of the faculty board.

The memorandum was copied to the Head of Department and the Acting Vice-Chancellor (the previous incumbent of the post, also an Acting Vice-Chancellor, having been suspended on charges of fraud). Neither responded. The Dean contacted me telephonically about a week later: he admitted that the situation was undesirable but was unable to offer any clear solution to the problems I had identified, beyond urging me to use my discretion and act as I thought best in the circumstances.

The memorandum was written at the end of a month-long period in which I had carefully charted the steady growth of the ENG 101 (the first of the English 100 modules) class from the first day of lectures (7 February) when I had counted 65 students in class, to 7 March, when the number had grown to 115. The class had continued to grow as a result of the

extension of the registration period, sanctioned by management in an attempt to swell student numbers. (A decline in the number of student registrations was noticeable throughout the country at the commencement of the 2000 academic year, fuelling fears among academics of imminent closure of institutions and retrenchment.) The growing number of students enrolled for ENG 101 could, moreover, only be deduced either by a physical count of those present in class or from the number of tasks submitted for assessment: as late as 9 March, a week before the end of the module, the computer centre was still unable to provide lecturers with class lists.

The extended registration not only affected the implementation of continuous assessment, as indicated in the memorandum; it also meant that valuable time was lost in repeating information and introductory material to newcomers to the class. Numerous journal entries and lesson reports record time spent in this way. Student journals also suggest the irritation felt by students at what they – not unreasonably – perceived as wasted time.

The effects were not only pedagogical: the continuing registration also had a disastrous effect on at least one aspect of my research. A questionnaire had been designed to elicit, among other things, the students' expectations of a first-year English course (see Appendix F, section 1). It was important that it should be administered *before* the commencement of lectures, so that students would not be influenced by their knowledge of the actual content of the course. The constant trickle of newly-registered students completing the questionnaire as they joined the class meant that for most of them this was not the case. Many of these students also misunderstood the instructions in the questionnaire, having missed the explanations and guidance given in class.

In the *Mail & Guardian* article MacFarlane (2000b:14) records the resentment that greeted the statement by the then Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, in November 2000, that it was 'unthinkable that, six years after the introduction of a new Constitution, higher education institutions have not yet begun to grapple with how to create institutional cultural identities that reflect the values of the new South Africa, in particular non-racism and non-sexism'. MacFarlane suggests that Asmal's accusation was unfair and misinformed: 'Around the country, forums, committees and working groups that have been grappling with exactly these issues for rather longer than six years now have received this attack with bafflement' (*ibid.*).

An examination of just how departments of English in South African universities had been grappling with the forces of transformation may now be attempted. In line with the concerns of this study, the focus will be on how the process of transformation affected the relationship between English language and literature, and on the importance increasingly attached to the first year of university study.

1.7 English studies in South Africa: The need for change

Combrink (1996:3), in describing innovations to the English studies programme at Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, sketches in the following brief background to the changes:

English departments in South Africa have traditionally been departments of English literature (firmly along the lines of the Oxbridge model), with the lang/lit divide providing grounds for at times acrimonious debate. In the past decade and a half, however, it has increasingly become imperative to address the teaching of students at tertiary level in a way at once more “practical” and “relevant” without relinquishing the perceived benefits of a “liberal” education.

Evidence of a need and willingness to re-examine the nature and place of English studies at tertiary institutions of education in South Africa was certainly apparent at the Conference on English at Tertiary Level organized by the English Academy of South Africa seven years earlier. In an introduction to the subsequent publication of the proceedings of the conference, Pereira (1990:114) names some of the major concerns that the delegates to the conference attempted to address: ‘the place of language studies in predominantly literature-oriented university syllabuses; the socio-political contexts of language and literature in southern Africa today; the crisis of confidence being experienced in many Departments of English; the problems of syllabus-content and syllabus-design; testing and evaluation; standards and teaching methods’. In reviewing the discussion on these issues, he draws special attention to the language/literature debate, emphasizing the need for a change from the traditional model (which, like Combrink, he characterizes as ‘Oxbridge’): ‘If one point has emerged with crystal clarity, it is that Departments of English can no longer ignore the need to involve themselves in language teaching. It is not merely a responsibility, it is becoming a matter of survival’ (*ibid.*).

Pereira’s dramatic reference to ‘survival’ acquires meaning in the context in which the conference was set. Though he does not say it, his oblique references to ‘present realities and

future demands' and to issues 'closely connected with recent developments in Southern Africa and in particular, the changing character of our student body' appear to be made from the perspective of an historically white institution dealing with a growing enrolment of second-language, mainly black, students, who represented a challenge to the implicit linguistic and cultural assumptions of the departments. The situation is stated rather more baldly by Chapman (1990:137) in his presentation at the conference when he points out that at the University of Natal, 'a traditionally white university, over 25% of first-year students have Zulu as a home language'.

However, the call for transformation did not come only from historically white institutions facing an identity crisis. Certainly, as far as the universities were concerned, there was the same sense of a need for change apparent in the presentations of academics from HBUs as there was from their colleagues at historically white universities (HWUs). Many departments of English at HBUs, for example, followed the same tradition of a literature-only syllabus in the major courses, with the texts prescribed differing only slightly (if at all) from those at HWUs. Language studies were usually relegated to non-continuing courses – called variously Practical English, Introductory English, Special English – the entry criteria to which were lower than to the first year of the major programme. The content and methodology of English courses, it was repeatedly asserted by academics from both HWUs and HBUs, needed to be reassessed. (see, for example, Hutchings 1990; Finn 1990; Leshoai 1990; Van Wyk Smith 1990; Combrink 1990).

While presenters from universities, technikons and colleges of education expressed differing needs and priorities, there were also, as Pereira (1990) suggests, recurrent themes and preoccupations. Speakers from university departments, in particular, emphasized the need to adapt to changing circumstances. Generally speaking, the *status quo* was questioned. University departments of English were, it was implied, misnomers, being, for the most part, departments of English Literature, with literature being conceived along elitist, Eurocentric lines. The call for change was expressed repeatedly, with varying nuances: the canon of literary texts should be expanded to include more non-metropolitan works, especially from Africa; literature itself should lose its privileged status as the only kind of text worthy of study; greater cognisance should be taken of the needs and experiences of the students, and academics should show greater willingness to enter the fray as teachers rather than lecturers. Of particular

interest to the concerns of the present study is the repeated insistence that 'English' should involve the study of language as well as literature.

The Conference on English at Tertiary Level was a significant milestone in the transformation of English studies in South Africa. It should not, of course, be seen in isolation. Five years earlier, Vaughan (1984:35) had surveyed the dominant ideas in certain university departments of English in South Africa, sharply criticizing their unstated humanist liberalism and mindset of colonial dependency. His critique of these ideas, he emphasized, was presented 'with the aim of contributing to pressures for change'. His stance is, however, less radical than he appears to believe. For him 'English' is still implicitly 'literature in English' and his survey is confined to English HWUs.

Nor should the proposals put forward at the conference be seen as unique to the South African situation. Curriculum innovations in the United Kingdom, for example, suggest the wider international context of which South Africa – for all the Afrocentricism of many of the conference's delegates – is a part. Widdowson (1982:7) speaks of the crisis in English studies, expressed as 'a question, posed from within, as to what English *is*, where it has got to, whether it *should* have a future as a discrete discipline, and if it does, in what ways it might be reconstituted [emphasis his]'. McRae (1991b:120), also echoes the sentiment expressed by many of the delegates at the conference that language study should be given more attention at university level: 'Too often, in university systems all over the world, literature study is not related to language learning; one is considered something of a superior discipline, the other an inferior exercise (often entrusted to lower-level personnel)'. More recently, Pope (1998:42), writing from an essentially British perspective, points to 'a growing concern with theory in practice, especially the politically and pedagogically urgent question of who learns and teaches what, how and why'.

The Academy Conference also drew attention to the importance of the first year of study, described by Chapman (1990:138) as 'a crisis year'. Eight years later, in January 1997, a 'First Year Forum' was organized by the Committee of Professors of English (COPE) at the University of Cape Town. First-year courses – whether of the non-continuing type designed to offer second-language students linguistic support in their studies or the first year of study of a major in English – were perceived as being of particular importance in the process of

transformation, which by now had acquired an even greater complexity than in 1989. But, as Orr (1997:51) records, in 1997, transformation was still far from complete or even clearly conceived:

Recurring features of most of the presentations were the conflict, chaos, uncertainty, consternation and creativity that attend the adaptation of a species to a changing ecology. Changing students, changing needs, changing times have thrown us back on the big questions: What English do we teach? Whose English do we teach? To whom? For what?

As had been the case at the English Academy Conference, it became clear that a wide range of issues was involved, touching on both the methodology of teaching as well as the content of the courses. Orr (1997:53) also comments on the issue of the relationship between language and literature: ‘a frequently mentioned battleground, and one where not all departments have achieved a truce’.

The English Academy Conference took place at a time of great political uncertainty. By the time of the First Year Forum, much had happened in the political, social and educational spheres. After South Africa’s first democratic elections in 1994, a number of Acts had been passed which had had (and would continue to have) far-reaching effects on higher education in the country. Departments of English had been faced with changes that went beyond the discipline-specific issues that formed the main topics for debate at the earlier conference.

Neither space nor the focus of this study allow for a detailed examination of all the changes that took place in the departments of English at South African universities in the wake of discussions such as those at the English Academy Conference and the COPE Forum. A few examples illustrating developments in the area of language-literature integration and first-year courses will, however, be examined to suggest the changing practice of some departments.

1.8 Implementing change

Dovey (1994:286) reports on a research project begun in 1991, not long after the English Academy Conference, ‘aimed at exploring the nature and effectiveness of changes in first-year *English* courses at the five traditional English-speaking universities: University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), University of Cape Town (UCT), Rhodes, and Natal (Durban and Pietermaritzburg) [emphasis hers]’. These universities were chosen, she explains, because of

the heterogenous nature of their student populations, which was unlike the linguistic homogeneity found in universities where Afrikaans or an indigenous African language was the dominant language. The course changes had been necessitated – as the speakers at the Academy Conference had recognized that they would be – by the influx of second-language, mainly black, students. (Dovey, however, also draws attention to the fact that statistics had shown that English-speaking students had also not been coping very well with English studies.)

Dovey's (1994) interest in first-year courses and her emphasis of their importance echoes the concerns expressed at the Academy Conference: it is here that 'students experience the greatest difficulties, and it is at this level that the most significant changes are being made' (*ibid.*). She also mentions the factor referred to earlier in this thesis with respect to the first-year course at UNW: most students require only a single credit in English, and have no intention of continuing into the second year. It must therefore serve a dual purpose: 'It is in the first year that a solid foundation must be laid for further study within the discipline, and students must be given something of value, which can be applied both within and outside the academy' (*ibid.*).

Dovey's conclusion was that, with the exception of the course presented at the Durban campus of the University of Natal, the new first-year courses lacked any explicitly theorized coherence, being held together only by an implicit humanism. Changes had been made on an *ad hoc* basis, with very little evidence of any on-going self-reflexivity. She scathingly dismisses the courses as being, for the most part, 'a mixture of literary appreciation and moral instruction' (Dovey 1994:288). As far as the inclusion of a language component was concerned, while all the departments acknowledged the need for it, there was little agreement on how it should be done.

Dovey's personal preference is for an approach that would enable learners to become 'competent speakers, readers and writers of English, and help them become *critical* interpreters of the various forms of language use they encounter in the world around them, and the range of texts which make up their culture' [emphasis hers] (1994:288). Such an approach, which does not privilege literature and which focuses on teachable skills rather than on content, offers an opportunity for a radical integration of language and literature, in contrast to the remedial or 'add-on' quality that, according to her analysis, characterized the inclusion of language in the

traditional literary syllabi at most of the universities in her survey. Elsewhere, she regrets the separation between work done on literary and non-literary texts, the former by departments of English, the latter by other, linguistics- or language-oriented departments, and suggests that critical linguistics and critical literacy would allow for a 'necessary sense of continuity' (Dovey 1992:138). In her survey she estimated that only the Durban 1A course, 'Reading and Interpretation', had achieved this kind of integration (Dovey 1994:294).

Dovey's (1994) survey was restricted to English-speaking historically white universities. In the following section, I shall summarize accounts of integrated language/literature first-year courses offered at three South African universities before or concurrent with the changes implemented at UNW. These are Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, an Afrikaans-medium HWU; the University of the North, an HBU; and Rhodes University, an English-medium HWU. In choosing these institutions, I hope to provide a representative selection from the full spectrum of South African universities as they were at that time. The descriptions are drawn from reports given by academics from each university. In the case of the first two, I have supplemented the descriptions with my own analysis of course materials. Like the foregoing account of the calls for transformation of South African universities, the summaries that follow do not claim to be in any way exhaustive of the position of language/literature integration in South African universities at the time: rather, the aim is to suggest some of the directions that transformation had taken, and so provide a context for the description of the programme at UNW later in this chapter.

1.8.1 Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education

Combrink (1996:3) describes innovations in the Department of English at Potchefstroom University, reporting on the early findings of 'an experiment in the teaching of language/literature via the stylistics route in a predominantly second-language university environment'. As a public statement of its re-orientation, the department had even changed its name to the Department of English Language and Literature (1996:1). Her conclusion is that the experiment had proved successful, having elicited positive feedback from students and produced a higher standard of work from them (1996:9). It has also 'begun to obviate the need for remedial work and academic support of especially formerly disadvantaged students and produced gratifying results in terms of students' appreciation of the value that the course holds for them'. She also emphasizes that the allocation of time to language teaching, 'in the sense of

writing skills and expertise', was considered desirable by both students and staff, with the proviso by the latter that there would not be any sacrifice in content and standard of the course (1996:1).

Combrink describes the three-year programme as having an integrated approach 'involving English language and literature, literary theory and practical skills inculcation'. It begins with 'a simple "language-in-action" programme at first-year level, involving the imaginative investigation of many kinds of text types' and culminates at third year level 'with students able to manipulate, comparatively, different models and approaches in stylistics, both as a mode of accessing texts they encounter and as a means of assessing their own writing and interpretive skills'(1996:4).

The impressionistic outline that Combrink goes on to provide confirms this description of a progression from mainly practical language and literary skills in the first year to increasingly theoretical and abstract concerns in the second and third years. In the selection of literary texts there is a development from what is presumably most accessible to students to the more distant: twentieth century fiction drawn mainly from South Africa in the first year; texts chosen according to period and theme in the second and third years (Romantics, Victorians and post-colonialism in the second; Chaucer, Renaissance drama, Metaphysical poetry, modernist and post-modernist texts in the third). There is a similar progression in the language component from a practical focus on language as communication in first year; to rigorous, close analysis of literary texts in the second year; leading to formal linguistics and theoretical stylistics in the third. Greater awareness of literary-theoretical issues, academic skills and creative writing are also progressively introduced and developed.

The first-year students are introduced to English studies 'via the notion of language as a means of communication and an awareness of texts in the widest sense of the word' (1996:4). In the 1997 edition of the Study Guide, the course is divided into seven modules, in the following order: Phonetics; Introductory Linguistics; Language in Action; History of the English Language; Introduction to Poetry; Introduction to Fiction and Introduction to Drama (Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education 1997:20-27). To some extent, the modules appear to be self-contained, each having its own list of aims and objectives. Integration of language and literature is, however, indicated in the links made between some

modules. For instance, the 'Language in Action' module, in which different kinds of texts are analysed, includes 'an introduction to the way in which poetic language functions' (1997:22), which is then further developed in the 'Introduction to Poetry' module. Similarly, one of the objectives listed in the 'Introduction to fiction' module is that students should 'be familiar with certain linguistic phenomena which are used with particular effect in fiction'(1997:25).

Although the Potchefstroom programme is described as 'integrated', the impression gained from Combrink's (1996) account and from the course descriptions in the study guides is that literature is still granted a privileged position, and that the language component plays a facilitating role in the study of literature. Textual study in the first year provides an introduction to poetry; later language, via stylistics, provides the tool for literary analysis. This impression is reinforced in the introductory section of the study guide:

As the majority of our students are second-language speakers, it is necessary to do a fair amount of (integrated) language work initially. Literature consists of language; it is therefore logical to assume that you must have a thorough knowledge of the way in which the English language is structured and the way in which it functions if you are to grasp the subtleties which works of literature have to offer (1997:2).

The course is, nonetheless, one that has clearly been developed from a theoretical base in stylistics. In this it contrasts with those dismissed by Dovey (1994:288) as lacking explicit theoretical coherence.

1.8.2 The University of the North

In her presentation at the COPE First Year Forum, Markestein gave an account of recent changes in the Department of English at the then University of the North, one of which was the integration of language and literature. Both the Practical English course and the first year of English as a major subject contained integrated literature and language components. As a mark of its commitment to the approach, the department had adopted a policy of recruiting staff who had an interest in both disciplines (Markestein 1997). This account is confirmed by McCabe (1999:248), who sets the changes in their broader context. She writes that the Department of English,

as part of its transformation from an apartheid foundation, moved away from its past Anglocentric orientation and the exclusive focus on literary studies to a

more inclusive literary study through the introduction of African literary traditions ... and the study of the English language in all its forms and varieties. ...The Department appropriately changed its name to “Department of English Studies” to reflect the changes to the syllabus and orientation.

In the same article, McCabe gives a practical example of language/literature integration in a passing reference to one of her techniques in teaching black protest poetry: linking the analysis of metaphor in a poem with an investigation into the uses of verbs and adjectives (1999:253).

An examination of a workshop manual used in the English 1 course (undated but in use in 2000) adds depth to McCabe’s and Markestein’s brief descriptions. The integration of language and literature is carefully structured. Although separate aims are listed for language and literature at the beginning of each workshop session, the same literary text is used to illustrate both literary and grammatical concepts. Thus, for example, in ‘Workshop 1 – African Poetry’ a translated transcription of an oral poem is the central text. At the beginning of the section, its aims are presented as:

- | | | |
|-------------|----|--|
| Literature: | 1. | To discover some elements found in oral poetry |
| | ▪ | To appreciate oral poetry |
| Language: | 1. | To recognise different parts of speech |
| | 2. | To recognise imperative statements |
- (McCabe *et al.* n.d.:11)

Literature is thus a area of study in itself *and* a resource for language study. Language here means prescriptive pedagogical grammar, focussing on the forms of language (although, in an exercise called ‘Grammar Errors’, the question of the acceptability of some ‘errors’ typically found in black South African English is raised). The literary texts (either complete in themselves or extracts from prescribed texts) are arranged to represent a progression from African to British and American literature. In each workshop session, there are also questions designed to open out the topics introduced through the literary text into more general areas (for example, the role of women or human rights). Students are invited to reflect on the issues and to give expression to their own opinions and experiences.

1.8.3 Rhodes University – East London Campus

Dovey, whose survey of first-year courses (Dovey 1994) was mentioned earlier in this section, also describes (Dovey 1998) a new course, English Language and Literature, which she designed and taught at the East London campus of Rhodes University in 1996. Prompted by her sense of the inadequacy of the existing course, it represented a realization of her earlier call for an approach which would ‘provide a bridge between “language” and “literary” studies’ and at the same time ‘allow for a continuum between functional literacy and critical literacy’ (1992:137). In the course, she integrated reading, interpretative skills, writing and grammar, using Hallidayean systemic functional grammar. Dovey (1998) explains that she attempted to move away from the narrow focus on canonical literary texts found in traditional English courses and to include a wider range of discourse types, literary and non-literary. She was not, however, able to diverge too far from the parameters of the existing Rhodes courses. This meant ‘maintaining an orientation toward the teaching of literature within the established framework of the primary literary genres of narrative fiction, drama and poetry’ (1998:28). However, in teaching the reading and interpretation of the literary texts, she adopted a pedagogy of genre literacy, drawing attention to ‘the conventions of reading a particular genre, in preference to providing students with ready-made interpretations of literary texts’ (*ibid.*).

This emphasis on *teachable skills* is developed in her parallel focus on the skills of essay writing and the direct teaching of grammar. She shows how both these elements, along with the analysis of non-literary texts, can be integrated into the examination of the three literary genres. Essay writing is also presented as a form of genre literacy, with the focus on production, which enables students to write *about* the other genres (where the focus is on reception). Grammar, on the other hand, is taught through drawing attention ‘to the connection between grammatical choices and generic conventions’ (1998:30). Throughout the course, students are encouraged to adopt a critical stance, both to what and how they are learning (1998:39).

Dovey’s (1998) account of the English Language and Literature course is presented in highly theoretical terms, her language loaded with the jargon of applied linguistics and education. It takes some effort to see beyond this to the reality of the course, as it would appear to the first-year students, a third of whom were, at the time of writing, second-language speakers of English (1998:25). The course was intended to make the subject more relevant

and accessible to the students and Dovey, quoting statistics from an independent evaluation, is cautiously optimistic that it has succeeded in its aim. She reports, however, that students found grammar difficult, especially in its application to critical analysis, even though the grammar had been taught at a very elementary level and she had taken care to select accessible texts for analysis.

From Dovey's (1998) account it is, however, clear that the new course was introduced under less than ideal circumstances, which militated against a successful implementation of her conception of language/literature integration. As already indicated, her innovations were introduced within the parameters of a more traditional literature course. She also hints at opposition to her approach from colleagues, which undermined its effectiveness. She mentions that she was not able to teach the drama component, which was consequently taught in a traditional manner. Later, in an apparent reference to the same issue, she comments that, 'for a course of this nature to succeed there must be a strong degree of coherence which was not achieved this year because of a lack of support from colleagues' (1998:41).

1.8.4 Assumptions and context

From even this brief account of the courses offered at three different universities, it can be seen that the integration of language and literature can be realized in significantly different ways and with different emphases. The way in which the two categories, 'language' and 'literature', are interpreted also varies. It is not simply a matter of *which* literature or language is taught (African or British literature; traditional or functional grammar, and so on) but also the way in which each is conceptualized. Does literature retain its traditional privileged status (as seems to be the case in the Potchefstroom approach), or is it seen as just another kind of discourse, with its own (teachable) rules and conventions, as in Dovey's first-year course? Does 'language' involve knowledge *about* language (as is the case in some of the Potchefstroom modules) or is it another word for grammar, whether of the traditional prescriptive kind (University of the North) or the functional grammar advocated by Dovey? Is it, in fact, still useful or meaningful to distinguish between 'language' and 'literature' any more? Dovey's approach would suggest that it is not.

The answers given to questions such as these reflect the assumptions, whether explicit or implicit, of the syllabus designers. The assumptions are not only about the academic disciplines of language and literature but also pedagogical assumptions about the needs of

students for whom the course is intended.

It is equally important to note the degree of support and recognition given to the innovations that the courses represent. Do they represent official departmental policy, or are they the work of individuals dissatisfied with the *status quo*? To what extent does the teacher/researcher have control over what is taught and how it is taught? To what extent were the views of the students gauged before the changes were made?

All these questions are implicit in the survey of the literature to be undertaken in the next chapter. They also represent issues that needed to be addressed in my own design and implementation of the English 100 course at UNW. At the same time, I was able to draw inspiration from many of the solutions devised by the South African syllabus designers examined here. Following Potchefstroom University's example, the English 100 course focussed on practical language and literary skills, preparing the way for greater theory and abstraction in the second and third years of study. The University of the North's systematic integration of literary appreciation and grammar knowledge provided me with a model for a similar approach, as did its emphasis on African literature. Dovey's arguments for breaking down the divisions between literary and non-literary texts reinforced similar arguments encountered elsewhere, and led to the idea of a continuum of literariness becoming one of the underlying theoretical assumptions of the English 100 course.

In the following section, the impact of the forces of transformation on the Department of English at UNW will be described.

1.9 Syllabus⁶ development at the University of North West

The Department of English at UNW was in advance of many South African universities in its recognition that both language and literature are important components in a programme of English studies, especially when it is aimed at second-language speakers of English.

When the university was established in 1980 as the University of Bophuthatswana, it

⁶Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:43) define a syllabus as 'an official outline or plan of a course of study' which 'describes the aims, content, organization and testing procedures of the work to be done'. The term 'programme' has also been used in this study to describe the undergraduate syllabus.

was stated that ‘the university should not necessarily follow the pattern of the classical Western university, but should seek to establish a university structure that would be relevant to the needs of the country [that is, the then nominally independent republic of Bophuthatswana]’ (University of Bophuthatswana, no date:14; see also Bophuthatswana National Education Commission 1978:87). Two aspects of this innovative approach are relevant here. Firstly, it was recognized that students would need ‘academic support to enable them to cope with the academic demands within the university system especially with regard to English as the medium of communication, mathematics and sciences’ (University of Bophuthatswana, no date:18). Secondly, the university would have a vocational and professional focus, which implied that ‘curricula and educational methods must be designed with requirements of the future work situation or vocational field in mind’ (No date:21). This would be reflected in the organizational structure of the university: instead of the traditional faculties, it would be divided into professional schools consisting of ‘a cluster of subjects the basis of which will be a profession’ (No date:24; see also Dellatola 1985).

These innovations had specific consequences for the fledgling Department of English. The requirement that students be provided with academic support in language and study skills led to the establishment of the Special English (later renamed English and Academic Skills) unit which offered a compulsory, non-continuing course to all first-year students (see Murray 1990). The vocational bias meant that the department was situated within the School of Education and offered a four-year programme that included ESL teaching methodology. Initially, students were given the option of majoring in *either* literature or language; later it was decided that *both* should be offered, since both disciplines represented skills necessary for prospective teachers (Segatlhe 2001: personal communication). A three-year BA programme was offered in later years, which also combined language and literature but had components of research methodology in place of the teaching methods offered to the BA (Ed.) students.

Honey (1988), in his inaugural lecture as professor of English Language in the Department of English, stresses that competence in the English language is essential for the future success of students at the University of Bophuthatswana. An even more telling indication of the importance attached to language studies (in contrast to the literary bias at most other South African universities) may, however, be deduced from the words of a former professor of English *literature* in the department. In a paper delivered at the South African Applied Linguistics Association in 1991, Saunders (1991a:3) spoke of the choice of literary

texts for study in a second-language situation, linking the issue to the need for literary and linguistic competence:

Until there is considerable language mastery and until there is considerable experience of current literature, reflecting current, even local, issues and concerns, there is little sense in compelling students to grapple with books about remote events, written in a highly complex and antiquated style (for example, Dickens, George Eliot and Thomas Hardy). Until language mastery is achieved, the teaching of literature should occupy a secondary place, and books should to a large extent be prescribed for their usefulness in achieving that mastery. They should help reinforce the process of learning the language as a *current* medium of expression.

By the late 1990s, however, staff in the department had perceived the need for a radical reassessment of the syllabus. The parallel BA and BA (Ed.) programmes had become too cumbersome to be managed effectively and needed to be streamlined into a single programme capable of serving the needs of all students. At the same time the university management had proposed that the School of Education be broken up into faculties: this would lead to the department giving up its vocational training responsibilities. Even more important, the department had to respond to calls from the national Ministry of Education to restructure its programmes in line with proposed changes to the whole South African system of higher education.

The integration and balance of language and literature was also a cause for concern among some lecturers (Butler 1999b:36). Relations between 'language lecturers' and 'literature lecturers' lacked the acrimony mentioned by Combrink (1996:3), but they were generally characterized by indifference to and ignorance of the others' work. Little attempt was made to co-ordinate the parallel streams, apart from allocating separate lecturing slots on the timetable. Language and literature were taught and examined separately. Students often complained of the conflicting demands made on them by language and literature lecturers. Assessment criteria and grades were often perceived as being unfairly inconsistent (see Department of English minutes 18/02/97).

The members of the department decided to take the opportunity offered by changing circumstances to implement the desired structural changes and at the same time integrate and balance the language and literature streams in a principled and theoretically sound manner. Two members of the department, Professor Chris Dunton and I, were charged with the task of

drawing up, in consultation with our colleagues, a draft of an integrated undergraduate programme. The changes were, however, phased in gradually, largely because of the lack of clarity in the national plans for higher education in matters such as modularization (see Dunton 1996; Orr 1997:51 and Department of English minutes 11/10/96, 21/01/97 and 18/02/97). The phasing-in period also provided me, as the principal designer of the new syllabus, with an opportunity to expand and refine on my understanding of the theory underlying an integrated approach. A statement of intention was among the documents presented by me on behalf of the department at the COPE First Year Forum. Here an outline of the first-year course was prefaced with the following explanation of the relationship between language and literature:

Academic English courses [that is, in contrast to the non-continuing EAS course] are divided into two equal components, language and literature. Until now the components have been taught and examined independently of each other. Although the division will remain in the proposed new syllabus, it is envisaged that there will be greater consultation between language and literature lecturers and a move towards a more integrated syllabus. The Department is especially eager to implement this approach at first-year level (Committee of Professors of English 1997:Appendix 10C).

The new undergraduate syllabus was progressively phased in from 1998 to 2000. Modularization was only completed in 1999 although even then the process was generally mismanaged and beset with inconsistencies. The case study was conducted in 2000 and 2001 when the new syllabus was operational on all levels. There were, nevertheless, still many teething problems, as will be apparent in the account in Chapter 5.

A detailed account of the case study will be given in Chapter 5. This will involve a description of the first-year modules: their intended outcomes, the materials and methodologies used to translate the syllabus into classroom practice, an account of my experiences and observations as the teacher/researcher and an analysis of the students' performance. In the following sections, some of my preliminary work in developing an integrated approach to the teaching of language and literature will be described. This activity can be seen as part of the action research process.

1.10 English 100 : Preliminary research and experimentation

UNW's English undergraduate programme (see Appendix D) emphasized the importance of the first year of study. In the General Outcomes, it is stated that the focus of the

programme 'moves gradually from a concern with practical language skills and foundational knowledge in the initial modes to a more theoretical, analytical orientation in later modules'. The description of English 100 is as follows:

The first year modules are designed to provide an introduction to university studies, drawing on and consolidating students' existing knowledge and experience, while at the same time laying the foundations for more advanced study. The emphasis on practice aims at discouraging rote learning. Students are provided with opportunities to take control of their own learning and to develop their observational and analytical skills. They are encouraged to develop a critical, questioning attitude to the assumptions underlying the practice of language in general and to the use of language in literature.

The challenge was to translate this into practice through appropriate materials and methodology in which language and literature were integrated. Durant (1996:66) argues in favour of teachers developing their own materials, designing them with a particular group of students in mind, in preference to using commercially produced materials. My approach was to use both kinds of material; however, even those sections that were taken from other course books were selected and adapted to conform to the design and aims of the course. In this section, I shall describe the first stages of materials development for the English 100 course, which were undertaken at the same time as the development of the programme itself. The two concurrent processes influenced and contributed to each other, and formed the foundation on which the subsequent case study was based. In some cases, materials were developed to give concrete expression to theory or technique; in others, my understanding of the theory was confirmed or expanded by earlier successful classroom practice. This two-way process is in keeping with the spirit of action research.

Prior to the introduction of the first year of the new programme in 1998, I had been experimenting with methods and materials that promoted the integration of language and literature. This was done within the constraints of the language stream of the old syllabus. I had been teaching the language component of the first-year course for a number of years, researching and experimenting with various text-based approaches (Butler & Williams 1992). The introduction of a syllabus that integrated language and literature gave new direction to this interest. My work in progress was described in a workshop at an International Association for the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL) conference, held in Israel in 1997, in which I explored ways of contrasting literary and non-literary texts in the language classroom,

using materials based on those I had been experimenting with at UNW. (Butler 1997; see also Butler 1999b).⁷ In my approach I was mainly influenced by the work of Ronald Carter, whose contribution to the theory and practice of language/literature integration will be examined in more detail in later chapters.

The first exercise in the workshop presentation involved a guided re-writing exercise, in which the participants, in the role of students, were required to use information found in one text to create another text, of a different kind. Using information found in an encyclopaedia, they had to create an advertisement for a tourist agency in which they described a town as a tourist destination. They then had to analyse what they had done, contrasting their intention as writers and their use of language with those of the writer of the original text. The aim of the exercise was to increase students' awareness of different kinds of English and their appropriate contexts.

In designing the material I had the following in mind:

- that it should be **student-centred** and promote **active involvement** in the task. Getting students to create their own texts (even if initially they perform the task badly) as a prelude to stylistic analysis is a useful technique, even in more advanced classes. I had tried this approach after I had found that students tended to summarize or paraphrase when asked to analyse a text 'cold'. By actually trying to write a particular kind of text, they are forced to consider how similar texts are created – the first step towards abstract analysis.
- **interest and relevance.** In a similar exercise I devised for my own students, I had tried to appeal to *their* immediate experience of the town in which our university is situated, and from that knowledge develop a critical awareness of how language permeates everyday life.
- **using the relatively known to develop knowledge of the relatively unknown.** Exercises like these could be used as a preliminary to the analysis of a literary text. The importance of immediacy that I noted in respect of my choice of topic applies equally to my choice of texts. Students who might be intimidated at the thought of literature (especially poetry) are likely to be reassured by an advertisement, so much

⁷Some of the material used in the workshop was eventually included in the ENG 102 module in 2000 and subsequent years.

part of everyday life. This makes it easier to talk about concepts like the writer's intention and stylistic effects.

- **an opportunity to introduce grammatical and stylistic concerns.** Texts provide a context for inductive study of grammatical and stylistic features. In this exercise, the students' attempts at creative writing could be expected to involve extensive use of adjectives and adverbs, loose or conventionally ungrammatical sentence structures, imperatives and so on. Analysis of these features could lead to discussion of the grammatical rules governing their conventional usage, as well as their appropriate use in this context.

In the second exercise, the workshop participants, this time in the role of teachers, had to think of ways of exploiting a passage from Chinua Achebe's novel, *Things Fall Apart*, as a resource for developing students' language and literary competences. A number of interesting suggestions were made: I then described how I had used the same passage in my teaching, contrasting it with a non-literary text. Comparison and contrast of texts is a useful technique for highlighting the distinctive qualities of a particular text. It is particularly effective if one wishes to sensitize students to the characteristics of literary discourse. Such an approach worked very well with *Things Fall Apart*. I had asked students to compare the passage from the novel with a non-fictional account (from a history book) of how Africans were affected by European colonization, very similar in terms of topic and content, but quite different as far as the presentation of that information was concerned. I asked them to consider the following questions: In what ways do the two texts differ from each other? Why should we read *Things Fall Apart* when we could get much the same 'information' from a history book? Does Achebe offer us anything that a historian cannot? Through trying to answer these and other questions, students were led to an understanding of literary techniques such as characterization, dramatization, and perspective. By anchoring the discussion in specific textual examples and encouraging a student-centred process of self-discovery, much of the dry abstraction of the topic, which might be discouraging to students lacking in literary competence, was avoided.

Underlying my approach to the design of all the worksheets used in the workshop was the idea of a **cline of literariness**, stretching from language use that is apparently neutral, objective and transparent to the kind of discourse in which *how* the message is conveyed is *as*, if not *more*, important than the message itself. As has frequently been pointed out, the traditional and 'commonsense' distinction between 'literary' and 'non-literary' language does

not stand up to careful analysis of actual language use: it makes more sense to think in terms of degrees of 'literariness', instances of which can be found in a wide range of texts (Carter & Long 1991:7; Lazar 1993:8; Brumfit & Carter 1986:8). Working with everyday texts such as advertisements and tourist pamphlets is a good starting point for training students to look *at* rather than *through* language (Rodger 1983:39). It prepares the way for the analysis of literary texts, while at the same time demystifying the language of those texts.

This conception of a cline linking 'non-literary' and 'literary' texts also provides a way of linking literature and language studies. It enables one to see them, not as mutually exclusive disciplines, but as intertwined elements within English studies. The sequencing of the ENG 100 modules and the arrangement of units and texts within them was, to a large extent, determined by this fundamental assumption.

Materials, like those used in the IATEFL workshop, were constantly revised and refined in the light of my experience in using them and feedback received from colleagues who later shared in the teaching of the course at UNW and at the university's affiliated Colleges of Education, Thaba 'Nchu and Marapyane. This period of experimentation and theoretical research also enabled me to formulate a set of hypotheses on the benefits of the integration of language and literature in ESOL teaching. These, formulated as fourteen statements, will form the core of the literature survey in the next chapter.

1.11 Outline of chapters

Chapter 1: Introduction

This introductory chapter provides an outline of the concerns of the study and attempts to sketch the background against which the research was undertaken. It begins with an account of the aim of the study, followed by a statement of the problem, the research question, the field of study, the research methodology to be employed and the immediate academic context. In the remaining sections, the circumstances that led up to and provided a motivation for the research are described. First, the larger context of the need to transform English studies at South African universities is outlined, with special emphasis on arguments for the integration of language and literature and the needs of first-year students. Three specific examples of an integrated first-year course are given. The specific transformational needs of the Department of English at UNW, which led to the design and implementation of a new undergraduate

syllabus, are then described. In an attempt to give a sense of this process and the immediate context in which the case study was undertaken, mention is made of preliminary work in materials development. An outline of the chapters in the thesis is then given. In conclusion, arguments are presented on the contribution of this study to the field.

Chapter 2: The integration of language and literature in ESOL: A survey of the literature

In this chapter, a survey is made of standard and current literature on the integration of language and literature in the field of ESOL pedagogy. The survey begins by considering the increasing contemporary interest in studying the interface between language and literature before examining its specific application to English teaching. The changing attitudes to the integration of language and literature teaching are surveyed; contemporary and recent publications are then reviewed for the wide range of possibilities that integration offers. A list of fourteen statements about the benefits of integration is offered in an attempt to identify common ground in the literature. Each statement is examined in detail, with representative citations in its support. The teaching methodology implicit in most versions of the integrated approach is also discussed. In conclusion, two mini-case studies are presented, in which the debates surrounding the relationship between literature and language teaching in the Middle East and Hong Kong are examined.

Chapter 3: Aspects of the transformation of education in South Africa: Outcomes-based education and quality assurance

Here some of the contextual factors briefly referred to in the first chapter are expanded upon. The chapter examines the issues surrounding educational transformation in South Africa, with particular reference to outcomes-based education and quality assurance. The conditions at UNW, under which the process of transformation was effected, are described. The theory and principles of outcomes-based education and quality assurance, as well as their practical application in the case study, are critically examined.

Chapter 4: Research methodology: Action research

This chapter describes and justifies the action research paradigm in which the case study has been conducted. Action research is shown to be particularly suited to the kind of research that attempts to conflate the roles of teacher and researcher. The theory and practice of action research are expounded, in particular their application in the context of a university.

Specific research techniques relevant to the case study are described. Throughout the chapter discussion of the theory and principles of action research is followed by accounts of their specific application in the case study.

Chapter 5: English 100: A case study

This chapter, the longest in the thesis, contains an account of the case study of the English 100 course. There are four concurrent threads to the commentary: a narrative of the case study, analysis (quantitative and qualitative) of the students' performance, links to the theory of the integration of language and literature and of outcomes-based education and triangulation in the form of input from students and colleagues.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

In the final chapter, the case study is summarized. Its limitations are then considered from the perspectives of the student population, the institutional context and constraints in the application of OBE. An attempt is then made to assess the success of the English 100 course using two concepts earlier introduced in the discussion on quality assurance: fitness of purpose and fitness for purpose. Finally, the case study is considered as action research: its contribution to the researcher's personal development and to on-going international research in the integration of language and literature in ESOL.

References

The list of references contains publication details of all the works cited in the text of the thesis, including unpublished documents, such as departmental minutes, personal communications and memoranda.

Appendices

The Appendices contain material referred to in the body of the thesis, documents not otherwise available to the reader. Appendices A, B and C are extracts from the students' resource books. Constraints of space mean that only those sections referred to in some detail in Chapter 5 can be included. Appendix D is a description of the whole integrated undergraduate syllabus. Appendix E contains materials used in tutorials. Appendix F reproduces all the questionnaires referred to in the thesis.

1. 12 Contribution to the field

This chapter has attempted to suggest some of the forces of change that have been operating in departments of English at South African universities in the last two decades. In line with the concerns of the thesis, special attention has been given to two particular aspects of change: the integration of language and literature and the development of courses for first-year students. Departments have reacted to these two issues in various ways, with varying degrees of success. In the current state of flux in South African higher education, the process of transformation and adaptation is likely to continue rather than abate.

The thesis, conducted within a paradigm of action research case study, can contribute to the on-going debate. By describing and evaluating the design and implementation of an integrated syllabus for first-year students at UNW, I hope to offer insights and provoke discussion that will influence the on-going development of syllabi for the study of English in South Africa. Unlike many other attempts at change instituted by South African departments of English at the time, the syllabus described here was not implemented on an *ad hoc* basis. An existing syllabus was not 'made relevant' by adding on a component, previously absent, such as practical language skills. Rather, the design of the syllabus involved a radical reconceptualization of the place and nature of tertiary English studies in South Africa. The syllabus was planned, implemented and, in the case of the first-year modules, monitored in a systematic fashion. The developments were grounded in contemporary international debates on the methodology of teaching ESOL and in literary theory. At the same time, the practical realities of the teaching context were not ignored. In particular, on-going attempts were made to solicit and explore the opinions and perceptions of the student population for whose benefit the research is ultimately intended. This approach was in keeping with the principles of action research. It also echoes the view of Davies (2006) who emphasizes that teachers should not simply depend on their own intuitions in their planning, but also consult their learners' real needs and desires. As Holly *et al.* (2005:213) comment: 'Critical researchers argue that the more we reduce power differences so that participants have an equal "say" with researchers, the closer we come to making valid statements.'

Unavoidably, some time has elapsed between the gathering of the data and the presentation of the findings in this study. In the meantime, the landscape of South African tertiary education has continued to shift. A series of mergers has resulted in new alliances; the racial, ethnic and linguistic distinctions are becoming increasingly blurred. These differences have not, however, disappeared. The University of North West, once the University of

Bophuthatswana, is now the Mafikeng campus of the North West University, in a theoretically equal partnership with the formerly white, Afrikaans-medium Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. This change has not, however, had any marked effect on the nature of its student enrolment, a situation that is unlikely to change in the immediate future. The same is true of other mergers throughout the country: while the formerly white institutions now reflect the diverse nature of the South African population, former ‘homeland’ universities remain relatively homogenous.

Chapter 2⁸

The integration of language and literature in ESOL: A survey of the literature

All of us here, however, definitely realize that a linguist deaf to the poetic function of language and a literary scholar indifferent to linguistic problems and unacquainted with linguistic methods, are equally flagrant anachronisms.

Roman Jakobson 1958, in Weber (1996:33)

2.1 Introduction

Roman Jakobson’s classic assertion of the inter-relatedness of language and literature studies, made in 1958, is reproduced in all books in Routledge’s INTERFACE series. But an

⁸Parts of this chapter were originally published in Butler 2002 and Butler 2006, as action research reports on work in progress. Comments made by the referees to whom the articles were initially submitted have assisted in the formulation of the chapter.

editorial comment under the quotation notes wryly:

This statement, made over twenty-five years ago, is no less relevant today, and ‘flagrant anachronisms’ still abound. The aim of the INTERFACE series is to examine topics at the ‘interface’ of language studies and literary criticism and in so doing to build bridges between these traditionally divided disciplines (Simpson 1997:ii).

The way in which these bridges are being built is clear from a survey of the books in the series: titles such as *Language, literature and critical practice* (Birch 1989), *A linguistic history of English poetry* (Bradford 1993), *Feminist Stylistics* (Mills 1995) and *Literature about language* (Shepherd 1994) point to the varied possibilities for exploring the interface between language and literature.

The INTERFACE series is just one instance of a growing trend that, in recent years, has seen a blurring of the traditional divisions between the two disciplines. Another is the INTERTEXT series, also published by Routledge. Here a core workbook, *Working with texts* (Carter *et al.* 1997, 2001), offers a method of analysing a variety of texts, literary and non-literary. The more specialized satellite volumes – bearing titles such as *The language of fiction* (Sanger 1998), *The language of newspapers* (Reah 1998), *The language of advertising: Written texts* (Goddard 1998) and *The language of poetry* (McRae 1998) – attest to the common ground between language and literature studies. Many other academic texts, theoretical and practical, published in the last two decades demonstrate a similar convergence or even blurring of language and literature. The following comment by Pope (1998:45) demonstrates the new perception. Having distinguished three fields of study in English – language, literature and culture – he goes on to emphasize the crudity of these divisions:

A couple of things should be clarified about the notion of “fields” used here. First, these are better conceived as *force fields* rather than the kinds of fields we find in farming. They operate as ceaselessly shifting and mutually shaping energies, not as spatially fixed and mutually exclusive areas. In this sense a “field” is a force we bring to bear on a particular material, or the conditions in which we place that material

But if, as the INTERFACE editor suggests, Jakobson’s ‘flagrant anachronisms’ have continued to abound in the academic study of language and literature, the same has been true in the more practical field of ESOL teaching. Bassnett and Grundy (1993:1) comment:

We have encountered language teachers who think literature is irrelevant, who argue that what students need are texts that are “practical” and “rooted in everyday experience”, not works of art. And we have encountered literature teachers who look down on “mere language” work, as though literary texts were made from some ethereal matter and not constructed out of language at all.

As will be demonstrated in this chapter, their complaint has been echoed on numerous occasions. Many writers attest to the continuing – and frequently unequal – division between the two traditional fields of English teaching. Nor, apparently, is this phenomenon confined to the teaching of *English* as a second or foreign language. Writers such as Herron (1985), Schofer (1990), Barnett (1991), Bayley (1994), Freeman (1999) and Scott and Tucker (2001) mention a similar rift in the foreign language teaching of European languages.⁹

However, these same writers – on both English and other languages – have frequently gone on to offer persuasive arguments in favour of breaking down the divisions in a way that would facilitate an integration of the two pedagogies. The aim of this chapter is to explore the possibilities for the integration of language and literature in the area of ESOL teaching, as they have been expressed in the literature.

After a brief survey of changing attitudes to the relationship between the two subject areas since the mid-1960s, an attempt will be made to represent the scope of discussion especially during the last two decades. This latter period has witnessed, on both sides of the language/literature divide, a growing interest in the idea of integration. An exhaustive annotated bibliography of everything that has been written on the topic is clearly beyond the scope of the present study. Such detail would, in any event, involve pointless repetition. It is, nevertheless, important to indicate, on the one hand, the variety of ways in which the notion of integration has been interpreted; on the other, the volume of writing, both theoretical and practical, scholarly and professional, that has been produced. In an attempt to accommodate

⁹Integration of language and literature in the teaching of English as a first language seems, on the other hand, to be generally accepted. For example, textbooks written with candidates for the UK-based A-level examinations in mind adopt an approach in which integration is explicitly stated as the underlying methodology (see, for example, Clark 1996, Norman 1998, Croft & Myers 2000, Keith & Shuttleworth 2000, Ross & Greatrex 2001, Jeffrey 2002). Similarly, in South Africa a widely used series of secondary school text books, *English in context*, intended for pupils studying English as a main language, integrates the teaching of language and literature (see, for example, Hendry, Gardyne & Burger 1994:iii). It should, however, be noted that, recently, in some theoretical discussions, there has been a blurring in the distinction between first and second language use (Paran 2006b:9).

both needs, the following organizational approach has been adopted. A list of fourteen statements of the benefits of integrating language and literature in ESOL teaching is offered as a framework within which individual contributions and responses can be mentioned, however briefly.¹⁰ I have drawn these statements up in an attempt to identify and encapsulate the core propositions that would make integration a feasible and profitable approach to ESOL teaching; they have also formed the theoretical underpinning of my action research project.¹¹ Two mini case studies will then be offered: a survey of debates surrounding the integration of language and literature in Hong Kong and in the Middle East. These foci have been chosen for two reasons: firstly, for the practical reason that a fairly substantial volume of research has been conducted in the two regions; secondly, and more significantly, because both share some similarities with the situation in South Africa and so provide a corrective to the metropolitan outlook that typifies most of the publications surveyed in the chapter.¹²

2.2 The relationship between language and literature in ESOL: A brief survey

The issue of integration can be looked at from the point of view of either the literature or the language specialist. Each will be considered separately in this section.

2.2.1 Literature in the language classroom

Many writers have commented on the changing attitudes to the inclusion of literature in an ESOL language context. A convenient summary is offered by Durant (1993:158-160). He distinguishes between three phases. In the first, the 'traditional' phase, the study of literature was seen as the ultimate goal of all language teaching and given a consequently high

¹⁰Citations in support of each statement will be limited to no more than six representative references. These will be selected according to one or more of the following criteria: the date on which it was written, the significance of the writer's contribution to the field and the intrinsic worth of the contribution. An attempt will also be made to include writers from outside the United States and the United Kingdom.

¹¹The propositions were implicit in the planning of the English 100 modules, and were revised and expanded in the course of the action research in 2000 and 2001. They therefore represent a cumulative summary of both theoretical and empirical research. They were articulated in their present form at the end of 2001 when they formed the basis of a questionnaire administered to colleagues who shared the teaching of the modules. The responses to this questionnaire will be examined in Chapter 5.

¹²The focus of this thesis is on teaching English language and literature at tertiary level in an ESOL situation. In surveying the literature on integration, my focus has been on similar contexts. Accounts of other levels or situations have not, however, been excluded as a matter of principle, and have been included if they are able to shed light on the topic.

status. The second phase, current in the 1960s and 1970s, saw a dramatic change as literature was downgraded, if not entirely excluded, from language courses, which became increasingly functional in their orientation. The third, which he describes as characterized by ‘discourse stylistics approaches’, emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s and was a reaction against the functionalism of the previous phase. There was once again a place for literature in ESOL. The approach was, however, now significantly different: literature was studied in conjunction with other kinds of non-literary discourse, and presented in various innovative ways.

Durant’s (1993) first two phases have clear parallels to the teaching of English at university level in South Africa, as discussed in Chapter 1. The first phase corresponds to the traditional literature-dominated syllabi, in which the study of language was either completely ignored or, at best, seen as playing a supportive role. The second is reminiscent of the swing towards ‘practical’ English courses necessitated by the growing numbers of ESOL students studying at tertiary level, for whom the traditional approach no longer seemed appropriate. The third points to the possibility of an integration between language and literature, an approach currently being explored in South Africa, and the subject of this thesis.

Durant’s broad outline is also generally indicative of trends in ESOL and other foreign language teaching internationally. This is evident in a survey of publications in scholarly and professional journals over the last forty years. Many publications in the 1960s and 1970s (Durant’s second phase) attest to the complete separation of language and literature teaching. Topping (1968) rejects the use of literature in the second language classroom on the grounds that it does not improve language proficiency, does not provide students with cultural exposure and is not wanted by them anyway. Arthur (1968:199) mentions the reluctance of language teachers to include literature in the syllabus, while Allen (1976:17) notes the deep division between linguistics and literature. Such attitudes are succinctly and forcefully summed up by Blatchford (1972:1, 6) who rejects the study of English literature as ‘a luxury that cannot be indulged’, an ‘expensive gew-gaw’. It is far more important, he insists, that students be given every opportunity to develop communication skills. Blatchford does qualify these sweeping statements with an acknowledgement that they might not hold true in all situations, such as where English is taught as a second, rather than foreign, language. His stance, nevertheless, seems to have been representative of a pervasive attitude among writers and practitioners in the field thirty to forty years ago that literature and literary studies were irrelevant to the teaching of English as a second or foreign language. Their position was, ironically enough, as

Durant (1993) suggests, in part a reaction against the earlier view that regarded the study of literature as the principal justification for learning a language. Strevens (1977:60), describing then current British ELT practice, makes this clear when he argues that ‘over the past twenty-five years the strength of this justification has evaporated; nowadays a much stronger justification for learning English is provided by the evident usefulness of having a practical, communicative command of the language’.

Yet, in spite of this general tendency, there were also, even then, voices claiming a place for literature in the language classroom. Holland (1973), referring specifically the teaching of English as a second language in South Africa, argues for the inclusion of literature on psychological and linguistic grounds. Marckwardt (1978:19) argues that there is a ‘justifiable and profitable place for literature’ in ESL, adding that ‘the place and the purpose of a literary component within the English curriculum will differ with the place and the purpose of teaching English’. Povey (1980) is also an advocate, although he argues that literature should be taught for its own sake, with its use as a resource for language exercises and cultural knowledge a by-product only.

Whether or not literature has a place in ESOL has remained a contentious issue, however. Edmondson (1997), for example, expresses scepticism at the claims made for literature in developing language competence. His argument is, however, not against the inclusion of literature in language courses *per se*, but rather against the belief that it is an essential component. Even in more recent years, the third period in Durant’s (1993) outline, nearly all writers advocating the use of literature in ESOL have prefaced their discussion with an acknowledgement of the widely held belief that literature does *not* have a place in language pedagogy. They then implicitly defend themselves against anticipated objections by pointing to current changes in thinking (for example, Povey 1980; Tomlinson 1986; Sage 1987; Gajdusek 1988). As recently as 2000, Bates (2000c:13) feels it necessary to argue that poetry is not, as is often supposed, completely removed from learning or teaching a language:

In fact, poetry can handle all kinds of experience connected with EFL and irradiate the experience, providing thought or comic relief, making the experience more real, and perhaps making the language learning more creative.

In the same year, Belcher and Hirvela (2000), writing specifically of the inclusion of literature in English second language courses, show that this is still a matter of fierce debate. Maley

(2001:180) confirms that the divide was still evident in the following year, especially at college and university level.

ESOL practitioners have, nevertheless, shown an increased interest in literature in the last twenty years. Numerous writers have, at different times, heralded the 'comeback' of literature. Widdowson (1983:34), Hill (1986:7), Maley (1989), McRae (1991a:432), Carter and Long (1991:1), Falvey and Kennedy (1997b:1), Paran (1998:6; 2006b:1) and Prodromou (2000:3), to name only a few in the last two decades, have all pointed to a renewed interest in using literature in the language classroom. Brumfit and Benton (1993) offer a world perspective on the phenomenon, including in their survey countries as diverse as Sweden and Kenya. That reservations have continued to be felt is evident from the fact that each writer has apparently felt the need to proclaim the 'comeback' anew. Maley (1989:59), however, points out that developments within ESOL since the 1960s and 1970s have made it more receptive to what literature has to offer. Innovative techniques developed within the communicative movement were suitable for use with literary texts. Literature was also a perfect vehicle for developing the personal response in language learning considered so important in the humanistic movement. It was also recognized that the aim of incorporating literature into language teaching was not to produce literary critics: rather literature was seen as resource for language teaching. Thus he concludes: 'Literature is back – but wearing different clothes' (*ibid.*). The point is reiterated in Duff and Maley (1990:3), where the authors provide concrete suggestions for putting the new approach to literature into practice. Literature teaching in the ESOL context was certainly sufficiently different for McRae (1991a) to feel the need to provide a glossary and discussion of all the new 'buzzwords' to assist teachers who wanted to investigate this new area.

2.2.2 Language and literary studies

My review so far has focussed on integration from the perspective of the language classroom. But, in Maley's (1989:59) words, literature has also acquired 'different clothes', the appearance of which have been determined by developments *within* the field of literary studies and pedagogy. There has been an increased awareness of the reader as an active participant in the construction of meaning from literary texts; stylistics, with its focus on the language of literary texts, has had an effect on language teaching; and the notion of 'literature' has been expanded beyond the traditional literary canon. These developments have, in different ways, affected how teachers of literature view language learning. The new approaches make literature potentially more accessible to language learners, while at the same

time raising awareness of language issues among literature teachers. The benefits of combining language and literature can therefore be seen from a literary perspective as well.

For literature teachers, the initiative for integration with language has also had a more pragmatic basis. Durant's (1993) model of three phases was conceived from the point of view of the language teacher, but it is equally valid from the perspective of the development of literary studies. Traditionally, as in the first phase, the study of literature was seen as an end in itself; this position has, however, become increasingly difficult to justify. Even at universities, the privileged status traditionally given to literary texts in the liberal humanist language curriculum has, increasingly, been displaced by a more utilitarian bias that favours language for its instrumental benefits (Durant's second phase). This phenomenon has already been noted in the context of the changing face of English studies in South African universities, but that it is not confined to this country, or even to the teaching of English, is suggested by Bayley's (1994) account of the declining position of literature in the teaching of foreign European languages at British universities. One of the reactions to this 'crisis', she claims, has been to emphasize the practical benefits of literary study for language acquisition, a claim that finds a reassuring echo in the arguments put forward by language teachers in the third phase.

Bayley (1994) also cites the broadening of the scope of literature as another strategy employed by foreign language teachers to ensure the continuation of their discipline. Once again there are clear parallels in the teaching of English literature. The effect, whether intended or not, is to make literature more appealing, and more accessible to a non-specialist ESOL audience, even one whose purpose in teaching or learning a language is avowedly utilitarian.

The acknowledgement by both language and literature teachers that their disciplines can complement rather than oppose each other leads naturally to the idea of integration, and the educational benefits to be gained from it. In the following section the possibilities and advantages of integration are examined in more detail.

2.3 Integrating language and literature in ESOL: A review of the literature

The possibilities for the integration of language and literature studies are captured

succinctly by Carter (1985:9) and Tomlinson (1985:9) in two articles in the *EFL Gazette*, under the shared heading of ‘Language through literature and literature through language’. The phrase suggests two contrasting pedagogical foci (‘language’ and ‘literature’) and the vehicle through which they might be presented to the learner (‘literature’ and ‘language’). The symmetrical reversal of the elements on either side of the conjunction neatly encapsulates the mutual benefits of integration. Their catch-phrase has been taken up in numerous subsequent studies (for example, Bassnett & Grundy 1993; Simpson 1997; Butler 2002a) and will also be used as a means of categorization in this study.

Tomlinson (1985:9) argues in favour of using literature as a resource in the teaching of language (‘language through literature’). He suggests a number of advantages to be found in this approach:

Poems, stories and extracts from plays, novels and autobiographies can involve students as individual human beings who can gain rich exposure to authentic English as well as opportunities to develop communication skills as a result of motivated interaction with texts and with their fellow students.

Carter (1985:9), on the other hand, presents the case for a stylistic approach to literature (‘literature through language’). Referring specifically to the context of ‘the teaching of literature to non-native speaking undergraduate students of English’, he claims that stylistics ‘is an approach to texts which allows ideas, intuitions and initial interpretations to be explored by linguistically principled analysis of the functions of grammar, lexis, phonology and discourse in the creation of meaning’. He concludes confidently that it is ‘undoubtedly the case that students’ response to literature varies in proportion to their sensitivity to language use’.

These two broad approaches have been elaborated by various writers in the field. ‘Language through literature’ has included using literary texts as resources for grammar teaching and raising language awareness. ‘Literature through language’ has included the use of ‘pre-literary activities’ such as cloze, multiple-choice and jig-saw reading and practical stylistics. The general consensus is that the integration of language and literature has a positive effect on the teaching and learning of both components (see, for example, Carter and Long 1991:101; Stern 1991:330 and McRae 1991b:120.)

Various specific claims have been made about the benefits of integrating language and literature, whether the focus is on language or on literature. The fourteen statements listed below represent my attempt to identify common ground in the literature in the field. The categories represented by each statement are, however, not mutually exclusive: one particular activity may (most likely, *will*) have several benefits simultaneously. Following the lead by Tomlinson (1985) and Carter (1985), I have divided them into two groups, *Language through literature* and *Literature through language*. For convenience of reference, they are listed here in their entirety: each will be examined in more detail in the following section.

LANGUAGE THROUGH LITERATURE

- 1 Literature provides a resource or authentic context for the teaching of grammar and vocabulary.
- 2 Because of its appeal to the learners' imagination and emotions, literature provides motivation for language learning.
- 3 The themes and plots of literary works provide stimuli for meaningful debates, discussions and other language tasks which develop the learners' linguistic and communicative competence.
- 4 Literature provides learners with authentic models for the norms of language use.
- 5 Literature assists learners in developing their overall language awareness and knowledge about language.
- 6 The study of literature helps develop the learners' interpretive and analytical skills (for example, skills of inference) which can be applied to other language-related activities.
- 7 Literature represents language 'at its best' and thus provides an ideal model for language learning.
- 8 Literature provides learners with insights into the norms and cultural values embodied in the language.
- 9 The study of literature educates the 'whole person' in a way that more functional approaches to language teaching do not.

LITERATURE THROUGH LANGUAGE

- 10 Comparing literary and 'non-literary' texts allows the learners to move from the known to the unknown: in this way literature is made more accessible to them.

11 Linking the study of literary texts to creative language activities (such as rewriting endings to stories, role playing, rewriting a narrative from a different point of view or in a different genre) makes the text more accessible to the learners and removes some of the intimidating mystique that often surrounds literature.

12 Applying basic ESL/EFL techniques (such as cloze, multiple choice and jigsaw reading) to the study of literature develops language skills and promotes engagement with the text.

13 Learners cannot develop literary competence without an adequate competence in language. Integration of language and literature helps compensate for any inadequacies in the learners' linguistic competence.

14 Developing the learners' sensitivity to how language is used in a literary text (for example, through elementary stylistic analysis) provides them with a 'way in' to the text, a starting point for the process of comprehension and appreciation.

2.3.1 Statements 1 – 9: Language through literature

The first nine statements fall under the broad category of 'language through literature': the focus is on the teaching of language, with literature as the means by which this can be achieved. 'Language' learning is understood by writers advocating this approach in a number of ways: for some it is the mastery and application of the structures and forms of a pedagogical grammar and the acquisition of vocabulary; for others it is the development of communicative competence; still others are concerned with a more reflective knowledge about language or language awareness. Some approaches will encompass all these elements of language learning; others will concentrate on one or some of them.

For most writers, a literature-based approach to language teaching also involves a reconceptualization of both the term 'literature' and the motivation for teaching it. In this way they attempt to counter the arguments usually put forward for not including literary works in an ESOL context. The definition of 'literature' is extended beyond the traditional canon of 'great works' (Heath 1996:776; Martin 2000:11; Hanauer 2001:297) and is presented, often somewhat controversially (for example, Povey 1979:163), as a resource to be exploited, rather than as a something to be studied in its own right and for its own sake. Their often explicitly expressed aim is to remove the intimidating mystique that sometimes surrounds literature in the classroom: it becomes, in the memorable title of McRae's (1991b) book, 'literature with a small "l"', taken down from its pedestal. Thus Widdowson (1983:31), while arguing in favour of the value of literature in language teaching, adds that this does not necessarily mean 'good literature'; similarly Pereira (1976:35), speaking in the context of Afrikaans-medium high

schools in South African, suggests that appealing to the readers' own interests is more important than teaching the 'great classics'. Similar views are expressed by Ronquist and Sell (1994) in their discussion of books suitable for teenagers: they stress the importance of selecting texts that engage and are relevant to their readers, rather than canonical or abridged canonical texts. In Anglophone countries, the desire for relevance frequently takes the form of calls for increased use of local literatures (French 1979; Kachru 1980; Lillis 1986; Brock 1990; Vethamani 1996; Choh 2002). Suitability is also conceived in terms of genre: short stories are frequently presented as ideally accessible forms of literature for ESOL learners (Murdoch 1992, 2002; Lucas & Keaney 1989; Collie & Slater 1993; Mrozowska 1998; Van Wyk 1998; Hess 2006).

In some works advocating the integration of language and literature in ESOL, the definition of 'literature' is often extended even further into genres traditionally thought of as 'popular', 'sub-literary' or even 'non-literary'. The term 'story' has in fact been used to cover a wide range of narrative texts: Wright's (2003a:7) definition lists 'traditional myths and legends, personal stories, anecdotes, modern stories or legends and the reporting of real events'. It is argued that their accessibility makes them ideal vehicles for language teaching. Traditional folktales (Baynham 1986; Helfrich 1993; Taylor 2000; Kennedy 2000; Paran & Watts 2003; Malgwi 2003) allow students to draw on their own cultural and linguistic experiences. The same is true of narratives and stories generally (Morgan & Rinvolcri 1983; Karant 1994; Wright 2000, 2003a, 2003b; Cullen & Burke 2002; Wajnryb 2003; British Council/BBC 2005). Literature understood in these terms means that, increasingly, the boundaries between literary and non-literary are being blurred, making the idea of integration between language and literature even more feasible. 'Literariness' is found in a wide variety of texts, all of them potential resources for language teaching: comic strips (Davis 1997; Butler 2000a), song lyrics (Moi 1997; Saricoban & Metin 2000), advertisements (Cook 1990; Brodie 1991; Picken 1999, 2000), among others. Drama, too, when presented as an aid to language learning, includes both literary texts and dramatic *activities* such as role playing, play writing and reading, mime and the dramatization of non-dramatic texts (Via 1987; Wessels 1987, 1991; Heath 1993; Ainy 2000; Elgar 2002; Almond 2005).

Statement 1: Literature provides a resource or authentic context for the teaching of grammar and vocabulary.

Statement 1 is perhaps the most frequently cited reason for using literary texts in ESOL

pedagogy. An early proponent was Povey (1967:42), who claims that the study of literature can extend the student's knowledge of vocabulary and syntax. Sowden (1987:28) suggests that literature can be used in the teaching of language 'by the linguistic manipulation of literary texts chosen for their real literary worth, but with an eye to their suitability for such manipulation'. He goes on to list examples of manipulation exercises that include cloze, vocabulary recognition and development, grammar reinforcement and extension, sentence building and pronunciation practice. These, he claims, 'will challenge the student, ensuring he gets completely involved in the language and style of the text, so increasing his familiarity with the language and improving the facility and accuracy with which he uses it' (1987:32). Similar claims can be linked to the renewed interest in the teaching of grammar within a broadly communicative approach. What distinguishes this from the older, pre-CLT methods is the importance of an authentic and meaningful context (Carter 1990; Kilfoil & Van der Walt 1997:99; Carter *et al.* 2000:vii). Thus Helfrich (1993) uses fables as resources to illustrate and practise basic language structures. Karant (1994:iii) argues that while 'students may have problems remembering unrelated sentences, they tend to remember stories'; similarly Deacon and Murphy (2001:23) present stories as a context for learning new vocabulary and language forms, engaging 'our narrative minds in the service of language learning in the classroom'. Dodson (2000) makes similar claims for the benefits of using drama in the language classroom. Most of these writers also promote the idea of *creating* literary texts as a means of practising the grammatical structures. This approach is exploited to great effect by Spiro (2000) and Holmes and Moulton (2001), both of whom use simple poetry as a way of teaching and practising grammatical forms.

Statement 2: Because of its appeal to the learners' imagination and emotions, literature provides motivation for language learning.

Most kinds of text can be used to provide context for language teaching: the unique suitability of literary texts is, however, implied in Statement 2. Teaching language through literature has affectual as well as purely linguistic benefits (Spencer 1979; Collie & Porter Ladousse 1991): through its appeal to the imagination it can motivate and stimulate learners (Tomlinson 1985; Elliott 1990; Holten 1997; Tagum 1998; Kaplan 2000; Smart 2005a, 2005b) and so act as an aid to language acquisition (Bouman 1983; Tomlinson 1986).

Statement 3: The themes and plots of literary works provide stimuli for meaningful debates, discussions and other language tasks which develop the learners' linguistic and

communicative competence.

For some writers 'language' is seen primarily as the development of communicative skills, rather than the knowledge of forms and functions emphasized in Statement 1. Here again, the role that literature has to play has received considerable attention, as suggested in Statement 3. The literary text is both a resource and a point of departure for various activities designed to promote communication in the classroom. Thus Collie and Slater (1987:10) describe their overall aim in integrating language and literature as 'to let the student derive the benefits of communicative and other activities for language improvement within the context of suitable works of literature'. Tomlinson (1986:41) suggests that poetry 'can break down the barriers and involve learners in thinking, feeling and interacting in ways which are conducive to language acquisition'. Numerous course books adopt this approach, often in the form of extension activities following on from others that involve textual analysis (for example, Maley & Duff 1989; Whiteson 1996). Fonseca (2006) uses literature as a springboard for creative writing and Kim (2004) argues that 'literature discussions' can promote language development.

Statement 4: Literature provides learners with authentic models for the norms of language use.

Statement 4 also has its roots in the communicative approach to language teaching and once again the literary text is viewed primarily as a resource through which the goal of communicative competence can be achieved. Tomlinson (1985:9) refers to the 'rich exposure to authentic English' that literary texts provide; similarly Whiteson and Horovitz (1998:xiv) refer to 'real language, such as that found in literature'. The statement needs to be treated with some caution, however. Insofar as a literary text is one of many kinds of authentic text, the mastery of which is necessary for the competent user of the language, the statement is not controversial, except in terms of the degree of importance attached to it in overall language competence (Blatchford 1972:6). It is in this sense that Widdowson (1973,1974) sees literature as a communicative act, one among many others. A more debatable claim is that the literary text, with its fictional characters and situations, can provide learners with a vicarious experience of how real people use language in everyday life. Whiteson and Horovitz (1998:xiv) argue that drama, with its natural-sounding conversation can provide a model for spoken English, a view shared by McRae (1987), Ainy (2000) and Robinson (2005b). However, an objection frequently raised against the argument that literature represents language norms is that literary language is, by its very nature, deviant. Even the 'realistic'

dialogue in drama and novels is an idealization of real conversation. Topping (1968:98) complains that literature often violates grammatical norms and he consequently rejects the idea that literature could be used to improve language skills. In this sense, it could be argued that literature is an extremely poor and misleading model for the inexperienced language learner. More recent years have seen a change in thinking, however. Watts (1981:446) describes how, in a project involving Ghanaian students, their use of grammar actually improved as a result of exposure to poetry. Lazar (1990a) argues that the way in which poetry typically subverts the norms of language use can, in fact, be used to develop students' language awareness. Parkinson (1990), while also acknowledging the problems that linguistic deviance in poetry presents for the non-native student, argues that they can be overcome. Boggs (1997: 64) goes further by arguing that the very creativity of literary texts is a sign of authenticity, in contrast to the bland 'correctness' of specially written ESL textbooks:

The literary text is refreshingly different. Any observer of language will see how idiosyncratic and creative people can be in their individual use of language, whether in casual conversation or in texts in magazines: words frequently take on meaning unique to that particular text or context of use.

In their creativity and their apparent breaking of linguistic rules literary texts reflect the norms of language and it is in their strict observance of the apparent rules that ESL texts are false. Literary texts reflect the norms of language; it is the ESL texts which are deviant.

Statement 5: Literature assists learners in developing their overall language awareness and knowledge about language.

Another understanding of 'language' is that of Language Awareness (LA) or Knowledge About Language (KAL).¹³ For many writers the integration of language and literature and consequent blurring of the traditional distinctions between the two provides a perfect opportunity for raising awareness of the nature of language itself. Hanauer (2001:320) suggests that poetry can be used in the second-language classroom to focus attention on formal language structures, 'a task that can enhance linguistic and cultural knowledge of the target language'. Wales (1990:97) sees stylistics, a discipline that combines language and literature, as simultaneously offering a 'way in' to literature study and an opportunity to sharpen language awareness. Similar claims are made in Carter and Burton (1982), Carter and McCarthy (1995), Heath (1996), Chan (1999) and Lima (2005a). McCarthy and Carter

¹³These concepts are examined in the discussion of the theory underlying the ENG 101 module in Chapter 5.

(1994:162), in their treatment of literature as a form of discourse, further argue that the language awareness that students develop as a result of this approach assists in the process of language acquisition.

Statement 6: The study of literature helps develop the learners' interpretive and analytical skills (for example, skills of inference) which can be applied to other language-related activities.

Some writers see the benefits of literary study for language learning from a pedagogical perspective. Its use derives from the *process* of literary study and analysis, rather than from the linguistic resources contained in the text itself. Widdowson (1983:31) argues that, because literature does not usually conform to conventional language schemata, the procedures that the learner has to use to make sense of literary discourse are more obvious: this, as Statement 6 puts it, 'helps develop the learners' interpretative and analytical skills ... which can be applied to other language-related activities'. Martin (2000:11) takes up the argument with regard to poetry in particular. Poetry, she argues, develops the students' abilities rather than providing them with knowledge. The process is also motivating: 'the confidence gained in one's own problem-solving strategies is probably at least as important as the results of interpretations themselves'.

Statement 7: Literature represents language 'at its best' and thus provides an ideal model for language learning.

The arguments summarized in Statement 7 hark back to the pre-integrationist approaches to literature found in Durant's (1993) first or 'traditional' phase, where literature was given a privileged status. But whereas previously the idea of literature as 'language at its best' meant that literary study was the ultimate goal of language learning, later writers reverse the process and use the claim as justification for using literary texts to facilitate the language learning itself. Povey (1979:162), while concerned with the 'theoretical and practical complications' resulting from the introduction of literature into the ESL classroom, acknowledges that literature 'provides examples of the language employed at its most effective, subtle, and suggestive'. The 'best language' is, in fact, the only theoretical justification given by Whiteson (1996:vii) for including literature in the language classroom. Even Bassnett and Grundy (1993:7), while insisting on the links between literary and 'everyday' language, describe literature as 'a high point of language usage [which] marks the greatest skills a language user can demonstrate'. They conclude: 'Anyone who wants to

acquire a profound knowledge of a language that goes beyond the utilitarian will read literary texts in that language’.

Statement 8: Literature provides learners with insights into the norms and cultural values embodied in the language.

Not only can literature provide insight into linguistic norms; it can also help students understand the cultural norms and values embedded in the language. This is the claim of Statement 8. For some writers, such as Stern (1991:330), the link between culture and language seems to be obvious and intimate, and literature is seen as the ideal vehicle for explaining it to learners. Hirvela (1988/89:41), however, warns against what he regards as a ‘misuse of literary texts’: the imposition, intentional or unconscious, of a culture on learners.

Such warnings are a salutary reminder, especially in view of the on-going debates surrounding literary studies in South Africa. It should, nevertheless, be remembered that, in the case of English, there is not a one-to-one relationship between language and culture. As an international language, it has adapted to, and been adapted by, a number of cultures in addition to the British and American mentioned by Stern (1991:330), a reality evident in the wide range of literary texts written in English. Careful selection of texts for study could therefore enhance the students’ awareness of the plurality of ‘English’ culture, rather than impose a world view on them. This is clearly the view of Robinson (2005a), who urges the use of African Caribbean literature, especially (but not only) for students from that background.

Statement 9: The study of literature educates the ‘whole person’ in a way that more functional approaches to language teaching do not.

Arguments of this kind can be seen as part of the historical reaction against the functional approach that characterized Durant’s (1993) second phase: implicit in them is the assumption of Statement 9, that language learning involves more than just acquiring specific intellectual skills. Adamson *et al.* (1999:112) seem to have this in mind when they make a case for connecting EFL and poetry:

Poetry has a sense of permanence and performance not afforded to a letter, memo or other communicative classroom exercise. It also gives permission to

intimate feelings which don't necessarily have a place elsewhere in the language classroom. For these reasons, language learners have much to offer poetry, and poetry has much to offer them.

French (1979), writing of ESL in South Africa, arrives at a similar conclusion in answering his own rhetorical question, 'Why teach English poetry in an ESL course?'. English, he suggests, should not simply be taught for technical purposes: learners gain insight into humanity via poetry, as well as gaining a sense of ownership of the language. Interestingly, Walton (1971), commenting from the perspective of a West African university, also rejects a utilitarian bias in ESL teaching: on these grounds he argues for the integration of language and literature. Similar sentiments are expressed by Adeyanju (1978), Tate (1993), McCarthy (1998) and Deacon and Murphy (2001). The special value of literature is also suggested in McRae's (1991b:1-7) distinction between referential and representational texts, the latter including literature in his extended definition of the term (literature with a small 'l'). Referential language 'communicates on only one level, usually in terms of information being sought or given, or of a social situation being handled'; representational language, on the other hand, 'opens up, calls upon, stimulates and uses areas of the mind, from imagination to emotion, from pleasure to pain, which referential language does not reach' (1991b:3).

2.3.2 Statements 10 – 14: Literature through language

Statements 10 to 14 present the case for 'literature through language'. This is frequently presented as an approach especially appropriate to the needs of ESOL students and can range from the use of language-based activities commonly associated with ESOL methodology to more sophisticated stylistic analyses of literary texts.

Statement 10: Comparing literary and 'non-literary' texts allows the learners to move from the known to the unknown: in this way literature is made more accessible to them.

A widely used technique employed to facilitate students' access to the relatively unfamiliar world of literature is described in Statement 10. As McCarthy and Carter (1994:149) put it, 'appreciation of literary functions of language may not, paradoxically, always be best stimulated by an exclusive focus on literary texts'. The comparison of 'literary' and 'non-literary' texts may, in fact, be used to both accentuate and diminish the differences between literary and other types of writing in English. Either way, the effect of the approach can be to enrich the learners' understanding of the many uses of the language or, as Widdowson (1973) demonstrates, give them a greater awareness of the communicative resources of the language.

On the one hand, by using the idea of the 'cline of literariness' posited by Carter and Long (1991:107), the teacher is able to demonstrate that the language of literature is not as alien as it might, at first glance, seem: for example, comparison of a poem with 'non-literary' texts such as advertisements and travel brochures (which are, presumably, closer to students' 'everyday' experience of language use) would reveal similar creative manipulation of language. Students would consequently be led to see these literary techniques in a wider context, not just as the jargon of a decontextualized and alienating classroom discourse. On the other hand, comparison of texts can also highlight the variety of styles and registers available in English, and the contexts in which they can be appropriately used. As was the case in the approaches that emphasized the broadening of the canon of literature, the effect here is to take literature down from its pedestal, in a sense to democratize it. Literature, in other words, can be seen as one of the many discourses available in the English language, not a privileged form, as more traditional approaches to literary study tend to imply.

Widdowson (1973:32) provides a succinct statement of the benefits of a comparative approach. (Interestingly, he is writing in the context of teaching English in 'African' schools in South Africa.) He emphasizes the need to be explicit in presenting literature to learners:

You have to be able to give them something definite to start with so that this comparative procedure enables them to see what it is in the literary passage that is unique in relation to conventional passages, and at the same time you are teaching them how language is used conventionally for other forms of description.

The way in which the comparison of texts is made varies. In exercises in a unit in Carter and Long (1987a), the authors present readers with a series of texts similar in content but different in genre (both literary and non-literary genres) and lead them through a process of contrastive textual analysis. They state their aims in the introduction to the unit as follows:

In this unit we shall be examining some features of language which literary and non-literary texts share. Our aim is to help you to appreciate what makes some texts literature and understand how language is used to create certain effects in non-literary contexts (1987a:94).

Similar descriptions of, or practical exercises in, contrastive analysis are found in McRae and Boardman (1984a), Cook (1990), Carter and Long (1991), McCarthy and Carter (1994),

Knight (1997), Norman (1998) and Montgomery *et al.* (2000).

A more interactive, student-centred approach is found in the technique of ‘guided re-writing’ (Carter & Long 1987a, 1987b, 1991) in which learners develop their sensitivity to the appropriate use of language through creating texts, using other texts as resources. Cook (1998a), however, warns against what he sees as the danger of literary texts being devalued when rewritten as non-literary texts. A variation on the technique is found in Nash (1986) who suggests that the literary features of a text can be highlighted through the use of paraphrase.

Literary and non-literary texts are also presented in conjunction with each other in Lucas and Kenny (1989): here, however, the focus is firmly on the short story which lies at the centre of each unit; the non-literary texts are provided ‘to help students gain fuller understanding of the cultural or geographical background’ (1989:vii).

Statement 11: Linking the study of literary texts to creative language activities (such as rewriting endings to stories, role playing, rewriting a narrative from a different point of view or in a different genre) makes the text more accessible to the learners and removes some of the intimidating mystique that often surrounds literature.

Statement 11 suggests a broadening out of the guided writing technique discussed under Statement 10. Pope (1994:1) advocates the reader’s creative ‘intervention’ in existing texts as a way of identifying and understanding the linguistic options available. He explains: ‘The best way to understand how a text works, I argue, is to change it: to play around with it, to intervene in it in some way (large or small), and then try to account for the exact effect of what you have done’. The literary text, in other words, is not to be regarded as sacrosanct: students should be encouraged to experience the writing process ‘from the inside’ by casting themselves in the role of the writer, rather than simply being passive consumers of the text. In this way they are also practising their writing and critical skills. Similarly, Salasar (1992:31) suggests that students best ‘learn to do something by doing it’. Among the activities he mentions are abridging and performing a play, transforming a short story into a play, writing and providing justification for a different ending to a short story. Drawing on his own experiences in the classroom, he concludes:

In the beginning the students envisaged this approach as easy entertainment; they felt as if they were dabbling at literature. But as time went by they

managed to get a firm grasp on the process of literary creation, and this made them love literature (1992:32).

The approach may, in fact, be applied in a myriad of ways, as a survey of the literature reveals. The following examples suggest the range. Tomscha (1987:17) recommends the teacher re-writing a poem in the learners' native language; students then translate it back into English and compare their translation with the original. Ambatchew (1997) suggests that literature can be demystified through students attempting to write their own poems. Lima (1999) lists post-reading activities that include writing the unwritten parts of a text, expansion and/or reduction of the original, as well changing the point of view and genre. Wales (1990) sees rewriting as a creative way to promote engagement with the text and discussion about style.

Other language-based activities can also deepen the students' understanding of the literary text. Whiteson (1996), for example, mentions, among other activities, critical or descriptive writing *about* the text, group discussion, prediction, role play and dramatization.

Statement 12: Applying basic ESL/EFL techniques (such as cloze, multiple choice and jigsaw reading) to the study of literature develops language skills and promotes engagement with the text.

The idea that engagement with the text can lead to greater understanding of it, in fact, provides justification for linking a wide range of language activities to the literary text. Language exercises of the kind typically found in ESOL methodology can, in addition to their primary aim of developing language skills, be used to encourage close, careful reading of the language of the text. Skills developed in this way may later be put to good use in a stylistic approach to literary study (Carter 1986; Lazar 1993:28).

The literature contains many examples of how this principle can be translated into practice. Carter and Long (1987a), for example, include language exercises that involve summarizing, sentence completion, ranking, reading and listening, gap filling, mind-mapping, unscrambling stanzas and sentences and completing charts. Lazar (1993:27) makes use of similar language-based techniques with the aim of providing 'students with the tools they need to interpret a text and to make competent critical judgements of it'; these are also found in Carter and Long (1991), Bassnett and Grundy (1993) (although the authors' focus here is on

using literature as a resource for language teaching¹⁴), Wales (1990) and Tomscha (1987). Isaac (2002) further reports on research in which ESL learners in Australia believed that cloze procedure applied to literary texts enhanced their LA. In particular, they believed that it contributed to their acquisition of vocabulary, the development of their interpretative skills and their confidence in forming and expressing opinions. A dissenting voice is, however, found in MacKay (1992), who questions the application of cloze, multiple-choice or replacement exercises to literary texts as a way of developing literary awareness.

Statement 13: Learners cannot develop literary competence without an adequate competence in language. Integration of language and literature helps compensate for any inadequacies in the learners' linguistic competence.

Traditional teaching of literature often tends to assume an intuitive literary competence on the part of the student and to believe that skills in literary analysis can be acquired by a process of osmosis. This is the view of Birch (1989:3), who claims that critical practices 'are rarely taught in any coherent, disciplined way; they are often wrongly assumed to be already a part of a student's critical capabilities'. Carusi (1998:32) puts the matter even more starkly when she describes literary studies as a discipline 'where the "rules of the game" tend to remain unarticulated, where, that is, the discursive practice is not made explicit or displayed as such', rather tending to be mystified. Brumfit and Carter (1986b:22-24) ask rhetorically whether literature is 'caught or taught' and suggest that traditional practice assumes the first option. They, however, advocate an approach in which teachers are as clear as possible about the principles on which they operate. Literary competence, in other words, needs to be taught. An integrated approach, however, avoids tacit assumptions about literary competence. Treating literature as a form of discourse and literary competence as one of many communicative competences has the effect, as previously stated, of making literary study appear less intimidating. A focus on language can make the process of analysis explicit and transparent

For the ESOL student, however, the process of developing literary competence cannot even begin before there is an adequate linguistic base. Brumfit and Carter (1986b:29) see a

¹⁴In an integrated approach, Statement 12 represents the correlative of Statements 1 and 3. Although the focus of the discussion in this section is on ways of teaching literature through language, the same techniques could be used to develop linguistic competence, using the literary text as a resource (language through literature), as proposed by Bassnett and Grundy (1993).

minimum language competence as the first stage in the development of literary competence. In Chapter 1, Saunders (1991a:3), speaking in the context of English studies in South Africa, was quoted as insisting that until ‘language mastery is achieved, the teaching of literature should occupy a secondary place’. It has been this realization that, as has been shown, has prompted many of the changes in the curricula in departments of English throughout the country. In the same year, McRae (1991a:432), writing from a British perspective, made the same point with even greater force. Referring to the ‘comeback’ of literature in language teaching, he points out that, in Britain, literature ‘has never actually been away’. But then he goes on to contrast this with the ESOL situation elsewhere:

Institutions abroad, however, have always found some difficulty in maintaining the balancing act between non-native speakers’ language-learning development and the inevitably more “advanced” literary register of set texts, literary history, and criticism. This led, in an astonishingly high number of countries, to the absurdity of students struggling to read *Beowulf* and Chaucer while still trying to master the difference between present perfect and the simple past tense.

In one of McRae’s earlier publications, this discrepancy had already been alluded to: in McRae and Boardman (1984a), fluency practice is presented as an essential complement to the development of literary competence. The authors make this clear in their introduction to the accompanying *Teacher’s book* (McRae & Boardman 1984b). They state that, although the course book allows a teacher to choose either a language or a literature focus, its sub-title draws attention to the fact that the activities presented in it are integrated. They emphasize: ‘The language-literature aims are, we repeat, complementary, the book has been organized to make them so, and you cannot achieve one without achieving the other’ (1984b:8).

A dissenting voice should, however, be noted with regard to Statement 13. Povey (1967:40), drawing both on his personal experience of teaching English literature in Africa and on reported evidence in similar situations, acknowledges that ‘students are being required to study English “classics” without the least attempt being paid to the inadequate language skills they bring to such a study’. However, he goes on to suggest that the language barrier for ESL students has been over-emphasized as a result of the assumption that successful reading requires *total* comprehension. He argues instead that ‘there can be a general comprehension even when there has not been a precise understanding of a certain syntactic structure’ (1967:43). The real barrier to understanding, he suggests, lies in the cultural differences between the reader and the writer of the text. It should, however, also be noted that Povey’s

paper appeared nearly forty years ago. For him, as probably for many of his contemporaries, there was a straightforward link between the canonical literature that he taught and the mainstream American culture that it represented. Contemporary literary theories as well as perceptions of English as a global language would render this a naïvely simplistic equation. Nonetheless, Povey's argument is a salutary reminder to proponents of the 'literature through language' approach that it should not exclude other ways of looking at literary texts. Carter and Long (1987a:125), in fact, acknowledge this in their introductory remarks on a unit about literary background:

We have stressed how important it is to examine carefully the "web of words" from which texts are made, as we believe this provides a basis for understanding, appreciation and interpretation. The words we find on the page, however, are not everything. Knowledge of the life of the author, or the times in which he or she lived, or of influential ideas current at the time of writing a particular work, can also help us.

Statement 14: Developing the learners' sensitivity to how language is used in a literary text (for example, through elementary stylistic analysis) provides them with a 'way in' to the text, a starting point for the process of comprehension and appreciation.

Povey's (1967) downplaying of the importance of language in the comprehension of a literary text is, nevertheless, at odds with stylistics and textual analysis, both of which underlie much of current thinking about the integration of language and literature. This approach is summed up in Statement 14. Writers such as Brumfit and Carter (1986:3) and Widdowson (1992:xi) present stylistics as a more rigorous and precise form of the practical criticism of New Criticism. Carter (1985:9) claims it is 'an approach to texts which allows ideas, intuitions and initial interpretations to be explored by linguistically principled analysis of the functions of grammar, lexis, phonology and discourse in the creation of meaning'. In the same vein, Widdowson (1992:xi-xii) argues that stylistics allows readers to assume the role of the author: it provides them 'with ways of justifying their own judgement by making as precise reference to the text as possible'. Through stylistic analysis the student consequently has a 'way in' to the text (Wales 1990:97). A stylistics approach has proved particularly popular in the South African ESOL context where its champions have welcomed it as an alternative to practical criticism, which is seen as an inappropriate approach to literary analysis for ESOL students. These writers include Muller (1982:591-592), Ngara (1982), Walters (1986), Evans (1992a, 1994) and Von Gruenewaldt (1994). Jennings (1990), however, rejects the claims of

stylistics, insisting that it is only a clumsier version of practical criticism. Stylistics has, nevertheless, continued to attract the interest of ESOL practitioners, as indicated in more recent publications such as Buckledee (2002) and Rosenkjar (2006). The ability to undertake this kind of precise and detailed analysis, of course, presupposes the linguistic skill emphasized in Statement 13.

2.3.3 Teaching methodology

Although there is no one specific methodology for the integration of language and literature in ESOL (Paran 2006b:6), in nearly all the literature the approach is linked inevitably to a teaching methodology that is ‘student-centred, activity-based and process-oriented’ (Carter 1996:3) – principles that typify CLT. Carter and Long (1987b:5) state this succinctly:

The role of the teacher using this book is to facilitate, stimulate and support in activities where learners investigate, explore and interpret literary texts. The process is learner-centred, and the book allows few opportunities for teacher exposition. The teacher is required to involve learners with the text, encourage them to support a viewpoint using the evidence provided by the writer’s use of language, and to make initial responses to and judgements about the text. The learners then have the opportunity to share their experience, argue their opinions, and try to appreciate other people’s positions, even if they do not agree with them. Sometimes these discussions are extended to writing, thus providing an individual task, in contrast to the group-centred activities.

The authors reiterate these principles in the Preface to Carter and Long (1991:unnumbered) where their focus is on the teaching of literature. They emphasize that teaching should attempt to engage with the experiences of the learners, using methods that are collaborative, learner-centred, activity-based and promote self-discovery. Similarly, Bassnett and Grundy (1993:1) refer to the desirability of seeing ‘the learner as a resource and working from that learner’s store of experience and intuitive poetic awareness’. They believe that the teaching of ‘foreign’ literature (that is, English literature in an ESOL context) should be brought ‘more into line with the learner-centred, collaborative approach of the communicative method’.

The same principles have been articulated by many writers in a variety of forms. Drew (2001) and Katona (2001) both emphasize the idea of a ‘hands-on’ approach to studying literature; Harel *et al.* (2005) urge the use of student-centred learning and group work. In South Africa, Van Wyk (1998) recommends a pupil-centred approach to ESL literature teaching in preference to the traditional teacher-centred approach and dependence on received

opinion. This preference is echoed by Barkhuizen (1994) who provides evidence from classroom research that it is the approach that is, in fact, preferred by learners.

The methodology envisaged for an integrated approach to language and literature is, as both Carter and Long (1991:99-100) and Bassnett and Grundy (1993:1) state, partly derived from language teaching methodology. It also has clear links with transactional and reader response theory (Paran 2006b:4; Tutas 2006:135). This is evident in a number of respects: in its approach to the study of literature itself; in its methodology and in its use of language related activities.

Reader-response theory owes much to the pioneering work of Rosenblatt, who emphasized the idea of the reader as an active agent in the process of reading (see, for example, Rosenblatt 1968, 1978). Since then, it has been elaborated by a number of writers. A sample of these will be sufficient to indicate how it has moulded much of the thinking on the integration of language and literature.

Reader-response thinking on the pedagogical motivation for literary study is in line with the idea of 'literature with a small "l"', referred to earlier. Luce (1992:64) presents a persuasive argument for teachers moving beyond the traditional canon of great works:

Reflection on Rosenblatt's theory challenges us to ask what happens to those who do not find literature exciting and interesting and what can be done to keep the English class malaise of previous generations from infecting classrooms. It does not allow teachers to participate in the deliberate perpetuation of the dichotomy between the reader and the literary elite.

Luce (1992) justifies his position with reference to non-specialist students at a technical college but his concerns are equally relevant in the context of an ESOL classroom where literature is to serve a complementary or supportive role to language acquisition. It is also especially relevant in the present case study at UNW, where, as was pointed out in Chapter 1, many students are obliged, because of their degree requirements, to register for English 100.

According to Lategan (1992b:5), reader-response criticism is able 'to accommodate a variety of techniques and methods'. What these have in common, however, is their emphasis on the role of the reader, and the ways in which (s)he is able to interact with the text. The

reader is an 'active participant' in the process of reading (Karolides 1992b:23). This approach is generally contrasted to the idea of the text as a 'thing in itself', favoured by New Criticism (Lategan 1992b:5), where the text is static and the reader the passive recipient of its message. In reader-response theory, the text is not ignored, but seen rather as dynamic, its meaning changing according to the circumstances under which it is read. Individual readers approach the text from different perspectives, and their reading might be affected by the moment in time in which it is performed, or, indeed by the period of history in which they live (Karolides 1992b:23).

While some of the techniques favoured in the integration of language and literature do focus on the text and a careful, analytical reading of the 'words on the page' (stylistics, comparison of texts), many others, especially those drawn from the methodology of CLT, have much in common with reader-response theories. Indeed, when Karolides (1992b) goes on to explore the ways in which transactional theory (a reader-response approach that emphasizes the co-operation of reader and text) can be put into classroom practice, his suggestions are very similar to those discussed earlier in this chapter. He emphasizes the value of shared responses in classroom discussion (reader-response discourages the idea of a single, received meaning in any given text) and on drawing on the students' own experiences and knowledge. He suggests that the literary text should be seen as both a springboard and resource in classroom activities. Students should also develop the habit of self-reflexivity, skills in interpretation and recognize the need to validate their own responses. Techniques such as small group discussions, logs and journal can promote this development. All of this, he concludes, promotes personal growth and ownership of reading, and allows the students to develop strategies for dealing with other texts on their own.

In the same way, Roen (1992:176) recommends the use of 'write-to-learn' strategies in teaching a literary text, the play *Antigone*. These include writing student biopoems, biopoems for characters in the play; 'unsent letters' (based on events in the play), journals and learning logs, retelling the story of the play and rewriting the play in a different genre (such as a soap opera). Techniques like these, he suggests, are appropriately used in conjunction with reader-response strategies. The writing activities, undertaken privately, provide students with an opportunity to formulate their own ideas before venturing into public discussion.

Various activities, similar to those mentioned by Karolides (1992b), are also considered

by Appleman (1992) and Probst (1992). Probst (1992:119) makes the useful distinction between writing *about* literature and writing *from* literature, the latter involving literature being used as a catalyst or prompt for classroom activities. This is clearly reminiscent of the idea of literature being used as a resource rather than as an end in itself and points to the use of extension activities provided in course books adopting an integrated approach to language and literature.

Lategan (1992b:5) states that, in reader-response approaches, 'the emphasis on the reader has brought the problem of text and context into sharp focus', a matter of particular significance, he adds, in the South African environment. This remark is certainly pertinent in an ESOL situation where the learners' context (language and culture) may differ markedly from that in which the text was produced. The temptation here is for the student to depend entirely on the teacher for interpretation: reader-response, however, allows the learners some degree of 'ownership' of the text by acknowledging the validity of their own interpretations and the possibility of a multiplicity of meaning.

A reader-response approach does have its dangers as well. Subjectivity unchecked can lead to bizarre interpretations; such as those recounted by Brimer (1992), drawing on his experiences at the University of Durban-Westville. As he points out, it then becomes difficult for the teacher to limit the freedom previously given to the student and declare a particular interpretation 'invalid'. A *laissez-faire* approach to interpretation can also, paradoxically, discourage learners from attempting to reach beyond their existing literary or linguistic knowledge. The students' experiences and knowledge are often simply inadequate for them to attempt any kind of meaningful interpretation. This is what Brimer (1992:32) obviously has in mind when he asks rhetorically: '[H]ow can one explain the ontological differences between a novel and a book to someone who has never possessed or read a book?'

It should, however, be acknowledged that a reader-response approach anticipates problems of this kind. Although the focus of interpretation has shifted from the text to the reader, other elements in the process are not excluded or ignored. Karolides (1992b:23) writes that, for a meaningful transaction between a reader and text to take place, certain prerequisites are necessary. The text must be comprehensible to the reader, both linguistically and experientially. Secondly, the reader must be willing to engage with the text; for example, (s)he must not be distracted or indifferent. The validity of the response is determined by the

constraints imposed by the text itself: a response may therefore be deemed invalid if it is too 'out of context' (although on a personal level it may still be valuable to the reader). Nevertheless, he stresses, these constraints do not imply a return to the traditional idea of a single, received, 'correct' response. Background may be taught as a means of determining the constraints on the text and so enhance the transaction, but not as an end in itself.

2.4 Two case studies: Hong Kong and the Middle East

The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to two case studies, 'real-life' applications of the principles explored in the foregoing sections. In both, the relationship between language and literature in an ESOL situation is the subject of often heated debate among the academics and researchers who report on it. In both case studies, however, some attempt has also been made to canvas the opinions of the students involved, as was done in the present study.

2.4.1 Hong Kong

Like South Africa, Hong Kong is a multilingual, multi-ethnic society in which English functions as a *lingua franca*. Even though there has been a decline in the number of people using English since Hong Kong received independence from Britain in 1997, the language continues to be seen as the language of opportunity and English-medium schools, although fewer in number, are still in demand (Kwan and Hingman: 2003:151). A number of studies in the last two decades has focussed on the relationship between language and literature in the English curricula at school and university.

Hirvella and Boyle (1988) describe a survey of Hong Kong university students' attitudes to the study of literature in English. The subjects were all Hong Kong Chinese who spoke Cantonese as their first language. They were all working adults, studying part-time for a degree in which English language and literature were combined. In the first year of their studies the emphasis was on language; literature courses were only introduced at second- and third-year levels. The writers' perception before undertaking the survey was that students were enthusiastic about the language courses, seeing in them an opportunity to improve their English, but had a more ambivalent attitude to literature. The aim of the survey was not, however, to question the inclusion of literature in the curriculum; rather it was to develop a better understanding of the students' feelings about literature and to act upon them.

Their findings provided detailed confirmation of the students' ambivalent feelings. Poetry was the genre least enjoyed and most feared, while a general preference was expressed for prose fiction in the form of short stories and novels. The students' fears, they found, were based partly on a lack of background in literary study and 'partly on a certain mystique about literature, a sense that literature was somehow totally different from other forms of writing in English' (1988:180).

The innovations that Hirvela and Boyle (1988) implemented after the survey had been undertaken show that the students' opinions had been taken into consideration. In searching for appropriate texts they moved away from the traditional literary canon to include more accessible and directly relevant texts. The number of texts selected for study was reduced. Methodology was also adapted to allow for the use of literature as a resource for other language activities. The writers acknowledge the ways in which their approach to literature differs from the traditional ones:

Those who have never tried to incorporate a literature component into an English course in an ESL/EFL situation may smile in surprise, or even derision as they read of the texts we have chosen. We hope that those who have tried to do so will have more sympathy with our efforts (1988:183).

They do, however, point out that, as a result of these changes to the curriculum, literature courses became more popular than either linguistics or language. In a later paper, Hirvela (1990) extends the argument in favour of literature to its inclusion in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses in Hong Kong.

Chan (1990) looks at the relationship between English language and literature teaching in secondary schools in Hong Kong. Since 1966, the two subjects had been taught and examined separately. He claims that this separation had resulted in the language curriculum becoming 'emotionally and intellectually impoverished' (1990:108). He describes a utilitarian, monotonous and irrelevant language syllabus dominated by the examination and containing very little to excite the interest of the learners (1990:110).

In contrast to the motivation that Hirvela and Boyle (1988) note in their students, Chan sees the language syllabus as responsible for an attitude that is 'somewhat perfunctory'.

English is merely ‘a requirement or qualification to be sought after’; neither the students nor their teachers read much English outside the classroom (1990:110-111). It is for this reason that he proposes the reinstatement of a literature component in the language curriculum. To be taken seriously it should also form part of the examination.

The kind of literature that Chan (1990) has in mind is not the canon of great texts, literature with a capital ‘L’. Rather, it can include songs, television drama, jokes and graffiti, and it is ‘approached from the language point of view and is studied for language improvement (i.e. to stimulate sensitivity to and interest in language) and for affective involvement (i.e. authentic communication of feelings and thoughts)’ (1990:114). Literary texts such as these should be included in a wide range of authentic texts drawn from a variety of sources: in this way students will be exposed to language use in a range of situations and language becomes ‘a tool for study, a medium of genuine communication and of pleasure and entertainment, as well as a valuable asset in everyday life’ (1990:117).

Chan (1994) develops these ideas further. Here again he proposes the inclusion of literature in the language syllabus: the aim of the study is to ‘investigate ways through which literature can be incorporated into the language syllabus as a means to invigorate the teaching of the language’ (Chan 1994:29). The means by which this is to be done was hinted at in Chan (1990): here the methodology is developed fully, with Chan (1994) acknowledging his debt to the work of Carter and Nash (1983, 1990) on the idea of a cline of literariness in both ‘literary’ and ‘non-literary’ texts. The research question that he now sets himself (1994:134) is stated as follows:

What are the effects of introducing texts and tasks which illustrate and identify differing degrees of literariness into secondary school ESL classrooms in Hong Kong on

- ↯ students’ language proficiency and literary competence?
- ↯ students’ and teachers’ language perceptions and attitudes?

His hypothesis is that exposure to the texts and tasks will have a positive effect on these areas, as well as promote teacher development, increase students’ and teachers’ language awareness and help forge an interface between language and literature (1994:135).

Chan (1994:249) believes that his findings confirm his hypotheses, even if there is no

direct evidence linking the texts and tasks to all the changes in performance and attitude that he observed after the completion of the experiment.

Chan (1994) goes on to outline the pedagogical implications of his findings. He endorses (with minor modifications) the text-based approach outlined in McCarthy and Carter (1994:166-168). He also mentions a number of course books available on the market in which language and literature teaching are integrated. They have three features in common that make them suitable for the approach that he envisages: the inclusion of texts not traditionally regarded as literature; treatment of literature as a resource and the use of language-based approaches to the study of literature (1994:295).

In his concluding remarks, Chan (1994) acknowledges the difficulty of implementing changes such as those that he advocates in Hong Kong schools. However enthusiastic pupils and teachers might have been in their response to his package of texts and tasks, the examination system, which compartmentalizes language and literature, ultimately determines the focus of their interest and energies. Only when literature is included in the examination syllabus can the full implications of his study be realized (1994:309).

Chan's was not, however, the only voice calling for the integration of English language and literature in the Hong Kong education system. Kennedy (1990), writing about the ESOL situation at a teachers' training college, reiterates the instrumental and utilitarian approach to English found in Hong Kong. He nevertheless argues that 'literature can play a crucial part in fostering enthusiasm for English as a subject and help to make students who will be future teachers alert and alive to the rich possibilities of the language they will be teaching' (1990:100). His approach to teaching literature is consistent with the thinking that informs Chan's proposals: avoiding canonical texts; moving from the 'familiar and simple' to the 'more strange and difficult'; student-centred activities that enhance affective learning; literature as a resource for language learning and teaching (1990:101-106). Durant (1993) similarly advocates an innovative approach to teaching English literature to university students in Hong Kong through the development of programmes that would 'explore the interface between language and literature, and the ways in which these two areas of study can complement each other within an English syllabus' (1993:167).

The collection of papers edited by Falvey and Kennedy (1997a), *Learning language*

through literature: A sourcebook for teachers of English in Hong Kong, provides a significant contribution to the realization of language-literature integration in ESOL in Hong Kong. As its subtitle suggests, the publication is aimed specifically at educators in Hong Kong; according to the editors, the contributors have extensive experience in the Hong Kong education system, whether at the primary, secondary or tertiary levels. The editors also indicate that the integrated approach is finding increasing favour in Hong Kong, reflecting the worldwide trend in this direction. Even the old bugbear, the Hong Kong public examination, has adapted to the changes with the introduction of the new Target Oriented Curriculum (TOC) in primary schools. Here Language Arts are acknowledged and given greater prominence, in contrast to the previous utilitarian bias. The sharp distinctions between language and literature noted by Chan are, according to Falvey and Kennedy, beginning to break down.¹⁵

Falvey and Kennedy (1997b), nevertheless, set out to convince sceptics that literature does, indeed, have an important role to play in the language classroom. Their approach is neatly summed up in the opening sentence of the Introduction: ‘This book is about *using* literary texts (with a small “l”) for language teaching’ [emphasis theirs] (1997b:1). Literature here is non-canonical, to be used as a resource and situated on a continuum of literariness that includes many texts not traditionally thought of as ‘literature’. The editors advance a number of reasons why literary texts should be used as a resource in the Hong Kong language classroom. These include having authentic, imaginative content and providing a resource for grammar study and communicative classroom tasks and activities. They also anticipate the kinds of objection that had characterized resistance to literature previously, and were presumably were still to be found in ESOL circles in Hong Kong. Their response is to provide a further justification for literature in the language classroom, on the very grounds on which it is being challenged. They argue that literature can be used to achieve the utilitarian goals – getting a job, passing an examination – on which critics had previously based their objections. Literature in the language class, they argue, is to be used as a *stimulus*, not as a *model*. To argue on grounds of ‘usefulness’ or to reject literature as ‘non-pragmatic’ is to confuse the goals of language learning with the means. The study of literature also teaches skills such as inference that can be applied in other contexts. Finally, literature can provide the affective element so often ignored in language learning: ‘Learning a language entails more than just

¹⁵In a more recent account of TOC, Kwan and Hingman (2003:153-155) emphasize the interconnectedness between language and content, and the task- and learner-centred methodology. They do not explicitly refer to any integration between language and literature, although this might be inferred from the move to a content-based approach.

making grammar deposits in a language bank account' (1997b:4).

That the developments in Hong Kong described here clearly reflect international trends and thinking is evident from the discussion of Statements 1 - 14 earlier in this chapter. Its significance for the present study lies, moreover, in the similarities between Hong Kong and South African society. In spite of the origin of much of the discussion in British and American contexts, the integration of literature and language would seem to be applicable elsewhere as well. The situation in the Middle East offers a somewhat different perspective.

2.4.2 The Middle East

In a paper entitled 'An investigation into the current status of English in the Gulf', El-Sayed (1988) provides an overview of secondary and tertiary English instruction in the Arabian peninsula, most notably in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. However, his numerous references to the 'Arab world' and confirmation from other reports (discussed below) suggest that his account holds true for most of the Arab Middle East. El-Sayed states that most Arab students are motivated to learn English for instrumental reasons. This motivation is, however, complicated by 'the hostility and suspicion one notices in the Arab students' attitudes towards western languages and cultures' (1988:47), which they associate with Western imperialism. The students have 'a psychological block towards English and the native speakers of English who teach them' (1988:48). Not surprisingly, the standard of English in the Gulf is, in El-Sayed's opinion, very low. School graduates are ill-equipped for university studies in English, which, in turn, do little to improve their competence. The parallels with HBUs in South Africa are obvious: indeed El-Sayed himself suggests that in some respects at least, the English teaching situation in the Arab world is typical of the Third World generally (1988:47), a point that is also made by Zughoul (1986, 1987) and Haggan (1999:22).

El-Sayed's (1988) pessimistic assessment of the quality of English education in the Arab world is confirmed by a number of Arab and ex-patriot academics, before and after the publication of his findings. Of special interest to the concerns of the present study is the collection of papers delivered at the 'First Conference on the Problems of Teaching English Language and Literature at Arab Universities', held at the University of Jordan five years earlier. Like El-Sayed, many speakers at the conference expressed their concern at the generally poor performance of students studying English at Arab universities and the failure of departments of English to achieve what was seen as their main objective: 'graduating

competent English specialists who are badly needed in our society because of the need for English as a language of science, technology, business and international communication' [emphasis his] (Zughoul 1983:41). For many speakers, the fault lay in the nature of the courses offered at the universities. A major issue was the place of literature in programmes with such avowedly utilitarian aims. In subsequent years, the issues raised at the conference developed into an on-going and often fierce debate over the relative merits of literature, language and linguistics courses in achieving the desired competence in English.

The collection of papers (Dahiyat & Ibrahim 1983) that emerged from the conference is, as with the comment made by El-Sayed (1988), likely to provide an uncanny sense of *déjà vu* for the South African reader. There is the all too familiar mood of frustration and depression at failure to achieve anything significant in the classroom. The linguistic and cultural difficulties faced by students seem insurmountable. Even from the papers themselves, there emerges a curious love-hate relationship with English: a recognition of its instrumental usefulness coupled with a profound ambivalence about the cultural baggage that the language and (more especially) the literature bring with them. The following comment could have been made by any English lecturer at an HBU, and, read out of context, could easily be mistaken for just that. Asfour (1983:80), referring to his students' inability to recognize differences in style and register in English, comments:

Unfortunately, our students simply do not have the opportunity to develop this sense of style on their own. The painful fact is that, due to various factors, reading is not yet a characteristic national habit, and the educational system in the country is not conducive to much extra curricular reading on both the secondary school and university levels.

In the light of such clear parallels with the South African situation it is worth examining the attitudes to language and literature studies that emerge from these and other sources.

Papers by Ibrahim (1983) and Zughoul (1983) provide an outline of the English curricula typically offered at Middle Eastern universities at the time. Both accounts confirm El-Sayed's perception of a gap between the departments' pedagogical aims and their actual achievements. Ibrahim (1983) bases his discussion on the courses offered at the University of Jordan but claims that they are generalizable to most, if not all, Arab universities. 'English' here consists of three components: language, linguistics and literature. Literature represents

the most important component, taking up 65% of the curriculum; half of this consists of pre-nineteenth century texts. In his opinion, none of the components has contributed significantly to the development of students' competence in English: the language component is inadequate; linguistics, although a discipline in its own right, has little to do with language teaching; and students lack the basic language skills necessary for real appreciation of literature, much of which is also inappropriate for their needs and experience (1983:26-27). Zughoul (1983) focuses on the literature component, suggesting that its part in the curriculum is disproportionate in view of the acknowledged instrumental motives and expectations of the students. His objections do not, however, amount to a rejection of literature as part of the study of English; rather, he argues, the imbalance should be corrected in favour of more language courses initially and greater emphasis on modern or contemporary literature. Furthermore, literature, like linguistics, should be viewed as vehicles for the improvement of language and communicative competence, rather than as ends in themselves (1983:41).

The idea of literature as a means of developing linguistic competence is taken up in a number of the papers presented at the conference, even those that focus specifically on the teaching of literature (Shabeen 1983; Jawad 1983; Munro 1983; Lott 1983).

Writing in the same year, Merghelani and Yassin (1983) describe the EFL situation in Saudi Arabia. Learners' motives are largely instrumental, and little importance is attached to native-speaker norms and culture. But, they hasten to add, these attitudes do not mean that there is no place for English literature. Literature selected from throughout the English speaking world, especially by Third World authors, can still provide a valuable springboard for the development of linguistic and communicative competence (1983:204). Their conclusion concisely sums up a view similar to those expressed at the University of Jordan conference:

If the aim behind EFL education in the Arab world is basically pragmatic, then the teaching of literature, whether it be British or otherwise, should be geared to that aim. Literature is to be used as a springboard for, and the raw material of, a multiplicity of exercises that drill and use the language skills to improve students' linguistic and communicative competences. Rather than drilling and practising those skills in a vacuum, literary texts will serve as a pleasant milieu for manipulating lexical and syntactical patterns through a host of standard activities: paraphrasing, précis, note-taking, reports, inferencing and so on (1983:204).

The approach adopted here is, in other words, 'language through literature'. Lott

(1983), one of the advocates of this approach at the conference, subsequently demonstrated it in practical terms in a workbook entitled *A course in English language and literature*. The book contains a selection of literary extracts that

provide two things at the same time. They offer experience in the close reading of many different kinds of literature, and also structured practice in the use of English, covering a large number of grammatical features which students often need to work on if they are to use them correctly. In these ways *A Course in English Language and Literature* is particularly useful for students who need to improve their English language skills early in their preparation for degrees, advanced certificates and diplomas in English (Lott 1986:vii).

Opposition to views such as these was, however, soon expressed. John (1986) agrees that language competence in English is the desired goal of a university English course. But he takes issue with Zughoul's (1983) claim that this could be achieved by altering the balance of language and literature courses in the university curricula in favour of the former. Instead, he asserts provocatively that 'any English program [sic] aiming to produce competent English specialists must be characterized by a preponderance of literature courses over language/linguistic courses' (John 1986:18). He is especially emphatic in his rejection of linguistics which, he insists, can only provide the student with knowledge *about* language; the student of literature, on the other hand, *learns language*, developing proficiency in grammar, idiom, vocabulary and syntax.

John's (1986) stance receives support from Salih (1989) who reports on research that he conducted at Yarmouk University in Jordan to elicit the students' views on the matter. Using a sample of 118 students, he found that the students believed that literature aided the development of competence in English, specifically in the areas of syntax, morphology, semantics and phonetics. The survey also revealed that the students enjoyed literature more than language and linguistics. Salih (1989:26) therefore concludes that, contrary to Zughoul's (1983) claims, 'the study of literature has a significant role to play in university English programs [sic] and that a positive correlation exists between literature on the one hand and students' language skills and linguistic knowledge on the other'. Furthermore, the enjoyment of literature that emerged from the students' responses contradicts Zughoul's claim that literature is a source of resentment for Arab learners. Salih (1989:27) then takes the case for literature further: the integrated approach to language and literature should only be employed 'if the teacher of literature senses that his students need some linguistic help or training to

comprehend and appreciate a literary work’.

However, research by Bader (1989), also at Yarmouk University, points to completely different conclusions. His findings are based on responses to a questionnaire given to 210 third- and fourth-year students in the Department of English. This sample represented roughly half the student population in those two years of study. All had Arabic as their mother tongue. Bader (1989:164) summarizes his findings as follows:

In short, they reveal students’ dissatisfaction with their level of proficiency in English, the study plan, the lack of emphasis on language in literature courses, and the failure of literature courses to help them master the complexities of English syntax, morphology, and phonetics. Only in the area of vocabulary and idioms did the students seem satisfied with the literature courses ... Another important result of the survey was students’ willingness to see more language and less literature courses offered. Most students also indicated a preference for 19th and 20th century literature in order to improve their competency. Moreover, the majority of them favoured a greater emphasis on prose and a lesser emphasis on poetry.

Bader (1989) goes on to describe how, following the student survey, a new study plan was drawn up by faculty members. The revised course emphasized practical language skills in the first two years of study. Linguistics and literary courses were delayed until the third and fourth years. The linguistic courses were designed to focus on English linguistics specifically. Owing to opposition from some faculty members, and contrary to students’ wishes, the number of literature courses was not reduced: however, a greater emphasis was placed on contemporary literature. Furthermore, there was a shift in emphasis from teaching literature *as* literature to using it as a resource for teaching language skills. In evaluating students’ work, greater stress was laid on their effective use of language, rather than just on content.

The measures described by Bader (1989) are consistent with the recommendations of many of the speakers at the University of Jordan conference and other writers. Literature is not completely abandoned in the shift to a more practical language-based course: it has, however, become a means rather than an end in itself. In a later paper, Bader (1992) makes this clear. He is careful to emphasize that neither he nor any of the other contributors to the debate has called for the total exclusion of literature from the English curriculum. Rather, he questions the prominence given to literature by writers like John (1986) and Salih (1989) who ‘go about glorifying (undoubtedly rightly) literature and its potential for teaching English

syntax, morphology, vocabulary and idioms, forgetting that this has not yet been achieved' (1992:235).

Obediat (1997) joins what has become, in his own words, 'a heated debate' (1997:30), on the side of those who advocate literature as the only means to achieving competence in English. He disputes Zughoul's (1983) original claim that courses offered by departments of English at Arab universities are skewed in favour of literature; rather, he asserts, they 'are actually heavily dominated by the language and linguistics component' (1997:32). Nonetheless, he insists that language-oriented courses can only lay the foundations for language proficiency: literature is necessary to 'provide actual exposure to the language at its best to develop subtle and sophisticated language knowledge' (1997:33). Obediat is, in fact, dismissive of the teaching of linguistics and language; for this reason he also rejects the idea of using literature solely as a means to developing linguistic competence and of applying linguistics methods to the study of literature. He concludes with the uncompromising view that 'linguistics and literature are two different fields of knowledge, which illuminate one another in very limited ways' and, in a final rejection of Zughoul (1983), affirms that 'literature (and not anything else) upgrades the students' ability to read, write, and speak proper English' (1997:35).

Haggan (1999) had, to my knowledge, the last word in the on-going debate at the end of the twentieth century and, in a sense, returned it to its starting point. She points to Obediat's (1997) misleading and inaccurate conflation of linguistics and language teaching as a single grouping in opposition to literature teaching: 'The former involves teaching the content of an academic discipline, while the latter involves the teaching of skills' (1999:22). This distinction leads her to question the basic assumption on which the whole debate has rested: that the aim of all teaching, whether it is of linguistics, language or literature, is to develop the practical language skills of the students. She asks rhetorically: 'Is it, indeed, the role of the English Department to provide ESP or vocational language training to qualify people for jobs in the banking industry?' Her own answer is unequivocal: 'And, as a linguistics teacher, I would honestly admit that I do not regard the teaching of practical language skills as my professional objective' (1999:24). Like Zughoul (1983), sixteen years earlier, she suggests that English departments need to reassess their roles. The role that she envisages is, however, far different. While she appreciates the need for students to improve their English, she sees this as in conflict with the academic mission of the department: the problem is 'to ensure the continued

status of English departments as centers [sic] of academic scholarship and to avoid their developing into some kind of vocational training institutes' (1999:25).

The interchange of argument and counter-argument that has been outlined here is reminiscent of the South African 'lang/lit divide providing grounds for at times acrimonious debate' mentioned by Combrink (1996:3). The positions adopted by many of the writers – described by Haggan (1999:24), with some justification, as 'this rather unsavory posturing' – do not suggest much hope for reconciliation, let alone the integration of language and literature on any level or for any purpose. While the linguists and language specialists concede that literature might have a role as a means to improving language competence, the acknowledgement is hedged about with fears of Western cultural imperialism. The literary scholars, on the other hand, are generally ignorantly dismissive of the claims of linguistics and language studies: the claims that they make on behalf of their discipline have the ring of unreflecting conservatism rather than of considered positions.

In suggesting that departments of English in Arab universities need to reassess their roles, Haggan (1999:25) cites the on-going debate as evidence that 'all is not well'. This is certainly the impression that even an outsider is likely to have gained. The debates appear to be no more than symptoms of a radical uncertainty about the role and mission of a department of English in an ESOL context. Comments by other academics in the Middle East reflect the same divergences of opinion. For instance, Khurma (1989, reported in Palazzo 1990:139-140), referring to a needs analysis conducted in Kuwait in the 1970s, concludes that the overwhelming need among university students is for language courses and that literature in English has no place in the curriculum at all. On the other hand, in a more recent publication, Murdoch (2002), writing of his experience at the United Arab Emirates University, does not appear to see the integration of language and literature as at all problematic. He advocates the use of short stories and outlines ways in which they can be exploited in language development activities. He also reports on the results of a survey conducted among his students, all female English majors, studying for a course 'designed to upgrade their skills so they would be able to better cope with their departmental Literature and Linguistics courses' (2002:14). He concludes: 'The results provide further confirmation that students at this stage are keen to read and study stories because they believe that this will improve their language skills and help them expand their vocabulary' (2002:15). Also advocating the use of literature, Heble (2006) links her teaching of poetry to Omani students with her practice as a communicative language

teacher, seeing literature as a useful opportunity for them to use language in a meaningful way.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to survey the literature on the integration of language and literature in ESOL in a number of ways. A broad survey of the field in the last forty years has revealed changing attitudes to the relationship between the two disciplines, leading to a situation where the possibilities for integration are increasingly being explored from both sides of the traditional divide. A closer examination of writing in the last three decades has shown the ways in which the very terms 'language' and 'literature' have come under increasing scrutiny and consequent reassessment, thus often providing further impetus for the cause of integration. Sub-disciplines have been explored for their contribution to the discussion: stylistics, communicative language teaching and reader-response theory. Debates reported in Hong Kong and the Middle East suggest the ways in which the claims for integration of language and literature in ESOL have found a response, either positive or negative: both contexts have resonances for the South African situation.

This chapter has examined the topic from an international perspective. The next chapter returns the focus to South Africa, and describes the educational context in which the integration of language and literature was attempted at UNW.

Chapter 3

Aspects of the transformation of education in South Africa: Outcomes-based education and quality assurance

... it is essential that very simple but basic questions are addressed. These are: What is a standard? How do we acquire academic standards, and how do we evaluate academic standards? Are academic standards in South Africa a myth or a reality, and whose standards anyway? (Makgoba 1998:54)

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter attempted a survey of developments in integrating the teaching of language and literature to ESOL students internationally. This chapter returns the focus to South Africa and the educational context in which the case study needs to be seen. As was pointed out in the first chapter, the motivation for the development of an integrated English syllabus at UNW was both internal and external. The desire within the Department of English to revise the syllabus coincided with a national initiative to restructure radically the system of education in South Africa, a move to which the department had no option but to respond. Both external and internal prompts informed and directed the development of the syllabus. The initial impulse to integrate the existing strands of language and literature in a systematic and theoretically principled way was given structured form by the new demands of accountability from the Ministry of Education.

In the first chapter, mention was also made of conditions at UNW that were not conducive to effective teaching and research. These had their impact on the process of educational transformation as well, as various internal memoranda from early in the

transformation process indicate. An information document, 'An outcomes-based approach to curriculum development: The basic framework and definitions', has the following introduction:

The pressure to rework our curricula and courses has ostensibly come from the national Department [i.e. Ministry] of Education. But the growing failure rate, as the composition of the student body has changed and diversified over the past few years with the increasing demand for access, has caused many academic staff to sense the need to reconceptualise our teaching practices (Gennrich 1998b:1).

However, the same writer, in another memorandum to all heads of department at the university, also makes the following comment: 'The current inertia among staff resulting from the broader financial and leadership crisis militates against any energetic involvement from many staff, especially without a clear vision as to the value of the task' (Gennrich 1998a:1). Her words aptly capture the situation at the university. A lack of clear direction, both from government and the university management, coupled with staff apathy and cynicism, resulted in an unnecessarily drawn-out process. The situation did not, however, appear to be unique to the institution, as will be shown in the course of this chapter.¹⁶ Gennrich (1998b:2), her earlier criticism notwithstanding, in fact argues that the less than ideal conditions under which transformation in South African higher education was taking place were unavoidable and perhaps even necessary:

In sum, it is important to realise that the system is still emerging, and that the confusion we may be experiencing about what is required from us is not a result of either our own incompetence or the incompetence of the leadership at SAQA [South African Qualifications Authority]. It is a natural consequence of the democratic approach SAQA has taken to developing standards, which I think we all agree is preferable to an authoritarian approach which would simply impose standards on us which may not take into account the variability within the system. As we work on understanding the terminology that is currency in education circles today, it may help to bear in mind that the discourse is still in the process of developing, and that the Department [i.e. Ministry] of Education

¹⁶The frustration experienced by many university managements at the lack of communication and consultation from the Ministry was widely reported in the press in 2000 (see, for instance, Macfarlane 2000a:11; Magardie 2000:11). An open memorandum from the Acting Vice-Chancellor of UNW to the Committee on Higher Education in response to its request for comments on a discussion document on the future 'size and shape' of South African universities emphasizes this: '... we practically had less than two days to formally respond. You must appreciate that it was almost impossible. We are of the opinion that our need to be consulted properly had been severely violated, and we register our disappointment' (Gouws 2000:1).

invites all stakeholders to be part of this process.

Gennrich's justification has a note of *post facto* rationalization to it. The transformation process, as it affected institutions and individuals, was characterized by a flow of information that was alternately inadequate and overpoweringly excessive. It is not, however, the aim of this chapter to provide a detailed or critical account of the transformation of South African education in recent years, but to highlight the ways in which this process affected the English 100 case study. Two areas in particular will be examined: outcomes-based education (OBE) and quality assurance (QA). Both were adopted in the policies drawn up by the national Ministry of Education; both were influential in the development and assessment of the English 100 course. Before examining the two concepts, it is, however, necessary to provide a brief overview of the scope of the transformation process and its impact on the Department of English at UNW.

In its attempts to transform higher education in South Africa, the post-1994 government, in consultation with other stakeholders such as labour and business, passed the South African Qualifications Act of 1995 and the Higher Education Act of 1997. The first of these led to the formation of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). SAQA was charged with developing a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that would integrate into one system all aspects and levels of education in the country. The system would, controversially, include institutions of higher learning, such as universities (Kilfoil 1999:3), which would be required to register all existing and new qualifications with SAQA. This requirement would, in effect, represent a step towards a unified national system of higher learning with a high degree of articulation between the different institutions. Institutions would be required to provide a detailed account of teaching and assessment, specified according to the guidelines set out in the NQF. At the heart of the envisaged new system lay OBE. The new educational dispensation also involved a system of Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) bodies, which would ensure that the standards set were met and maintained. The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) was the sole ETQA for higher education (that is, Level 5 and above on the NQF).

The implementation of the national plan for education was beset by controversy from the start. There was widespread public and professional resistance to OBE as the means of

transforming the education system. In universities there was also resentment at what was perceived as state interference in academic freedom, a reaction that was exacerbated by the limited guidance provided by the national authorities for understanding and implementing the principles of OBE and QA. This, as has already been indicated, was the cause of considerable frustration and low morale at UNW, then suffering the additional burden of transforming itself from the University of Bophuthatswana, a creation of the apartheid 'homeland' system. As will be shown in the course of the chapter, although it was possible for me to master some of the principles of OBE and apply them to the design, implementation and assessment of the English 100 course, most of the national structures for QA were not in place at UNW at the time at which the case study was undertaken. I was, nevertheless, able to anticipate the broad concerns of QA and incorporate them into my action research.

The deadline for universities to register outcomes-based qualifications with SAQA was June 2000, the year in which the main part of the case study was carried out. In anticipation of this process, the English 100 syllabus had been formulated in accordance with the requirements of the NQF and the basic principles of OBE, the details being refined in previous years through a process of action research.

The first step towards restructuring the format of the revised English 100 syllabus, had, in fact, begun with the process of modularization. Prior to 1996, the university had followed a semester system, with 'write-off' examinations in June and December. The old English syllabi in the BA and BA (Ed.) programmes had been structured according to this model. The move by many South African universities to introduce a modular system (in accordance with the OBE principle that learning should be divided into clearly defined units) was observed in the early drafts and trials of the new syllabus. At that stage, however, there was no clear specification as to the duration of a module. In the initial conceptualization, eight modules of integrated language and literature study replaced the two semesters. This system soon proved to be cumbersome and by 1999 had been restructured into two modules per semester, ENG 101 and 102 in the first semester, and ENG 103 and 104 in the second.

By the June 2000 deadline, the various elements in a module description had also been finalized, although only after considerable discussion. It had become a matter of university policy that these details be given to students at the commencement of each module. (In the English 100 course, the information was provided in the prescribed resource books.) The

following areas were covered:

1. the title of the learning module, for example, 'Introduction to Textual Analysis';
2. the code of the module, for example, ENG 102;
3. the number of credits the module carried towards the programme, for example, 6;
4. NQF level;
5. duration of the module;
6. name(s) of lecturers;
7. learning outcomes;
8. instructional and learning strategies;
9. assessment plan;
10. content;
11. recommended support materials.

Providing these details ensured that the new syllabus was constructed in accordance with the principle of transparency. More important, however, was the OBE philosophy that underlay the course and its individual modules. This influenced the way in which the idea of language/literature integration was given pedagogical expression and provided the terminology for its rationale. The nature of OBE will therefore be examined in the next section.

3.2 Outcomes-based education (OBE)

A picture on a flyer for Cambridge University Press (African Branch) depicts a scene outside a rural village school. The villagers are fleeing from a tornado swirling with books and papers. The caption reads: 'OBE is coming ... but ... the NEW Study & Master series will guide you through the stormy patches'. The advertisement perfectly captures the reception of outcomes-based education by a large number of educationists and members of the general public when it was introduced in South Africa as part of the general overhaul of education (Bell 2001:38). While the need for change was widely acknowledged, many were sceptical about the suitability of OBE for the task. It was perceived to have been a failure when implemented elsewhere in the world. The complicated, clumsy and convoluted language of policy documents also did little to assuage fears and scepticism (Kramer 1999:v; Davey & Goodwin-Davey 1999:16; Jansen 1999a:9, 1999b:147). The theory seemed remote from the practicalities of everyday teaching and too ambitious for a country devastated by the effects of apartheid education (Jansen 1999b).

To others, however, it presented a golden opportunity to revitalize education in South Africa, in spite of the initial difficulties in its conceptualization and implementation (Davey & Goodwin-Davey 1999). It has since been generally accepted as the informing paradigm of educational transformation in the country, albeit after considerable reworking of the original form in response to its negative reception.

Certainly, one of OBE's advantages is that it can be clearly linked to the idea of ongoing QA: its emphasis on the need for clearly stated educational outcomes and assessment criteria increases the possibility of accuracy and reliability in subsequent measurements of quality and achievement. As Kramer (1999:4) puts it: 'OBE is based upon the premise that we can help learners to create definite and reliable evidence of achievement'.

What, then, does OBE involve? What distinguishes it from the former approach to education in South Africa?

3.2.1 Principles of OBE

OBE, as its name suggests, places the focus on the end result of the educational process. Van der Horst and McDonald (2001:5) summarize the OBE approach in South Africa as follows:

Firstly, the focus is on the desired end results of each learning process. These desired end results are called the outcomes of learning and learners need to demonstrate that they have attained them. They will therefore continuously be assessed to ascertain whether they are making any progress.

Secondly, the focus is on the instructive and learning processes that will guide the learners to these end results. Educators are required to use the learning outcomes as a focus when they make instructional decisions and plan their lessons.

Stated thus, OBE represents a shift in emphasis from the more traditional, fact-oriented and content-based learning that previously typified education in South Africa. The process of education, in effect, begins with the envisaged end product or outcome. Practitioners further distinguish between three basic kinds of outcome: knowledge, skills and attitudes or values. In the past, the first, in the form of factual content, had tended to receive emphasis and had informed the development of curricula. In OBE, although the students' knowledge is still an

important outcome, the emphasis is equally on what learners are able to *do*: their ability to do it represents their level of achievement and the extent to which the learning has been successful. Implicit in both these outcomes should be attitudes or a sense of values. Kramer (1999:3) encapsulates the vision of OBE when he stresses that the point of departure for teachers is understanding ‘what we want our learners to know, to be able to do and what values we want to instill’. He goes on (Kramer 1999:18) to develop these three kinds of outcome into a comprehensive model of learning:

Figure 1: Kramer’s ‘Comprehensive Model’

At the centre of Kramer’s model is knowledge. This could include facts, dates, theories, definitions, vocabulary. Knowledge, however, only acquires significance if accompanied by insight. As Kramer (1999:19) puts it: ‘We want to see whether learners really understand all the aspects of the knowledge and that they can also engage with the knowledge intelligently rather than just recall what they have learned’. Beyond this, evidence of learning can also be gained from the skills that learners are able to demonstrate. Kramer distinguishes between three kinds: discipline-based skills, general or cross-curricular skills and communication skills (1999:19-20). The final, relatively broad, element of learning is summed up as personal attitudes and beliefs. This, according to Kramer (1999:20) is achieved when ‘the learner takes personal ownership of the learning by creating or expressing a personal perspective’. Again, Kramer (1999:20-21) distinguishes between three kinds: logical deductions, attitudes and values, and morals and ethics.

As Kramer's (1999) discussion makes clear, the outcomes envisaged in OBE are not only those specific to a subject. This is evident in the different levels of outcomes listed by SAQA for learners at school level.¹⁷ Critical cross-field outcomes are those that should underpin *all* learning. These broad outcomes are then translated into specific outcomes (SOs). At the classroom level, teachers will further refine them in specifying outcome statements for individual lessons or units of learning.

For some educators, OBE might appear to represent a significant paradigm shift. For the language teacher, especially in a second or foreign language context, it is, however, entirely consistent with the still dominant methodology of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The compatibility of OBE and CLT is, in fact, suggested by Davey and Goodwin-Davey (1999). For them, OBE, once stripped of its jargon, is simply a matter of formalizing 'good teaching and learning strategies' (1999:19); it also requires language teachers to reflect and improve on certain key aspects of their teaching. Davey and Goodwin-Davey's (1999:19-20) subsequent discussion of these requirements can be summed up in the following points:

- being transparent and explicit about one's intentions, objectives and goals;
- promoting a critical awareness of language and culture;
- integrating the four language skills in the classroom, as they are integrated in real life;
- recognizing the limitations of the classroom and the reality of the outside world;
- using language across the curriculum;
- developing thinking skills;
- emphasizing the process of arriving at knowledge as much as the final product itself;¹⁸
- encouraging self-directed and lifelong learning in ourselves (as educators) and in our learners;
- being accountable to learners for evaluation, feedback and affirmation in a variety of ways;
- using cooperative learning when appropriate;
- developing materials to facilitate learning;

¹⁷Although these outcomes did not apply specifically to tertiary education, they influenced my thinking as I attempted to apply the principles of OBE to the design of the English 100 course. See Van der Horst and McDonald (2001:49-52) for the critical cross-field outcomes, as well as the specific outcomes for Language, Literacy and Communication, specified by SAQA at the time of the English 100 case study.

¹⁸OBE, with its focus on outcomes is, however, product, rather than process, oriented. Davey and Goodwin-Davey's (1999) claim here is therefore disputable.

- constantly reflecting on and improving teaching skills.

There is little in this list which a practitioner of CLT might find contentious or even surprising. OBE's basic premises also echo the views held by the proponents of the integration of language and literature. For language learning especially, the emphasis on achieving outcomes is self-evident. Languages are learnt to be used: the learners' ability to communicate effectively is an indication that the desired outcome has been achieved. Equally, the study of literary texts should lead to the development of literary competence. In the context of apartheid education in South Africa, where English was a medium of instruction as well as a subject, OBE's emphasis on skills and personal empowerment furthermore represented a vital corrective to the rote learning to which black ESOL students frequently resorted in the absence of a clear grasp of the language of the learning material.

The methodology favoured by OBE in achieving the specified outcomes is also entirely compatible with that of language/literature integration. Kramer (1999:6-15) shows that OBE has its roots in earlier theoretical approaches to learning, such as Constructivism and Experiential Learning: much of the methodology of ESOL learning, such as schema theory, has similar origins. In practical terms, OBE's commitment to being 'less educator-centred and more learner-centred, less transmissional (that is where the educator "transmits" knowledge to the learner) and more transactional (where both interact as a team in the pursuit of learning)' (Kramer 1999:89) directly reflects the approach favoured by nearly all the authorities surveyed in the previous chapter.

Other significant principles and practices of OBE will be examined in the next section, with specific reference to their relevance and application to the English 100 case study.

3.2.2 English 100: Applying the principles of OBE

Expression was given to the basic tenets of OBE in the planning and design of the English 100 syllabus and materials, following the principle of 'Design down, deliver up'. Kramer (1999:26) explains what this entails:

OBE says that we need to be clear about what the outcome is. When we know this we can trace our steps backward from that outcome. Planning for OBE happens by asking what needs to be achieved before attempting to achieve the final outcome, and then asking what learners need to achieve before that and so

on ... OBE therefore designs learning backwards from the end and not forwards from the beginning. The last step in the planning would be to decide where we start teaching.

Following the logic of this process, the choice of content (texts, tasks, information) of each study unit in the English 100 course was determined by its stated outcomes; these, in turn, were designed to contribute to the achievement of the outcomes of the module; the modules were arranged in a sequence that facilitated the progressive development of skills and acquisition of knowledge and which collectively gave expression to the general outcomes of the English undergraduate syllabus. They also expressed the department's perception of the peculiar status of the English 100 course in relation to the English syllabus and in answering the students' needs. The following example will illustrate the planning process. In this case the sequence of the description will reverse the process, moving progressively from the most general outcomes to the specific texts and tasks through which they could, in part, be realized.

The General Outcomes of the undergraduate programme (see Appendix D) include the following broad outcomes:

The aim of the language stream is to provide students with a theoretical knowledge of the English language as well as to develop their practical skills in using it as an effective means of communication. It seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- to provide students with the resources and opportunities to develop their ability to use English effectively, appropriately and critically;
- to provide students with the metalanguage and analytical skills needed to discuss and explore the ways in which English functions in society;
- to lay the foundations for further study in the discipline.

The literature stream of the programme aims to involve students in an investigation of the nature of the literary text and of different critical and linguistic options for analysing works of literature. Through the study of selected texts the literature component seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- to familiarize students with a wide range of formal options that can be employed within the major genres of prose, poetry and drama, in order to build students' awareness of the scope and nature of the literary field, and to build their skills in identifying the particular qualities of literary discourse;
- to sensitize students to the possibilities literature offers for the

- articulate discussion of major issues in human experience.
- to assist students in developing a sense of the history of the English language and its formal properties;
- to provide a forum within which students can develop skills in critical literacy and practice the transferring of those skills across a wide range of texts.

The first-year course needed to achieve these broad outcomes but, at the same time, have its own specific outcomes. As has already been shown, an analysis of the needs of first-year students pointed to the need for a course that served the dual purpose of being self-contained and providing a foundation for further study. The integration of language and literature was perceived as one way of realizing this broad aim: at first-year level the approach would make both components more accessible to students and it avoided specialization in any particular academic field. The methodology used, with its emphasis on personal experience, self-reflection and practical involvement would also, it was hoped, benefit non-specialist students. All these elements determined the specific outcomes for English 100 and underpinned its planning and content. The process of combining the general and the specific was repeated in determining the outcomes for each of the modules that made up the course. The modules were intended to move from the establishment of general concepts (ENG 101: Introduction to English Studies) to the more specific skill of textual analysis (ENG 102: Introduction to Textual Analysis); this would, in turn prepare the way for the study of literary texts (ENG 103: Introduction to Literary Genres) and a contextualized study of grammar (ENG 104: Grammar Awareness).¹⁹ The outcomes, for example, of the ENG 101 module consequently indicated its specific concerns, while at the same time harking back to the aims of English 100 as a whole:

In the first module students are introduced to basic (foundational) concepts in language and literature, in the context of actual English usage. As important as the concepts themselves is the process of self-discovery through which students are led to them. The module also encourages self-reflexiveness in that students are encouraged to adopt a critically questioning attitude to the assumptions underlying the practice of English as an academic discipline.

In the introduction to the ENG 101 resource book this statement of aims was then expressed in terms more appropriate to OBE:

¹⁹For a full discussion of the sequencing of the modules see Butler (2002a:41-44) and Chapter 5.

What does this module aim at achieving?

In this introductory module, as in the rest of English 100, the focus will be on helping you to acquire the skills that you need to use and study English effectively, rather than giving you a lot of facts and figures to memorize.

The intended outcomes of ENG 101 are that:

- ▶ You can demonstrate a developing awareness of language (not only English);
- ▶ You can recognize variation within the English language;
- ▶ You can demonstrate the knowledge and skills that you have begun to acquire in studying English as an academic discipline.

The outcomes for individual units in the resource book then homed in on specific aspects of these outcomes. The following is a selection:

- Unit 2: You can demonstrate a basic awareness of language in everyday use around you.
- Unit 3: You can reflect on your use of language as part of your personal identity and as a means of self expression.
- Unit 5: You can use your personal experiences as a language learner in developing your understanding of the nature of language learning.
- Unit 8: You can reflect critically on the basic issues in the controversy surrounding 'Standard English', and can relate them to your personal experience of language.

Teaching materials were then selected and developed to achieve the outcomes. Unit 2, for example, began with texts describing Mafikeng, the town in which the university is situated, which the students were asked to analyse critically, considering the political and historical implications of the language used in them. A follow-up task then required them to note and analyse names of places in their own environments. These tasks aimed at developing analytical and reflective skills as well as making a point about the nature of language. They were also designed as an alternative to the essay traditionally favoured as a means of assessment at university level, and to encourage the self- and peer-assessment advocated in OBE (Kramer 1999:48-52).

The expression of outcomes in the extracts quoted above demonstrates an imperfect use of the terminology of OBE. It also reveals an ignorance of the OBE distinction between *outcomes* (statements of the intended results of learning and teaching) and *assessment standards* (the criteria used to assess that outcome). This distinction remained blurred throughout the teaching of the course during the case study. Moreover, in the preparation of

teaching materials and assignments, detailed rubrics were not provided for the students. Neither assessment standards nor rubrics were mentioned in the university's guidelines on the application of OBE. These omissions, as has already been noted, are an indication of the extent to which the principles of OBE were still being internalized while the course was being developed.²⁰ The design of the course does, nevertheless, demonstrate some understanding of the 'Design down, deliver up' principle. Selection of content is the last step before teaching: it is, however, the final expression of a series of increasingly specific outcomes.²¹

3.2.3 Criticism of OBE: A functionalist approach to education

In concluding this section on OBE, reference should be made to a criticism frequently levelled at it. Its focus on what students are able to do on the completion of their studies has seemed to many commentators to amount to an undesirably functionalist or behaviourist approach to education (see, for example, Kraak 1999:46-47). Van der Hoven (2003:87) has pointed to the proliferation of 'method courses' in humanities faculties, both in South Africa and internationally. While this tendency might, in South Africa at least, be justified on remedial grounds to accommodate under-prepared students entering universities, he also points to 'the almost overwhelming pressure on the university to instrumentalise its knowledge for business or, alternatively, development purposes' (2003:88). He sees this as symptomatic of 'the decline of the humanities into a "service provider"' (2003:93). Similar reservations are expressed by Carusi (1998:27), Green (2000) and O'Connell (2006:8). Describing attempts by the Department of English at the University of Natal, Durban, to broaden its appeal to students by including media and communication studies, Green (2000:63) concludes with the following caveat: 'The real danger for the human sciences as they attempt to stake their claim to the study of media and communication is that they avoid becoming merely the cultural wing of a business school or, in an even more service-oriented capacity, a management communications centre'.

²⁰The Department of English, UNW, was not alone in its initial failure to master the terminology of OBE. Kilfoil (1999:13) comments on attempts by the Faculty of Arts at the University of Port Elizabeth to formulate outcomes-based programmes: '[T]heir understanding of outcomes could still be refined ... In many ways they read like goals or objectives rather than outcomes.'

²¹Newfield and Janks (1998:78-79) offer a dissenting view of the planning of an OBE lesson, asserting provocatively that outcomes-based education 'does not have to be outcomes driven'. They argue that pedagogy, outcomes or content are all equally valid points of departure for a lesson plan, provided that they are ultimately integrated with each other.

In the South African context, the possibility of scenarios such as these can clearly be linked partly (although not necessarily exclusively) to the introduction of OBE. Kramer (1999:24) lists one of the key objectives of OBE as ‘to ensure that all learners are equipped with the knowledge, skills and values that they will need for success in the various roles they will fill in their lives outside of the classroom’. While this definition allows for a broad interpretation of what ‘life outside of the classroom’ might entail, in practice OBE does tend to encourage an increasing vocational orientation in education (Kilfoil 1999:7). This tendency has obvious implications for English studies; in particular for literature. Literary studies are increasingly under pressure to justify their existence, as Green (2000:61) notes. Even the inclusion of literature in the integrated English 100 course at UNW was partly ‘justified’ on instrumental grounds: it was valuable, not just in its own right, but because its study assisted in the acquisition of ‘practical’ language skills (Butler 2006:14).²²

In the case of English 100, however, the practical orientation of the course was determined without reference to the OBE framework although this subsequently gave it shape. As has been discussed elsewhere, the approach was elaborated and justified on both pragmatic and educational grounds. It was deemed to answer to the needs of students, while being at the same time pedagogically appropriate. Although it was aimed at making the study of English accessible and relevant to students’ needs, the intention was never to do so at the expense of disinterested academic enquiry. To have turned it into a ‘method course’ of the kind mentioned by Van der Hoven (2003) would, in any event, have involved duplication with the English and Academic Skills (EAS) course, as well as other projected language courses.

3.3 Quality assurance

As was indicated in the Introduction to this chapter, the system of QA was still in embryonic form at the time that the English 100 case study was conducted. Although the concept of QA had been mooted and was part of the discourse of transformation in South African universities, the actual legislation and infrastructure that would allow for its implementation were not in place until 2004. The account of QA in this section is therefore a reflection of a later, refined understanding of the concept, not current at the time of the case study. Its inclusion is, nevertheless, justified on the grounds that the case study, its findings

²²It is ironic that these criticisms are – with some justification – levelled against OBE. Much of the criticism – equally justified – of black ESOL education before 1994 was made on the grounds that it was instrumentalist and treated learners as no more than potential units of labour. See, for example, Ndebele (1987), Janks and Paton (1990:237).

and the subsequent reports submitted to the Department of English at UNW anticipated the concerns of QA and, in fact, laid the foundations for the development of QA capacity within the department.

It is a widespread belief among the general public that tertiary education in South Africa, particularly at HBUs, is of inferior, or at best, uneven, quality (for example, Switzer 1998:6; Sewlall 2003; Shai 2003). Many academics share this view: a prominent academic and outspoken critic of the government's current educational policies, Jonathan Jansen, has gone as far as to suggest recently that at least half of the universities in South Africa should be closed (Macfarlane 2006:12). Lickindorf (2004:11), in an article in the *Mail and Guardian*, appropriately entitled, 'Nothing but the best', acknowledges that this perception is not without foundation and describes the measures instituted by government to ensure quality education. Although her account is intended for the general reader of a weekly newspaper, it is thorough and succinct; and, as a respected academic in the field, it can be assumed that she speaks with authority. A summary of her article can therefore serve as a convenient introduction to this section on QA.

According to Lickindorf (2004:11), prior to 1994 quality assurance was entrusted to universities in terms of their status as autonomous institutions. However, the result was that '[q]uality as well as quality assurance in higher education were uneven'. She explains that current government policy, aimed at transforming the higher education system, has consequently embedded quality assurance in its foundations. To this end, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) has been formed, operating within the framework of the SAQA and Higher Education Acts. Higher education institutions, she goes on to say, will remain primarily responsible for QA, but the committee will ensure that there is a single coordinated system. The committee will 'plan, monitor and tackle quality differences across institutions and programmes, and it [will] accredit programmes and quality promotion'. In terms of its founding document it has three mandated roles: 'accreditation (of programmes), audit (of institutions), and quality promotion and capacity development'.

Lickindorf (2004) emphasizes that quality assurance is designed to make institutions accountable (see also Lickindorf 1994:33-34). This is a goal to which all role players need to be committed: QA is not simply a matter of governmental policy. Quoting from a CHE report

on progress in achieving QA, she stresses that ‘academics and students must be successfully engaged in, and committed to, the QA process; the voices and needs of both must be heard’ (2004:11).

The roles outlined by Lickindorf, in fact, suggest a two-pronged approach to QA. Initially, institutions are to be made accountable; but leading on from this is the idea of improvement. Both concepts underlie the rationale for accreditation (Kilfoil 2005:6-7). In both areas commitment is required from all those involved in the process.

Lickindorf concedes that, initially, in 2001, progress in achieving these aims was not consistent. She quotes a CHE document: ‘[A] gap existed between the broad intentions of national policy ... and the individual quality approaches of HEIs [higher educational institutions] as they had taken shape – or failed to take shape over the years’ (2004:11). She also points to the on-going debate in finding ‘the balance between equity and quality’.

The issues raised by Lickindorf (2004) will be examined in the remainder of this section. QA, in effect, places the English 100 case study within a broader educational context (suggested in *Figure 2* below). The case study and the action research through which it was undertaken were intended to contribute to the process of QA at UNW, even though institutional policy was then only in the early stages of development. The frequent lack of quality at institutional level – over which I, as an individual teacher/researcher, had no control – inevitably had an effect on the case study. However, as Lickindorf (2004) points out, the onus for QA does not only rest with the institution: individual learners and teachers are able to contribute to quality in their individual capacities. In the words of the *Criteria for Institutional Audits* document (Council on Higher Education 2004:2): ‘[I]t is recognised that the achievement of quality requires not only effective quality management systems, but the professional expertise, competence and commitment of those who are actually engaged in teaching and learning, research and community interactions.’

Figure 2: QA as context

3.3.1 Quality Assurance: Interpretations

The *process* of assuring quality in South African higher education is outlined in Lickindorf's (2004) account of the duties assigned to the CHE/HEQC. But this presupposes an understanding of the meaning of 'quality' itself. 'Quality' and 'quality assurance' are relative terms, open to a wide range of interpretations (Ellis1993b:3; Thomas 2003:234), as is 'standard', the term most often used in conjunction with, or instead of, quality. Not only are these elusive concepts, but their determination or origin is also problematic. Who sets these standards, whatever they are? Who is in a position to judge quality? What exactly does 'assurance' entail? The answers to these questions have emerged and evolved – and continue to do so – in the years since the issues were first raised in academic circles in South Africa.

Like the whole process of QA, the answers were not clear in 2000 and 2001, the years in which the case study was undertaken. My attempts to assess and, where necessary, improve upon the quality of the English 100 course were, nonetheless, undertaken in response to a need for accountability that was then beginning to make itself heard. The possible interpretations of 'quality' and 'quality assurance' that are offered in this section will provide a norm against which the early attempts to implement QA at UNW (described below in section 3.3.2) and the case study (described in Chapter 5) may be measured.

Ellis (1993b:3) offers a tentative definition of QA as 'ensuring that standards are specified and met consistently for a product or service'. However, he acknowledges that this definition is partly derived from terminology used in the manufacturing and service industries, and questions the extent to which it can be adopted uncritically by educationists. Similar reservations are expressed by White (1998:135) and Harvey (1996:23), the latter pertinently pointing out that '[e]ducation does not have "customers" or "products", but has participants in a process of empowerment and enhancement'. These, and other discussions on QA in education, make it clear that the concept is multifaceted. 'Customers' include learners, teachers, management, prospective employers, the state and the community at large. The 'products' and 'services' of education also encompass a wide range of activities. The National Association of Distance Education and Open Learning Organisations in South Africa (NADEOSA), for example, includes the following areas in which quality criteria need to be met: policy and planning, learners, programme development, course design, course materials, assessment, learner support, human resource strategy, management and administration and collaborative relationships (Welch & Reed 2005:18-56). Similarly, a tutorial letter on OBE from the Department of Secondary School Education at the University of South Africa offers a definition of QA that encompasses 'the registration of qualifications, the registration of schools and other educational institutions, the accreditation of teachers and other providers of education, the assessment of educational provision and practices and evaluation of the overall education system' (University of South Africa 2002:53). The need to define basic terms is consequently a necessary preface to most discussions of QA in education. Definitions frequently vary in their emphasis, as the following comparison between QA in the United Kingdom and in South Africa will illustrate.

Harvey (1996:22), reporting on the Quality in Higher Education (QHE) project established in the United Kingdom in 1991, introduces his article with the *raison d'être* for

quality assurance in higher education: 'No longer are "university" and "quality" seen as virtually synonymous'. This statement suggests that the need for QA is not unique to South Africa and the process of transforming its system of higher education, as Lickindorf's (2004) comments might have implied. Internationally, centralized control of previously autonomous institutions of higher education is increasingly becoming the norm, partly as a result of a general movement from elite to mass education (Gibson 1993:89; Thomas 2003:236-237).

Harvey (1996:23) goes on to attempt to unravel the idea of 'quality' as it is used in discussions about higher education. He lists five discrete but related conceptualizations of quality, as arrived at by the QHE: 'It can be viewed as exceptional, as perfection (or consistency), as fitness for purpose, as value for money, and as transformative'. These definitions are also summarized in the inaugural editorial of the journal *Quality in Higher Education*, and quoted in White (1998:134). It is worth reproducing them in full here for the light that they throw on the QHE's attempt to specify what is meant by 'quality':

Definitions of quality in education

Exceptional linked to the idea of "excellence"; linked to professional competence.

Perfection or consistency zero defects, getting things right the first time, a largely meaningless concept of primary relevance in relation to administrative processes, such as record keeping, timetabling.

Fitness for purpose relating standards to the defined objectives of a course; involves explicit specifications of skills and abilities related to objectives and criterion referenced assessment.

Value for money maintaining or improving academic outcomes for the same (or declining) unit of resource; students and other stakeholders are seen as "paying customers".

Transformation quality as a process of change which, in higher education, adds value to students through their learning experience; provide students with enhanced skills and abilities that empower them to continue to learn and to engage effectively with the complexities of the "outside" world.

Harvey (1996:23) focuses on the last definition in particular, and glosses it as follows: 'In relation to teaching and learning, transformative quality sees the student as a participant in the learning process. It focuses on the enhancement and empowerment of the learner through

a learning experience that adds value and equips the participant for lifelong learning'. The student, he suggests, should, in fact, be seen as 'the principal focus of quality assurance in higher education'. He further develops the idea of education as transformation when he considers quality from the perspective of prospective employers of graduates. He quotes from a report commissioned by the QHE which states that 'employers want to recruit graduates who not only add value, but can cope with change and are able to transform their organisation positively in the face of continuous and rapid change ... Knowledge is less important than an ability and willingness to learn and continue learning'. Although the discourse of business and commerce is still evident in the QHE's conceptualizations of 'quality', Harvey's emphasis on the learner does, to some extent, reinterpret them from an educational perspective.

Lickindorf's (2004:11) summary of the CHE/HEQC's understanding of its role in ensuring quality includes many of the elements mentioned by Harvey (1996:23):

"Quality" was defined as having four components: fitness of purpose (quality within the national goals for higher education); fitness for purpose (in relation to each institution's specific mission); value for money (in terms of the purposes that higher education was expected to fulfill); and transformation (including quality for developing "the capabilities of individual learners for personal enrichment" and for the requirements of social and economic development and employment potential).

Not surprisingly, given the framework of outcomes-based education in South Africa, evaluation of education in terms of its ability to achieve specific goals is given emphasis by being the focus of two of the four components. A distinction is made between national and institutional priorities, the inclusion of the former perhaps suggesting greater centralization than in the case of the United Kingdom. The CHE/HEQC's definition also includes the idea of value for money and transformation. In the South African context, the idea of transformation, which in the QHE's conceptualization focuses on the individual learner, here also includes social and political transformation.

Harvey's (1996) emphasis on the central role of the student in the process of QA (see also Stringer and Finlay 1993) is similarly endorsed in the approach to QA in South Africa, as is shown in Lickindorf (2004). This same emphasis was found in the conceptualization of QA at UNW and in my case study, as will be demonstrated later in this chapter, although the UNW process and conceptualization of 'quality' preceded much of the national debate and implementation.

Discussion so far has considered QA from the perspective of higher education

generally. Thomas (2003:234-235) comments that in the more specific area of English language teaching (ELT) little has been written (see also White 1998:133) and therefore attempts to look at the matter from the point of view of a language teacher. She begins by considering an interpretation of the notion of quality particularly suited to language teaching: 'improvement'. Although this interpretation has the advantage of simplicity, it is not, however, without problems in practical application. For a full understanding of what QA involves, she claims, 'improvement' as a definition is inadequate: the language teacher also needs to take into account economic and political factors, an increasing public demand for accountability, as well as the many variables involved in the process of language education, such as staffing, financial management and teaching resources (Thomas 2003:237).

Much of Thomas's (2003) commentary here could, in fact, be applied to any subject. When, however, she goes on to examine two common conceptualizations of quality, 'fitness for purpose' and 'fitness of purpose' (both of them, as earlier noted, are identified by the CHE/HEQC), her discussion acquires a particular resonance for the ESOL teacher. In her view, QA needs to take account of both: it needs to measure the extent to which an institution meets the goals it has set for itself (fitness for purpose) as well as whether those goals were appropriate and relevant in the first place (fitness of purpose). She illustrates the issue by imagining a hypothetical university department of English subjected to a QA review:

The department decides what it is going to teach and how. What is evaluated is the extent to which the institution does what it says it is doing ... the aims of the course are to teach the history of English as a foreign language, to inculcate a thorough knowledge of English descriptive linguistics, and of the different Englishes to be found globally; to familiarize students with the great works of literature, and enable them to transpose between Shakespearean English and American English. The department excels in this, and in the review scores top marks. Were the students to be invited to have a conversation about British politics, conduct business, or watch a film, however, they would be thrown into difficulties ... There is fitness for purpose because the curricula and their delivery enable the students to achieve the intended aims. There is something uneasy about this, however, which suggests there is yet something more to quality than fitness for purpose. Surely there is no point in the language programme being excellent in the way defined by the subject review, if what it offers is inappropriate or irrelevant to the needs of the students and to society? The relevance or appropriateness of what we teach is also part of the quality (2003:239).

In her conclusion, she states: 'Quality for the professional teacher means being committed to

different interpretations of quality, not only to improvement but to standards, fitness for purpose, and fitness of purpose, too' (2003:240).

I have quoted Thomas (2003) at some length, since her analysis of QA, although done within the context of ELT in the United Kingdom, brings the discussion much closer to the realities of QA as applied to the case study under discussion. The idea of quality being measured by 'fitness of purpose' was a key factor in the planning and on-going assessment of the English 100 course and dictated many of its features. Its peculiar nature as a first-year course made meeting this criterion of quality problematic, however. The extremely low competence of many students at entry level meant that meeting their real academic needs and maintaining standards commensurate with study at tertiary level were often incompatible aims, a situation that perfectly illustrated Elton's (1993:138) reference to the 'double loyalties' of academic teachers: 'to their discipline, which represents *what* they teach, and to university pedagogy, which represents *whom* they teach'. That this problem was not unique to the English 100 course, or even to UNW, is suggested by Lickindorf's (2004:11) reference to the difficulty of finding the 'balance between equity and quality' in the search for quality in South African universities.

In the following section, I will provide a historical overview of QA at UNW at the time of the English 100 case study that will include an account of the way in which I attempted to incorporate QA into my action research.

3.3.2 Quality assurance in the Department of English, University of North West

The establishment of QA at UNW perfectly illustrates Lickindorf's (2004:11) claim that progress at many HEIs was initially slow. Gennrich *et al.* (1999:9) make the same point with regard to UNW.²³ The process of post-1994 transformation was hindered not only by problems inherited from the university's apartheid past, but also by 'an array of new constraints': authoritarian models of education, a history of limited accountability, inadequate

²³UNW is not mentioned at all in the institutional profiles published in Lockett and Kotecha (2000), presumably being one of the three universities (out of a total of 21) that did not respond to the questionnaire sent out by the South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association (SAUVCA) in 1999 (2000:7). In the absence of published documentation of this kind, my account of QA at UNW is, of necessity, fragmented, and dependent on internal communication and personal records.

funding policies and weak management initiatives that were not communicated to lower levels of the hierarchy. In this section I will concentrate on how the issue of QA was tackled by the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, in which the Department of English was situated.

Early in 1999, the faculty established the Faculty Academic Development Unit (FADU), giving it the task of finding ways of developing quality in teaching and learning in the faculty. Gennrich *et al.* (1999:9) describe the unit's aims:

From the outset, the FADU's efforts were guided by two concerns. Firstly we agreed that the promotion of quality teaching and learning provides our framework for quality evaluation. Secondly, it soon became clear to us that we would have to account for student opinion – on what to evaluate, and how; and on the ways in which evaluation might actually transform students' educational experiences.

This baseline policy of involving lecturers and students in the formulation of an approach to QA was necessary in the light of the lack of clear and decisive leadership from management. Apart from such practical considerations, however, it was also appropriate from an educational point of view. As the authors further argue: '[R]eforming insights generated by lecturers and students ought to inform the ways in which the institution as a whole conceives of its educational policies' (Gennrich *et al.* 1999:9). It was in this context and spirit that my action research on the development of the English 100 course was undertaken: an important element was the elicitation of opinion and direction from colleagues in the department and the students involved in the course.²⁴

At the same time as the establishment of FADU, Gennrich, as project leader of the TELP Academic Development Project²⁵ at the university, issued an offer of assistance to all faculties in undertaking a programme review with the aim of enhancing quality. Gennrich (1999a:2) emphasizes the importance of this undertaking, linking it to the new demand for accountability: 'This is particularly important at UNW at this time, since we are in a critical phase of our existence (particularly as the existence of universities in general is being challenged)'.

²⁴Significantly, FADU also conceived of its task in terms of action research (Gennrich *et al.* 1999:10). The methodology of action research does, in fact, have much in common with many conceptualizations of QA. See, for instance, Boore (1993) on circles of quality.

²⁵TELP is an acronym for the Tertiary Education Linkages Project, funded by the United Negro College Fund in the USA.

In spite of this enthusiastic beginning, little immediate progress was made in developing QA in the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, or indeed, in the university as a whole. In her editorial to the July edition of the in-house *Higher Education Forum*, Gennrich (1999b:3) comments on the 'apathy and low morale on campus'. Her view is given weight by a letter in the journal from Dunton (1999:4), then the Head of the Department of English, in which he expresses his 'concerns regarding the structures available for ensuring effective academic development at UNW, especially as regards the mechanisms that exist – or do not exist – to ensure dynamism and coherence in exercising the transformation of our academic programmes'. Similar sentiments are expressed in another letter, from a member of the Department of History (Roos 1999:5).

Complaints of this kind appeared to fall on deaf ears, however, and in the next eighteen months little real progress was made in establishing a culture of QA that had any significant impact on teaching and learning at the university. FADU had envisaged the creation of mechanisms for 'creating a framework for ongoing dialogue between teaching staff and students, with student representatives playing a key role as facilitators', in accordance with their stated principle that 'students and lecturers are committed partners enhancing the teaching and learning experience' (Gennrich *et al.* 1999:11). Possible mechanisms had included questionnaires and class representatives to elicit feedback from students and the introduction of teaching portfolios to encourage self evaluation by academic staff. Where such initiatives – or any other kind of AR aimed at improving QA – were undertaken, however, it was by members of staff working as individuals (for example, Zulu 1999a, 1999b; Peega 1999): attempts to institutionalize them as mandatory procedures met with limited response. Any information that I gathered from students and colleagues regarding the quality of the English 100 course in 2000 and 2001 was part of my own action research. This information was, nevertheless, submitted to the Head of the Department of English and copied to the Dean of the Faculty, in the form of three reports.

The first report (Butler 2002b) was submitted in January 2002 and arose from discussion at a departmental meeting at the end of the previous year. At that meeting, members were asked to discuss a questionnaire which had been received from the CHE/HEQC (Singh 2001:1). The introductory remarks in the document gave the following justification for the questionnaire and clearly demonstrate the point already made that QA was in its early stages at national as well as institutional levels:

The questionnaire requests quality assurance information from your institution in four areas:

- 1 The link between quality assurance and institutional planning
- 2 Details of your institution's internal quality management system
- 3 Details of your institution's capacity development needs in relation to quality assurance
- 4 Advice to the HEQC on its quality assurance responsibility.

The focus of the information provided should be teaching and learning issues in relationship to undergraduate and postgraduate provision.

The information will be analysed and used by the HEQC in the following way:

- 1 It will form the basis for the HEQC visit to your institution in 2002 (Dates will be finalised in discussion with you)
- 2 The information will provide a baseline picture of current quality assurance arrangements that are in place in higher education. On the basis of this information the HEQC will plan its quality assurance, quality development and monitoring activities.

The threat of the CHE/HEQC's impending visit finally galvanized the department into action. It should, however, be noted that only two of the members present were familiar with the term 'quality assurance'; the departmental representative on FADU and several other members were not present at the meeting (without having sent apologies). A debate ensued on the information that we would submit: should we indicate what we *intended* to do to develop QA, or what was actually being *done* currently? The latter option did not seem advisable since, in fact, very little was being done at the time. For example, it was noted that, although all examination papers listed second internal examiners, in practice second examining was rarely done because of constraints of time. (Another reason, not raised publically, was that certain members of staff were unwilling to change marks when this was recommended by a colleague.) The Head of Department pointed out that second examining had been rigorously practised in the past, but had lapsed in recent years.²⁶ The absence of any real QA within the department was even more graphically illustrated later in the meeting when two members raised the question of a colleague (one of those who had failed to attend the meeting) who had not produced any semester marks for the module that he had taught. These marks would

²⁶This observation undermines the stance taken by many advocates of QA in South Africa, such as Lickendorf (2004), that tends to view education at HBUs before 1994 as uniformly inferior. The experience of many members of the department (myself included) suggests rather a rapid decline in educational standards after the demise of Bophuthatswana.

normally have been added to the examination marks in calculating a final mark. A number of 'solutions' were proposed, such as failing all his students in the examination so that they would have to write supplementary examinations (which were not combined with semester marks). The only possibility *not* raised was that he should be asked to account for (and rectify) the absence of his semester marks.²⁷

Nonetheless, at the beginning of the 2002 academic year, an attempt was made to compile a response to the CHE/HEQC questionnaire and, in this way, initiate the process of QA in the department. Contributions included the report on the English 100 course that I had drawn up, using the findings of questionnaires administered to staff and students in the preceding two years. The report concluded that there was overwhelming support among both groups for the approach adopted in the course and ended with a list of recommendations. These involved a commitment to the continued use of the integrated language/literature approach, small group teaching and the on-going development of teaching materials. The department's submissions were incorporated into the QA profile of the university as a whole, to be submitted to the CHE/HEQC in April. The continuing apathy of some members of the department is, however, suggested by an extract from the minutes of a departmental meeting on 11 April 2002: 'The University is to submit a Quality Assurance Profile on the 26 April 2002. Dr N – and Ms Z – have attended the Quality Assurance Workshop. Some people who had volunteered to attend did not' (Department of English minutes 11/04/02)

In October 2002, as part of the department's preparation for a CHE/HEQC audit scheduled for later that year, I submitted a second report (Butler 2002c). This was to be combined with the first as part of the department's submission, and was, in effect, a report on the extent to which the first report's recommendations had been implemented. Since it has a direct bearing on the progress of QA within the Department of English, the content of the second report is reproduced in full below.

At the end of 2001 [in fact, early 2002] I reported on the Department's experiment in collaborative teaching of the English 100 modules. At the conclusion of my report, I made a number of recommendations about the continued teaching of the course, based on the information I had gathered from

²⁷The account of the proceedings of the meeting presented in this paragraph is based on notes that I made at the time. It is consequently coloured by my personal bias. I noted in conclusion that my impression was that the department as a whole had neither the will nor the ability to implement QA.

staff and students. These are summarized briefly below:

- 1 The integration of language and literature should be retained as the dominant principle underlying the English 100 modules.
- 2 Small group collaborative teaching should be retained as the methodology in all of the modules.
3. Close co-operation between the lecturers involved in teaching the modules is imperative.
4. To facilitate the kind of co-operation envisaged in the previous point, it is recommended that the number of lecturers involved in the teaching of any of the modules should be reduced from the twelve involved in the experimental period to five or six.
5. Lecturers should be involved in an on-going process of revising, adapting and sharing materials.
6. The quantity, quality and variety of the literary texts to which the students are exposed need to be improved.
7. Lecturers may also like to consider the action research possibilities in the teaching of the ENG 100 modules.

Recommendations 1, 2 and 4 have been implemented in 2002. In line with recommendation 5, I have made revisions to the ENG 101 and 102 resource books and have drawn up, with the group's approval, a new list of prescribed texts for ENG 103 and 104 (although the extent to which these changes have met with the requirements of recommendation 6 is debatable). Cooperation between lecturers involved in the project (recommendation 3) has, however, been minimal, presumably because of other teaching commitments. Meetings have been irregular, and are attended reluctantly, if at all. Requests for feed-back and contributions are frequently ignored. We have also not succeeded in putting effective quality assurance mechanisms in place. The distribution of students between lecturers is extremely uneven, largely because of factors beyond our control, such as the university's policy of on-going registration. Apart from myself, I am not aware of anyone conducting action research in this area.

In spite of the negative tone of these comments, I was later informed by the Head of Department that the auditors expressed their satisfaction with the reports and were pleased that members of the department had been experimenting in collaborative teaching (Lalloo 2002: personal communication). (I was not, however, able to obtain written confirmation of this response for my personal research records.) Although the second report implies a lack of achievement by the department as a whole, its existence points, nevertheless, to the beginnings of a culture of QA, at least within the Department of English.

In 2003, the university management finally approved the establishment of a Quality Assurance office. That any real QA had not been implemented throughout the university and in the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences in particular, may, however, be deduced from an open memorandum from the Dean to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) on issues raised

by Botswana nationals studying at the university. Responding to a complaint about frequent absenteeism and cancellation of classes by lecturers, the Dean gives the assurance that the matter will be addressed. He adds:

But it is imperative that the Faculty arranges a periodic examination of the situation and have a system of getting feedback from both Heads of Department and students on the issue.

This is where the concern of the teaching and learning questionnaire (to be completed by students) comes in. The Faculty will be implementing this with effect from next year (2004) to identify especially the most-needed improvements in our offerings, teaching and learning, assessment, and student support materials. Moreover, the Faculty should and will always develop a corrective-action plan to improve service quality (Manyane 2003).²⁸

The measures promised here had, in fact, been mooted by FADU over four years earlier.

My third and last report on QA (Butler 2003b) was submitted in July 2003 in the form of a discussion document on the undergraduate English syllabus as a whole. Once again, its writing was prompted by issues raised at a departmental meeting (29 May 2003). A task team, which included me, was mandated to consider the possibility of revising or replacing the syllabus in the light of developments since its inception. The report explicitly addresses the need for on-going QA, an indication of the extent to which it had finally become entrenched in departmental procedures and that greater accountability was being expected by the national authorities. Repeated reference is made to the findings of the first report, a reflection of my attempt to develop a capacity for personal critical self reflection. The reader will, however, note an increasing sense of frustration in the tone of the report, suggesting the constraints to effective QA still present.

Circumstances which prompted the need for review included:

- the impending expiry of all courses previously submitted for approval to SAQA;
- the department's on-going quality assurance procedures;
- the impending merger with Potchefstroom University;
- the perception by some members of staff that the current syllabus lacked coherence,

²⁸Since I resigned from my post in the Department of English at the end of 2003, I am not able to comment on whether or not these plans were actually implemented.

was too abstract and theoretical and (arising out of the last point) did not adequately address the needs of the student population;

- the absence of a literature specialist in the Department, following recent staff resignations;
- the extremely poor performance of the ENG 301 class in recent examinations and the negative report received from the external examiner.

Some members of staff pointed out that the situation mentioned in the last point could be attributed to a number of factors, which did not necessarily include the form of the present syllabus. Those mentioned were:

- the increasingly poor English language skills found in the students admitted to the university;
- poor class attendance by students;
- the pressure placed on lecturers by the university management in recent years 'to find ways of enhancing student enrollment and pass/graduation figures' (Department of English minutes 07/08/97): this had inevitably impacted on the standard of the courses and the ability of the students who pass them;
- the consequent expectations by students that they would pass regardless of any effort (or lack thereof) on their part;
- lack of transfer from EAS to English courses.

It was nevertheless agreed that the syllabus should be reviewed with the aim of identifying areas for improvement. The meeting also identified the following areas for further investigation:

- the modular system;
- integration of modules;
- the place of literature in the undergraduate syllabus;
- relevance to the students' needs;
- the possibility of integration with courses offered by the Departments of Setswana and Afrikaans;
- reintroducing admission criteria and/or an assessment test at first-year level;
- possible overlap between EAS and English 100;

- liaison with the Department of Communication with a view to synchronising courses offered by the two departments.²⁹

I drafted a response, which I submitted to the other members of the task team for their consideration. It was accepted without alteration; further points arising from our discussion were then incorporated into the document as an addendum. The general consensus was that perceived shortcomings lay less in the syllabus itself than in the failure of many of the lecturers who taught it to internalize its principles and put them into practice. The constraints imposed by the context of UNW also hindered its effective implementation.

The third report represents the culmination of the on-going internal monitoring of the quality of the English 100 course. A number of QA-related issues are addressed: the needs, performance and capacity of students; staff concerns and capacities; the effect of management directives and expectations; syllabus content and presentation. Since it brings together both the theory and practical application of QA, as discussed in this chapter, the document is reproduced in full below:

Review of the undergraduate syllabus:
Comments and recommendations:

1. Direction and integration in the syllabus

Comment:

In the meeting the Head voiced his perception that the syllabus lacked direction and that the modules were not integrated.

It was the intention of the syllabus designers that the syllabus should be developmental and integrated. This aim is stated in the first two paragraphs of the *General Outcomes*:

The English undergraduate programme consists of twelve equally weighted modules. It has two streams, literature and language. In some modules the streams are integrated; in others they are separated while still linked within the overall design of the programme, having been designed to complement and reinforce each other.

The focus of the programme moves gradually from a concern with practical language skills and foundational knowledge in the initial modules, to a more theoretical, analytical orientation in later modules. The last two modules (ENG 303 and ENG 304)

²⁹The content of this paragraph is an edited version of the preamble to my report.

enable students to develop an overview of the work they have done throughout the entire programme, drawing on the skills and knowledge they have acquired.

The vision of the syllabus can, however, only be realized by the lecturers who teach the individual modules, through continuous cooperation and consultation with each other. However, in research conducted by Butler at the end of 2000 (the year in which the syllabus was implemented up to third year level) little evidence of this was found. Lecturers teaching second and third year modules were asked the following question: *Did you link your module(s) (by means of content, texts, themes, etc) to any other module taught by yourself or any other lecturer?* The majority of responses indicated that this had not taken place: lecturers were either unaware of the need or had not had time to do so. It is possible that this has continued to be the practice in subsequent years. There is certainly anecdotal evidence of lecturers who have completely disregarded the syllabus in their teaching of individual modules. It is unlikely that neglect at this level would have been accompanied by a concern for integration and consistency.

Recommendations:

Quality assurance measures aimed at ensuring that lecturers are familiar with and committed to the principles of the current syllabus (or of any other that might replace it) should be implemented.

2. *The modular system*

Comment:

In the syllabus the academic year is divided into four modules. The University has, however, continued to operate on a semester system, and many departments have, in fact, opted for semester-based modules. Responses to Butler's research in 2000 show that many members of staff in the Department of English found the present 8-week modules insufficient to cover the work and to assess students' performance adequately. The situation is exacerbated by university's policy of extended registration throughout the -01 and -03 modules.

Recommendation:

- The number of modules should be reduced to two per academic year. This could be accomplished through combining and/or re-coding the existing modules.

3. *Relevance to the students' needs*

Comment:

Most of the students who enroll for English at first- and second-year level do so because it is a requirement for their particular course of study. Few intend or wish to major in the subject. The consequence is that, on the whole, students lack both competence and motivation to study English as an academic subject: responses to questionnaires given to first year students in 2000 and 2001 point to purely instrumental needs and expectations. The department therefore finds itself in the difficult position of having to reconcile the needs and abilities of the student population with the demands of academic respectability.

Two issues are particularly pertinent here:

- the role of theory in the modules.
- the place of literature in the syllabus.

The first issue is directly addressed in the *General Outcomes* of the syllabus: “[t]he focus of the programme moves gradually from a concern with practical language skills and foundational knowledge in the initial modules, to a more theoretical, analytical orientation in later modules”. The extent to which this progression is realised in practice is, as in the case of modular integration, dependant on the lecturers who teach the modules. An undue emphasis on theory in any module may therefore be the result of the lecturer’s (mis)interpretation of the outcomes, rather than the prescriptions of the syllabus itself. The balance between theory and practice was also one of the issues raised in the questionnaire administered to lecturers in 2000: responses ranged from a ratio of 50/50 to 80/20 in favour of theory. All respondents, however, indicated that the bias towards theory was due to time constraints rather than personal choice. The increasingly unfavourable student : staff ratio may also explain the theoretical orientation in the teaching of many of the modules.

The syllabus sees the study of literature as complementary to the study of language; as such it need not be seen as antithetical to any practical orientation in the syllabus. Responses from first-year students have moreover indicated an overwhelming support for the study of literature, provided that it is integrated with the study of language.

Recommendations:

- The grammar module in the first year course (ENG 104) should be broken up and spread over the whole year. (The contents of the other three modules would then be rearranged accordingly.) A pedagogical grammar component could also be included in second- and third-year modules.
- Literature and the theoretical aspects of language study could be made more ‘relevant’ by linking them to work done in Communication (for example, the study of drama could be linked to script writing; the study of spoken English could be linked to the training of radio and television journalists.)
- A more radical alternative to the modifications suggested above would be the development of an entirely new ‘practical English’ course catering to the students’ more general language needs. This would be open to all students. Entrance to the first year of the academic English course would then be restricted to those who meet the admission criteria. Alternatives along similar lines could be ‘practical’ optional modules within the existing English 100 course; or a new foundation course that combines academic and general language skills (that is, elements from the existing English 100 and EAS courses).

Further comments and suggestions arising from the meeting on 24 July 2003:

The following general points were made:

- In view of the uncertainty surrounding the practical implications of the proposed merger with Potchefstroom University, there did not seem any point in making any drastic revisions to the UNW syllabus at this stage.
- Limited time and resources meant that little could be done for students

- unprepared for university study.
 - Concern was expressed at the notable absence of a culture of learning at the university (as demonstrated at the intolerable noise level outside lecture theatres, late-coming to class, and students not purchasing prescribed texts). It was suggested that the SRC be approached in this regard.
 - The apparent lack of transfer of skills from EAS to academic subjects, such as English, was again mentioned as a cause for concern.
- The group also considered the following specific recommendations for modification to the existing syllabus:
- The spoken English element in ENG 202 should be dropped and replaced with a component in pedagogical grammar.
 - Remedial classes should be offered for first-year students. The onus was, however, on the students themselves to recognize their own need for assistance.
 - The system of peer tutoring should be used to identify both good and poor students. A culture of reading could also be cultivated in this way.

In this section, I have attempted to sketch the way in which QA was applied to the English 100 course within the institutional context of UNW. During the period of the case study itself and afterwards, little or no support as regards QA was available from sources external to the project and it was undertaken with only a limited knowledge of the theory of QA in South Africa and internationally. The research was, nevertheless, conducted in the spirit of the principles laid down in Gennrich *et al.* (1999) and others discussed in this chapter who emphasized the importance of consultation with colleagues and students. In my reports on work in progress I attempted to use my action research as a way of contributing to the development of QA within the Department of English. Although not always explicitly formulated in those terms, it is possible, retrospectively, to identify in the planning and on-going assessment of the English 100 course, an application of some of the conceptualizations of QA mentioned in this chapter.

3.4 Conclusion

In October 2005, a poster advertising a seminar on the future of academic institutions in South Africa, displayed in the library foyer of the University of South Africa, had the slogan, 'From the ivory tower to the marketplace: What future for the university in SA?' The picture below the slogan was of an apparently discarded academic gown bearing a price tag of R30,00. In many ways the poster encapsulates the concerns of this chapter. The last decade has seen an increasingly market-driven approach to higher education in South Africa, linked to a desire for political and social transformation. Government legislation has had far-reaching effects on education at all levels, including universities. Universities have been compelled, not

only to restructure their academic programmes but, at a more fundamental level, to reassess their missions. Mergers, such as that between the University of North West and Potchefstroom University to form North West University, have gone even further in redrawing the map of academia in South Africa.

Two aspects of these changes have been examined in this chapter: outcomes-based education and quality assurance. As stated earlier, the aim was not to provide an exhaustive or even detailed account of the two concepts, but rather to examine those aspects that impinged on the case study of the English 100 course. Although the project was initially conceived of as individual action research, the influence on it of the wider educational context was unavoidable. In fact, in line with the spirit of action research, such an influence could be seen as an advantage, since it linked the research project to a world beyond the confines of the particular classroom in which it was conducted. The AR framework – which allows for cycles of reflection and consequent action – also meant that it was possible to incorporate these developments into the project while in progress. The English 100 research project, ultimately, was not simply an academic exercise but one that potentially had resonances beyond itself, both to educational transformation and to developments in literature and language teaching internationally. In the next chapter, action research, the methodology that informed the case study, will be examined.

Chapter 4

Research Methodology: Action Research

Only connect.

E. M .Forster *Howards End*

The other day the topic was what makes us to do english he [Mr Butler] gave us form to fill. I was so scared because there is no one who motivate me and I lie to him that I was encourage by my friend who was doing english.

From the journal of an English 100 student

4.1 Introduction

Van Lier (1994:31) quotes the words of the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, to illustrate the gap that often exists between research into language teaching and the actual practice of it: ‘those who reflect without practising and those who practise without reflecting’. This sentiment is echoed by Bell (1997:5) when she suggests that ‘much educational research does not reflect the reality of the language classroom, with the result that many teachers dismiss it as irrelevant to their everyday practice’. But she believes that the gap between research and practice can be narrowed by teachers conducting research in their own classrooms. The idea of the teacher as researcher has, in fact, received attention in many areas of education (for example, Hopkins 1985; Hitchcock & Hughes 1995), including language teaching. Teachers, it is suggested, should become more involved in research, instead of leaving it to outside ‘experts’. Key words used to describe teachers in this discussion are: *reflective* (for example, Schön 1987; McKernan 1991; Russel & Munby 1992; Richards & Lockhart 1994; Farrell 2003; Van der Horst & McDonald 2001) and *inquiring* (for example, Brause & Mayher 1991; Rowland 1993; Freeman 1998). For the proponents of action research, these concepts provide their point of departure: as Nunan (2001:198) says, an ‘important concept underpinning action research (AR) is that of reflective practice’. Action

research, it is claimed, provides a convenient and effective way of closing the gap between the theorists and the practitioners, between reflection and action. McNiff and Whitehead (2006:8) capture the synthesis most effectively by contrasting AR with what they call ‘spectator research’. They also use the term ‘new scholarship’ (2006:68) to describe the approach.

The case study described in this thesis has been conducted within the paradigm of action research (AR). The aim of the present chapter is to provide an overview of the principles and practice of AR. An exhaustive survey of all contributors to the field of AR is clearly not possible: the emphasis will therefore be on more recent contributions that have focussed on two areas of particular significance to this study: language (especially ESOL) teaching and higher education. The contributors to these specialized areas are themselves heirs to earlier practitioners such as Lewin, Carr and Kemmis,³⁰ on whose pioneering work they draw. Throughout the chapter, discussion of the theory of AR will alternate with accounts of its practical application in the present study. This is in accord with the integrative spirit of AR. The transitions from theory to application will, however, be signalled stylistically. The formal, impersonal style traditionally associated with academic discourse will be abandoned in favour of the more personal mode of narration occasionally employed in earlier chapters. Apart from its function in distinguishing the two strands of discussion in the chapter, the latter mode of discourse is in keeping with the practice of most AR practitioners. McNiff *et al.* (1996:33) recommend that action researchers adopt an ‘inclusive style of language’ in reporting their findings: while professional, it should not be heavily biased towards any particular group of people (such as academics), and jargon and densely packed ideas should be avoided. Walker (1995) is a good example of this style of writing.

McNiff (1988:57) uses the same kind of language in her six critical questions that teachers might ask themselves in preparation for action research:

1. What is your concern?
2. Why are you concerned?
3. What do you think you could do about it?
4. What kind of ‘evidence’ could you collect to help you make some judgement about what is happening?
5. How would you collect such ‘evidence’?

³⁰See McNiff & Whitehead (2002:39-58), Holly *et al.* (2005:47-56) or McNiff & Whitehead (2006:36-42) for a succinct overview of the various contributions to the development of AR.

6. How would you check that your judgement about what has happened is reasonably fair and accurate?³¹

These questions will be used as a framework for the account of the application of AR to the case study. The first question has already been largely answered in the previous chapters. McNiff's remaining questions are concerned, in various ways, with the process of addressing this concern and will be considered in the course of this chapter.

4.2 Action research: The theory

The meaning of AR lies in its combination of two traditionally distinct elements: 'action' and 'research'. It is this combination that gives it the potential to bridge the conceptual gap mentioned in the previous section. McKernan (1991:3) states that '[t]he aim of action research, as opposed to much traditional or fundamental research, is to solve the immediate and pressing day-to-day problems of practitioners'. Wallace (1998:1) similarly defines AR as 'the systematic collection and analysis of data relating to the improvement of some aspect of professional practice'. He suggests that, as a methodology, it has a special attraction for teachers, offering them an opportunity for professional development. The link between research and practice is also implied in the definition of action research offered by Cohen and Manion (1994:186): 'small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention'. Crookes (1993:131) describes it more simply as 'teachers doing research on their own teaching and the learning of their own students'.

Action research, in other words, conflates the roles of practitioner and researcher in a way that is not found in most research methodologies. Research questions emerge from the practitioner's immediate concerns and problems, and the aim of the research is not merely to analyse and explain, but also to improve on professional practice. 'Research' and 'action' are thus complementary components in the approach, each informing and modifying the other. As Wallace (1998:15) further elaborates, action research 'nearly always arises from some specific problem or issue arising out of our professional practice ... It is therefore very problem-focussed in its approach and very practical in its intended outcomes'.

³¹The questions are expressed in the first person and expressed slightly differently in the second edition of this work (McNiff & Whitehead 2002:72), but remain the same in essence. In McNiff & Whitehead (2006:79) they are expanded and refined to include other aspects of the research process.

Crookes (1993:131), however, distinguishes between two kinds of AR. He summarizes the differences as follows:

The first is an older, relatively conservative line, which finds action research equivalent to research done by a “teacher-researcher”. The second is a newer, more progressive line where the term “action research” is used to refer to aspects of critical educational practice, that is, education and educational research which is committed to emancipating individuals from the domination of unexamined assumptions embodied in the status quo.

While the former is nominally value free, the latter is explicitly value-laden. Crookes acknowledges the importance of both approaches, but sees the former as unremarkable, ‘no more than a description of what good teachers might be expected to do in the course of their teaching and thinking’ (1993:131). Both approaches are found in the theory and practice of AR, whether explicitly articulated as such or not.³²

A further element of the more progressive approach emerges in the definition of AR offered by Stringer (1996:7):

Action research is based on the assumption that the mere recording of events and formulation of explanations by an uninvolved researcher is inadequate in and of itself. A further assumption is that those who have previously been designated as “subjects” should participate directly in research processes and that those processes should be applied in ways that benefit all participants directly.

The ‘subjects’ of the study are no longer passive entities, but active co-workers with the researcher. For Stringer (1996:7) these assumptions form the basis for what he calls ‘community-based action research’.

Differences in definition do not occur at this broadly ideological level only. Nixon (1981:7) comments that AR is ‘nothing if not eclectic’, a description that is certainly borne out in the literature. Walker (1989:3) claims that there is ‘no one right way’ of doing AR; according to another writer, AR means ‘different things to different people’ (Zuber-Skerritt

³²The degree of overlap between various modes of socially committed research may be deduced from Walters (1983:175) who describes Participatory Research (PR) as an approach that ‘combines research, education and action’ and which attempts ‘to erode the traditional divisions between mental and manual work’, with the aim of ‘radical social change’. In these and other descriptions she appears to be describing a research methodology that is at least similar to the second kind of AR defined by Crookes (1993:131).

1992a:2) and Altrichter *et al.* (2002:125) provide an inclusive definition of AR only after first acknowledging that it does not have ‘one neat, widely accepted definition’. In similar vein, Nunan (2001:202) warns that AR is, in some cases, inconclusive. Comments such as these may contribute to the poor reception that AR has had in some quarters, where it is perceived as lacking in academic rigour (Zuber-Skerritt 1992a:2; Crookes 1993:130). Its tendency to subjectivity and use of anecdotal data has prompted critics to see it as ‘unscientific’.

Criticism of this kind is not entirely unfounded. A survey of the literature on AR does reveal much work, theoretical and practical, that is, at best, ephemeral (for example, Pritchard 1995). The attempt to make research accessible and unthreatening to the non-specialist can result in trivialization.

The proponents of AR are, however, quick to defend it against such accusations. Holly *et al.* (2005:48) distinguish between AR and teacher research, the latter covering a much broader area and not necessarily satisfying the criteria of AR. Walker (1989:5-6) also makes a careful distinction between the reflective teaching that practitioners habitually engage in and action research and then considers the criteria necessary to justify AR as research. She states: ‘To win a place for action research as valid research methodology for higher degrees requires, I believe, that such research be systematic, critical, public and above all, rigorous’ (1989:6). Similarly Zuber-Skerritt (1992b:89) insists that action research must combine relevance with rigorous standards. Nunan (2001:200) argues that as long as AR has the three essential elements of research – a question/problem/hypothesis, data and analysis and interpretation of data – it qualifies as ‘real’ research. Wallace (1998:36) suggests that action research will gain credibility through triangulation and transparency.

Many authorities on AR also offer detailed accounts of research methods and techniques which, properly applied, ensure academic respectability. Some of these will be examined in this chapter.

For other researchers, the precision that sometimes seems to be lacking in AR is a strength rather than a weakness. The fact that research is carried out in a real context, and not under carefully controlled laboratory conditions, means that it will inevitably share many of the characteristics of real life: it will be unpredictable and untidy (Van Lier 1994:35; McNiff *et al.* 1996:51; Holly *et al.* 2005:43) and hard on human relations (Nunan 2001:202). Factors

such as these narrow the gap between theory and practice and make research more immediately relevant to the everyday life of the practitioner. In the same way, the researcher's subjectivity, traditionally repressed in research activities, can be seen as a positive element in AR. McNiff *et al.* (1996:20) see it as an advantage in that it allows the researcher to 'have an insider knowledge of events'. The danger of bias is minimized if the researcher adopts a consciously critical stance.

McNiff *et al.* (1996:106-107) also examine the issue of generalizability and replicability, the hallmarks of traditional research. These criteria, they argue, are not appropriate to AR:

It is not possible, nor desirable, to aim for replication or generalisation, since the aim is to understand rather than to predict, to liberate rather than control. People do research on themselves rather than on others; they do research with others in order to understand and improve their social practices. People offer stories of their own improved understanding as outcomes. They share these stories, not competitively but collaboratively. This shared learning leads to the construction of collective knowledge.

Holly *et al.* (2005:219) also see generalizability as running against the grain of AR, being a way of controlling, rather than liberating. Crookes (1993:134) argues that the action researcher is interested in 'locally-valid understandings of problems in teaching and learning, not necessarily findings of maximal generality', and so uses techniques 'which capitalize on the actors' and investigators' deep familiarity with the situation'.

A significant feature of AR is that the researcher does not work alone. In the course of the research (s)he collaborates with others; at its conclusion the findings must be communicated to others working in the field. Both these aspects of AR are mentioned in the literature, although with varying emphases. An extreme position is taken by Van Lier (1994:33) when he insists that AR is unlikely to work if carried out by a single teacher working alone: it is, he insists, 'essentially a collaborative effort involving observation and conversation'. The importance that Burns (1999) attaches to collaboration is explicitly stated in the title of her book, *Collaborative action research for English language teachers*. Similarly, Zuber-Skerritt (1992a:15) emphasizes 'participation and collaboration', and McNiff and Whitehead (2006:28) state categorically that AR means 'working with others at all stages of the process'. A term often used to describe a colleague collaborating in AR is a 'critical

friend' (McNiff & Whitehead 2002:105; 2006:85), a description that suggests a nice balance of support and objectivity. Others, such as McKernan (1991:236), appear not to regard collaboration as a *sine qua non* of AR, but nonetheless encourage it. Wallace (1998:207-210) urges teachers to make use of the ideas of colleagues, other teachers, writers and researchers and at the same time to share their own ideas with others. 'No teacher', he asserts, 'is an island'. He suggests that collaborative action research has a number of advantages: it adds to the depth and coverage of the research; validity and reliability are enhanced; and motivation is increased. For the sharing and gathering of ideas, Wallace (1998:211-13) suggests the following sources: informal conversations with colleagues; electronic communication (such as e-mail and discussions lists); talks, workshops and membership of professional organizations; radio and television; print media such as books, magazines and journals.

Yet, surprisingly, Wallace (1998:207-8) does not regard the publication of findings as obligatory. He comments: 'As a practising teacher, I can decide to investigate some aspect of my own teaching, collect the relevant data and analyse it, come to certain conclusions, and keep whatever findings I have arrived at completely to myself'. Nevertheless, this is not something that he would *advocate*: action research is, in fact, a way of breaking down the isolation in which individual teachers often work. For most writers, publication and dissemination are integral parts of AR (McKernan 1991:244; Crookes 1993:135-137; McNiff *et al.* 1996:115), consistent with its commitment to the improvement of the practice which has been the object of the research. For it to remain private is, they imply, to defeat its purpose.

Differences of opinion such as those examined in the preceding paragraphs notwithstanding, there is a core of principles and methods that characterizes all definitions of AR. According to Zuber-Skerritt (1992a:15), this can be summarized in the acronym 'CRASP'. Action research, according to her definition, is:

**Critical (and self-critical) collaborative enquiry by
Reflective practitioners being
Accountable and making the results of their enquiry public,
Self-evaluating their practice and engaged in
Participative problem-solving and continuing professional development.**

The process of AR has been described in a number of ways. McNiff *et al.* (1996:48) mention phrases such as 'cycles of reflective action', 'spirals of action' and 'flow diagrams'. The point of these metaphors, they claim, is to 'represent the idea of practice as non-linear,

accepting that people are unpredictable, and life (even at work) does not follow a straightforward pattern'. Burns (1999:35), on the other hand, prefers to describe the process as 'a series of interrelated experiences', involving a number of phases. However, the most common way of looking at AR is as cycles of action and research. Each cycle has four movements: plan, act, observe and reflect. One cycle leads into the next, allowing for a continuous process of revision and adaptation, based on the experience and findings of each cycle. Wallace (1998:17) calls this a 'loop process', which can be repeated until a solution is found to the problem that initially set it in motion. There is 'a dynamic relationship between the problem you set yourself at the beginning of your research, and your conceptualisation of that problem as the research proceeds' (Wallace 1998:33). To complete only one 'loop' is insufficient: AR must be viewed as an on-going process. The sense of research as process is also captured in the assertion by Altrichter, Posch and Somekh (1993:43) that AR 'tries to avoid the dogma of fixed hypotheses which, in more traditional research approaches, cannot be modified once the research has begun'.

The split between research and practice is often personified as university academics (the researchers) and school teachers (the practitioners who are expected to implement the researchers' findings) (Burns 1999:14; Szesztay 2003:8). However, Zuber-Skerritt (1992a, 1992b) and Schratz (1993) draw attention to the need to break down the same barriers at university level. Both point to the traditional emphasis on research at universities, with a concomitant neglect of teaching skills. Zuber-Skerritt (1992a:11; 1992b:3-4) mentions the lack of interest shown by most academics in educational theory and their ignorance of the principles and methods of learning and teaching, an observation echoed by Walker (1995:18) in the South African context. Zuber-Skerritt suggests that AR, by offering a dialectical relationship between theory and practice, offers a means of addressing this neglect:

Action and practical experience may be the foundations of educational research, and research may inform practice and lead to action. Academics are in an ideal position; on the one side they can create and advance knowledge in higher education on the basis of their concrete, practical experience; on the other side, they can actively improve practice on the basis of their "grounded theory" (1992a:11).

She goes on to present the advantages of AR in terms of the immediate benefits it has for university teachers:

Through systematic, controlled action research, higher education teachers can become more professional, more interested in pedagogical aspects of higher education and more motivated to integrate their research and teaching interests in a holistic way. This, in turn, can lead to greater job satisfaction, better academic programmes, improvement of student learning and practitioners' insights and contributions to the advancement of knowledge in higher education (1992a:15).

Elsewhere, she reinterprets her CRASP model to show that AR in higher education 'is not only possible, but particularly appropriate' because it promotes a **C**ritical attitude, **R**esearch into teaching, **A**ccountability, **S**elf-evaluation and **P**rofessionalism – all of which are undeniably important goals in higher education (1992b:122).

Zuber-Skerritt (1992a:109-111) proposes AR as a way of satisfying the increasing demand for accountability in Australian universities and attempts to demonstrate this through her accounts of specific case studies. While acknowledging its limitations and warning against treating it as a panacea for all problems, she nevertheless argues that AR 'is appropriate in an uncertain environment for solving problems in complex situations in which the answers are not simple or known to be right or wrong' (1992a:110-111). Holly *et al.* (2005:9) make similar claims for AR when they argue for its importance in times of accelerating change. Such views have clear resonances for South Africa – which Zuber-Skerritt (1992b:207) herself mentions in passing – especially in the light of the recent and current changes in South African higher education and the need for quality assurance.

AR has, in fact, received some attention in South Africa, especially in the context of liberatory pedagogy. In a now somewhat dated study, Walker (1989) links AR to People's Education. AR, she suggests, has the emancipatory potential to transform apartheid education: teachers should make use of it 'in the struggle for democratic schools and democratic education' (Walker 1989:55). Similarly, Davidoff and Van den Berg (1990:51) see AR as a means of empowering both teachers and learners. More recently, Walker (1995:17) writes of the need to 'ground action research in a discourse of reconstruction'. Heese (1998) advocates the use of AR as a methodology for trainee teachers doing classroom research. Foster and Leibowitz (1998:83) use AR as a tool by which university lecturers are able to learn from their students and so foster their own personal development. AR is also used in university teaching by McCabe (1999) who employs it as a methodology through which to reflect on her practice in teaching English at an HBU. Like Van der Horst and McDonald

(2001:94), she finds AR compatible with the principles of outcomes-based education.

The perspectives on AR offered by these South African writers would appear to fall into the second category mentioned by Crookes (1993:131). Their stance also seems to endorse Zuber-Skeritt's (1992b:24) faith in human beings as having 'personal knowledge, values and attitudes and as being able to change and transform societies and organisations'. More specifically, she argues that in higher education 'staff and students are not totally subordinated to the rules and structures of their institution, but are able to bring about change'.³³ Scepticism about AR's power to transform has, however, been expressed, both in South Africa and internationally. Gibson (1986:164) writes about AR from the perspective of critical theory, but questions the claims made for it by advocates of the 'socially critical school', such as Carr and Kemmis. He comments:

The emancipatory power of action research in education is very much restricted to the local level: the teacher in her(his) classroom. Even at the level of the whole school, the action researcher's power is very limited and the capacity to alter institutional or structural factors is low.

Writing of her own experience of AR in South Africa, Walker (1989:9) acknowledges that she had initially been too optimistic about its transformative possibilities; she had subsequently become aware of the way in which material conditions and outside agencies could act as constraints on any individual teacher conducting AR. Furthermore, a critical understanding of society by the researcher did not automatically accompany reflection on and improvement of his/her practice.

Comments such as these suggest that some of the claims made of AR about its potential to improve practice should be treated with some caution although, in fairness to Zuber-Skeritt, it should be noted that she acknowledges elsewhere that 'there is a dialectical relationship between intentional, strategic action, personal responsibility, involvement and self-direction on the one hand, and certain constraints within an institutional framework on the other' (Zuber-Skeritt 1992b:93). My own experience of AR has prompted similar conclusions, as will be shown in the following section.

³³Compare my earlier comments on the implementation of quality assurance at UNW in Chapter 3.

4.3 Action research: Application

The second and third of McNiff's (1988:57) critical questions are relevant in explaining why AR provides a suitable paradigm for my research. They shift the focus from the 'concern' – the integration of language and literature in the English 100 course at UNW – to the researcher himself, and so introduce a personal element usually absent from educational research. To repeat, the questions are:

2. Why are you concerned?
3. What do you think you could do about it?

The question of why I was concerned about a particular method of teaching English can be answered in number of ways. From a professional and personal point of view, I wished to be as effective a teacher as possible. The issue of an appropriate teaching methodology also posed an interesting intellectual challenge to me as an academic. A way of teaching English that integrated language and literature was particularly appealing since it offered a synthesis of areas that I had until then studied and taught in isolation from each other. As a professional working in a South African institution of higher learning during a period of educational change, I was also subject to external pressures and challenges. The research could clearly be linked to the improvement of educational provision at UNW. Added to these was the desire – again professionally and personally motivated – to study towards a higher degree. The present study represents an attempt to respond to all these concerns. An AR approach made this possible; it also provides an answer to McNiff's third question.

My personal experience therefore seems to provide evidence to support Zuber-Skerritt's (1992a, 1992b) arguments in favour of the using of AR in higher education. As a research methodology it had a number of advantages. The complementary relationship between research and practice in AR allowed me to both teach and research the area in question without running the risk of methodological conflict. The emphasis that action research further places on the improvement of practice allowed me to link it to my professional development as a language teacher. The cyclical nature of action research meant that all facets in the development of the English 100 course could be seen as part of the process of planning, action, observation and reflection: its conceptualization, the development of material, its initial implementation, subsequent revisions, and on-going quality assurance provision.

The cyclical nature of action research was, in fact, realized in a very specific way in the course of the research. It had originally been envisaged that the study would be conducted for one year only, 2000. During this time I taught or oversaw the teaching of all the modules in the course and kept detailed records in an on-going process of action and reflection. The relatively low enrolment of students in that year made this feasible. These circumstances were particularly fortuitous since in the following year, 2001, the profile of the student population changed drastically, both in numbers and background. An agreement between the government of Botswana and UNW resulted in a large and unexpected influx of students at first-year level. The number of students who registered for ENG 101, the first module, rose to over 350, in contrast with 125 students in 2000. The Department of English had not been prepared for the situation, and so changes had to be made on an *ad hoc* basis. As the only lecturer responsible for the module, I had to reduce the number of tasks to two (in contrast to the six required the previous year), and the students' journals could not be read and assessed with the same attention to detail. The teaching of the second module was shared between two other lecturers. Under these conditions the kind of research conducted in 2000 would not have been possible, even if it had been planned.

At the beginning of the second semester, however, significant changes were made to the teaching of the English 100 course, in an attempt to deal with the situation. Members of the department decided to share the teaching of the third and fourth modules, ENG 103 and ENG 104, as a project in collaborative teaching. This innovation introduced a factor that had not been present in 2000. It also meant that the tutorial system of smaller groups of students that I had experimented with in 2000 could be introduced in a systematic way. These changes had implications for the way in which the modules were presented. Under these circumstances it seemed worthwhile to resume the case study, especially since the involvement of my colleagues provided a valuable opportunity for the collaboration and teamwork so valued in AR. It also provided me with another source of triangulation. The reactions of the students in 2001 could also provide a point of comparison with those in the previous year.

The cyclical nature of action research was also apparent in the on-going refinement and adaptation of teaching materials for the course. The materials used in 2000 were themselves the product of an ongoing process, drawing on worksheets used in the old syllabus

and modified by my reading in the theory of integrating language and literature. (Part of this process was described in Chapter 1, section 1.10.) The process did not end there, however. The resource books were continually modified in response to my recorded observations during and after the action research. The material reproduced in the appendices should therefore be seen as a moment in a process rather than a product.

In conducting the research for the present study, I have attempted to involve the ‘subjects’ – my colleagues and, more especially, my students – in the process, as advocated by Stringer (1996:7). I have tried to reflect this involvement by allowing the students’ voices to be ‘heard’ whenever possible in the presentation of my findings. I have also disseminated these findings on an on-going basis in accordance with the expectation of most proponents of AR that they should be made public. Contact and discussion with others in the field have also been sources of enrichment and inspiration. The work has been reported at conferences in South Africa and abroad (Butler 1997, 1999a, 2000b, 2001b) and in national and international professional and academic journals (Butler 1999b, 2000a, 2001a, 2002a). Membership of professional organizations such as the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL) has also facilitated contact with others working in the field (for example, Mrozowska 1998; Paran & Watts 2003). This exchange of ideas also led to an invitation from the editor of a TESOL publication on literature in language teaching (Paran 2006a) to contribute towards it (Butler 2006). On a local level, the findings of my research have been disseminated among my colleagues in the Department of English at UNW through reports submitted to the Head of Department (Butler 2002b, 2002c, 2003b) and workshops given to colleagues assisting in the teaching of the English 100 course in 2001 and 2002. Similar workshops or lessons were given to lecturers at the Marapyane and Thaba’Nchu Colleges of Education in 1998 and to teachers and pupils at the International School of South Africa and St Michael’s School, both in Mafikeng, in 2002 and 2003. The materials have also been modified for use in 2004, 2005 and 2006 at Mount Edmund Christian Brothers’ College, Courtney House School, the British International College and the North American International School, all in Pretoria.

Throughout my research I have been very conscious of the dangers of subjectivity and have attempted to cultivate the habit of critical reflexivity, and, wherever possible, to triangulate findings initially based on introspection and personal action, using a variety of data-gathering methods. I have also been aided by the fact that the writing up of the findings

for this study took place quite some time after it was gathered, analysed and stored: this time lapse has enabled me to some extent to differentiate between a teacher *persona* and a researcher *persona*. It has thus become possible to read and analyse journal entries and lesson reports with an objective eye.

An essential element of AR is that it should lead to improvement of practice. This had been a motivating factor in undertaking the research project, both from a personal and an institutional perspective. From a personal point of view, my research has proved an enriching experience, in terms of validating my work at UNW and also in contributing to subsequent teaching experience. However, in the course of the project, I became increasingly sceptical about the more ambitious claims of AR's potential as an agent of radical educational and social transformation. Similar scepticism is expressed by commentators such as Gibson (1986:10), Walker (1989:9) and Borg (2004:6-7). The conditions at UNW in 2000 and 2001 that are described in this study had shown no signs of improvement by the time I resigned from my post at the end of 2003. On the contrary, they had shown every sign of deteriorating. The situation had a negative impact on my ability – and commitment – to conduct research and improve my practice.

4.4 Research techniques

Zuber-Skerritt (1992b:141) locates AR in a research paradigm that she characterizes as 'ethnographic, naturalistic, holistic, descriptive, ideographic and interpretative'. She contrasts this with another basic research paradigm that she describes through key words such as natural science, traditional, experimental, prescriptive, reductionist, normative and positivist (1992b:127). This contrast is, in fact, implicit in most attempts to justify and characterize AR: it is frequently presented as embodying an alternative research paradigm to the positivist, empiricism tradition of the natural sciences (Brown 1985; Zuber-Skerritt 1992b; Wallace 1998). The AR paradigm has implications for the specific techniques and methods that are likely to be employed by researchers. Although some may be employed in either of the two paradigms mentioned by Zuber-Skerritt (1992b), others are typically associated with only one of them and may, in fact, be deemed inappropriate in the other. The distinction does not, however, mean that it is impossible to combine elements from both paradigms, as Lynch (1996:158) points out. The AR orientation of my research meant that I tended to favour the methods typically found in the first of Zuber-Skerritt's paradigms. This did not, however, preclude the use of quantitative data, which is more usually associated with the second

paradigm.

In this and the next section, the research methods employed in gathering and analysing data in the case study will be described in some detail. The general approach as well as the specific techniques will be reviewed in the following sub-sections. This will be followed, in section 4.5, by an account of how they were used in the present study. At the risk of anticipating details from the narrative to be presented in the next chapter, this account will occasionally be illustrated with specific examples drawn from my data. In these sections, an attempt will be made to address the last of McNiff's (1988:57) questions:

4. What kind of 'evidence' could you collect to help you make some judgement about what is happening?
5. How would you collect such 'evidence'?
6. How would you check that your judgement about what has happened is reasonably fair and accurate?

4.4.1 Case study

McKernan (1991:74) provides a succinct definition of a case study as 'a formal collection of evidence presented as an interpretive position of a *unique case*, [which] includes discussion of the data collected during fieldwork and [is] written up at the culmination of a cycle of action, or involvement in the research [emphasis his]'. Wallace (1998:47) also stresses the idea of uniqueness when he defines a case study as 'the systematic investigation of an individual "case", whether that refers to one teacher, one learner, one group, one class, or whatever'. It is an approach that contrasts with traditional empirical research which is 'typically concerned with establishing general scientific laws which apply to the whole class (population) of people or phenomena being investigated' (1998:160). Although this narrow focus has obvious limitations, the case study is therefore particularly suited to teacher reflection (Burton 2006:vii), and consequently to action research. Since action researchers are usually interested in their own unique situations, the specific focus of a case study becomes a positive advantage.

Although Yin's (2003:13) definition (quoted in Chapter 1) makes no reference to AR, it implies the same elements as those just quoted here. Yin defines a case study as 'an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context,

especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident'. According to both Wallace and Yin, the focus on uniqueness does not mean that case studies cannot have any resonances beyond themselves. Although they are not generalizable, they can be used as *evidence* to support a theory (Wallace 1998:163; Yin 2003:10-11). This is the way in which the method will be used in this study.

A further advantage of case studies is the flexibility of the methodology. Within the broad framework of a case study, a wide range of techniques for gathering and analysing data can be used: which ones the researcher uses will depend on the precise nature of the study (Zuber-Skerritt 1992b:130-141; Wallace 1998:168). Again, McKernan (1991:77) sums up the situation:

Case study is eclectic, using a variety of research styles and methods; it is idiosyncratic and specific; it is process- rather than product-oriented; and it is rich in description, interpretation, explanation and narrative, working more for understanding than for rigorous scientific measurement, prediction and control of settings, respondents, actions and so on. It is qualitative as opposed to quantitative, yet a good case study worker knows how to quantify masses of qualitative data.

He goes on to state: 'Case study methodology may make the greatest contribution where project purposes or aims are unclear or ambiguous. The research may tend to clarify and tidy up misunderstandings' (1991:81). Both these comments highlight the compatibility between case study and AR.

The discussion in the following sections will be limited to those methods and techniques actually used in the present case study. These have been divided into four categories, listed below:

- **Introspection and reflection:**
Lecturer's journal
Lecturer's lesson reports
- **Observation:**
Classroom (lectures and tutorials) observation by a 'critical friend'
Video tapes of observed classes
- **Data obtained from colleagues and students:**

Students' responses to questionnaires
Colleagues' responses to questionnaires
Interview and discussions with colleagues
Students' written tasks, assignments and diagnostic tests
Students' journals

- **Documentation**

Memoranda, policy statements, press reports, etc.

4.4.2 Introspection and reflection

Wallace (1998:54) suggests that the kind of everyday, subjective reflection that all teachers engage in can be made available for systematic analysis through the use of an appropriate research methodology. This includes the use of field notes, logs, journals, diaries and personal accounts. He summarizes their differing uses as follows:

Field-notes and *logs* are terms used to describe what has happened during a lesson, and may be written up during the lesson or shortly after. Logs are described here as being more highly structured than field notes. *Diaries* are personal records, usually written up daily. Diaries are private and confidential, but may be shared with others in some edited or controlled fashion. *Journals* are similar to diaries, but are not written as confidential documents. *Personal accounts* are much more selective and may cover an extended period of time – perhaps even a whole career. These are usually recorded with the help of a “discussant” (collaborator) (1998:66-67).

Wallace (1998:76-90) also includes various kinds of verbal report, such as self-report, self-observation and think-aloud, as introspective techniques. When transcribed and analysed these can offer insights into the process of teaching and learning.

Holly (1987:4-6) also distinguishes between different kinds of written record used as vehicles for reflection. Logs are regularly kept records of performance, containing mainly factual information. Diaries are more personal, introspective, less structured, subjective, generally open-ended. Journals combine the structured descriptive and objective notes of the log with the unstructured impressions of the diary (see also Holly *et al.* 2005:18). She further distinguishes the research journal, which focuses on a specific topic: ‘Important considerations in keeping a research journal are to keep comprehensive, descriptive documentation, to record procedures and interactions (including verbal information), and to keep analytical and interpretive notes’ (Holly 1987:6).

The value of journals particularly as vehicles for reflection is attested to throughout the

literature. Carroll (1994:20) suggests that they are a useful tool for the action researcher, describing them as a ‘powerful way of documenting one’s practice as well as one’s developing critique of that practice’. Journals help teacher-researchers think about their own work, the very act of reflective writing enabling them to understand and make sense of their own practice (Holly 1987:7-8; Carroll 1994:19; Richards & Lockhart 1994:7; McNiff et al.1996:89); researchers are able to reflect on theories and relate them to experience (Halbach 1999:184; Bailey 2004:80); journals promote candid self-awareness (Bailey 1980:65) and the examination of personal assumptions (Peyton 1990:x).

A lesson report is another term for the field notes and logs mentioned by Wallace (1998:66-67). Richards and Lockhardt (1994:9) define a lesson report as follows:

A lesson report is a structured inventory or list which enables teachers to describe their recollections of the main features of a lesson ... a quick and simple procedure for regularly monitoring what happened during the lesson ... Whereas a lesson plan describes what a teacher intends to do during a lesson, a lesson report describes what actually happened from the teacher’s point of view.

They go on to offer a simple framework of questions to give direction to the report:

- ¬ What were the main goals of the lesson?
 - ¬ What did the learners actually learn in the lesson?
 - ¬ What teaching procedures did I use?
 - ¬ What problems did I encounter and how did I deal with them?
 - ¬ What were the most effective parts of the lesson?
 - ¬ What were the least effective parts?
 - ¬ Would I do anything differently if I taught the lesson again?
- (1994:10)

An obvious disadvantage to teachers’ journals and lesson reports as sources of data is their subjectivity (Richards & Lockhardt 1994:11). As techniques for introspection and self-reflection, they are useful and easy to implement; but the perspective that they offer is dangerously limited. Further perspectives are therefore needed to give a fuller picture and provide a challenge to the teacher’s own account. Various methods of triangulation aimed at providing this perspective will now be considered.

4.4.3 Observation

The way in which observation techniques can be used to balance and complement those discussed in the previous section is neatly captured in Wallace's (1998:104) distinction between inward turning techniques (the various kinds of introspection and reflection) and outward turning techniques (such as observation). Observation, he says, can have different foci: the researchers themselves as teachers, the students or the context (1998:105). The observer could be the teacher concerned, a colleague, or even the students (1998:106). Methods of observation include real time observation, audio and/or video recording and transcription (1998:106-7). The analysis may be unstructured or structured, using any of the models available (1998:109).

Being observed may lead to anxiety on the researcher-teacher's part, however. Whatever observation's advantages as a means of triangulation, the psychological effects cannot be ignored. For this reason Richards and Lockhart (1994:22) argue that its function in research should be limited to information gathering rather than evaluation.

4.4.4 Data obtained from colleagues and students

Four sources of data will be examined in this section: questionnaires, interviews, students' journals and students' written work.

A wide variety of data, such as facts, personal opinions, interests, experiences, anecdotes, opinions, preferences, values and ideas, can be gathered through questionnaires (Richards & Lockhart 1994:10; Wallace 1998:124-26; Dornyei 2003: 8-9). Questionnaires should be clear, simple, relevant and user-friendly; the questions can be open, closed, scale items or a combination of all of them (Wallace 1998:134-137; McNiff *et al.* 1996:99; Burns 1999:129-130). Interviews may be structured, unstructured or semi-structured (Wallace 1998:146-47).

Although data gathered from questionnaires and interviews is, like the researcher's introspection, limited by the subjectivity of the interviewees or respondents, Wallace (1998:127) suggests that this does not invalidate them as long as the researcher exercises caution: 'The fact that we are getting information from, say, a questionnaire does not make irrelevant the common-sense considerations that we normally employ when we get information, advice or opinion from others: considerations such as the quality of the source, possible hidden motivations, and so on'. McNiff *et al.* (1996:98) also advise due caution: the

researcher should guard against influencing the respondents, and responses can sometimes be misleading. But, like Wallace, they suggest that these pitfalls can be avoided through the use of common sense.

Burns (1999:129) weighs up the relative advantages and disadvantages of interviews and questionnaires. The latter have a number of disadvantages. Being in written form, they assume adequate linguistic skills on the respondents' part: this may present problems when the questionnaires are to be administered to foreign- or second-language speakers. More preparation time is needed to ensure that the questions are clear and unambiguous. Questionnaires are also best suited to investigations where the answers are likely to be straightforward and easily predictable. On the other hand, they have the advantage of being easier to administer, especially when large numbers are involved, this also applies to the process of extracting and processing the data obtained from the respondents.

Wallace (1998:128) points out that a disadvantage to both interviews and questionnaires is their intrusiveness. People are often reluctant to answer questionnaires or be interviewed. A consequence may be that these activities are either done perfunctorily or not at all. Respondents may even inadvertently provide false information, unconsciously influenced by factors such as the prestige attached to certain responses, uncertainty as to what is required of them or simply fatigue (Dornyei 2003:10-14).

More 'authentic' modes of gathering data from colleagues and students can, however, be used to counteract this effect, such as extracting relevant and useful information from sources ostensibly produced for a purpose other than that of research. Here the conflation of the roles of practitioner and researcher in AR is particularly useful, since the teacher can use written work produced by students during the normal learning process. In addition to providing information about the students' progress, assignments and tasks can be designed to yield factual and affective information about the writers. Care should, however, always be taken to ensure that this purpose always remains subsidiary to the primary learning function.

The use of student journals and diaries has been encouraged as an aid to language acquisition (Peyton 1990:x). They have also been promoted as a means of offering the teacher insights into that very process. Schumann and Schumann (1977:241), who examine the use of diaries as self-observation tools, suggest that they also enable the teacher to become aware of and so focus on the needs of individual learners. Other uses for the researcher have also been

suggested: Halbach (1999) points to the usefulness of student journals in course evaluation; similarly Peyton (1990:x) mentions their use in gathering information for curriculum development. More generally, student diaries can show ‘how different the learner’s view of classroom process and out-of-class learning could be from that of teachers and researchers’ (Parkinson & Howell-Richardson 1990:128), thus providing an ideal form of triangulation for the reflective teacher.

Advocates of the use of student journals for research purposes offer a number of suggestions for analysing them. Halbach (1999:185), for instance, skims the journals to identify recurring topics, whereas Parkinson and Howell-Richardson (1990:129-134) analyse according to specific predetermined categories and sub-categories, which are then quantified. Murphy-O’Dwyer (1985:101-102) offers a systematic procedure involving a number of steps including editing, preliminary analysis, selection of issues to focus on and final analysis, culminating in the preparation of a final report.

Halbach (1999:184), however, warns that the analysis of journals should be approached with caution. As with all qualitative data, analysis and evaluation will be dependent on the researcher’s personal interpretation. To avoid erroneous conclusions, data gathered from journals should therefore be compared with other sources (these will also fill in gaps resulting from possible bias or reticence by the journal writers) and any conclusions drawn from them should be presented to the informants for confirmation. Similarly, Parkinson and Howell-Richardson (1990:135) see diaries as a source of information to be pursued further in interviews. On the other hand, Murphy-O’Dwyer (1985:101) argues that ‘a limited type of triangulation’ is achieved if data comes from more than two individual diaries.

4.4.5 Documents

Given the close relationship between practice and research in AR, it is inevitable that documentation of various kinds will form part of the data used. Memoranda, letters, mission statements, minutes of meetings, policy directives and so on are all part of the discourse of any profession and may be used by the researcher to support, illustrate or simply document an aspect of research. The only constraint to the use of this kind of data is the ethical consideration of confidentiality. In the event of the research being published, editing of quotations may be necessary.

4.5 Application of research techniques

In the previous section, the methods and techniques were discussed individually. For the sake of continuity, their application will be shown in the same order, under similar sub-headings, in the account that follows. It will, however, soon become apparent that, in practice, they are used in conjunction with each other.

4.5.1 Suitability of the case study

The suitability of the case study approach for action research became clearer in the course of my research. Not only did it enable me to link research and practice, it also permitted me to take account of the context in which both the research and practice were undertaken, a factor that assumed increasing significance as the work progressed. In practical terms, it meant that the general aim of linking research and practice could be realized through a particular group of first-year students identified as the unit of analysis for the case, and so subjected to intensive and systematic observation.

Wallace's (1998:163) argument in favour of using case studies as a way of finding evidence in support of a theory was also a relevant factor in the choice of methodology. Although the findings of a case study of a particular group of students at UNW have obvious resonances for other institutions, particularly South African HBUs, replicability is not its aim. Rather, it is to explore the claims made by the proponents of the integration of language and literature in ESOL teaching. The introduction of an integrated English studies programme that explored the interface between language and literature was, in large part, a consequence of the subjective intuitions of the members of the Department of English. While a case study of the English 100 class cannot provide quantifiable evidence of its efficacy, it can go a long way towards exploring the claims advanced by the adherents of the approach.

Ultimately, the case study consisted of the whole English 100 class in 2000 and two of the groups into which the 2001 class was divided in the second semester. In the case of the students in 2000, however, defining the 'class' was far from unproblematic, and at the end of the year I found it necessary to select retrospectively a sample which would form the core of the case study. The rationale and manner of this selection process are outlined below.

English 100 consisted of four modules, for each of which students registered separately. A total of 172 students registered for some or all of the modules. Of this number, 90 students registered for and attempted all four modules. (The remaining students were either repeating one or more modules failed in the previous year, or had dropped out of the course.) Although data were collected from all students taught during the year, the group of 90 students was isolated and designated as the 'core class' at the end of the year. For statistical purposes the case study was confined to this group, although data obtained from other students have occasionally been used for illustrative purposes. From the core class a representative sample of nine students, designated the 'focus group', was selected for longitudinal study and detailed analysis of work.

In identifying the focus group, the initial criterion was that I should have copies of all pieces of written work produced by those students. A number of students was isolated from the the core class on this basis: from these students the focus group of nine students was selected to represent three broad levels of performance. The selection process was, therefore, random.

4.5.2 Introspection and reflection

I made extensive use of two techniques of written introspection. Journal entries and lesson reports were kept on a regular basis throughout 2000 – and intermittently in 2001 – as a means of recording and subsequently reflecting upon the development of my teaching and research.

The term 'journal' is used here in Holly's (1987:6) definition of a hybrid form that combines objective reporting with subjective impressions, with perhaps a greater bias on the latter. Topics included evaluation of materials and tasks, areas to be revisited, research methodology, the viability of stated outcomes, problems in logistics and the teaching context, as well as the occasional flashes of insight and inspiration. Initially, I found that there was overlap between my journal entries and lesson reports. Both were meant to serve the purpose

of documenting and critiquing practice. In an early journal entry (Journal:10 February 2000), I mentioned my uncertainty about how to use both techniques without unnecessary repetition:

I'm not quite sure how to deal with the overlap between lesson reports and journal entries. Most of what I want to say is in today's lesson report. To what extent are my other feelings/ideas, etc. relevant to my research?

As I settled into the routine of both forms of introspection, however, these 'other feelings' became increasingly relevant and began to take up a significant part of each journal entry. The looser format of the journal allowed for greater freedom in what could be recorded and how it could be expressed. It could therefore be used for introspection on issues not directly related to lessons, but which affected the process of teaching in some way. A recurring motif was my sense of frustration at the manner in which conditions at UNW interfered with my work.

In some ways writing of this kind served a therapeutic purpose, as is suggested in much of the literature, but, ironically, it could also exacerbate negative feelings: the consciousness-raising that keeping a journal involved often had the effect of foregrounding and making explicit practices and conditions that might otherwise have appeared natural or unremarkable. The effect, then, could be traumatic as well as therapeutic.

On the other hand, in spite of these attempts at candid self-awareness, the fact that the journal was also potentially a public document meant that self-censorship was unavoidable, both at the time of writing and while selecting items for inclusion in this thesis.

The lesson reports, although also dependent on subjective judgement and expressed in personal terms, were more focussed and encouraged systematic analysis of teaching and learning. The focus on the description and analysis of specific lessons provided a balance to the wider range of the journal.

Richards and Lockhart's (1994:10) list of questions, quoted in section 4.4.2, was used as a framework in my lesson reports of lectures and tutorials. The advantage of the model is its compatibility with outcomes-based education: assessing the success of the lesson, to a large extent, involved matching the stated outcomes with the actual events in the classroom.

The following example, extracted from my lesson report file, demonstrates the process

of introspection. The report is on a lecture given to the full-time students covering the material in Unit 12 in the ENG 101 module. Videotaping and peer observation were also employed as research methods in this particular lecture:

Rather apprehensive before class because AH [my 'critical friend'] arranged to video it. In fact turned out very well: perhaps most interactive lesson I've given to this class — who did not seem intimidated by camera, rather responded to it. So did I !

Texts worked exactly as hoped for. 'Old lady' [text] got the right shock and horror; someone then suggested that kick meant a push start (as to a donkey!). I didn't emphasise the "get a kick out of" meaning too much because there didn't seem to be much response when I mentioned it. But the point was made about needing to reinterpret it in the light of later information and of context. George Michael [text] was very successful – quite contrary to my doubts when first choosing the text. We went through the process of uncovering the meaning step by step in perfect textbook fashion. Wonderful to see the light dawning as the final connection between cupboard and closet was made. Students also enjoyed Nigerian poem – worked our way to an understanding, and I was able to make the point about using evidence in the poem on which to base an interpretation.

Seemed like a model lesson: I don't feel embarrassed about being preserved forever on video!

Pace slowed with Asia in Malaysia [text] (as with part time class). Class clearly getting tired; I answered most of my own questions, and cut the analysis short, content to show that intrinsic factors would be important in analysing this text (persuasive language). In the end I did use the extrinsic/intrinsic definitions – they seemed to fit and they do provide a neat and easily remembered framework for making sense of a text.

Will return to Malaysia to illustrate framework in Unit 2.

(Lesson report: 6 April 2000)

Although Richards and Lockhart's (1994:10) questions are not dealt with individually, most of the elements of the report are implied in the comments. The lecture was the first in which an attempt was made at triangulation through observation by a 'critical friend', a colleague in the Department of English who also used the opportunity for her own research in classroom interaction. Her comments were not officially recorded in the report, however, since it was intended as a 'trial run' only. The report is still expressed in terms of my own introspective analysis, although we did compare our impressions of the lesson informally. Subsequent lesson reports show my attempts to reflect and act on my colleague's observations as well as my own.

My subsequent analysis of both the journal and lesson plans involved scanning them to identify recurring themes and preoccupations over the course of the case study. They were also used to create a contextual narrative in which to set the teaching and learning processes.

4.5.3 Observation

The peer observation and video recording mentioned in the lesson reports also functioned as a form of triangulation to my introspection, modifying or confirming my own impressions. But the following extracts from later lesson reports highlight their shortcomings as methods of observation, in particular their intrusive nature and the introduction of factors over which the researcher has no control. In these instances, my colleague's own research interests, the unreliable cameraman and the students' erratic attendance at tutorials had an obvious impact on my attempts to gather data in a systematic and consistent way. On the other hand, by recording the experience in my lesson reports, I obtained a different kind of data: a qualitative insight into the institutional context in which the teaching and research were taking place.

A larger class (12), although AH only wanted six to be filmed, which meant that the camera was focussed on their side of the room, making the others seem excluded. I did my best to include them, talking through and around the cameraman, but they seemed to feel left out ...

(Lesson report: 20 October 2000).

Meant to be two large classes, one of which AH was to take. In the event only three turned up, all ENG 104 repeaters. Their presence discouraged me, and when no-one had arrived after fifteen minutes I insisted that we cancel. AH reluctantly agreed since her cameraman hadn't turned up either...

(Lesson report: 23 October 2000).

Floating tutorial population: some from last week did not come; others new, and not knowing what had been done before. AH noticed the difficulty of analysis and observation under these circumstances.... Conscious of AH saying I talk a lot, but difficult to avoid it when you get no or an incorrect response, and you are conscious of time passing ...

(Lesson report: 25 October 2000)

A lively encouraging class, smaller than last week (perhaps those excluded from the filming saw no reason for coming again?)

(Lesson report: 27 October 2000)

4.5.4 Data obtained from colleagues and students

The questionnaire was another method of triangulation. Questionnaires were administered to both students and colleagues in the course of 2000 and 2001 in an attempt to gather various kinds of data, including facts and attitudes. The findings were summarized in a report submitted to the head of the Department of English.

The first student questionnaire (see Appendix F-1) was administered at the beginning of 2000: here students were asked to provide information about their personal background and their expectations of the English 100 course. Another questionnaire (see Appendix F-2) was administered in the middle of the year. Its aim was to test and quantify my subjective observations of the students' responses and difficulties in the ENG 102 tasks and tutorials, while at the same time providing the respondents with an opportunity to introduce any other issues that concerned them. A third questionnaire (see Appendix F-3) at the end of the year attempted to elicit students' opinions on issues relating to the ENG 103 and 104 modules, in particular their views on integration of language and literature and their perceptions of their own progress in the use of English. A modified version of the combined 2000 questionnaires (see Appendix F-4) was administered to two groups at the end of 2001 after the case study had been resumed in the second semester.

In all of the questionnaires, I attempted to balance questions that demanded easily quantifiable answers with questions of a more open-ended kind that provided respondents with an opportunity to expand on their responses or to introduce new variables. This mixed approach was chosen in spite of the disadvantages presented by open-ended questions. Dornyei (2003:47,121), for example, discourages their use on the grounds that they take up too much of the respondents' time and are difficult to analyse. He concedes, however, that they can be used to add richness to quantitative data, restore a sense of the original issue, and identify issues not previously anticipated. It was on these grounds that open-ended questions were used in my research, and are quoted extensively in this study.

In none of the student questionnaires was I able to obtain a hundred percent return of responses; in one case the response was so poor as to give the findings anecdotal value only. The circumstances surrounding the administration and return of the questionnaires was, however, always carefully noted, so that analysis and interpretation could be undertaken with these factors in mind (Dornyei 2003:122). The following passage, drawn from the report of

my findings (Butler 2002b:8), sums up the situation:

[A]ttempts have been made in the course of 2000 and 2001 to gauge the opinion of ENG 100 students on a number of issues. Lack of resources and an uneven response from students have meant that the surveys have not been as extensive as might have been desired. It cannot therefore be claimed with certainty that the findings are representative of the entire student population in both years. The general quality of the students' explanatory comments (often irrelevant, contradictory or simply incomprehensible) also raises doubts about the validity of their responses. However, in spite of these obvious limitations, the views expressed by the student respondents indicate a remarkable uniformity of opinion, which, it seems likely, are typical of the group as a whole.

In the case of the first questionnaire, the drawn-out registration period meant that it was difficult to monitor the completion of the questionnaire or even to ensure that all students completed it. In the event a total of 81 students (90%) from the core class returned a completed questionnaire. However, the responses of a large number suggest that they had not always understood (or paid much attention to) what was expected of them. In part, this seemed to confirm Burns's (1999:129) warnings about the dangers of using questionnaires to gather information from second-language speakers. The size of the class meant that the alternative, interviewing all the students, was not a feasible option, however.

These circumstances ruled out the possibility of a complete profile of the student population, as had originally been the aim. Nevertheless there was enough data in the responses available to build up a picture that suggested general tendencies at least, one that would probably not have been greatly changed if the survey could have been more rigorously controlled. The questions for which there was evidence of misinterpretation were discarded from the analysis or, in some cases, the responses were reinterpreted in the light of what had appeared to be the students' intentions. (Reinterpretations of this kind are clearly signalled in the detailed analysis in Chapter 5.) A further consideration that suggested that the exercise had not been entirely wasted was that, even though the questionnaire had not achieved its full potential as a research instrument, it had served a useful pedagogical purpose, at least for those students who completed it at the commencement of the module. It introduced them, at the outset, to the habit of self-reflection and student-centred learning, which would be further developed in the tasks in ENG 101.³⁴

³⁴Holly *et al.* (2005:199) suggest that selective use of data gathered in a questionnaire is, in fact, normal in the research process: 'Since we cast a wide net at the beginning of a study,

The administration of the second student questionnaire was also beset by problems beyond my control. It was handed out at the last tutorial in the ENG 102 module. However, because this followed a period of prolonged class boycotts, class attendance was poor. A total of 78 (from a total enrolment of 117) students responded to the questionnaire, a percentage of 66,67%. Since the respondents were allowed to remain anonymous (to encourage an honest and uninhibited response to the questions) it was, furthermore, not possible to separate out members of the core class later, as had been done in the analysis of the first questionnaire.

Poor class attendance was again a factor in the extremely low response of fourteen students to the last questionnaire of 2000. A malfunctioning photocopier meant that it could only be given to the class at the last lecture of the module, in spite of my determination to learn from the experience of the previous questionnaire. In addition to this, my reading of many of the responses in the sample led me to question their reliability. The responses of one of the 2001 groups to the same questions prompted a similar reaction on my part. The reasons for my doubts will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6. These doubts, like the second epigraph to this chapter, point to the necessity of treating data from questionnaires with caution. They, no less than the researcher's own introspection, should be subjected to critical scrutiny. This approach contrasts with McNiff and Whitehead's (2006:55-56) somewhat naïve view that, to obtain confirmation of the effect of any teaching on students' learning, it is enough 'to get their testimony that they were influenced'.

The more limited scope of the case study in 2001 also naturally had implications for the generalizability of these surveys. This point was made in the report (Butler 2002b:12):

As in the case of the research conducted in 2000, it cannot be claimed that the findings from these questionnaires can be generalized to represent the whole ENG 100 student population in 2001: the informality of the collaborative teaching experiment, ineffective co-ordination of the lecturers, as well as other normal inter-group differences represent too many variables to allow for this. Nevertheless, if seen as two small scale case studies, the research yields interesting insights into student perceptions of the ENG 100 course. Once again, the remarkable consensus of opinion in most areas is worth noting.

The questionnaires were conceived of as an on-going dialogue with the students in which their responses would provide a corrective to the my own intuitions and introspection, we may want to later select only those questions for analysis that now seem important.'

as well as providing them with an opportunity to influence the direction that the rest of the course would take. It was unfortunate that circumstances placed numerous constraints on their effectiveness.

Questionnaires to colleagues in the Department of English were easier to administer because of the much smaller numbers involved. Although, in this case, interviews would have been a viable option, the questionnaire was retained as a means of gathering information, since it would allow respondents more time to consider their answers. Analysis of the responses was, nevertheless, not without problems and discretion was often needed in interpreting and quantifying comments. Two staff questionnaires were administered in the course of the research. As with the students' questionnaires, I tried to provide a balanced mix of closed and open questions: easily quantifiable options and opportunities for elaboration of those responses

The first, distributed at the end of the 2000 academic year (see Appendix F-5), asked the six lecturers involved in the teaching of the second- and third-year levels of the new syllabus to review and assess their experiences. The questions required the respondent to choose between Yes/No options, followed by space for further comment. Analysis of the responses was therefore in qualitative and quantitative terms. The questions covered various aspects of the teaching of the modules, but my principal aim was to investigate the degree of integration of language and literature in the actual implementation of the programme. This intention was not explicitly stated since I did not want to prompt the respondents in any way: instead, one of the questions merely asked for details of any attempts at linking modules with others in the programme. This, I hoped, would provide those who had consciously implemented the principle of integration with an opportunity to mention it; those who had not would not be unduly influenced into responding in a way that was obviously anticipated. The data gathered from the questionnaire was triangulated with data from my own analysis of questions in the English 200 and 300 examination papers and assignments.

A more detailed and comprehensive questionnaire was administered a year later, at the end of 2001 (see Appendix F-6), to lecturers involved in the collaborative teaching of the ENG 103 and 104 modules. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first aimed to investigate and assess the respondents' experience in collaborative teaching. Here they were asked to answer YES or NO to questions and then to motivate their answers. The second section focussed more specifically on the issue of integrating language and literature. Here my

list of fourteen statements about the benefits of language/literature integration was presented for comment: respondents were asked to choose one of three options: AGREE; DISAGREE; NOT ABLE TO COMMENT. Space was provided after each question for any further observations the respondent wished to make.

In analysing the responses, closed questions were quantified while those comments which significantly expanded on or qualified the response were noted. At this point, it became clear that the responses to the open-ended question were vital for a clear understanding of the respondents' views: the responses to the closed questions alone would have provided an incomplete or even, in some cases, misleading picture. The following extract from the report (Butler 2002b:1) makes this point:

Comments made by the respondents were generally of two kinds:

- ▭ justification or explanation of the chosen response;
- ▭ a qualification of the chosen response.

The respondents' comments allowed the researcher to fine-tune the rough statistics provided by the responses to questions and statements. This was especially true of the second type of comment: a response which is qualified by a subsequent comment could as easily have been expressed as a different category of response. For instance, where some respondents might have indicated their reservations about the validity of one of the statements with an outright DISAGREE response, others might have chosen AGREE and then expressed their reservations in a qualifying comment.

Thus, in Section 2, the AGREE : DISAGREE ratio was sometimes misleading, since many responses were qualified in the comments that followed. Whether the respondent said, 'Agree, but ...' or 'Disagree' was an arbitrary decision. In another instance, it became clear that some respondents had interpreted a question differently to the others: the accompanying comments clarified the real intentions, which might not have been apparent in the closed question answer.

Analysis also raised another issue related to the methodology of questionnaires. On occasion, I found it necessary to make 'commonsensical' judgements about the validity of certain responses (compare Low 1997), as had been necessary in some of the students' responses. In the case of one particular respondent, the data had, in fact, to be treated with great scepticism. Many of his comments were completely unrelated to the statement in the questionnaire and seem to reflect his own preoccupations: in some instances responses contradicted each other; in others he appeared not to have understood the statement at all.

After completing the questionnaire, he admitted to me during a personal discussion that he had confused ENG 103 and 104 with ENG 204, a module which he had also been teaching.

Two important points about research methodology emerge from findings such as these. Firstly, they point to the need for triangulation: no set of data is in itself complete evidence. More specifically, they demonstrate the fallibility of quantitative data. Both these conclusions are in line with the practice of action research.

An interview (Manone 2000) was also used to gather data on other matters from a colleague. In 2000, the teaching of ENG 103 and ENG 104 was shared with a junior lecturer in the department. His participation in the English 100 course had originally been accidental, arising from a bureaucratic distribution of the teaching loads within the department. From my action research point of view, his involvement had initially seemed a drawback. He was not familiar with the principles of integrating language and literature, his qualifications and interests being almost entirely in the field of literature. Further consideration, however, suggested that the situation could be turned to my advantage and at the same time benefit the students. His participation would provide the students with an alternative point of view and his approach to the teaching of literature might provide a useful and authentic point of comparison to my integrated approach. After he had concluded his section of the course, I interviewed him, using a semi-structured format – in Holly *et al.*'s (2005:157) phrase, a 'purposeful conversation' – with the aim of establishing his approach to the teaching of literature. He also allowed me to examine his teaching notes and overhead transparencies with the same aim in mind. The data that I had gathered in this way provided concrete evidence on which to base generalizations about his approach. These findings formed the basis for an item in the third student questionnaire in which the respondents were asked to express a preference for studying literature in isolation or integrated with language.

The students' opinion was also gauged indirectly through some of their tasks and assignments. Apart from being the means of measuring the students' attainment of the various specified outcomes throughout the course, their written work was often an incidental source of data about their linguistic and educational backgrounds, their learning difficulties and their attitudes to the study of English. The advantage of this method of data gathering was that, although extracting the relevant information was often a cumbersome and time-consuming task, it was not intrusive in the way that the questionnaires were and its status as grade-

carrying assignments guaranteed the students' attention. The stress that was laid throughout the English 100 course on learner self-reflexivity meant that it was relatively easy to combine learning and research. Students' work provided a rich source of data without any interference in the learning process.

The method was used with particular effectiveness in both 2000 and 2001 when students were asked to write short essays in which they reflected on their attitudes to the study of literature. To ensure uniformity and ease of analysis, guidelines were provided for the structure of the essay and the content areas to be covered. The essays were then subjected to detailed qualitative and quantitative analyses. As well as providing me with invaluable information on a topic central to my research, the assignment aimed at developing the students' skills in critical self reflection.

Two class tests were also designed with a research purpose in mind, although they also served useful pedagogical functions. A test administered at the beginning of the second module was not graded but presented to the students as an awareness-raising exercise to prepare them for the work to be done in the module. From an action research point of view, it also served a diagnostic purpose, a means of assessing the students' sensitivity to variations and contrasts in linguistic style. A grammar test given in ENG 104 was similarly designed to measure the students' competence in English grammar against an internationally recognized benchmark in ESOL proficiency. Questions were taken from an old examination paper set by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, made available to the public in a booklet.

The task with the potential to serve the dual function of pedagogical and research tool most effectively was, however, the student journal. As a learning tool, it was designed to encourage language acquisition and foster the habit of independent, reflective and critical thinking.³⁵ It had also been hoped that it would provide a rich source of data about the writers themselves. Although this did happen in the case of many journals, as a research instrument its use had some limitations. A significant number of students, especially those who registered after classes had begun, had difficulty in adapting to the demands of keeping a journal, which required self motivation and the ability to work independently. Many reported that they were uncertain of what was expected of them; others did not follow the instructions set out in the

³⁵This aspect of the students' journals will be examined in Chapter 5.

resource book and so failed to include all the compulsory entries. In this, they provided a marked contrast to Carroll's (1997:10) description of effective journal writers who, 'engaging in dialogue with themselves, with their fellow-learners or with the teacher, work through the questions which arise out of their learning experiences both in and out of the classroom, and therefore become highly skilled at directing the course of their own learning'. The most obvious impact that this had on my research was that I was not able to code and quantify the data, as had been my original intention, following the model suggested by Murphy-O'Dwyer (1985:101-102). Yet this very failure to obtain significant qualitative data from the journals can be interpreted as a research finding in itself, indicative of the learning situation and student performance. Again, it is worth contrasting the situation at UNW with that described by Carroll (1994:20). His students, mainly immigrants to Australia, taking a course in English for professionals, are described as 'highly motivated and able learners ... articulate, sophisticated, independent and introspective language learners'.

Nonetheless, the data available from most journals was enough to give depth to the class profile that had been developed using the qualitative data from the questionnaire. They also provided invaluable insights into the development of the students in the focus group. Since extensive use of data from students' journals will be made in Chapter 5, illustrative extracts will not be provided here.

4.5.5 Documents

Documents have been used in the present study as a way of providing evidence and data of events, processes and opinions that have a bearing on the research. They have generally been used to sketch in the background to the case study and to substantiate a narrative initially perceived and reported from my point of view. Minutes of the Department of English at UNW have been used to trace and subsequently document the planning and implementation of the new, integrated undergraduate syllabus. Other departmental and faculty documents, produced by myself and others, have also provided documentary evidence of events during its implementation. These include memoranda, reports, notes and plans. Documents produced at departmental, faculty and management levels have been a source of information about policy and planning in educational fields, such as outcomes based education and quality assurance. In this respect documents produced by the National Ministry of Education have also been invaluable.

4.6 Ethical considerations

In concluding this chapter, brief mention must be made of the ethical considerations incumbent on the action researcher. Holly *et al.* (2005:176-177) suggest the following guidelines for action researchers in their dealings with the other people involved in the research project:

- ↯ Obtain permission;
- ↯ Involve participants;
- ↯ Ensure confidentiality;
- ↯ Ensure anonymity;
- ↯ Inform participants of the right to withdraw;
- ↯ Build relationships of trust;
- ↯ Be self-reflective.

Ethics are important in any kind of research: in AR, with its emphasis on social and professional amelioration, it assumes an even greater significance. In a methodology that allows for the conflation of research and practice, there is always the danger that the practice could be put wholly in the service of the research, to the former's detriment. The danger is not to the practitioner, but to the subjects of and co-workers in the research. In the field of education, those likely to suffer from the teacher-researcher's improper use of his or her privileged position are the students or pupils – those whom the research is ultimately meant to benefit. Wallace (1998:49) warns that it is 'not ethical to use up our students' time and effort on activities which do not contribute in any way to success in their studies'.

In the present study, Wallace's warning has been borne in mind. Although, as I have already indicated, many of the students' tasks and assignments lent themselves to my research purpose, and in some cases, were even designed with a research purpose in mind, this was never done in violation of pedagogical principles. The aim was always, to use Wallace's (1998:42-43) distinction, to use an approach that was complementary rather than intrusive.

I have also attempted to observe ethical conventions in other ways. Students were informed that I was engaged in research on the English 100 course and that their written work would become part of my data base. No objections were raised to this. When quoting students, I have, nevertheless, ensured confidentiality by either doing so anonymously (as in the epigraph to this chapter) or, in the case of students whose work is quoted extensively, referring to them by their number on the core class list. The same has been done in the case of

my colleagues: in analysing their responses to questionnaires, anonymity has been preserved through the allocation of representative numbers or the deletion of names. My 'critical friend' has also been referred to only by her initials. In quoting from my journal and lesson reports, I have edited out any remarks which might inadvertently hurt or give offence to anyone, even if this has meant some omissions in the raw data.

I have not, however, practised the same restraint in my comments on the institutional practices of UNW. These are matters of public interest and record and have had a significant impact on the course of my action research. To gloss over or misrepresent the institutional context in which the research was undertaken would amount to a betrayal of the tenets of AR and a distortion of my research findings. Instead, I have attempted to substantiate my subjective impressions through documentation and triangulation.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have surveyed the various research methods and techniques used in the case study, the detailed findings of which will be given in Chapter 5. In spite of its limitations, AR provided an ideal framework within which to conduct this research, being particularly suited to the volatile conditions of the educational context in which it took place (Butler 2002a:47).

Chapter 5

English 100: A case study³⁶

Lecturer should also be active in class to encourage students.

His/her lecture should not be boring beyond description.

Comment by English 100 student in a questionnaire

5.1 Introduction

The case study will be described in this chapter. The bulk of the analysis and evaluation is of the work done in 2000, selectively supplemented with observations of the groups taught or monitored in the second half of 2001, when the English 100 class was divided into groups. The account will consist of four concurrent threads of commentary: a narrative of

³⁶Material from Butler (2006) has been incorporated into this chapter.

the case study, analysis of the students' performance, links to the theory of the integration of language and literature and of OBE, and triangulation in the form of input from students and colleagues.

Narrative or storytelling has been proposed by a number of writers as an appropriate vehicle for teachers to relate their experiences (Connelly & Clandinin:1988:xv, 1990:2; Johnson & Golombek 2002; Gordon *et al.* 2006:62). Its suitability for AR in particular is further suggested by Holly *et al.* (2005:243-244), whose comments also provide a rationale for the detail (and consequent length) of this chapter: 'With the rise in the use of qualitative methods to study educational issues, there has been a concomitant increase in the use of qualitative or narrative reports, which often are longer than more traditional reports.' This kind of report, they add, takes 'the reader to the data in personal and highly descriptive ways', with the narrative standing for 'both the process and the results'. The first thread of the account will consequently take the form of a loose narrative of the case study, running through the academic year. This will consist of a description of the four consecutive modules of the first-year course and a chronological account of my experience in teaching them within a research framework of AR cycles. Here I will be drawing on data from my lesson reports, my teacher's journal and the teaching materials.³⁷

At appropriate points in the course of this narrative, the students' performance in tasks, assignments and examinations will be analysed in an attempt to measure the extent to which they met the specified outcomes, their progressive performance within and across modules, their general literary and linguistic competence and the extent to which they were able to adapt to the demands of university study. In the case of the core class, mainly quantitative data in the form of statistics (summarized in the tables) will be used to provide an overall picture of achievement. To add depth and richness to the results, a more detailed qualitative analysis of selections (reproduced without correction or alteration) from the work produced by the focus group will be made.³⁸ This will also allow the students to 'speak for themselves'. The focus group can be divided into three equal sub-groups: those who generally failed to achieve the outcomes of the module; those who achieved the outcomes; and those whose achievement of

³⁷Constraints of space mean that it is not possible to reproduce all the teaching materials used in English 100: a representative selection has, however, been included in the Appendices, to which the reader will be referred.

³⁸For a detailed account of the composition of the core class and focus group, see Chapter 4, section 4.5.1.

the outcomes was above average (although not necessarily at distinction level). This is the order in which they are presented in the statistical tables; the detailed analyses will follow the same sequence. The analysis of the focus group will be the most detailed in describing their work in ENG 101. Although much of the commentary for this module does not have a direct bearing on the issue of the integration of language and literature, it is important, initially, to give as full a picture of the group as possible, to provide a base from which their progress in the later modules can be measured. This will make it possible for subsequent analysis to be more succinct and focussed: in the sections on ENG 102, 103 and 104, only three students, one from each level of attainment within the group, will be subjected to the same detailed attention.

The qualitative analysis will provide a link to the theoretical strand of the account. Data used here will be drawn mainly from the fourteen statements through which I have attempted to encapsulate the advantages of an integrated approach and from the outcomes specified for each module or unit.

The fourth strand turns the focus to the needs, perceptions and reactions of students and of colleagues. Data used here will be the feedback obtained from questionnaires, student journals, reflective tasks, interviews and peer observation.

In the course of the account, description and analysis will merge with evaluation. This latter element will attempt to answer two questions:

- What effect does the integrated approach have on the development of the students' literary and linguistic competences? Does it, as the theory suggests, work to the benefit of both?
- To what extent does the approach meet students' and colleagues' perceived needs and expectations for a first-year university course in English?

The procedure adopted in this chapter is summarized in the diagram in Figure 3. The four columns represent the four strands of the account, the second being sub-divided to indicate the two forms of analysis of the outcomes: qualitative and quantitative. The horizontal arrows suggest the movement from descriptive analysis to evaluation, while the vertical arrows show the way in which the data gathered in the course of the research feeds in

to the account.

Before embarking on the narrative account, it is appropriate to create a sense of context through the construction of a student profile, drawn from the questionnaires administered to the class at the beginning of the academic year. Previous chapters have attempted to set the case study in its institutional, national and educational contexts. This section attempts to reduce these to the immediate, human context and so foreground the main focus of the study: the students whom the action research project was designed to benefit.

Analysis

Evaluation

	Narrative of case study	Achievement of outcomes: Core class	Achievement of outcomes: Focus group	Theory	Triangulation
Content of the account of the case study	AR cycles Description of modules Account of teaching	Quantitative analysis	Qualitative analysis	Measure outcomes against hypothesis of the advantages of the integration of language and literature	Assess students' and colleagues' perceptions
Data gathered in the research	Lesson reports	Tasks, assignments and examinations	Tasks, assignments and examinations	OBE 14 statements on the benefits of the integration of language and literature	Questionnaires Student journals Reflective tasks Interviews Observation

Figure 3 Account of the case study

5.1.1 Student profile

The profile that follows is based on a 90% (81 students) return of questionnaires administered to English 100 students at the beginning of ENG 101 in 2000 (Appendix F-1).³⁹ The first two questions asked for the respondent's name and student number. These details subsequently enabled me to identify students belonging to the core class and focus group. The responses to questions 3 - 8 build a clear picture of the 'typical' student in the English 100 class. Information provided by them is summarized below.

70 respondents indicated that they were full-time students; the remaining eleven were part-time. Setswana was listed as their mother tongue by 63 respondents. Another seven failed to specify a mother tongue, but all listed Setswana as one of their languages, rating their competence in it above all other languages: this would suggest that they fall into the same category as the first group. The remaining eleven respondents each listed one of the following indigenous African languages as their mother tongue: Luganda, Isixhosa, Tshivenda, Sesotho, Isizulu, Siswati. With the exception of one student (who presumably understood the question as referring to all languages *other than* English) all listed English as one of the languages that they used regularly. Most also included other indigenous African languages (sometimes including Afrikaans) with varying degrees of competence. Two also mentioned French. None of the respondents rated his/her knowledge of English as poor; 62 described it as average; thirteen as excellent. Five students did not use the categories specified in the question: they either described their ability as 'good' (2) or 'fair' (3). Both these terms presumably correspond to 'average'.

For 61 students gave their highest educational qualification as matric; three had Cambridge O-levels; six held a teaching diploma; four others listed university degrees or courses and seven indicated various other post-matric courses and diplomas. Only twelve indicated that they had studied English after matric or O-level. In subsequent personal

³⁹The circumstances surrounding the administration of this questionnaire and the rationale for its analysis are discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.5.4.

interviews, the O-level students also indicated that they had only taken the language paper. (In the Cambridge International Examinations, Language and Literature are separate papers; candidates may sit for both or either of them.).

Of the 78 students who had written matric, all had taken the higher grade paper and thirteen had studied it as a first language.⁴⁰ The distribution of symbols⁴¹ was as follows:

A (1 st language Higher Grade)	0
B (1 st language Higher Grade)	0
C (1 st language Higher Grade)	2
D (1 st language Higher Grade)	6
E (1 st language Higher Grade)	5
A (2 nd language Higher Grade)	1
B (2 nd language Higher Grade)	0
C (2 nd language Higher Grade)	13
D (2 nd language Higher Grade)	32
E (2 nd language Higher Grade)	19

From these statistics a very clear profile emerges. The ‘typical’ English 100 student at UNW in 2000 was a full-time student, spoke Setswana as a first language, was studying for the first time since matriculating, had studied English as a second language at school, obtaining a final grade of D. This tendency towards homogeneity is typical of many rural HBUs (Evans1992a:60) and reduces the number of factors that might complicate the researcher’s task. (Deviations from the norm are, however, often significant, and may explain differences in student performance.)

An analysis of the responses to Question 9 and Question 10 suggested that many students did not understand the distinction that was made between their expectations of the English 100 course and what they actually believed would be of benefit to them. Many also appeared to have interpreted the benefits mentioned in Question 10 as referring to the benefits that they would gain *as a result of* having studied English 100. A large number did not appear to be addressing the questions at all, but merely responding in a general way to the idea of

⁴⁰Although none of the students was a mother-tongue speaker of English, some were likely, because of the subject choices available at school, to have studied it as a first language.

⁴¹The prerequisites for English 100 were actually a matriculation symbol D Higher Grade or C Standard Grade or their equivalent. These requirements were, however, regularly waived by the faculty officer (without consulting or informing the Department of English), on the grounds that English was a required ancillary for certain subjects and programmes.

course content. In addition a number (presumably late-comers) were clearly influenced by the actual content of the English 100 course. However, although no accurate generalizations are possible about responses to these questions, here also there was a noticeable uniformity in the responses which suggests general tendencies in the students' perceptions and expectations.

In their responses to Question 9, three students admitted to having no idea of what to expect. The responses given by the rest of the class, although varied in detail, point to remarkably similar expectations. The emphasis was on practical language and communicative skills, and on the knowledge and use of grammar (specific items that recur are the use of tenses, vocabulary, pronunciation and speaking skills). In a number of responses, these linguistic skills were linked to vocational needs. Mention was occasionally made of the analysis and criticism of texts, literary and non-literary (these might, however, have been echoing elements found in the course outline). A minority (sixteen students) explicitly mentioned the study of literature; a smaller group (four students) referred to the culture associated with the English language. A commonly voiced expectation was that English studies at university level would, in some way, be an advance on what was done at school, different either in nature or level. Expectations revolved around the teaching situation as well as course content: it was widely anticipated that the lecturer would facilitate learning, making the material and language accessible to the students.

Responses to Question 10 tended to reiterate points made in the previous response. A few responses indicated an understanding of the question, citing discussion and practice as activities that would benefit them as students. Most, however, responded by listing anticipated benefits from a course in English: advanced skills development, greater proficiency in the language, skills which could be transferred to other academic subjects and an improved ability to communicate with others. As before, the emphasis was on practical, usable language skills.

In spite of the limitations resulting from the difficulties in the administration of the questionnaire, the responses to the first ten questions yielded useful data that have made the construction of a plausible profile of the student population possible. This was not the case in the remaining questions where students were asked to evaluate their reasons for studying English (Questions 11- 23) and to reflect on the learning situation (Questions 24 - 31). The major stumbling block to interpreting the responses is that many respondents, mainly from those who joined the class after the initial administration of the questionnaire, appeared not to have understood the instructions on how to indicate their responses on a Likert scale of 0 to 5,

seeing these figures as the only options available rather than the beginning and end of a continuum. (Evidence of this can only be deduced from the frequency with which these were chosen as the only two options on a number of questionnaires: it is, however, enough to call into question the validity of any statistics based on an uncritical analysis of the responses.) The responses were therefore discarded from the analysis. The loss of this data is, fortunately, not serious as far as providing an insight into the student profile is concerned: many of the issues that the questions aimed at exploring were, in any case, implicitly covered in the earlier questions. The general impression gained from scanning the responses to the open-ended Questions 22 and 23 (in which respondents were invited to add and grade any other reasons for studying English) and 32 (in which they were given the opportunity to contribute comments of their own) also seems to confirm the picture created by the responses to Questions 9 and 10: the motivation for studying English was instrumental rather than integrative, in spite of a number of expressions of personal enjoyment and appreciation. A strong sense of English as the language of empowerment emerges, coupled, significantly with a concomitant sense of personal inadequacy (in spite of the fact that no one had chosen 'poor' as an option in answering Question 4) which, it was hoped, the course would address.

The general student profile that has emerged from the questionnaire will be given greater depth later in this chapter through the analysis of the nine students in the focus group.

5.2 ENG 101: Introduction to English studies

5.2.1 Theoretical assumptions

As its title implies, ENG 101 was conceived as an introduction, both to the first year of study and to the undergraduate programme as a whole. The aim of the module was to raise and develop students' language awareness and, at the same time, through the methodology employed, to develop their skills of reflection, observation and analysis. Given the time available, the module could only be an introduction, touching on some of the most important concepts and topics that make up language awareness. The concepts were introduced inductively, partly through being contextualized in authentic English texts, and partly through the students examining and expanding on their own linguistic knowledge and experience. The first method allowed for the integration of language and literature – the study of language through the use of literary texts – while the second encouraged the habit of self-reflectiveness.

The module was divided into twelve units, each dealing with a particular topic:

UNIT 1	The study of English
UNIT 2	Language Awareness: Language around you
UNIT 3	Language Awareness: You and your languages
UNIT 4	Communication
UNIT 5	Learning and knowing a language
UNIT 6	English or Englishes?
UNIT 7	English around the world
UNIT 8	Standards and Standard English
UNIT 9	A brief history of English
UNIT 10	English: Spoken and written
UNIT 11	Style and register
UNIT 12	Talking about English: Introduction to analysis and metalanguage

The units were given a loose coherence through the learning outcomes they were meant to achieve. Units 2, 3, 4 and 5 sought to raise awareness about language and languages generally (Outcome: *You can demonstrate a developing awareness of language*); Units 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 introduced and explored the idea of variation within the English language (Outcome: *You can recognize variation within the English language*); Units 1 and 12, the first and last, laid emphasis on the study of English as an academic discipline (Outcome: *You can demonstrate the knowledge and skills that you have begun to acquire in studying English as an academic discipline*). Underlying all the units was the idea that students should take a critical, reflective view of themselves as learners and language users.

In the following sub-sections, the two main theoretical underpinnings of the module and their application in it, will be examined: Language through Literature and Language Awareness.

5.2.1.1 Language through literature

In ENG 101 there was a minimum of literary analysis: the focus at this stage was on

the content of the text. Literature was used primarily as a resource, a means to introduce, illustrate or contextualize ideas and concepts. Although non-literary texts were also used for this purpose, literary texts were seen as having the added advantage of being able to make unfamiliar concepts accessible and attractive. The role of literature here, in other words, was premised on one of the most basic arguments for its inclusion in language learning: it provides a pleasant and entertaining way of learning about something that might otherwise appear dull and boring (Bates 2000/1:14). Literature appeals to the emotions and imagination as well as to the intellect: it can, in Sir Philip Sidney's phrase, both teach and delight (Butler 2001a).

The approach to the integration of language and literature in ENG 101 was therefore an expression of the principle of 'language through literature', as explored in Chapter 2. A number of the fourteen statements on the benefits of the integration of language and literature are applicable here. Statement 5 (*Literature assists learners in developing their overall language awareness and knowledge about language*) is the most explicit justification for its use in the module but equally relevant is the claim made in Statement 2 (*Because of its appeal to the learners' imagination and emotions, literature provides motivation for language learning*). Since the literary texts were intended to initiate a process of discussion and discovery on the nature of language, Statement 3 (*The themes and plots of literary works provide stimuli for meaningful debates, discussions and other language tasks which develop the learners' linguistic and communicative competence*) and Statement 6 (*The study of literature helps develop the learners' interpretive and analytical skills – for example, skills of inference – which can be applied to other language-related activities*) are also applicable.

Being used as a resource did not, however, exclude the possibility of the texts – both literary and non-literary – being treated as objects in their own right: some elementary analysis

was introduced in ENG 101, thus preparing for the more detailed stylistic analysis to be attempted in ENG 102.

A few examples from the ENG 101 resource book will illustrate the 'language through literature' principle in action:

- In Unit 4, R K Narayan's short story, "The Mute Companions", provides a stimulating introduction to a section on verbal and non-verbal communication.
- In Unit 5, Christopher van Wyk's poem, 'On learning Sotho', encapsulates the affective dimension of language learning, and provides a literary model for students to explore their own feelings about English (see Appendix A-3).
- In Unit 7, a folktale from Cameroon, written in pidgin English, gives concrete expression to the theme of English as a world language. It also provides students with practice in analysis. At first glance, the text appears incomprehensible and completely unrelated to standard English. However, by making the effort to understand it through drawing on their existing knowledge of English, students can be shown the importance of close, careful reading (see Appendix A-4).
- Also in Unit 7, extracts from works by Chinua Achebe and Athol Fugard provide examples of regional and social variation within the English language and a stimulus for debate on the desirability and status of similar varieties (see Appendix A-4).
- In Unit 11, an extract from George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* is used to illustrate the idea of social styles and registers. Once students get past the immediate strangeness of the text, they are able to find parallel examples from their own experience.

5.2.1.2 Language Awareness

Arguments in favour of teaching Language Awareness (LA) or Knowledge about Language (KAL), either as an end in itself or as an aid to language acquisition, have been put

forward by numerous researchers, including those working in the field of ESOL. Mittins (1991:25) sees LA exploring 'in particular the middle ground where theorizing about language meets the practical uses of language'. Van Lier's (1995:xi) definition is more specific:

Language awareness can be defined as an understanding of the human faculty of language and its role in thinking, learning and social life. It includes an awareness of power and control through language, and of the intricate relationships between language and culture.

He goes on (1995:98) to consider the role that LA can play in education in particular:

People use language to express themselves, to relate to others and to get things done. It is so central a part of our lives that it is of the utmost importance to control it well, to grow it as strong and rich as possible, and to keep working at those tasks in a spirit of lifelong language learning.

Both Mittin's (1991) and Van Lier's (1995) views seem to inform the ethnographic case studies conducted at three multilingual Johannesburg schools, reported in Brouard *et al.* (1999). Pupils were assigned a project in which they had to observe and report on the uses of literacy in their own homes. The writers see this exercise as conforming to the principles of OBE, as expressed in *Curriculum 2005*. In it, 'learners need to become more actively engaged in taking responsibility for their learning and teachers need to provide learners with more flexible, integrated learning environments in which knowledge is seen as purposeful, useful and linked to the real worlds of home and work' (1999:1). The learners become 'knowledge makers' (1999:2), rather than passive consumers of information. The degree to

which the research project eventually succeeded may be deduced from the comment of one of the pupils:

I didn't know at first what [sic] literacy was. I thought it was something you did at school. But wherever you go, there's stop streets, signs on buildings ... There's literacy all around you (1999:16).

This learner's words were quoted at the beginning of the ENG 101 resource book. Using the project as a source of inspiration, my approach in the module was to reinforce the idea of language being 'all around you', discoverable through observation, analysis and also through the medium of literary works. Its aims were not just to raise awareness about the English language; equally important, it encouraged students to analyse, reflect on, and articulate their knowledge and feelings about the nature of language generally and to understand their study of English language and literature in that context. This was done by exploiting and building on the students' existing knowledge and use of language in a multilingual and multicultural society. In this sense, the module attempted to place them in control of their own learning; they were not just passive recipients of information delivered by an 'expert' about what was, in many ways, still an alien language. The following examples from the resource book will illustrate the approach:

- In Unit 2 students are given the task to research the names of streets and places in any area with which they are familiar. They are encouraged to adopt a critical approach in considering the historical or political significance of the names (see Appendix A-1).

- In Unit 3 students are asked to write their own language profiles (see Appendix A-2).

- In Unit 5 students are asked to reflect on their own feelings as language learners (see Appendix A-3).

Each of these tasks required the students to raise their language awareness through a process of discovery and reflection, directed either outwardly or inwardly. In the latter two examples, literary texts are used to inspire or direct the process.

The development of LA can also have benefits outside the language classroom: as Donmall (1985:7) argues, LA can play a vital role in the learners' affective and cognitive development, and make them better students. Since, in ENG 101, LA is frequently raised through the medium of literary texts, the claim of Statement 6 is relevant here: *The study of literature helps develop the learners' interpretative and analytical skills which can be applied in other language-related activities.*

The Language Awareness working party of the National Congress on Languages in Education (NCLE) in the United Kingdom further advances the claims of LA when they argue in their report (Donmall 1985:19) that it can serve as an aid to language learning on the grounds that

all forms of language learning need to be set in a context, need to be understood by the participants. Without some general appraisal of what sort of phenomenon human language is, language learning can become the meaningless acquisition of alien codes, either other people's languages or unfamiliar varieties of the native language.

A similar argument might be advanced for the usefulness of LA in developing *literary* competence. As Rodger (1983:45) comments: 'Without [a] solid background in the normative uses of English, the ESL student of English literature will be unable to perceive literary foregrounding, either in its socio-stylistic dimension or its syntactico-semantic manifestations.' Both Donmall's (1985) and Rodger's (1983) claims lend weight to the decision to begin the English 100 course with a module that stresses LA.

5.2.2 Translating the theory into practice: Methods and materials

The materials mentioned as examples in the previous sections were contained in the English 101 resource book. The book contained the material used in class activities as well as the tasks on which the students were assessed. Students were also required to keep a language learning journal. In the following two sections, a more detailed account of the contents and methodology of the resource book and the rationale behind the student journal will be given.

5.2.2.1 The ENG 101 resource book

The format followed in each unit of the book was described in its introduction. The aim of the description was to involve students in the learning process: each step by which the

various concepts were introduced and developed was explained. The same attempt at transparency was found in the statement of outcomes at the beginning of each unit. This information, together with the tasks and journal work at the end of the unit, was aimed at providing students with the opportunity to assess their own progress.

The methodology underlying the presentation of the material in each unit reflected the belief that language awareness involves leading students to a greater awareness of what they intuitively know already (Tinkel 1985:37); or alternatively, the assumption that they can be introduced to unfamiliar concepts through appealing to their existing knowledge. *Getting started*, the first activity in each unit, was a ‘warm-up’ exercise, aimed at getting students thinking about the topic by appealing to an aspect of their assumed experience. The same logic determined the sequence of the units themselves. The topics in Units 2 - 5 were designed to draw on the students’ most immediate experiences of language. The units that dealt with variation in English (Units 6-11) similarly attempted to introduce the concept by beginning, in Unit 6, with a variety of English that students were most likely to be aware of – American English – and using its differences from South African English as a point of departure for exploring the concept of variation in the subsequent units with increasing complexity and abstraction.

The whole unit centred on the next section, *Texts*. This section contained a text or texts chosen for their relevance to the topic. The range of texts used throughout the module – literary and non-literary, and drawn from a variety of sources – was intended to be, in itself, a means of developing language awareness through exposing students to a wide range of authentic uses of English. Here again, the principle of leading the learner from the known to the unknown was applied. Generally, an attempt was made to choose texts that would be relatively accessible to first-year students at an HBU. This did not, however, preclude the inclusion of texts, such as the extract from *Pygmalion*, the ‘George Michael’ advertisement (see Appendix A-6) or various historical varieties. All of these texts, while probably lying outside the students’ cognitive schemata or linguistic ranges, were interpretable with

guidance. Any difficulties that students experienced would, in fact, provide a means of foregrounding the process of reading and interpretation. Although texts with an African or South African origin were often used, the simplistic assumption that these are *per se* the most accessible or relevant was resisted. The next section *Comprehension and discussion* or, in some cases, *Lecture*, gave focus to the text, applying it to the concerns of the unit.

Finally, the *Tasks and Activities* section was designed with the stated outcomes of the unit in mind, to test whether these had been reached. This work could be done in class, as an assignment for grading, or as part of a journal entry. In view of the introductory and developmental nature of the module, assessment needed to take into account students' potential as well as their ability to achieve a certain level of competence immediately. The emphasis needed to be on process rather than on product. Assessment was therefore continuous, based on the short focussed tasks in the resource book and on the students' journals. The initial tasks emphasized subjective, personal responses; gradually and progressively the emphasis shifted to being more abstract and objective. The journal was intended to assess outcomes on a more global level.

The principles of self-reflectiveness and self-discovery were implicit throughout the book. These were sometimes expressed through active learning in the form of student-centred tasks and activities that involved group or pair work. Given the constraints of the traditional lecturer-fronted mode of teaching during the first module, interactive learning could, however, only have a limited application. The language learning journal aimed at compensating for this.

5.2.2.2 Student journals

The use of student journals as sources of data for the researcher was examined in Chapter 4. Their pedagogical value was, however, the primary concern for their inclusion in the assessment scheme for ENG 101. As a tool for learning and assessment, journals serve a number of purposes:

- Journals can provide limited lines of communication between student and lecturer, that might otherwise be completely lacking in a large class (Hansen-Thomas 2003:27);
- Journals provide students with opportunities to draw on and articulate personal experiences, engage in self-reflection and develop observational and analytical skills (Matsumoto 1996);
- Journals provide students with an opportunity to articulate and come to terms with anxieties that might negatively affect their language learning (Cohen & Norst 1989);
- Journals promote active learning and the opportunity for students to reflect on their roles as learners (Carroll 1994);
- Journals can enable students to affect the direction of the course by providing feedback on which the teacher can act (Carroll 1994; Krishnan & Lee 2002);
- Journals provide students with an opportunity for focussed writing practice;
- Journals provide practice in the language outside the classroom.

All of these uses were consistent with the overall orientation of the course.

At the beginning of the ENG 101 module, students were told about the language learning journal that they would be required to keep. A summary of the main points of the lecture was reproduced in the first unit of the resource book. This is given below.

Lecture: Keeping a journal

The main points of the lecture are summarized here. In later units, however, you will be expected to make your own notes.

Your performance in ENG 101 will be assessed by means of the journal that you are required to keep throughout the module.

A journal, like a diary, is a book in which you record your ideas, feelings and thoughts on a regular basis. In this case, your journal will focus on your experiences as a student of English. At the end of every unit you will be given a task and topics to write about; but, in addition to them, you should also keep a record of any language or language-learning matters that you experience in your everyday life. These personal entries should not simply be a summary of what was taught in class on that particular day: they should also serve as a record of your personal development as a student of English: your intellectual and emotional reactions to what you learn and to the process of learning it. Think of the journal as a kind of on-going dialogue with yourself in which you comment on aspects of English that you have learnt, your feelings about learning them (interest, frustration, boredom, etc.), your feelings about the learning situation (lectures, overcrowded lecture rooms, tasks, lecturers, etc.). You should not confine yourself to reacting to formal lectures. Learning is (or should be!) a continuous process. A newspaper article or overheard conversation could provide a new insight into some aspect of English usage, which could be noted and commented on in your journal.

Your journal enables you to take control of your own learning and to develop your analytical and observational skills. It is also a means of communicating with your lecturer.

At the end of each unit in the module, you should summarize your reactions to it. Try to answer the following questions (as well as mentioning anything else you think is important): Did you find the unit interesting, boring, easy, challenging, too difficult, etc., etc.? Why? Do you think that the material in it is relevant to you as a person and as a student of English? If not, why not? Did you learn anything new? Can you suggest any improvements to the unit?

Your progress in the module will be assessed by means of the work that you do in your journal. The tasks should be handed in at the end of each unit, on a loose sheet of paper, which can be pasted into the journal after they have been graded. Your lecturer will also ask to see the journal at regular intervals.

You will be given opportunities to share what you have written with the rest of the class, if you wish to.

These instructions attempted to put into practice the theoretical justifications listed earlier. It soon became apparent, however, that the expectations were impractical, and had to be modified. The revisions will be described in the next section.

5.2.3 Assessment and grading

In contrast to all other modules in the undergraduate programme, ENG 101 did not have an end-of-module examination in addition to the continuous assessment already mentioned. This was to provide first-year students with a ‘settling in’ period without the stress of an examination. An examination was also felt to be an inappropriate conclusion to a module that emphasized process and self-reflection.

The ‘settling-in’ period was facilitated in other ways as well. Students who misunderstood what was required of them in the first two tasks were given an opportunity to resubmit their work. At the end of the module, all students who had been given a grade below 50% were allowed to submit a supplementary assignment in which they reflected on their failure to achieve the outcomes of the module (see Appendix A-7) to upgrade their marks to a pass. (Normal university policy allowed supplementary examinations only to those with marks from 45% to 49%.) These concessions became all the more necessary in view of the university management’s decision to extend the registration period well into the first semester.

The approach to assessment adopted here is consistent with OBE: students are given ‘extended opportunities’, and assessment criteria become increasingly stringent as the course progresses.

A way of grading the written work also presented special challenges in planning. Several revisions were necessary before an appropriate system was developed. In designing the tasks for each unit, it had initially been assumed that students would submit all of them for grading, thus fulfilling the requirements of continuous assessment and ensuring feedback on the outcomes for each unit. The tasks would be done as entries in the journal, where students would also write their personal observations and consider the topics suggested at the

end of every unit. A grade would also be given for each of the individual tasks; in addition, a global grade would be awarded for the journal as a whole. Assessment of the journal would therefore measure both the outcomes specified in each unit and the general outcomes. These were the arrangements initially given to the students when they were told about the journal.

However, once teaching began, it became apparent that submitting and grading all twelve tasks would place an impossible burden on both the lecturer and the students. The number of tasks to be submitted and graded individually was therefore halved. The tasks were, however, selected in a way that retained a sense of the development from the personal and subjective to the impersonal and objective. The tasks for submission were chosen from Units 2, 3, 5, 7, 10 and 12 (see Appendices A-1 to A-6). The remaining tasks were to be undertaken in the journal and would be graded globally along with all the other entries. Journal assessment would take place twice: in the middle of the module and again at the end. There would thus be eight marks altogether, from which an aggregate would be calculated. In addition, the grade awarded for the journal might be used to raise borderline final marks.

It had also originally been proposed, in line with the principles of OBE, that the grading of the tasks and journals would be expressed in terms of three categories, which represented the degree to which the student had achieved the stated outcomes.

Fail:	Student has failed to achieve the stated outcomes (or has failed to submit the task);
Pass:	Student demonstrates a satisfactory / adequate achievement of the stated skills and knowledge;
Distinction:	Student's performance is above average.

However, this model of assessment, although attractively simple, had practical drawbacks. How, for example, was one to calculate the aggregate mark in a way that would be fair, easy to implement and comprehensible to students? Experience also suggested that students, especially first-year students entering an already alien environment for the first time, would not feel comfortable with these broad categories, radically different from the system to which they had been accustomed at school. An even greater problem was that the university examination system would not accommodate a model that did not involve numerical grades.

The model was consequently revised. Numerical grades would be given, but each mark would be understood to represent the extent to which the student had reached the stated outcomes:

0	task late or not submitted
30	student has not met the assessment criteria at all
45	student has failed to demonstrate an adequate competence in the required skills or knowledge
50	student has demonstrated an adequate competence in the required skills or knowledge
65	student shows an above average competence in the required skills or knowledge
80	distinction

Even in this initial planning stage, the revisions made to the system of assessment illustrate in a very practical way an AR cycle of action and research. The emerging context had immediately made modifications necessary to the initial conceptions. Similar cycles would occur throughout the English 100 course, affecting both the pedagogy and the research.

5.2.4 Teaching the module

My teaching journal and lesson reports, together with the material in the students' resource books, provide the narrative thread for the recreation of the teaching of the first module. If my journal paints a somewhat bleak picture, it is partly because one of its functions was to provide a therapeutic outlet. An examination of the lesson reports for this period provides a more balanced view of the situation. These records were kept more regularly than the journal; their structured analysis of each lecture also meant that issues were addressed in a more systematic and objective way; and the identification of a problem brought with it the obligation to find a solution, in the spirit of AR. In the account that follows, the data obtained from these two introspective documents will be triangulated with data obtained from the students' work.⁴²

5.2.4.1 The core class

From the start, my awareness of the context in which the ENG 101 module was taught

⁴²Findings from research conducted on ENG 101 were reported in Butler 2000b and Butler 2001a as part of the action research in progress. Material from these papers has been incorporated into the discussion in this section.

meant the materials and methodology were subject to constant scrutiny and frequent modification. The cycles of AR were thus applied instinctively as I had to adapt to the realities of the situation.

My teaching journal was begun on 7 February 2000, after meeting the English 101 class for the first time. In the first unit of ENG 101, students were asked to reflect on 'English' as an object of study. The text used as the point of departure was the outline of the English undergraduate programme at UNW. They were also introduced to the concept of critical *self*-reflection in the form of the journal that they would be required to keep and the questionnaire they were asked to complete. They were encouraged to think of themselves as actively involved in the learning process and able to control and monitor their own learning. It was emphasized that there was not one answer to the question 'What does it mean to study English?' (For instance, I contrasted the integrated language/literature programme with my own experience of studying English as an undergraduate at an English-medium HWU, where 'English' meant 'English literature', and 'literature' meant the canon of 'great works', usually British.)

Most students seemed to find this a very disconcerting and surprising exercise. This was, in itself, not unexpected, given an educational background in which teachers and lecturers were perceived as authority figures and students as passive consumers of information. However, even this difficulty was overshadowed by the context of the administrative chaos at the beginning of the academic year. In my journal, the main topic on that and the next day was my frustration at the absence of a final timetable and at the on-going registration process. It had become clear that effective teaching would not be possible in the first week; this led to concern about how all the work could be covered in the time

available. The necessity for revising plans to meet the new circumstances became apparent as I reflected on the situation. It was at this stage that the decision was taken to cut down on the number of tasks.

The lesson reports kept at the same time reflect a similar concern with the teaching context. But sometimes classroom experiences also prompted me to reconsider or revise material or methodology. After teaching Unit 1, for example, I decided that, in view of the subdued response from the class, less time should be spent on a detailed discussion of the text (Lesson report: 10 February 2000).

By the second week, when things had settled down somewhat, my journal entries were generally more optimistic in tone and I felt that I was establishing a good rapport with the class. On 16 February, I was able to record a 'good lesson' with the full-time group, and my general satisfaction with the suitability of the materials in Unit 2.

In Unit 2 (Appendix A-1), the sense of involvement in the learning process that the first unit was meant to promote was extended to the students' experience of language itself. They were encouraged to see language as something that is an aspect of their daily lives, shaping and influencing them. The theme was developed through the analysis of two stylistically contrasting texts, both descriptions of the town in which the university is situated. The questions in the *Comprehension and discussion* section attempted to steer the students into taking a critical view of the apparently innocuous texts and uncover the history and ideology implicit in them. For example, a question asked students to consider the meaning of the word 'boers', which was used in its historical sense in one of the texts. The question generated some interesting (and often heated) class discussion. This raising of the students' LA seemed to endorse Carter and McCarthy's (1995:308) claim for the importance of developing students' awareness of connotations, idioms, metaphors, proverbs and so on in an integrated manner. As the writers put it:

As a preparation for subsequent reading of complete literary texts such

awareness is valuable in this connection but the language learner is also learning that words have extended meanings as well as learning those meanings themselves, that meanings often have to be negotiated, that a language is something to be learned *about* as well as learned, and that a language is a productive resource of great creative potential, not just a fossilized code.

The unit, in effect, attempted to take the students beyond the 'basic awareness' of language stated in the outcome, towards a critical awareness of language, one that could give them confidence in their own powers of observation and analysis. The task, in which they were asked to undertake their own research on the names of places, was designed to test whether this outcome had been achieved.

The response to Unit 2 was sufficiently stimulating to inspire me to include in my journal ideas for supplementing the material with further activities and texts, although there was still the occasional entry on a lesson that seemed to have missed the mark. The tension between pedagogical demands and the less than ideal conditions continued to be a cause for concern: however, I believed that I was able to adapt to circumstances. The next day I recorded the following observation:

I'm becoming increasingly conscious of time: perhaps I must start cutting down on what can be covered in class, leaving them to work on their own ... But I don't think, in retrospect, that any time so far has been wasted: the process of getting them to self reflect and observe should be developed over time, even if it means spending a lot of time on a relatively easy and 'trivial' task (Journal:17 February 2000).

Unit 3 (Appendix A-2) attempted to narrow the focus of language awareness to how language forms and affects the individual user's identity. Once again, the students' were required to demonstrate their achievement of the outcome of the unit by writing a language profile, similar to those provided as examples. This appeared to be a well received and successful activity. However, the lesson reports on Unit 3 indicate that subsequent reflection prompted me to reconsider my presentation of the material. Since this had implications for the fundamental principle of integrating language and literature, it is worth examining the issue in detail. As before, I was concerned about the time spent on each of the activities in the unit. In the lesson I spent quite some time on the *Getting Started* activity. The students wrote their own language profiles, while I moved around among them, commenting and

assisting. This left little time for the poem, “Digging”, which was intended to provide the central focus of the unit. In the time available, I briefly summarized and interpreted the poem rather superficially, without inviting any comment or questions from the class. Yet, in reflecting on this later, I did not regret the shift in emphasis. In the lesson report I commented:

Unsatisfactory though the cursory treatment of the poem was, I think my time distribution was right. The language profiles got the students to write in class and I went around reading and commenting. I think this will make them happier about the final version they hand in as a task on Monday. It was also good to move from my position in front of the class. And since the poem is only a vehicle for LA, it would have skewed the focus to spend too much time on it *as a poem*. (This issue of a diffused focus is what gave me problems in Unit 2 yesterday.) But in future I think that some guidance, sign pointing and explanation is necessary in the book to cover issues that there isn't time enough to cover in class, e.g. ways of helping them get at the meaning of “Digging” before I use it to talk about LA. (A general point about lang/lit integration can be made here: in using literature *only* as a resource for language teaching, one has to make sure that the text is sufficiently transparent in literary terms so that it can be used for its linguistic purposes). For now I will give them photocopies of the poem from Malan [i.e. *Poetry Works* edited by Robin Malan, which has notes on the poem]— they should have got it before, but this is the best under these circumstances. I can also modify my approach slightly with the part time group tomorrow: I will use Malan to explain the poem as quickly as possible, and then pose the question: what has this got to do with our focus on LA? (Lesson report:17 February 2000)

This extract shows action research in operation. Putting the integrated approach into practice had revealed potential contradictions. Using the poem as a literary resource to introduce an aspect of language awareness (in a way suggested by Statements 2, 3 and 5) had, because of time constraints, prevented the full implementation of other principles (such as Statement 14, which encourages close reading of the text). The consequence was a very instrumentalist use of a literary text. Nevertheless, from an AR perspective, a lesson had been learnt. The planning that had gone into the unit had been acted on; my lesson report represented my observation and reflections. This led to modifications which could be put into effect immediately, thus entering a new cycle.

On the other hand, in my lesson report on Unit 4, I was able to record my satisfaction with the technique that I had adopted in using a short story to illustrate the concept of non-verbal communication: reading it in class, pausing at strategic points to relate incidents in it to

the theme of communication. This approach represented a compromise (and, I thought, an improvement) on the two options that I had originally envisaged in developing the material: either reading the story first and then generalizing about methods of communication (moving from the concrete and specific to the general and abstract) or delivering a lecture on communication first and then reading the story (applying abstract ideas to a practical situation).

The lesson reports that have been quoted in some detail are typical of most written during the ENG 101 module. Scanning the reports for that period reveals the following preoccupations, some of them overlapping with the concerns of the journal:

- reflection on and attempts to improve my skills as a facilitator of learning;
- related to this, a recurring sense of the circumstances beyond my control (on-going registration; crowded lecture theatre) which made effective teaching difficult;
- trying to assess student response to material and lectures, which was especially difficult in view of the size of the class;
- comparing the responses and behaviour of full-time and part-time classes.

As the class grew in size, the opportunities for close interaction with the students grew fewer; nevertheless, my journal shows that I was beginning to form a picture of their abilities. One entry points to the perennial issue of reconciling language awareness with language proficiency. When the students were due to submit their first tasks, I commented:

We are looking at language, communication, etc. – yet students are not able to interpret basic instructions about which tasks to submit when. I suppose it's also a matter of nervousness about it being the first submission. But the irritation of having to explain the procedure for the n'th time – as if it's *my* fault (Journal:18 February 2000).

As will be seen in my analysis of the focus group, for some of the students the problem of understanding and acting on instructions or answering questions would remain a stumbling block throughout the year.

My picture of the students expanded as I graded the tasks from Units 2 and 3 a few days later. The outcomes were that students could demonstrate language awareness and the ability to reflect. These had been explicitly stated in the units in the resource book. However,

the students would not be penalized unduly for errors in language use, provided that the meaning was reasonably clear and the outcomes had been achieved. The students were informed of this concession when the tasks were returned to them: it was, however, emphasized that assessment would be more stringent in future tasks.

Meanwhile the continued influx of students into the class and their apparent difficulty in adjusting to university study remained a theme in my journal. After returning the tasks to the students, I wrote in my journal:

My failure to communicate the basic instructions really does bother me because I consciously employed several ways of communicating the information, on the assumption that together they would cover all possible forms of perception: a timetable in tabular form which I explained orally in class, and then put on the noticeboard; followed by a paraphrase and explication, written and then verbalized in class. Yet for many, the difficulty of connecting all this information with what is in the book and then acting on it, remains.

Interesting to see what happens in the next task submission. When explaining to the students who did not submit the correct tasks, I try to get them to work it out for themselves and show me what is to be submitted. Most *can* do it, but do not offer any reasonable explanation for their initial inability to do so apart from “I did not know”, “I thought that”, etc. But, to keep things in perspective, I must remember that many – most of them – had no difficulty in doing what was asked of them (Journal: 24 February 2000).

But by 28 February, half way through the module, on-going registration and student confusion continued to present a source of irritation that would persist to the end of the module, occasioning many similar comments, and the memorandum to the Dean. Later, reading through the students’ journals, I noted that two students had made comments that, I thought, provided an accurate, although not very flattering, reflection of my behaviour and moods over the previous ten days:

- *I was very angry to-day because Mr Butler was not in by time and on top of that he just lectures us for 5 minutes and says he is going to the meeting. One day I will come late, just went out when the lecture is still on and when he asks me where am I going I will tell him that I have an appointment with my girlfriend which I must attend.*
- *I am in ENG 101. Mr Buttler does not seem to be in a good mood today. He is yelling at us, he even tells us that he is not our teacher, he is a lecturer, he is not our friend, he is not our big brother. If Mr Buttler is not careful the ENG 101 students will end up being afraid of him.*

Gauging student reaction to the units had, until now, been largely impressionistic and became increasingly difficult as the class grew in size. While the tasks from Units 2 and 3 had given some sense of the students' academic performance, the information was generally limited to those particular outcomes. Now the journals and the task from Unit 5 in which the students had to analyse their own feelings as students of English enabled me to get a better sense of the class dynamics and provided some insight into affective factors (including the negative impact of the university's maladministration and my consequent behaviour). The feedback also gave me an opportunity to involve the class in the on-going development of the module.

Unit 5 (Appendix A-3) examined two related aspects of language awareness: the process of learning a language and the various competences involved in 'knowing' a language. The first topic focussed on the affective aspect of language learning and was introduced by means of a poem. The second topic, hinted at in the poem, was developed by means of a lecture. The techniques used to present material thus followed the principle of moving from the concrete to the abstract. The task at the end of the unit aimed at bringing together the two topics: students needed to reflect on their own feelings as students of English and attempt to link these to their abilities in the language.

The following extracts are a selection from the answers to the task. Not only do they represent a successful achievement of the specific outcome of the unit; from a more general point of view, they also suggest good progress in developing skills in introspection and analysis. As far as research is concerned, they provide a rich source of data about the students' varied attitudes to the language they are studying that go beyond the instrumental benefits previously noted, such as cultural and intrinsic motivation, the influence of context and changing attitudes.

- *I grew up with the feeling of a thought of English is foreign language spoken by foreign people. And that we learn English only to be able to communicate with foreign people or people who cannot speak my language. And those feelings created a negative attitude towards the language and I used to fail English tests very often at school ... But as time changed my learning of English changed to something better and so was my feelings. I learned about the culture and people of English. I realized that English is everyone's language but its not like any other language because is used world wide.*

- *Today i can even express myself better in english than setswana in certain circumstances. Its a sense of success for me. I can spend a day with a white friend in my neighbourhood and find no difficulty, and it's somewhat fun for me knowing another man's tongue. Even though there are words i don't know, there is time for me to seek meanings and would love knowing and experiencing the joy of playing with words in english.*
- *English is very important language because nowadays English is used everywhere and it is an international language around this universe, the majority of the countries use English for better understanding. To know English means you have better communication with almost everything that happen around the world ... Again you'd never find a company runed by a black person and searching for Setswana as a language to communicate with it is always English that means that with English employment opportunities are many because you'd probably have the interpersonal skills and be able to communicate with clients/customers and be able to convince a client seeking to seal a deal with the company if he or she is from some countries or anywhere from around.*
- *I realize that I made a good decision by choosing to learn English at university level. It is a language that is even building my character. English speaking people are soft spoken, sweet and firm. I am gradually adopting this nature.*
- *I have very positive feelings as a student of English to the subject. I've noticed that in future English will take place of my mother tongue. At home I only speak my home language to my mother and father, to my sisters and younger brother, English only. So it's becoming rooted in my heart*
- *most of my time English seems to be a problem to some of us Batswana since we are not used to the language. It is hard for me to practice or speaks English on a daily basis because my colleagues, whom I spend with, are Setswana speaking.*
- *In most cases people are annoyed when someone speaks in English and act different from how they expect people to act in their society, you find them saying "people do not have respect since they are in multiracial schools," it is because they do not understand that people are adopting the culture, which in English it is not disrespectful to answer a question directly when you are asked by an adult or even looking straight into his/her eyes when talking to her/him.*
- *My feelings about English language is a mixture of bitter and sweet, I love English because it is interesting and sophisticated, being fluent in English can open doors, one can master a job interview when English is fluent. Then again I have a problem with the fact that English is more respected than other language; English is certainly not the only language in this universe. I believe other languages should be given equal attention because that is not fair.*

Many of the journals offered equally interesting insights into students' experiences and perceptions. There were, however, also many students who had not followed the instructions and consequently not covered all the relevant areas and topics. The journals had,

in fact, been a continual source of confusion; many students saying that they did not understand what was expected of them and showing little evidence of the kind of independent, self-directed approach to learning that had been presented as one of the outcomes of the English 100 course.

Confusion was not only found in the production of the journals. In the case of many students, it also formed the topic of their writing: they frequently expressed their sense of confusion and disorientation at being at university, their lack of confidence in studying English, and their uncertainty at what was required of them in the new setting.⁴³ There were, fortunately, also students who expressed interest and enthusiasm for journal writing and the new ideas about learning that they had been exposed to. It is worth noting that these students had not necessarily performed well in their tasks (and, in at least one case, would continue to do badly). One student wrote in an early entry that she was sceptical about keeping a journal; a few entries later, she was very enthusiastic. Many of the poor or incomplete journals were submitted by late-registrants; this provided concrete evidence of the detrimental effects that the university's policy had on the learning situation. Some students alluded to this, complaining about time wasted in class because the lecturer had repeatedly to explain basic information to new students. For example:

There is only one thing I personally fail to understand. I think we all had a good start and instead of moving forward our lecturer had to go back to Monday's lecture for the sake of those who didn't attend a class. I feel that they stayed away for their own reasons.

Students' impressions of the module content and activities varied, sometimes greatly. One student commented:

I realize our new lecturer this year tends to repeat what he is saying over and over again as if he is dealing with standard sevens. I hope he is only doing this temporarily to make us feel at ease.

On the other hand, there were also students who expressed enthusiasm and excitement:

⁴³An orientation course was given to all new students at the beginning of the academic year by the staff of the Academic Development Centre. Evidence from the journals, however, suggests that this had only a limited effect. The extended registration period also meant that a large number of students were denied even this introduction to university study.

I really love to be part and parcel of English 101, there's so much that was in my conscious and I wasn't aware of. English did help me out at least at this stage to analyse even the most difficult situation.

The tasks from Units 2, 3 and 5, as well as the journal, required personal, subjective responses from the students. They aimed at developing the skills of self-reflection and analytical observation, rather than the production of 'correct' answers. They were also designed to provide the students with a relatively accessible point of entry to academic study, following the pedagogical principle of proceeding from the known to the unknown. An examination of Table 1 shows that students generally did well in these tasks. A very high percentage of the core class passed (that is, obtained 50% or higher): 82 students (91,11% of the class) passed the task from Unit 2, 83 students (92,22%) passed the task from Unit 3 and 73 students (81%) passed the task from Unit 5. These results thus confirmed expectations.

TABLE 1

ENG 101 core class: Distribution of grades in all tasks

Figures represent the number of students obtaining grades (vertical axis) for each task (horizontal axis)

		T 2	T 3	T 5	J 1	T7	T10	Lit	J2
FAIL	dnw	–	01	04	08	05	07	07	06
	30%	02	01	07	05	11	07	04	05
	45%	06	05	06	07	27	19	11	11
PASS	50%	47	52	35	25	34	48	30	23
	65%	35	30	34	34	13	09	38	34
	80%	–	01	04	11	–	–	–	11

KEY

T2	Task, Unit 2 (Place names)	J2	Journal, Second submission
T3	Task, Unit 3 (Language profile)	dnw	did not submit task/journal
T5	Task, Unit 5 (Feelings as a student of English)	Av	Average mark for ENG 101
J1	Journal, First submission	Supp___	Supplementary assignment
T7	Task, Unit 7 (Textual analysis of varieties)		
T10	Task, Unit 10 (Spoken and written English)		
Lit	Literature in the study of English		

Units 6 – 11 in the module focussed on a specific area of language awareness: variation within the English language. The idea of variety was interpreted in a number of

ways. Regional variation (using the specific contrast of North American and South African varieties of English) provided an introduction in Unit 6; this was generalized in the next unit to world varieties of English. In both units, the discussion was firmly grounded in authentic texts, both literary and non-literary, which students were encouraged to read closely and attempt to describe as specifically as possible. In Unit 8, students were asked to examine the implications of the varieties to which they had been introduced by critically considering the idea of a 'standard'. Units 9, 10 and 11 went on to examine other aspects of variety in English: historical change, the difference between spoken and written language, and style and register. Students were required to submit two tasks for this section, from Unit 7 (Appendix A-4) and Unit 10 (Appendix A-5). Both tasks required close, analytical reading of the relevant texts. In contrast to the subjective introspection of the earlier tasks, students needed to demonstrate an ability to focus on experiences external to themselves, analysing the language in which these were expressed in a systematic and objective way. The movement, in other words, was from basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) to cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (Cummins 1984:136-137).

In keeping with the aim of developing study skills as well as language awareness, I therefore set the work in Unit 6 as self study. Students were to read the text (an account by a South African visitor to the USA confused by differences in vocabulary that she encountered there) and answer the questions on their own, after which they were given model answers with which to assess themselves. I recorded in my lesson report that the strategy seemed to have been successful: it had achieved its purpose of raising awareness, in preparation for the more detailed analysis that would be undertaken in the later units (Lesson report: 23 February 2000). I later recorded good responses to the exploration of texts in Unit 7, especially to Text 14, a poem written in Singaporean English (another pleasing vindication of the language through literature approach).

In spite of the positive responses, in the following units my lesson reports reflect my increasing preoccupation with the extent to which I was dominating the classroom. To some extent this would have been inevitable, given the growing size of the class, but it also seemed to be a consequence of the increasing abstraction of the material as I tried to compensate for the apparent lack of response from the class with repeated explanations of the concepts. In my lesson report on 6 March 2000, I noted: 'Took up development of standards, linking it to history ... Same problem of too much talking: I'm definitely moving into transmission mode,

tending to skimp on activities ...' Two days later, I was still aware of the problem, and resolved that action was necessary:

Finished off standards, looking at pertinent factors as mentioned in Comprehension and Discussion, and highlighting relevant sections in the texts. Talked too much, boring myself and the class.

The fact that I keep becoming aware of talking and transmitting information highlights the need for smaller groups to work in. Next module students will have a tutorial in place of one of the lectures, which might help things – or at least show more clearly where the real problems lie.

This realization prompted me to raise the issue of tutorials with my 'critical friend' and we decided to introduce supplementary tutorial classes in the ENG 102 module, at which she would act as an observer.

Meanwhile, my sense that many of the students were having difficulty in making the transition from the first part of the ENG 101 module to the second was borne out in my analysis of the tasks from Unit 7 and later again, in the comments in their journals. In spite of my attempts to scaffold the presentation of the material with references to their own experiences, many students simply seemed to lack the schematic knowledge that would enable them to make much sense of English as an international language that had developed over many centuries; still less were they in a position to adopt a critical stance on any of the issues involved. They tended to retain the entirely subjective stance with which they had begun the module, apparently lacking the experience or knowledge to project themselves imaginatively into other situations. I noted a number of recurring comments in the work arising from Units 7, 8 and 9, which seemed to me to exemplify this perception:

- Non-standard varieties were consistently condemned as 'wrong' or 'ungrammatical', because 'we' cannot understand them. This perception persisted, in spite of class discussions on some of the unique features of South African varieties of English that are incomprehensible to other speakers of English.
- 'Standard' English was universally praised. Many of those who did so, did not, however, seem aware that their own use of the language was far from standard. Most did not, in fact, seem to have the linguistic resources to recognize the differences between standard and non-standard, let alone be able make any kind of value

judgement about them.

- ↪ In referring to the history of English, there was a frequent tendency to see the language as having 'improved' on the grounds that 'we' find modern English easier.

A more telling limitation in the students' performance of the task was that many were not able to generalize in abstract terms. They could not distinguish between the features or characteristics of a language variety and the specific examples through which these were realized in the text. In my lesson report, I noted that I made these points in my feedback after returning the graded tasks:

Commented on Task from Unit 7 (varieties of English); emphasized lack of close reading, a skill that would be returned to in ENG 102. Emphasized that defining characteristics not the same as summarizing or giving examples. Not *what* but *how*. Importance of objectivity. (This entry is being typed on 01/04/00 after I had marked further tasks: none of what I said seemed to have made much difference!). Looked at Text 10 to illustrate point of reading carefully (Lesson report: 15 March 2000).

The remark in parenthesis refers to the fact that the lesson reports were usually handwritten, and typed up later. Here, the lapse in time enabled me to compare the performance in the task with that in Unit 10, which I was then marking. Once this was completed, it was evident that the grades for both tasks were considerably lower than in the first four (see Table 1). Only 47 students (52.22% of the class) obtained a pass mark for the task from Unit 7, although the results for the task from Unit 10 were better, with 57 students (63.33%) passing. Both contrasted with the much higher pass rate of the earlier tasks. It is also worth noting, however, that some students responded to the suggestion, in Unit 7, that they write a poem to express their feelings about using English. The following poem, written in a student's journal, is a strangely moving and poignant account of what the English language means to her. It is also a perfect demonstration of the possibilities of facilitating learning through the integration of language and literature. It leaves no doubt as to the student's critical grasp of the power of English in her society.

Everything's English

*Wherever I go, English.
On my way to town
Seeing road signs
Reading advertisements
Speaking with the shopkeeper
Everything's English.*

*Whatever I do, English.
When I'm trying to relax
Watching TV
Reading magazine
Using computer
Everything's English.*

*Whoever I speak to, English.
My lecturer, Mr Butler
My friend, Dolly
My name, Hazel
Everything's English.*

It is possible that, notwithstanding the reactions I noted while marking the Unit10 task, the class as a whole learnt from the mistakes made in the previous task. The task from Unit 10 also combines textual analysis with the production of a new text,⁴⁴ a technique that tests sensitivity to language in a more intuitive way. In addition, Units 10 and 11 focus on areas that are potentially of greater practical use in the development of linguistic competence. All of these factors might explain the relatively better performance in the latter task.

Because of time lost in the course of the module, the last unit, Unit 12 (Appendix A-6), was postponed to after the mid-semester break, when it was presented as an introduction to ENG102. Since it had, in fact, been designed as a bridge between the two modules, this was entirely appropriate. It had originally been planned that the final task would be taken from Unit 12. However, when it became apparent that it might not be possible to cover all the work in the module in the time available, I decided to replace this task with another, the inspiration for which came from the students' journals and their responses to the questionnaire. A number of students had made references to the study of literature. Attitudes were both positive and negative. A recurrent theme was the dislike or fear of poetry. These views merited further

⁴⁴The text used in the Unit 10 task is the transcript of an oral narrative: as an example of 'storytelling' it fits the extended definition of a literary text. The rewriting task (changing a spoken text into a specific written genre) is based on principles similar to those expressed in Statement 11.

investigation. I wondered if there was any link between the students' tendency to value English for its instrumental benefits and their attitudes to literature. Answering this question would have obvious implications for the integrated approach on which the whole course was based. Did the reading and study of literature in fact hold any appeal for the students at all? I recorded this question in my journal as an issue to be explored, linking the students' comments to my reading of the research conducted in Middle Eastern universities on the same question.⁴⁵ With these questions in mind, a new task was drawn up (Appendix A-7). In class, students were shown some of the comments reproduced below. Using these as their point of departure, they were then to write a short essay in which they explored their own views on the matter.

- *... I expect to learn more about literature in english and to be able to express myself more clearly in english*
- *In English we should study everything about English verbs, synonyms, antonyms, idioms, but we should not read Shakespeare's books.*
- *I think Literature is a big [sic] difficult for me, because when I was at high school we used to do Macbeth and Julius Caesar the English in there is very complicated and it has no bright future. Maybe if I could read a very simple literature I can change my attitude towards literature.*
- *I expect how to use tense, its importance to me. To know how is poetry or literature communicating with to-day's lives.*
- *I am expecting to study English as a subject because I am interested in literature, and I expect to be taught it in the way that I am going to understand it well.*
- *I expect to study the use and the importance of English in a communication basis or process. I also expect to study and understand literature and English as a whole.*
- *As a student of English I do not see the reason why we should study English literature because I see it as not important and relevant to the course. I think that only grammar can help as a student of communication because it helps and teaches us how to communicate.*

As an exercise in learner self-reflection, I hoped that the specificity of the topic would compensate for the rather uninspiring material in Unit 1 with which I had originally attempted to develop the same skills. An introspective essay that combined subjective attitudes with objective reflection on language learning issues would also provide a fitting end to the module. Table 1 shows that the students did well in the task, with a pass rate of 75,55% (68 students).

⁴⁵See Chapter 2, section 2.4.2.

The literature essay also had very obvious benefits for me as researcher, providing me with an authentic and unobtrusive method of eliciting students' views on an aspect of language/literature integration. In contrast to the questionnaire with which I had attempted to elicit students' views at the beginning of the module, this research instrument had developed naturally from the teaching situation. The introduction of an unplanned research instrument in the course of the case study was also in keeping with the AR approach.⁴⁶

Table 2 shows that 61 of the 90 students in the core class achieved the outcomes of the module, a pass rate of 67,77%. Of the remaining 29 students, 25 attempted and passed the supplementary assignment.

TABLE 2
ENG 101 core class: Distribution of final (average) grades

	Number of students	Percentage of core class
FAIL		
Below 30%	03	3,33
30% - 39%	07	7,77
40% - 49%	19	21,11
PASS		
50% - 59%	44	48,88
60% -	17	18,88

Of the 29 students who failed the module, 25 submitted supplementary assignments. All their grades were raised to 50 %.

5.2.4.2 The focus group

To give depth to the statistics given in the previous section, a qualitative analysis of the performance of the students in the focus group will now be made. The grades obtained by the students in the group are summarized in Table 3. For ease of reference, the tasks will be referred to using the abbreviations explained below that table.

⁴⁶The research findings based on an analysis of the essays are discussed below in section 5.2.5.

TABLE 3**ENG 101 focus group: Percentages obtained for all tasks**

Figures represent the grades (expressed as percentages) obtained by focus group students (vertical axis) for each ENG 101 task (horizontal axis)

	T 2	T 3	T 5	J 1	T7	T10	Lit	J2	Av	Supp
Student 65	45	45	50	–	30	45	45	30	36	50
Student 49	30	50	45	50	30	30	30	50	39	50
Student 47	45	50	30	65	45	50	30	50	46	50
Student 7	50	50	65	65	50	50	50	50	54	
Student 76	65	65	50	65	45	50	65	65	59	
Student 78	65	65	50	80	50	50	50	65	59	
Student 19	65	65	50	65	50	65	65	80	63	
Student 82	65	65	65	65	65	50	65	65	63	
Student 66	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	80	67	

KEY

T2	Task, Unit 2 (Place names)	J2	Journal, Second submission
T3	Task, Unit 3 (Language profile)	dnw	did not submit task/journal
T5	Task, Unit 5 (Feelings as a student of English)	Av	Average mark for ENG 101
J1	Journal, First submission	Supp___	Supplementary assignment
T7	Task, Unit 7 (Textual analysis of varieties)		
T10	Task, Unit 10 (Spoken and written English)		
Lit	Literature in the study of English		

Student 65 (average: 36%) indicated on the questionnaire that his mother tongue was Setswana, described his English as average (which he hoped to improve by doing English 100), and stated that his matric symbol for English was an E, first language higher grade.

In T3, the language profile, the student reproduced, almost word for word, one of the examples given in the resource book, with bizarre results. After describing his initial education in Kraaipan, a village near Mafikeng, he says that he was sent to Gauteng:

In Gauteng I was sent to an English medium school where the whites were the majority. (The Whites in Gauteng speak English as their home language.) The school which I attended was situated in the East, which is predominantly English speaking.) Because of my township variety of Whites [sic] I became a centre of attraction. And I ended up using English in my class and at my residence.

Throughout the profile the writer continued to reproduce the example, altering only places, ethnic groups and languages, with little regard to the meaning. To what extent, if at all, it reflected his actual experience is difficult to determine. T2, which required students to reflect

on the significance of place names, was similarly a confused and often inaccurate rehash of examples given in class. In neither task was there any evidence of personal involvement or real language awareness as specified in the outcomes of the tasks. The student's proficiency in English was also poor, in spite of the great importance he attaches to the language, as shown in the following extract from T5:

My feelings is also high about English, because it gives opportunities of interviewing to someone who comes from outside country, or to a person speaking Xhosa, for example because I don't know even a little bid of it. So it makes me easier to speak with. According to my side as a student of English I feel that English is one of the good language to study and to follow. So English has reached the massive success in the world.

Here a personal response is clearly evident, justifying a pass mark in spite of poor expression. The student did not submit a journal mid-way through the module; when it was handed in at the end, it consisted of only two pages. It is worth quoting the whole 'journal' here for the light it throws on the process of adjustment many first-year students at UNW appeared to have to go through:

08/03/00

My reaction to this unit [which unit is being referred to is not specified, however] is that the unit itself is an interesting one. The way Mr Butler lecturing us is the good system. I like his format. I understand a little bid, not as much as I would like to. It is my first year in university so I found it difficult to settle on because I don't know the lecturer's formation of lecturing very well, I'm still learning and looking what's going on. Time is over now I don't know where is my performance, but I will fight all over again to find it. I feel lost during the lecturing, especially on the Unit one. I don't know where I am. My journal was not in order. It was too much complex.

15/03/00

University does not impressed me at all. I was only impressed by the student who completed their studies in this University. This university is not interesting I was impressed by the students of this university who pass very well with distinction. I ask myself a question why distinction, I found then they are naturally intelligence. So I like to be like them; but it is not the reason of being here in this university. The University of North West was not on my mind, I'm just came here to study, but really I don't like this university, so I've nothing to do. My mind was based on the other impressing university, so things didn't go the way I expect. It was an expression of temporary anger when I hear my parents says that I must come to this university. My intention is to quiet further education because things were not come on my way.

While these entries do demonstrate learner self-reflexivity, they are, in themselves, inadequate evidence of the general outcomes for the module.

The student did not fare any better in T7, T10 and the essay on literature, showing little skill in analytical thinking and writing. His failure to reach the standards expected in the ENG 101 module is, perhaps, best illustrated in the following extract from the essay:

I'm interested in African literature because I understand the language they use very easily. I didn't like Asian literature such as Shakespeare, because he based on Asian things and I no interested in reading one of his book. When I was at school I read Shakespeare drama series known as Julius Caesar, and the play takes place at Italy. ... I've seen that if I can go further reading the South African literature I will be able to write a book on my own.

In contrast to his perfectly legitimate preference for African literature, there is an apparent absence of any intellectual schema which would give meaning to the choice. When questioned about his comments later, the student was able to identify a number of countries in Asia (thus discounting the possibility of semantic error), but, in spite of prompting, could not guess at the probable connection between Shakespeare, the English language and England.

In his supplementary assignment Student 65 explained his failure to achieve the outcomes of the module in terms of the difference between school and university study and the fact that he was 'lacking in concentration'. He adds:

The other thing which is killed me, is not to submitting first round journal and a lot of marks had gone. I arrived two weeks later at school while lecturing process goes on. I don't know much about journal. My first week at school (university) was the submission of the journal. And I didn't write it due to misunderstood. I refused to submit my journal. After that I ask one of my fellow-student what's going on about the journal. He told or gave me a little information to work on. So on the second round I was under pressure and I wrote only two pages as my journal because I don't have enough time to arrange my things well. And that two pages of the journal gave me a little marks. So my marks drops in that way which leads not to achieve a passing mark in English 101.

The student's comments here provide reinforcement of my own perceptions about the detrimental effects of the registration period.

Student 49 (average: 39%) also gave her mother tongue as Setswana. She described her English as 'fair', having obtained an E symbol in second language higher grade in matric. On the questionnaire, in describing her expectations of the English course, she said that she

wanted 'to be a qualifier in future and helps in completing to further my studies'.

After apparently misunderstanding the instructions in T2, she was given a chance to resubmit. The second version showed no improvement on the first: the language was very weak, and there was no evidence of any personal language awareness, most of the information being a confused regurgitation of examples given in class:

Firstly, we can see since the elections takes place in 1994, things had changed according to names and streets.

Now is the new government so we can see some changes around our country like in South Africa. Names and streets are changed according to the new apartheid government system.

The streets had given names like roads had called the Mandela Drive road. When we are going to the Province of North West, Mafikeng which had been called Mafeking or others they say Mahikeng had gone ten years ago. Another streets and names which had been changed is at Pretoria since the time of elections. Politics had not been existing around our country 'South Africa'.

At Now we are living with peaceful and harmony because politics had not being longer exist around our country. New government had took over the position.

The concluding paragraph, with its focus on politics, rather than on the forms of language which are affected by political pressures, makes it especially clear that the student has failed even to recognize the intended outcomes of the exercise. The language profile in T3 shows a similar lack of focus. The student's account contains a mixture of description and prescription; she attempts to explain what a language profile is, coupled with brief references to her own experiences:

Language profile deals with life history about yourself. It tells where you are born and where you are started your school. What was your home language by that time.

At your school what was to supposed to speak, Tswana or English. By the time at school we supposed to speak English but to mine it is difficult because I do not know English very well.

Because our neighbours were speakers of two language. They help me how to speak and write English.

Language profile summarise what we after completing your studies. Are you rest or going further your studies to other places. where you studying other language.

When you are study at school you must to know Tswana, Xhosa, Zulu not knowing your Home language only. You must know all language.

In spite of the obvious weaknesses in the answer, the student was awarded a pass mark for the attempt at self-reflective language awareness. However her performance in T5 showed a similar failure to apply new knowledge to her personal experience and so make it her own:

These feelings related to sense of success because when you experiences as a language learner we can see how English is very important to know it. To know it, it does not meant we must forget other subjects. It meant that one of the good day will be a success in the future.

In analysing and assessing the student's answers, it is difficult to separate linguistic and cognitive skills. The following extracts from the student's journal seem to suggest the absence of both:

- *My initial impressions and feeling about studying English at University is to improve my language and skill. It helps me when I am at the interviews talking with other people. It helps in communicating with Manager or someone who I am knowing.*
- *This units [Unit 2] show people that when you are not educated you can [sic] get job easily because of knowing how to speak English to other person or writing English.*
- *Journals that have made since the beginning of module views and perceptions changed by change grammar and English as a standard. The using of pidgin English and by spoken and written English. By introducing various Englishes in the whole module. How Englishes have many different ways of using. Because it tells about different people which uses its own language.*

In T7 and T10 the student's responses clearly indicate that she has failed to grasp the fundamental concept of language variation, and lacks problem-solving skills. Her attempts at analysis in the first section of T7 show her floundering hopelessly. For example:

- *Gadaram in pidgin English version is similar to the standard gathered (pot is used in the standard English[])*
- *sohm in pidgin English version is similar to the standard precious (time is used in the standard English[])*

In the second part she seems to be struggling towards an understanding of the idea of language variation, but the meaning is obscured by almost impenetrable syntax:

'English' found in texts 14 it has various words which can not understandable. In this text words are not written well. There are written in some other way that we can not know whether it is the way it was written to other like Singapore. In Singapore they try to simply English but according to the South Africans this English words are not suitable. They try to speak according to the writings.

In all her tasks the student's writing is characterized by an apparently complete ignorance of even the most elementary conventions of English syntax. The following is an extract from T10:

An Indian carried case with yellow shoes was passing his temperature. His heart was still beating and they took him back to his straw. He was just straw with blankets. Chucked over it.

The sentiments expressed in the essay on literature defy analysis or explanation:

Literature is very important to everyone because it contains many things in it. For example when we read book, it has an information message and guide us. But others book like Shakespeares [sic] and Macbeth have not interested to us. Because it is a comedy it is the storie that have not the beginning and the ending. That's why I do not intended to read because the author tells about the second and third world war. That's why the comedy people are saying that it has a boring storie

She also clearly misread the instructions in the assignment. 'Other aspects of English' are not presented as alternative to literature but are interpreted as an aspect of the reading process:

The aspects of English that are more important we must read English slowly to understand what the author or writer what to say to us. Read carefully and concentration on your reading knowing you are taking information. And when you are reading, take the information fact not relevant things and take notes what you are reading.

In her supplementary assignment, Student 49 offers reasons for not achieving the outcomes of the module. Initially she appears to be saying that she was one of the late registrants: *'To fail English 101 is the poor attendance in lecture and to come late since we were starting lecture'*. Other reasons are not having the resource book from the beginning, not discussing work with other students, reluctance to consult the lecturer for clarification about tasks and the journal, and not reading the task instructions carefully. The tone of the assignment suggests great

insecurity: a student completely out of her depth and unable to help herself:

And to fail to achieve a passmark is that I'm afraid of asking a question to Mr Butler during lecture what he was saying something which I am not understand. I am afraid to go to his office since the beginning of English 101 module. I do not understand English 101 for example Journal since we were started I do not know the word "journal" is a heading or writting but at last I find out that is a sort of work to be done every unit.

Student 47⁴⁷ (average: 46%) spoke Setswana as a mother tongue and described her English as average, having obtained a D second language higher grade symbol for matric. In the questionnaire she comments: *'The lecturer must bear in mind that students we are not exposed to lecturing, they were taught, and try to make English simpler'*.

She failed T2 through misunderstanding the question. Since the examples in class were of place names in Mafikeng, she assumed that she would have to comment on the same area in her task (even though the instructions clearly state that students should write about *any area with which they were familiar*). She did not take up the opportunity to submit a replacement task, but managed to pass T3. Misunderstanding the requirements of T5 resulted in a grade of 30 %. Here, instead of reflecting on her own feelings about the English language, she attempted an analysis of the poem in the unit. Even this was performed badly, as she failed to recognize the metaphorical nature of the language in the poem. Not surprisingly, she finds the poem difficult to understand:

The writer confuses the reader, and asked themselves question when he impresses all the ladies with 'dumela ausi' or 'moratiwa'. When did he reached the age of knowing how to speak, and when did he learn how to greet elderly people?

The same problem of not addressing the topic is found in the later tasks as well. In the essay on literature, for example, she indicates a preference for 'literature from the past in Setswana', although the essay questions clearly indicate that the discussion should involve literature written in English. Later, under the heading of poetry, she again comments on 'literature from the past':

It gives more insight about how black people have been treated by whites. How

⁴⁷In 1998, Student 47 had failed (with an average mark of 40%) ENG 116, the first semester course that was subsequently replaced by ENG 101 and ENG 102.

apartheid system was like towards blacks. The blacks had to work hard for whites especially at mines, but they were earning low salaries. Pressures of apartheid system forces them to deteriorate further, by being addicted to alcohol and drugs.

Whereby the mother had to dump the baby, because she was unemployed, the mother would not be able to take care of the baby by providing clothing, shelter and food for her; the poem is An abandoned bundle. During the night white police men were patrolling on the streets, not allowing blacks to move around ten o'clock.

Perhaps surprisingly, the student's journal does reveal a level of self reflection: she considers her role as learner, her relationship with her lecturer, and displays a degree of language awareness that is usually lacking in the tasks. The following extracts suggest a student of greater ability than the task grades would imply:

- ↪ *I was so shocked to be given rules and regulations by the lecturer. But it proved to me that Mr Butler, he is a straight forward person and could be fair to himself and to the students too. I was little bit nervous whether could I make it? Because I heard many stories about the difficulties of English from other students. And I told myself that I will make it even if it is difficult.*
- ↪ *During my first lecture, I felt frustrated of not understanding whether the lecturer might understand written essays of mine or what will happen at the end of the course, because he is not an African.*
- ↪ *One friend of my father visited him at home, so he felt uncomfortable holding a flower with his hand, and asked me to find himself a checkers. You know I spend about (45 minutes) forty five minutes looking for a checkers plastic bag. When he came to store room, he asks me what I've been looking for, I told him that I'm looking for a checker's plastic bag and laughed at me and explained to me that any plastic bag he regard it as checkers plastic bag.*
- ↪ *It is interesting for me as a student of English to be given an opportunity to raise out my opinion about the previous module. It shows that the lecturer was sure about his work, and he was expecting everyone of us in his class to pass the module. It wasn't come the way he was expecting or expected the performance to be. According to my view, he is trying to correct his weakness or his wrong doings to make students pass. He is trying to look for solutions. There is no way that the lecturer can fail the students, because he is aware that the course is costly. English becomes difficult to other students like me, but others it is simple.*
- ↪ *May you please Sir, allow me to pay a visit to you, at least twice in a week to give short questions and mark them immediately to check or prove whether am I improving or not.*

In the supplementary assignment, the student analyses the factors that she believed contributed

to her failure. Like the others, she found it difficult to adapt to the demands of university study, which she found completely unlike school: *'I was able to perform well at school and what is required of me to do was perfect'*. This knowledge created a sense of insecurity that only made matters worse. Although she acknowledges that she might be responsible for her own failure, the dominant mood of the essay is of suppressed and inarticulate frustration verging on anger:

The marks that were been allocated for those tasks were demanding a lot. The lecturer could have been [sic] given at least fifty percent in each tasks instead of hundred [sic] percent. There are times when I thought that I have tried all my best in doing tasks, but when results comes, you are unsatisfied with the marks or stated that you [sic] were irrelevant. I do realize that I am unable to express myself clearly. The lecturer is very strict in giving marks. I should think that the department of English should try to help students like me, to know and understand their methods of teaching, how to tackle their work, by giving extra classes on Saturdays, it might help.

Students 65, 49 and 47 all obtained average marks of below 50% and so, in terms of university regulations, failed the module. In the case of the first two, they also conspicuously failed to reach the outcomes of the module. Their work, which has been quoted at some length, is generally indicative of the standard of others in the core class who failed the module. All have in common an extremely low competence in the English language. Most, as mentioned in their own journals, found it impossible to adjust to the demands of university study. Those who were allowed to register late were usually the most badly affected. Most significantly, these students appeared to lack any kind of background knowledge or schemata on which they could usefully draw in their English studies. This may, in part, be attributable to poor judgement on my part in selecting and presenting materials; on the other hand, it is difficult to imagine that any teaching strategy, however imaginative, could compensate for the glaring gaps in knowledge about basic geography, history or even contemporary South African politics that are apparent in the work of the first two students.

Another feature typical of students who failed to achieve the outcomes of the module was the apparent lack of self awareness about their lack of skills in English. Most described their competence as 'good' or 'fair', or even 'perfect' and seemed genuinely surprised at their poor grades, even in this module where more stress was laid on content than on linguistic competence. In many cases the reaction by the student is to shift the responsibility away from themselves. The most obvious manifestation of this is when the lecturer or the university is

held responsible for their failure, either in having unrealistic expectations or in not providing adequate resources. This was the gist of the comments made by Student 47. Reactions of this kind are probably partly psychological defence mechanisms to save face and partly indications of the widely different 'realities' of the various people involved in the education process. However, an equally noticeable tendency is for the same defensive posture to be adopted when difficulty is experienced in interpreting a text: the student's lack of perspective often results in the *writer* being 'blamed' for the reader's poor linguistic or literary competence. Thus, Student 47, after misreading the poem, accuses the poet of 'confusing' the reader.

Students 7, 76 and 78 represent those students who managed to achieve the outcomes of the module satisfactorily.

Student 7 (average: 54%) was a Setswana speaker, claimed an average competence in English, and achieved a matric D second language higher grade. In her comments on the questionnaire, she expressed her wish to improve her proficiency in English.

Her writing in T2 shows clear evidence of language awareness. Her answer, however, illustrates the danger of tasks that aim at developing students' skills and knowledge by appealing to their personal experience. Unlike the students discussed above, who did not seem able to make any link between their lives and the texts with which they were confronted, this student represents a tendency in the opposite direction. For her, the personal experience became the entire focus of her attention, rather than the point of departure for a new learning experience. Her keen awareness of the socio-political uses of language blurred her focus on the task itself. The full answer is quoted below:

I live in the township called Kanana of which it is situated in Rustenburg where the boers lived, they used to called Rustenburg in the olden days Rust-in-die-berg. They build up the stature of old dead Boers in town, naming the streets in town after the dead Boers. Right now, we have the hospital called Paul Kruger hospital of which it was only used by the Boers and it is named after their leader Paul Kruger. After the 1994 elections some names of streets and places were changed. But the Boers even now go to an extend of addressing the places with the names of Afrikaans even though they have been changed names. They don't want to use new names. Even now the Paul Kruger hospital is still called like that of which it is a symbol of apartheid is still there. The reason I say this is because some of them wants to be addressed as "My bas", and young one's as "Die Klein Master" of which it is not allowed in the new constitution.

The student's personal anger has given her insight into the role that language plays in everyday life, especially as a symbol of power. In this she has grasped one of the main points of the unit. But that same anger has apparently clouded her thinking: her analysis becomes incomprehensible and she loses her focus on the topic under discussion. Her emotions seem also to have affected her language: her writing is characterized by badly structured sentences and careless repetition. This impression is reinforced by her own reflections in her journal, where she wrote of Unit 2:

I find this unit very much challenging than Unit 1. In this unit the language used, take us back to the history of the past (apartheid). I find it very tough because it brings back old memories. But it also teach us where we come from and how the Boers called Mafikeng in the olden days. At first I didn't understand but as time go on, I got the picture of what we talking about. I also enjoyed this unit very much even though it is very challenging

Of even greater interest is the very next entry in her journal, her reactions to the poem, "Digging", in Unit 3:

This poem I find it very challenging. The poem uses a lot of comparison. He compares the pen with the spade. It also have the memories of the olden days (apartheid) whereby the blacks used the spades to work for the Boers. But it is also interesting poem I enjoyed it very much.

For both T2 and T3 her grade was 50%. There are signs of improvement in T5 (for which she received 65%); here the grammatical errors are not as striking as in the first two tasks:

My feelings for learning another language is that, sometimes you'll try to speak that language with people who really know the language and you don't pronounce the words clearly, they will just laugh at you, and not correcting you. At the end of time you'll seem like a fool. Sometimes you'll fill like you could just drop that language and stick strictly to your language.

The remaining tasks were graded at 50%. T7 and the final task, although adequately performed, contained a number of errors and inaccuracies. In T10 she appeared to have misunderstood the question; the first part identifies a few features of spoken English but also contains a great deal of irrelevant information; in the second she writes in the first person, rather than reporting the incidents in the third person.

Her final journal entry sums up her experience of the module. It also seems an accurate

reflection of her performance from the lecturer's point of view:

We finished up the first module. We are going to start the next module I think in two weeks time. I hope the next module will be a lot simpler than the first module. I am so relieved and happy that we have finished the first module because it was giving me a lot of problems and stress. Huh, the mystery is over!!!

Student 76 (average: 59%) was Setswana speaking, described her English as average, and obtained an E matric symbol, second language higher grade. On the questionnaire she expressed her desire to improve her proficiency in English: *'Since I am not as good as I want in English, I expect to study more about english language'*.

Her performance in T2, T3 and T5 shows initiative and observation. Her writing is generally fluent although there are frequent grammatical errors. The following extracts from the three tasks will give a sense of the extent to which she achieved the outcomes of the units:

- *The other block in the Huhudi township was called Ndukaye and it was named after a famous man who used to sell meat and also resided in that block. It was recently changed to Galeng block, which is the name of the mayor of Vryburg who will be remembered by his contribution in the struggle in the early 1980s during the apartheid regime.*
- *I was born and brought up in Vryburg and attended school there up to standard 8. My home language was Sotho but I can speak Setswana. When I completed my standard 8 my parents sent me to Mmabatho to complete my high school education.*
- *I also use Afrikaans but not as much as I use English, and as I grew up I tend to have a negative attitude towards because in our area it was regarded as a "Boer" language. But when I am angry I speak English to my husband because I think I express my feelings well in it.*
- *I do not have a problem to analyse my feelings the problem is how I do it, how to put the words together i.e. grammar and to use tenses. But now the way Mr Butler is lecturing English it assists me to catch what I have left undone.*

Her journal does not contain any remarkable insights, but is generally fluent and intelligently expressed. She was one of the few students who rejected the study of literature in her final task: the rejection was, nevertheless, presented as part of a reasonable and persuasive argument. She writes:

I do not see the importance of studying or reading literature in English course,

not English as a whole but at first year level. I think at first year level we should study the background of English and literature should be introduced from second year.

I think it is important to study literature from second year level because there are some students who study English not as a major but as an ancillary. I do not know much about literature but the little that I understand about it, I think it is important for the students who are majoring with English.

The aspect that I think are important in English are like grammar awareness and the language itself. Grammar awareness is important in a sense that one can have a light on how to express themselves in a grammatically right way. It is also important to can demonstrate the basic grammar awareness in our everyday life of using English.

The other important aspect is language. I think it is necessary that we learn English language to be able to communicate properly. Through language everything is done, especially, in to-day's life that English is an international language. It is important to see to it that we understand each and every bit of it.

However, the student's performance in T7 and T10 followed the typical pattern of the class. Like many others she seemed not to be able to apply her linguistic skills in tasks that required generalized, abstract expression. Although interpretable, the following extract from T7 (in which she attempts to analyse the language in Text 14) contrasts with the clarity and fluency of her writing in the earlier tasks:

In Singlish a form of a question is noticed by the word what at the beginning of the sentence. In English the short sound words are prolonged or became long in Singlish and the long sound ones become short in Singlish. The grammar is simplified and it sounds like Singlish Language because the student who wrote it is from Singapore where Singlish is widely spoken.

Student 78's (average: 59%) performance followed a pattern very similar to that of the previous student. Her mother tongue was also Setswana. She described her competence in English as excellent, and recorded a C second language higher grade symbol for matric. Her self confidence is evident in her pert response to the question in the questionnaire about her expectations of the course: *'I have no idea. I have been studying English all my life. What else is left? Maybe what's left of it might interest me'*.

Her language profile (T3) describes the multilingual and multicultural milieu in which she grew up, in contrast to the monolingual rural background of most of the other students. The exposure to English that this gave her goes some way to explaining her proficiency and

sense of confidence. She writes:

When I came to Mafikeng in the early 80s I was exposed to the English language. I had to know the language since I attended church with some White people. I ended up being fluent in the language since I had a friend then who is White but originally a Persian speaking girl. We live in a suburb called Riviera Park, so it became easy to adapt to the language because back then the place was full of English and Afrikaans speaking Whites ... Apart from the three languages mentioned I always loved picking up words from Arabic since my dear friend Sayeh spoke the language with her parents. I would ask her the meaning of some word I found interesting in her conversation with her parents.

Not surprisingly, she scored above average marks in T2 and T3, where her writing is fluent, generally accurate and shows linguistic observation and analytical skills. T5, although written well enough, lacks depth and earned her only 50%. Here her confidence in her proficiency seemed to work against her: her answer suggested that she had little reason to think very deeply on something that came so naturally to her. This attitude is suggested in the first paragraph: *'I do not encounter many problems as a student of English. Being used to speaking and writing the language everyday helps a lot. So far I feel that I am succeeding'*. Her journal shows similar fluency and wit, clearly achieving the outcome of language awareness:

I never thought that one word like "boer" can have so many meanings like what I experienced today. I am not a politics lover but from what I knew then this word meant farmer but today many opinions were brought up so many meaning just erupted from nowhere.

It really shows how much someone knows a lot about nothing. I really enjoyed class today because of this particular experience. It shows how different people can interpret one word into so many things that you never thought about yourself.

I could now understand what it means when people say bringing up the culture of learning. Today's class was an example of that.

Her comment here echoes my own reaction to the class on Unit 2, as recorded in my journal (Journal:16 February 2000).

In spite of the fluent confidence of the student's writing, she makes a number of grammatical errors, typically the kind that might go unnoticed in spoken language. But she seems partly aware of this weakness herself, as a later journal entry indicates:

I also do not find any aspect of English difficult not even the writing. The only thing I turn to miss now and then is spelling. You could understand exactly what I have written but with lots of mistakes. Speaking is easier since half of my relatives speak the language and also having two white uncles contributes to my easy flow of language.

Nevertheless her performance followed the typical pattern of lower marks in the later tasks. In T7, her comments, although not in themselves incorrect, lack coherence; she makes a number of vague statements which do not reveal any depth of analysis and, in some, she does not focus on any particular text, but makes vague generalizations that might apply to any of them. Though the task was given a pass mark, her performance did not suggest above average skills in the required outcome of recognizing the characteristics of regional varieties of English. T10 similarly received a narrow pass mark of 50%: here again the student was not able to demonstrate the kind of abstract analytical skills that the task demanded: instead of describing features of spoken English, she gives specific examples from the text. (These examples are, however, well chosen, confirming the impression created in her earlier tasks and journal, of reasonable communicative skills in the language.) In the final task (on the place of literature in the study of English), her grammatical inaccuracy is more noticeable than in the more colloquial context of the language profile and the journal, where it gives the impression of deliberate informality. For example:

I would like to read short stories and drama. Dramas are interesting because the [sic] keep you in suspense and always make you want to read more, as to short stories I like the happy ending and sometimes can be funny and so silly. I cannot say much about novels and poetry since I am not crazy about them. I find poetry too boring for my liking. I find novels also boring because it seems like the story will never end, to me they are just like soapies.

The remaining three students in the focus group are representative of those whose grades were regularly 65%, marking them as students showing ‘an above average competence in the required skills or knowledge’. Distinction marks (80%) were rare, and when awarded, only had the effect of raising the average mark slightly.

The students in this category might best be characterized as having had all the attributes conspicuously absent in the first sub-group. Their general linguistic ability was noticeably better than the majority of the class; they appeared to have the ability to cope with the intellectual and psychological demands of university study and they were generally better

informed and more widely read. Significantly, they also often tended to be more realistic, or even modest, in their self assessment of their competence in English. This, in contrast to the weaker students, might be attributed both to greater self confidence and to better knowledge and experience in the language.

Student 19 (average: 63%) was Setswana speaking, described his English as excellent, obtained a C matric symbol in second-language higher grade for English. His responses on the questionnaire reflected a desire to improve his proficiency in English.

His first task, the language profile, is well written. Contrary to popular perception among the students, however, his proficiency in English was not the result of attending a multiracial school. He attended secondary school in Kraaipan (the same village outside Mafikeng which Student 65, to his detriment, apparently left for Gauteng). The methods employed by his teachers, while questionable from a pedagogical point of view, appeared, in his case at least, to have been successful: *'I started learning a lot of english and afrikaans as our principal instilled a rule that he will punish anyone who is caught speaking setswana. This is english and afrikaans vocabulary improved'*. His profile also shows skills in language awareness as he records the difference between Setswana in Mafikeng and in Kraaipan. The second task demonstrates similar skills of observation. He extends the initial class discussion on the names of streets in Mafikeng, turning his tasks into a thorough, well-researched analysis. Not surprisingly, in T5, he records his attitude to the study of English as positive. An entry in his journal suggests the quality of his work: intelligent observation that applies and expands on the class work, even if the language in which it is expressed is sometimes at fault:

I have realised here in school that people, especially around school/UNW are always mixing english with their mother tongue. Like last time in the COMSOC meeting, most of the speakers were using setswana, and words like, "You'll find that", "In fact", "You know" were used frequently. The way the female students speak the language is through their noses. They like speaking in americanized accent. Like the other one at the cafeteria, when she exclaimed she'll say "Oh my gaard", referring to "Oh my God!"

His performance followed the usual pattern of dropping in T7, although it picked up again in T10. In both cases he reflected on his performance in his journal: his grade for T7 was low because he was not certain about what was expected of him, and to prevent the

situation repeating itself, he consulted me before submitting T10. Again, his entries show the journal being put to good use, in the manner intended. As a student, he was not passive: he showed himself able to reflect on his own performance and take control of his own learning. As before, the contrast with the weaker students is obvious.

Student 19's comments in the essay on literature indicate a positive attitude, which he extends to literature in other languages. Its justification for him lies in its capacity to expand on the readers' knowledge.

Student 82 (average: 63%) was a Setswana speaker who described his English as average and received a matric C symbol for second-language higher grade. Like most other students in the focus group, he hoped to gain increased proficiency in English. His writing was generally fluent, although sometimes inappropriately colloquial, as the following extract from T2 shows:

I think the name 'MAFIKENG' has been through hell over a lengthy period, but I'm not sure if everything is alright now. It was known as Mafikeng or Mahikeng before the Boers come and change it to Mafeking just because they were unable to pronounce Mafikeng well. The siege of the town passed and then Bophuthatswana got in.

In his language profile (T3), he demonstrates a well-developed language awareness and describes his exposure to a number of languages other than his mother tongue: Afrikaans, English, Zulu, German. Again, the writing is fluent and intelligent, if occasionally inaccurate:

I met a German friend five years ago after moving to Mmabatho. We spoke English, but she was bad at it, I kept on rectifying her mistakes all the time. She insisted on teaching me German, I learnt a lot though I've now forgot everything. All I can remember now is how to say 'I love you' to a German girl in her mother tongue. For now, English and Setswana are languages to speak, for me.

In his journal, the student shows further evidence of the ability to reflect on and express his awareness of language:

I would play with the children of my mother's boss. Communication would be hard for us. So I'll mix all the languages, English, Tswana and Zulu and also

use my hands. I would say: "Neil, me funi ice cream not sweets, man". The word 'me' would always be in what ever I say. I would sa many things like:

- "Hey come play me" for "hey come play with me"*
- "Me, grade two school," for "I am doing grade two at school"; showing two with my fingers.*

I'll say a lot, but I was glad those kids understood me.

The student's ability to use different registers of English is also apparent in a task from Unit 11, which he did in his journal. The task requires students to rewrite a formal invitation as an informal note.

Leo

Hey, how' you doing man, you've not shown up for some time now, since the last time we were together at Tim's 21st party. Now, again man I want you to attend with me a lecture, an Inaugural lecture of our Head of Department. It will be funky after the lecture man, we will do it like there is never tomorrow, phone me for more details.

See ya'

Nev

In spite of the minor errors in grammar and punctuation, his answer demonstrates clearly that he has achieved the outcome of Unit 11: an ability to 'demonstrate a critical sensitivity to the various styles and registers available in the English language'. That he is also consciously aware of the need for this skill is suggested in his comments in T5. Here, he mentions the increasingly important role that English plays in his everyday life, suggesting that it might even take the place of his mother tongue: already it is '*becoming rooted in [his] heart*'. But he goes on to mention that, as a student, he also needs the language: '*How will I express myself, criticise, argue and debate if I don't study English?*' It is therefore not surprising that he, unlike most other students in the class, is able to make the transition to the expository style required in T7. His journal entries have already shown evidence of analytical skills, although expressed in an informal register. The following extract from T7 demonstrates his ability to combine this skill with a formal, academic style:

Singlish is also not far from Standard English. The people who speak it cannot pronounce 'r' so they'll say 'l' instead of 'r'. Like lice for rice and light for right. Sentence construction is also bad as compared to Standard English, for example Chan Wei Meng said, "I looksee first", rather than I want to look around first. Singular and plural forms are not recognised. It is shown in the following quotation: "they is vely cheep and new".

His analysis of spoken English in T10 is also systematic and clear, even though it only

merited a narrow pass of 50%, owing to its poor presentation and brevity.

In his essay on literature, he says that he disliked literature at school: Shakespeare was too difficult and African novels were boring, being '*full of the politics of Central African countries*'. He, nevertheless, believes that the study of English should include literature, linking his study of the varieties of English in ENG 101 to their depiction in literary texts (thus unconsciously endorsing Statement 5).

Student 66 (average: 67%), a Xhosa speaker, was the only student in the focus group who did not have Setswana as a mother tongue. Although he was later to stand out as one of the best students in the class (in my perception, confirmed by my 'critical friend' who observed a tutorial group later in the year), his own perception of his competence in English was that it was 'average'. In the questionnaire he comments: '*I hope the lecturer would be sympathetic to students whose mother tongue is not English*'. In his journal he expresses similar reservations about his abilities:

I think about my understanding of the English language. I translate every English version into my mother tongue – Isixhosa – for better understanding. And when I reply into English I will then blast [?] in English. This consumes a lot of time. I think this happens to every average black South African. How am I going to talk with my lecturers, especially Mr Butler? I hope he understands the situation we, black South Africans, are in.

Again, in T5, he shows the same realism about his progress:

No success comes overnight. We should be very patient in failure. Failure is part of learning. We should show more commitment. We should not assume that we know better. One learns until one dies. The course is here for the taking. We can overcome any hurdles.

Paradoxically, it was his very modesty that showed his confidence, which, in turn helped him to do well in the course. He could afford to be humble. Linguistically and intellectually, he was equipped to deal with the material in ENG 101, make the knowledge his own, and use it in a critical way. The following extracts from the journal show this happening:

Investigative journalists change their language and the way they talk to get information from unsuspecting people. This is shown in Text 10. Alex uses a particular way of language – non standard – that would be familiar to the poor and homeless people of Benoni.

In Text 18 the history of English is given. English is a Germanic language. This implies that all Germanic language speakers may be very distant relatives. Not so. The language was forced to others after the colonisation by other or English speaking peoples. The missionaries in South Africa taught the language in the guise of Christianity. Even to-day non-English people was given English names.

As pointed out earlier, this student offers a contrast to the less successful students, some of whom seem to be out of their depth from the very start, lacking even the most basic skills necessary. Having no realistic criteria against which to measure themselves or background knowledge to refer to, they are unable to learn from their mistakes.

Student 66's work in T2 and T3 shows intelligent introspection and observation and the tasks are generally well written. In both cases he effectively applies his schematic knowledge to the task. The following extracts illustrate this:

In my hometown there are places like Guba. The word simply means 'grind'. The place was given the name because the first mealie-grinding machine in the area was owned by a man from there.... Our hospital is called, unofficially, Nomkazi because the name belonged to the first matron. Officially, the place is called Glen Grey Hospital.

At high school I became aware of the importance of English. This happened after I visited my father's employers in Worcester in the Western Cape or Boland. They were Jewish and we communicated in English. However they spoke Afrikaans to my father. My father could not speak English.

Like the previous student, he was also able to use a writing style appropriate to T7 and T10. The following extract is from T7:

Singapore English version is different from other Englishes in the following ways:

- 1. Some words are shortened. This gives an impression that this version is spoken faster. One word which is shortened is 'spik' for speak.*
- 2. An r changes to an l in some instances, e.g. 'lice' instead of rice; 'Maly' for Mary.*
- 3. The last words of some sounds are lengthened, e.g. 'mee' and 'manee' in the second stanza.*

His journal shows evidence of reading beyond the requirements of the course. This is also apparent in his essay on literature, where his comments are, in comparison with most other

students in the class, informed and critical. He argues that both modern and historical literature should be studied but then goes on to qualify this statement:

Modern literature relates to issues that are familiar to everybody. Of course, modern literature would use modern language to facilitate better understanding. Also literature from the past should be covered. The only misgiving is that it is only William Shakespeare's works that dominate literature of the past. There should have been other writers beside Shakespeare. Shakespeare's books have been studied for too much at high school.

Andrew Donaldson of Sunday Times comments that 'it is more useful and culturally enriching for both African and White children to watch a play such as The Zulu than being forced to read and watch plays by a European fossil like Shakespeare who has as much relevance for children in South Africa as a play about reindeers in the North Pole (Sunday Times, The new Dumb comes up trumps. March 12, 2000). Need we say more about Shakespeare?'

5.2.5 Student opinion

The use of the students' reflective essay on literature as a research instrument was referred to in the discussion of the core class in section 5.2.4.1. In this section the findings are summarized.

The students' response in their essays revealed an overwhelming approval of the place of literature in English studies. Interestingly, the reasons that they offered in support of literature were very similar to those usually given by the 'experts': improvement of reading, grammar, vocabulary and general language skills; development of creative, imaginative and mental faculties; broadening of knowledge and experience; and a source of moral guidance (views summarized in Statements 1, 2, 3, 6, 8 and 9). The essays also yielded some interesting insights into the students' knowledge, perceptions of, and attitudes to literature.

The essays were analysed according to the writers' responses to the key issues in the instructions for the task:

1. Should literature be included in the study of English? If so,
2. which literary genres should be studied?
3. Should the texts chosen be contemporary, from the past, or both?
4. From which geographical area should the texts come?

If the answer to the first question was in the negative, the question to be answered was: 'What aspect of English studies is more important?' In answering these questions, students were expected to justify and explain their responses.

My analysis of the data was both quantitative and qualitative. The responses to and discussion of each of the four questions were interpreted, categorized and enumerated. Since the discussion was meant to be open-ended, some students offered several reasons for each of their choices, while others gave only one. All were nevertheless recorded and included in measuring the support for that particular point. Some students, however, did not address all issues outlined in the topic. In some cases, these omissions appeared to be because the writers had not understood what was expected of them; in others, it might have been the result of deliberate avoidance, owing to ignorance of the issues involved.

There was overwhelming support in favour of literature. Of the core class of 90 students, 85 students thought that literature should be studied; three did not; one did not wish to express an opinion; and one student did not submit the essay.⁴⁸

The three students who rejected the study of literature cited the following reasons: irrelevance to their chosen area of study and vocation; their perception that in the past students had failed the literature components of English courses while passing language; and that literature was for pleasure rather than study. They were unanimous in selecting grammar as their greatest need, since they believed that this it would lead to improved language skills; and that literary study would be meaningless without a proper knowledge of grammar.

In the essays of the remaining 85 students, a large number (64 responses) gave improved proficiency in English as one, or the only, benefit of the study of literature. Specific areas mentioned included grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing skills, exposure to the language and increased language awareness. Another widely cited reason (37 responses) was that literature increases one's knowledge about life: this included the claims

⁴⁸In a survey of attitudes to the study of French and Spanish literature held by foreign language students, Davis *et al.* (1992), contrary to expectations, found them to be generally positive. Their findings also suggested that innovations to the existing curriculum and instructional practices would probably increase this attitude. Stern (1980) also reports positive student feedback on the use of drama in language learning.

that it encourages self introspection and exposes one to important issues. A smaller number of responses referred to the development of literary competence (six responses) or analytical and critical skills (five responses). Some mentioned that literature was also fun and interesting (five responses), contrasting it with an unrelieved diet of grammar; it could also develop creativity (three responses). Reference was also made to literature's aesthetic qualities (one response), its function as a carrier of culture (four responses), its vocational uses (one response), its status as an authentic use of English (three responses), and (here presumably influenced by work done in the module) its depiction of varieties of world English (three responses). These responses effectively include all the arguments expressed in favour of 'language through literature' in Statements 1 - 9.

Three students (including the one who did not want to venture an opinion) appeared to have missed the point of the self-reflective exercise (or, perhaps, the power of their lecturer to change anything) and simply pointed out that literature was included in the syllabus and therefore unavoidable. Five students either did not offer a justification for their answer, or were not able to express themselves clearly enough for analysis.

In responding to the second question, a number of responses (26 responses) suggested that all literary genres should be studied. They generally justified their choice on the grounds that each genre has its own characteristic features and merits, and therefore a complete study of literature would need to include all of them. Other students, however, chose one or a combination of genres for special attention. Most frequently mentioned were short stories (29 responses), followed by poetry (24 responses), drama (20 responses) and novels (nineteen responses). Individual mentions were made of oral literature and autobiography. Eleven students did not respond to this aspect of the topic at all.

The justifications offered for individual genres varied greatly, which made precise qualitative analysis too cumbersome. Nevertheless, by grouping similar responses into categories, I was able to identify clear trends. Short stories were popular mainly for their brevity and because they were perceived to be relatively easy. Drama and novels were also seen to be accessible, the former because it encourages reader identification, the latter because they extend the reader's knowledge of life. The surprising popularity of poetry (in view of the comments in the journals, noted earlier) was modified by several references (nine responses) to its perceived difficulty, although generally those who mentioned this aspect did

not think that poetry should be excluded for that reason. One student, in fact, cited its difficulty for the inexperienced reader as a *reason* for it to be taught. Other arguments in favour of poetry included its creative use of language, its brevity, and the fact that it deals with serious human concerns. A total of 27 essays did not include any justification of genres chosen: this includes the eleven that did not address the issue of preferred genres at all.

In their responses to the next question, a third of the students (30 responses) thought that both contemporary literature and texts from the past should be studied. Reasons advanced included the necessity for diachronic comparison, the development of a broad knowledge and awareness of language change and the perception that the present develops out of, and is influenced by, the past. A few students added the proviso that literary texts from the past should only be included if they are easily accessible to the modern reader.

A number of students (25 responses) preferred modern literature. This was perceived as being more accessible, both in language and content. A minority (eight responses) wished to study only literature from the past, for the insight and knowledge that this would provide. There were 22 students who did not comment on the issue; 28 students did not or could not justify a choice.

As far as the question of the geographical origin of the texts was concerned, the most common preference (35 responses) was for a selection from throughout the English-speaking world, for the variety and comparative possibilities that this would offer. As before, some students qualified this choice with the expectation that the texts would be accessible. Almost as many (25 responses) suggested a concentration on literature from South Africa or Africa generally (four responses), since this would reflect more closely their own background, enable them to learn more about their own country, and contribute to the development of an indigenous literary culture. A few (six responses) preferred non-South African literature, since they believed that it would expand their existing knowledge. In fifteen of the essays, the issue was not examined; in 21 essays, the writers' reasons for the choice were not given.

The statistics emerging from this quantitative analysis, although pointing to a clear approval of literature, do not suggest any equally clear patterns of preference in the choice of texts to be studied. A qualitative reading of the essays, furthermore, suggests that these statistics are also often misleading and should not be accepted uncritically, even though some

interesting insights into the class's perceptions about literature are apparent in them. The discussion below will attempt to justify this conclusion.

The gaps and omissions in many of the essays have already been mentioned. The failure of the writers to respond to all aspects of the essay topic means that the statistics are not a complete reflection of the class's choices and preferences. In other cases, students appeared to have misunderstood some of the questions. For example, they often supplied examples from African language literature in justification of their choices, wrote about literary texts they *had* studied in the past (rather than those that they thought *should* be studied) or appeared to confuse English literature with English studies or even the English language, generally. Poor expression in a number of cases meant that the writers' meanings had to be inferred, perhaps incorrectly. An even more problematic feature of the essays was that in many cases the students' comments on literature were uninformed, or apparently generalized from an extremely limited exposure to literature, such as texts studied at high school. The following extracts will illustrate these tendencies:

- ↪ *I enjoyed studing Master Harold and the boys by Alan Paton, Shaylock by Shakespear and Sizwe Banzi is dead also by Alan Paton.*
- ↪ *Novels are not so important because is like when you read magazines during your spare time. They are unusually [sic] used in schools.*
- ↪ *... as to short stories I like the happy ending, and sometimes can be funny and so silly.*
- ↪ *The study of literature can elliminate and reduce bias. The study of literature also serves as an eye opener to both illiterate and literate people. It may also promote the economic development, particularly at the stock exchange since the investors communicate using the medium English.*
- ↪ *Bessie Head is not boring like other literatures that write their novels about the past and they did not makes a sense to their storie.*
- ↪ *... short stories could be brief as it could be of which will encouage a person to be eager to tackle whatever the short story was all about like Shakespeare's books, the one that learnt me was Julius Caesar..*
- ↪ *... but it should not be the literature that is written in Old English, for example, books written by William Shakespeare, Thomas Hardy, James Hadley Chase, and other authors who use old English.*
- ↪ *The word literature refers to everything that have been written ...*

- ↪ *The reason why I like short stories most of it is the novels, drama and poetry; The author the style of writing is one we find somewhere he loses the meaning of what he is trying to deliver to the reader.*
- ↪ *Literature from the past is important than of the modern as you are only focusing on the past tense. They told about traditional doctors who could make the rain and some witch-crafts who could fly on the broomsticks.*
- ↪ *When I started reading English, I was so happy because I started reading Australian novels, Mills and Boon ... Even today I read Mills and Boon's books. I call them a wonderful literature.*

(My point in quoting the last extract is to point to the student's generalization of the *Mills and Boon* romances into 'Australian books', rather than to question her non-canonical reading preferences. The fluency of her writing, here and elsewhere, seems to point to the advantages of exposure to 'literature with a small "I"'.)

Even more telling than the comments quoted above is one that very succinctly suggests the place that literature probably had in the lives of most of the students: *'A novel is a writing made by its writer to be read on a specific event like by matric students who will be writing an examination on that novel or by the English students at a tertiary level'*.

There were, however, also some enthusiastic and articulate supporters of literature:

- ↪ *Literature to me is art, to me it is very necessary and very important in an English course. It is sort of an escape from the straight forward grammar that we have to know by heart, which is taught from the beginning of school years. It is sort of like, reaching the inner part of a person because you have to start to visualise what you are reading.*
- ↪ *Literature is what makes us human beings who we are, it gives us a sense of being in control of our destiny. It can be any other kind of literature depending on one's choice, the more you read the more you get a sense of understanding the world that we live in and all that is on it.*
- ↪ *Of course, yes, it is important to read and study literature in English in the sense that we want to learn English and for us to be fluent in English we must read everything which is written in English including literature book. If we only concentrate on language grammar the process of learning is going to be slow and we might even get bored unlike reading literature, while reading a story you become interested to know everything about the story and at the same time you are also learning a language.*

5.3 ENG 102: Introduction to textual analysis

5.3.1 Theoretical assumptions

In ENG 101, a variety of texts, literary and non-literary, had been used to illustrate and exemplify concepts in language. In the second module, the emphasis shifted to the texts themselves. The aim of the module was to develop the students' skills in textual analysis. In this way, it was assumed, the awareness of language that had been introduced in the first module would be consolidated and developed. The outcome for the module was stated as follows: *You can demonstrate skills in recognizing, analysing and creating different kinds of text.*

'Recognizing' involved an ability to identify and discriminate between the various styles, registers and conventions available in the English language and an understanding of their appropriate uses. These skills had been touched on in the later units in ENG 101: now, however, students would be expected to be able to articulate more clearly their understanding of textual variation – as suggested in the words 'analysing' and 'creating'. Analysis and creation were, however, conceived of as two techniques designed to achieve the same outcome: an increased sensitivity to the linguistic choices available to the competent user of the language.

While thus continuing the work begun in the first module, ENG 102 was also designed to lay the foundations for the more specialized literary studies in ENG 103. The approach used here, summed up in Statements 10 and 16, falls into the category of 'literature through language' and takes the form of elementary stylistics. In ENG 102, skills would be developed for systematic, close reading of any text: these skills could later be applied to the study of literary texts in particular. This transfer was, in fact, anticipated in the sequencing of the resource materials for the module by giving increasing prominence to literary texts and in the technique of comparing literary and non-literary texts, the latter usually from popular, relatively accessible sources. Comparison might involve highlighting the *similarities* between the two texts, with the aim of demystifying literature and showing that literariness is relative rather than absolute, as is suggested in Brumfit and Carter (1986b:10), Carter and Long (1991:101) and elsewhere, in the idea of a 'cline of literariness'. Equally, the *differences* might be emphasized as a way of pointing to the characteristics that are peculiar to literature.

The module also looked forward to the language focus of ENG104. Exposure to a variety of authentic texts would develop the students' linguistic and communicative skills.

The ability to use different styles of language in their appropriate contexts is a vital skill for all language users, perhaps even more important than achieving grammatical accuracy.

The introduction to the students' resource book for ENG 102 attempted to explain the theory underlying the module in terms accessible to the students. It is reproduced in full below:

The title of this module is "Introduction to Textual Analysis". It could also have been called "English in Action" because in it you are going to see how English is actually used in everyday life.

In the first module you were introduced, very briefly, to some of the concepts involved in the use and study of English. A variety of **texts** – poems, short stories, encyclopaedia entries, advertisements, transcripts from television shows, to name a few – were used to illustrate them. ENG 102 is also **text-based**: much of your work will involve the study of '**authentic**' **texts**. However, you will be asked to concentrate more on the texts themselves than you did in ENG 101. In particular you will need to think about how language has been used in these texts to create and communicate meaning. This is what is meant by **textual analysis**.

In analysing texts, we should ask ourselves two questions:

- **What** is the writer or speaker saying?
- **How** is he or she saying it?

The second question is usually more difficult to answer than the first, but it lies at the heart of the whole process of textual analysis.

Looking at language

When we analyse a text we look **at** language rather than **through** it. This distinction can be explained with the analogy of a **glass window**. Most windows are made of **clear glass** and, unless they are dirty or broken, we do not pay much attention to them. We just look through them to whatever lies on the other side. But there are also **stained glass** windows, the kind that are often found in churches or public buildings. Here the window itself is the focus of our attention as we admire its design and colours.

Most people treat language as they would a clear glass window: they look straight 'through' it to the message on the other side. They only become **aware** of language if for some reason its meaning is not transparent: for instance, speakers may not express themselves clearly, a reader may not know the meaning of certain words. Then language becomes like a dirty or broken window.⁴⁹

⁴⁹The sustained metaphor of the window is based on an idea in Falvey and Kennedy (1997b:3).

But sometimes language, like a stained glass window, attracts attention to itself. In poetry and advertisements, for example, *how* something is said is as important as – perhaps even more important than – *what* is said. In other words, the readers or listeners are invited to look **at** the language being used.

In ENG 101 you were encouraged to develop your language awareness and your skills in observation and analysis. In ENG 102 you have the opportunity of applying your knowledge and skills to the analysis and creation of English texts – even to the kind of text that most people would normally not examine very closely in their daily use of the language.

Approaches and techniques

Understanding how language has been used in a text is often easier if that text is compared with others of a different kind. This technique of contrast and comparison will be used throughout the module. Another approach to textual analysis is to try to create a similar text yourself: in this way you can put yourself in the place of the original writer and experience the same process of creating a text. For this reason, in ENG 102, **the development of writing skills** is given as much emphasis as the textual analysis mentioned in the title of the module.

An example might make these approaches to textual analysis clearer. Perhaps you know the traditional English children’s rhyme about Humpty-Dumpty:

TEXT 1

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall;
And all the King’s horses and all the King’s men
Couldn’t put Humpty together again.

Even if you had never heard the rhyme before, you should have been able to recognize features in it that are typical of certain kinds of poetry: the use of rhyme, rhythm, repetition and personification. You should, in other words, have been able to recognize Text 1 as a particular kind of text because of the way that language has been used in it.

Now read the following version of the same ‘story’:

TEXT 2

LONDON Well known personality Humpty Dumpty died tragically today when he fell off a wall near his home. Witnesses to the tragedy described it as a ‘great fall’. Although members of the Royal Cavalry, whose barracks are near Dumpty’s home, were on the scene within minutes, they were unable to save his life. A spokesman for the men expressed their regret. “We did our best, but we just couldn’t put Humpty together again,” he said.

Dumpty is survived by a wife, six children and twelve grandchildren.

The language used here is completely different from that used in Text 1. You should be able to recognize it as typical of the language of journalism and newspapers. Here Humpty Dumpty's fall is presented as if it has been an incident in real life, not just a children's fairy tale. The language use differs because Text 1 and Text 2 are different kinds of texts, written for different audiences and with different purposes in mind. Readers also *expect* to find certain kinds of language in certain kinds of texts and contexts: this knowledge is essential if one is to use language effectively. (If you found anything amusing in Text 2 it was probably because you did *not* expect to come across a reference to Humpty Dumpty in any context outside a children's book.)

Here is another kind of text, this time from a book *about* children's nursery rhymes. The writer is explaining the origin of "Humpty Dumpty".

TEXT 3

This extremely popular rhyme is, of course, a riddle. 'Humpty Dumpty' is an egg which, having fallen and broken, cannot be put together again. It is thought that the rhyme is very ancient indeed and it is known elsewhere in Europe in substantially the same form.

The kind of language used here is different from that used in both Text 1 and Text 2. Text 1 is **poetry**; this, like Text 2, is a form of non-fictional **prose**. It is obviously intended for adult readers rather than children. (Look, for example, at the vocabulary used in it.) But, although it has some similarities to Text 2, it also has significant differences: Text 2 has a distinctive journalistic style which is not found here.

And so on. We could probably go on playing this game for quite some time, creating and analysing different kinds of texts around the same theme. (For example, an advertisement for eggs could use the Humpty Dumpty story very effectively. This time you could say that Humpty Dumpty had *half a dozen* extra large children and a *dozen* medium grandchildren!).

In creating texts you need to use language appropriate to the *kind* of text it is. Analysis of a text, on the other hand, involves, not only recognizing it as a particular kind of text such as a poem or a newspaper report, but also being able to identify and describe the features that make it distinctive.

The ENG 102 module was divided into four units, less structured than those in the first module, but broadly developmental in their approach to textual analysis. In Unit 1, the relationship between a text and its context was briefly explored. The aim was to introduce the idea of textual analysis by raising students' awareness of the elementary (and usually unconscious) analysis involved in linking a piece of language to its probable source. Building

on this foundation, Unit 2 went on to provide a framework for systematic textual analysis. Unit 3 contained a bank of texts, chosen to illustrate the aspects of the framework, and provide practice in analysis. In Unit 4, the technique of comparison was used as a means of highlighting the distinctive features of texts, with special emphasis on literary texts.

5.3.2 Translating the theory into practice: Methods and materials

5.3.2.1 Tutorial groups

Acting on my observations during the first module and subsequent discussions with my ‘critical friend’, I divided the class into five tutorial groups (that were later further divided into sub-groups by the tutors). For three periods a week, students would continue to meet as a class for lectures. In the fourth period, they would meet in their tutorial groups, while the fifth period would be for self study, a time to prepare for the next week’s tutorials and lectures. I was able to enlist the aid of my ‘critical friend’ and a junior lecturer in running the tutorials. It was not logistically possible to offer more than one tutorial per week for each group. I attempted to compensate for this limitation by making the lectures as interactive as possible. The need to introduce small group teaching, even on this limited scale, was highlighted by the nature of the second module: it was envisaged that the students would use the tutorial periods to practise the skills in analysis demonstrated in lecture periods. Small group work is also emphasized by most writers on the integration of language and literature, as well as by theorists of OBE. The tutorial period would therefore provide me with an opportunity to attempt at least some of the techniques and approaches that would otherwise be impossible in a lecturing context.

5.3.2.2 The ENG 102 resource book

The resource book for this module consisted of texts interspersed with tasks that would allow the students to practise and refine their skills in textual analysis. Unit 1 contained a number of jigsaw activities in which students needed to contextualize and then reassemble text fragments using the semantic, syntactical and cohesive clues embedded in them (see Appendix B-2).⁵⁰ Unit 2 attempted to build on the foundation laid in the first unit. The introductory remarks were as follows:

In Unit One you were asked to identify and contextualize various kinds of texts. Your ability to do this partly depended on your knowledge of the many

⁵⁰This idea was adapted from Carter *et al.* (1997:168).

registers and **styles** available in English.

But how are people able to recognize these differences in language? How, for example, are we able to distinguish between the language used in a legal document, a knitting pattern and a poem? Most competent users of English are able to do this intuitively, without really thinking about the process. This is what you may have done in the exercises in Unit One.

As students of English, however, you need to be more precise in your reaction to the way in which language is used in any given text. This unit presents a way of doing this, a method of **close reading** that will enable you to **analyse** in detail exactly how language has been used in a text.

The rest of the unit consisted of a framework for the close reading of a text, followed by a selection of texts to which it could be applied. The framework, adapted from Pope (1998:258-61),⁵¹ consisted of two parts. In the first, the reader formed an overall response to the text by asking a number of *wh*- questions; this was followed by detailed analysis according to various linguistic categories. The framework can be summarized as follows:

A *Framing an overall response*

1. Why, where and when would you normally read this text?
(purpose and context of reading)
2. What, basically, is the text about?
(identifying subject matters)
3. What kind(s) of text is it?
(medium, genre, function)
4. Who is talking with whom through, within and around the text?
How do *you* respond?
(addresser - addressee relations)
5. What overall version or vision of experience (present, social, historical, political, moral aesthetic) does the text appear to offer? Are you persuaded to share it?
(world view and ideology)

B *Analysing in detail*

1. Word choice
2. Word combinations
3. Sound patterning and visual presentation

⁵¹In 2002, this framework for analysis was replaced with a more concise diagram based on Croft and Myers (2000:3).

The texts provided for practice consisted of poems, advertisements, a legal contract, medicine dosage instructions, an invitation, an extract from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, a passage on sociolinguistics and a passage of prose fiction.

The texts in Unit 3, subtitled 'Playing with words: Using language creatively', were selected to exemplify the categories in the second part of the framework for analysis. The introductory remarks (reproduced below) drew attention to the idea of a cline of literariness: until now the tendency had been to emphasize textual differences. Students were also encouraged to continue to cultivate the habit of observing language in texts around them:

The second section of *A framework for the close reading of a text* provided you with an approach to analysing a text in detail. A number of categories were given, with the aim of helping you to work through a text systematically, turning your general response to it into a more detailed analysis of *exactly how* language has been used.

This unit is divided into sections, each containing illustrative texts, which correspond to the framework's categories of analysis. Careful study of the texts will provide you with practice in developing your skills in close reading.

As usual, the texts have been drawn from a wide range of sources. This has been done deliberately to show that "playing with words" is not confined to the "difficult" language that many people associate with literary texts. My aim in this unit is to show you how language can be used effectively and creatively in such ordinary, everyday contexts as advertisements and public notices. The examples that I have provided are, however, only the beginning. **You** must continue the process by observing and analysing the ways in which language is used all around you.

Texts selected included advertisements, poems, newspaper and magazine journalism, slogans, political speeches, drama and cartoons.

Unit 4 was broken up into thematic sections, each containing pairs or groups of texts that were similar in content but different in genre. The contrast was typically between literary and non-literary texts. The material is listed below:

Describing places:

- An encyclopaedia description of India was contrasted with a travel advertisement for

the same country. These texts were followed by a task in which students were given a description of Mafikeng, taken from the same encyclopaedia, and asked to write a tourist advertisement based on it. They had then to analyse their own texts objectively.

- Statistics describing South Africa, taken from an internet site, were contrasted with Sandile Dikeni's poem, 'Love poem for my country'.

Describing things

- A sensuously evocative description of berries, taken from a lifestyle magazine, was contrasted with a factual account from a gardener's manual.

Facts and fiction

- A narrative cartoon issued by the City Council of Pretoria, in which consumers are urged to pay for water and electricity, was contrasted with a factual pamphlet from the Salvation Army, describing its AIDS work. The tasks that followed required the students to rewrite each text in the contrasting genre.
- A passage from a history book was compared with an extract from Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*; this was followed by the blurb from one of the editions of the novel.
- An internet news report about two teenagers found guilty of murdering their baby was contrasted with Mtshali's 'An Abandoned Bundle'.

Different Perspectives

- Two versions ('King James' and Good News Bible) of a Biblical passage were contrasted with T. S. Eliot's 'Journey of the Magi'.
- The blurb from the jacket of a chicken recipe book was contrasted with a passage from Jo-Anne Richards's novel *The Innocence of Roast Chicken*, in which the narrator describes her horror at having to eat a chicken she had regarded as a pet.
- A biographical account of Shaka was contrasted with a translation of a Zulu praise poem in his honour.
- Five versions of the fable of the tortoise and the hare were compared with one other: a traditional account; two versions written especially for ESOL learners (one for elementary readers, the other for the more advanced); told in comic verse by Vikram Seth, and an African rendition of the story.
- Students were also given a task where the comparison between literary and non-literary texts was implied rather than given. The literary text was from Pamela Jooste's *Dance with a poor man's daughter*, a novel set in District Six at the time of forced removals. The other text, used by Jooste as the epigraph to the novel, was a comment by Nadine Gordimer on the power of literature to get beyond mere statistics.

- The students were asked to assess the literary extract in the light of this comment.
- An addendum to the unit consisted of a series of protest poems from Southern Africa. In this case the students had to supply the non-literary texts with which to contrast them. In tutorials they were asked to think of the ways in which one might protest against something. Answers included placards, slogans, songs, letters to newspapers, speeches. They were then asked to consider in what ways these forms of protest were different from, and similar to, poetry.

The tasks set on the passages were a mixture of stylistic analysis and reformulation. In some instances comprehension exercises were included to help students come to grips with difficult texts. 'Literariness' was interpreted in very broad terms: texts ranged from advertisements to canonical texts such as those by Achebe and Eliot. Towards the end of the unit, analysis was focussed on literary texts.

Throughout the resource book, in an attempt to provide continuity and to build on the students' schemata, material was occasionally carried over from ENG 101. For instance, in the introductory remarks to the texts describing India, students were reminded of the short story, 'The Mute Companions'; two Bible passages from different historical periods were provided as a reminder of the unit on the history of English; and one of the descriptions of Mafikeng was recycled in a task as an example of creative word choice.

5.3.3 Assessment and grading

The system of assessment was modified somewhat in the second module. In conformity with continued practice at the university, the grades awarded for assignments and examinations were expressed as percentages. These marks were still representative of the broad OBE categories that had been used in ENG 101: however, whereas previously each category was symbolized by a single percentage, now it included a range of marks:

0-39% student has not met the assessment criteria at all

40-49%	student has failed to demonstrate an adequate competence in the required skills or knowledge
50-59%	student has demonstrated an adequate competence in the required skills or knowledge
60-74%	student shows an above average competence in the required skills or knowledge
75%+	distinction

The final mark for the module was calculated as an average of three equally weighted marks from two assignments (more substantial than the tasks of ENG 101) and the summative examination at the end of the module. (In conformity with official university policy, students who achieved an average mark from 45% to 49% were entitled to sit a supplementary examination.) The equal weighting for the three marks was intended to be in line with the OBE principle of continuous assessment. The two assignments were selected from the tasks in the resource book with the aim of reflecting the complementary skills of textual creation (reformulating an existing text) and textual analysis. The examination was designed to test the broad outcomes of the module; texts used in it were both ‘unseen’ and ‘seen’. (The inclusion of ‘seen’ texts from the resource book was partly intended to ‘reward’ those students who had undertaken the self study recommended in lectures and tutorials. Texts discussed extensively in lectures or tutorials were not, however, used.).

5.3.4 Teaching the module

ENG 102 was, in many ways, central to the first-year course, both chronologically and in terms of the skills it aimed at developing. Unfortunately, the learning process was disrupted again. In ENG 101 the extended registration period had hampered effective teaching; now at least two weeks of teaching were lost in consequence of an extended class boycott by students and the Staff Association, demanding the resignation of the Acting Vice-Chancellor; shortly after classes were resumed, attendance dropped again in anticipation of the Easter holidays. In addition to the loss of contact time, the boycott had a psychologically detrimental effect on an already demoralized staff and student population. In practical terms, it meant that, as in the previous module, plans for teaching had to be modified continually. For the most part, this meant cutting down on the number of texts examined in class, leaving the rest for self study. Since a large number of students did not buy their own copies of the resource, it is unlikely that much of this took place.

5.3.4.1 The core class

At the start of the module, my impressions, as recorded in my journal and lesson reports, were optimistic. The first lecture covered Unit 12 (Appendix A-6) of the first module. The outcome of this unit was stated as follows: *You can apply some of the processes involved in reading, interpretation and analysis of language.* It was designed to be a demonstration of the skills that would be developed in ENG 102. An advertisement with the slogan, 'Give an old lady a kick', was used to illustrate a reader's semantic and syntactic expectations. The text was placed on the overhead projector, with initially only the first word "give" showing. Students were asked to predict the rest of the sentence. The slogan was then progressively revealed, with the class modifying its predictions at each stage, until the shock ending of 'kick'. Once the whole text had been revealed, it was possible to see the slogan in context and reinterpret it figuratively. The same process of reading and interpretation was attempted with the other texts in Unit 12 of the resource book to demonstrate how interpretation is often dependent on factors such as background knowledge, context or recognition of the metaphorical use of language.

The lesson in which the unit was presented was observed by my 'critical friend' and videoed. The aim of her observation was to establish a norm against which the tutorials that she would be observing in the rest of the module could be measured. Ironically, on this occasion, the lecture format did not hamper class interaction, as had often seemed the case before. In my lesson report, I noted it as a 'model lesson' in which the materials and class reactions seemed perfectly matched. The presence of an observer and a cameraman, far from inhibiting the class, seemed to act as a stimulus.

The success of this lesson was followed by a very promising first tutorial, in which students worked in groups to reconstruct jumbled texts. In my lesson reports on all three of the tutorial groups for which I was responsible, I recorded that students seemed to have adapted well to group work. The following extracts, although containing some reservations about the students' limited skills at analysis, are generally optimistic in tone:

Group A

10 April 2000

Worked well on first jigsaw; most fell into the cake trap, some got themselves out with my prompting as I went from group to group. Reasonably articulate about how they went about the process of assembling the texts, although some very shy. But most tried to say something even if in a mumbled chorus....

Altogether not a bad beginning, although to what extent they saw the point I'm not sure. Still, quite a lot of cognitive and communicative activity, even if mostly in Setswana (I said they should try to speak English, but did not want to force the issue at this stage – D [a tutor] said that he insisted on English).

Group C

11 April 2000

Unremarkable. Worked quite well in groups. Fell into the cake trap: some reasoned their way out of it, one group remained stuck in spite of heavy hinting on my part. Most groups seem to have a dominant member who runs it, others participating to varying degrees – noticeable when I lead general discussion at the end. Like the first group I get the impression that some are adjusting to the new teaching situation: time will tell.

Group D

12 April 2000

Worked well in groups. Cake trap, but most couldn't get out of it. But good discussion, exchange of ideas, etc in group discussion, and it seemed to be mainly in English.

Tried to generalize from it afterwards in feedback. But heavy-going: don't understand when I ask what *kind* of text: just summarize the content. I noticed the same tendency in the other groups (old problem of summarizing rather than analysing). Their performance in the diagnostic test will show the extent to which this is a general tendency.

The 'cake trap' is a reference to fragment 7 in Exercise 1 (see Appendix B-2), which is part of the advertisement for Portfolio, a financial institution. The word is used metaphorically and refers back to the 'capital cake' mentioned in fragment 15. Most students initially interpreted it literally, and assumed the fragment was part of the recipe, another of the jumbled texts. Completing the task correctly required them to recognize their misinterpretation, understand why the mistake had been made, and consequently be able to distinguish between literal and figurative uses of language. Being able to observe and guide the learning process seemed to me a vindication of the tutorial method. The engagement of the students in the task also seemed to confirm the claim made in Statement 12 (*Applying basic ESL/EFL techniques ... to the study of literature develops language skills and promotes engagement with the text.*), even though the texts in question were not literary.

The diagnostic test (Appendix B-1) referred to in the last entry was administered in the following lecture period. The test was designed to allow the students to assess their own skills at stylistic analysis. Question 1 required comparative analysis of three texts similar in content but differing in genre; Question 2 was a cloze exercise based on a poem; Question 3 was a

multiple-choice exercise requiring students to select the stylistically appropriate option for the gaps in an advertisement; Question 4 required them to identify and replace stylistically inappropriate words or phrases in a number of formally written short texts.⁵² The test was designed to challenge the students' abilities and raise their awareness of the issues involved in the module. They assessed their own performance in the next lecture.⁵³ In reviewing the test with the students, I noted different reactions from the part-time and full-time students. The former were generally sensitive to variations in style, such as those in Questions 3 and 4: discussion about possible answers was generally lively and informed. Many of the full-time students seemed not to see the point of the choices to be made in Question 3, one student insisting that 'they were all saying the same thing'. The difference in reaction could probably be attributed to the wider experiences and linguistic knowledge of the part-time group, largely made up of older, working people.

My optimism about the benefits of the tutorials was not sustained. In a later lesson report, I reflected on a tutorial in which very little progress appeared to have been made and attempted to identify the causes:

Divided group into sub-groups, each with one of the texts to analyse. Went around commenting and advising. However, clear that very little preparation had been done. Few students have the book (average of one book per sub-group); most were seeing the framework, let alone the texts for the first time. Painful reading of and puzzling over the framework and texts, laborious writing out of answers. I stopped work after 15 minutes although most groups were far from finished, and opened up class discussion by asking for report back from each group. Also painfully slow (Lesson report: 19 April 2000).

Preparation for tutorials by the students was essential for their effective running and, as earlier mentioned, time for this had been built into the timetable. However, since most students were unable or unwilling to purchase the materials, effective teaching and learning became impossible. Irregular attendance at lectures and tutorials also meant that many students missed stages in the process of developing the skills of textual analysis: the students mentioned in this entry were clearly unfamiliar with the framework in Unit 2, which had been discussed at an earlier lecture. In tutorials, where students were expected to play an active

⁵²Question 4 was taken from Carter *et al.* (1997:179-180).

⁵³Although only intended for student self assessment, the answers to the test were taken in and copied for my research records. The performance of the students in the focus group will be analysed below.

role, their commitment to the learning process is obviously vital.

The tutorial referred to in the lesson report was one that my 'critical friend' had observed and videoed. In our subsequent review of it, she agreed with my assessment but was inclined to be more optimistic than I was. I recorded her remarks in the same lesson report:

AH later confirmed her impressions of it not being a very successful tutorial: yet said I had been "very patient" in eliciting answers, and that tutorials aren't a waste of time (as I was inclined to wonder) as some students, such as those who *had* prepared for them, would benefit. Also that it seemed a weak class generally (Lesson report: 19 April 2000).

My 'critical friend' and I also discussed an issue that I had noted in an earlier lesson report (Group A, 10 April): the use of the mother tongue in group discussions. Students were extremely reluctant to speak to each other in English. This applied even to those who were reasonably fluent when addressing me. When groups were given a task to perform, the discussion would frequently be dominated by one or two students who would dictate answers to the group's spokesperson (nominated at the beginning of the task). The information would be transcribed laboriously and read out in a monotone when groups were required to report to the rest of the class. Most members of the group had great difficulty in responding to subsequent discussion or questions and could only repeat the information already written down. Under these circumstances there seemed little chance that group work would develop communicative fluency. Although current practice in South African education tends to encourage multilingualism in the classroom, a view shared by some ESOL practitioners and theorists internationally (see, for example, Baynham 1986), I was reluctant to encourage it. The alternative, however, seemed to be silence and the complete breakdown of any group work. My 'critical friend' and I consequently concluded that, while students should be encouraged to use English, we would not insist on it. This, however, limited the potential for testing Statement 3 with its claims for the development of communicative and linguistic competence in the target language.

In concluding our discussion on the efficacy of tutorials, we resolved to gauge students' attitudes by means of a questionnaire. This would be administered at the end of the module. It would also provide an opportunity for further triangulation of my on-going action research. The form and results of the questionnaire will be examined later in this section.

The first assignment in ENG 102 (Appendix B-3) was the task in which students had to create an advertisement for Mafikeng as a tourist destination, using information provided in the encyclopaedia entry, and then attempt to justify and explain their use of language in it. The second assignment (Appendix B-4) involved a contrastive analysis of the two texts describing a chicken. The sequencing of the two assignments was aimed at facilitating the development of the students' skills at analysis: analysing their own creative attempts first would pave the way for the more difficult task of trying to 'get inside the head' of another writer. As in ENG 101, the principle was to move from the known to the unknown, from the subjective to the objective. Unfortunately, owing to the disruptions to teaching, many students did not submit the first assignment on time; some only handed in both pieces of work shortly before the examination was written. They therefore did not have the opportunity to learn from their first attempts at analysis; nor was I able to judge to what extent any learning had taken place after the first assignment.

The examination (Appendix B-5) focussed on analytical skills, using materials and techniques in the resource book. Question 1 consisted of short unseen texts containing stylistically inappropriate words or phrases that had to be identified, explained and replaced. This was similar to a question in the diagnostic test. Question 2 required students to comment on a series of short unseen slogans as creative means of communication. Here they were expected to apply the relevant sections of the framework for analysis. Question 3 involved the analysis of literary techniques in one of the protest poems from the resource book. Question 4 required a contrastive analysis of two seen texts. The supplementary examination (Appendix B-6) also drew on work done during the module. The first question contained unseen jumbled texts, similar to the exercises in the resource book; the second required an analysis of a seen text, and the third asked the student to write a South African version of the hare and tortoise fable. A second supplementary examination paper had to be set in August 2000 when university authorities acceded to a student demand that all students who had failed a second module examination should be allowed to sit for a supplementary examination, irrespective of the grade obtained. In format it was similar to the first supplementary paper. (It is not included in Appendix B since none of the students in the focus group wrote it.)

Notes made while marking the assignments and the examination record my

impressions of the performance of the core class. In marking the first assignment I had taken the chaotic conditions and consequently limited practice in textual analysis into account and marked generously, giving credit for any attempt at, if not the achievement of, an analytical approach. I felt, in retrospect, that the marks were higher than deserved, given the limited abilities of most of the class. The grades represented in Table 4 show that over half the class falls into the 50 -59% category. A more detailed analysis of the marks in fact indicates that almost all of these students (41 out of 52) did not obtain a grade higher than 54%. A slightly more stringent approach in marking could therefore have resulted in many of those students failing to meet the outcomes. My general impression of the writing exercise was of inconsistent and often inappropriate use of content and style. There was little originality: students often lifted details and language from similar advertisements in the resource book, with little consideration for meaning or relevance. Few students were able to analyse their own work and simply summarized what they had written. There was also misunderstanding of the question, with students contrasting their own texts with the advertisement for India in the previous section, rather than with the source text.

My impressions of the second assignment were much the same. There was little evidence of close, careful reading: consequently there were frequent misunderstandings of the literary text. I was, however, more confident that in this assignment the results were a truer reflection of the students' ability than the first had been. The distribution of grades was much more even than in the first assignment and a larger percentage failed to meet the outcomes (see Table 4).

In both assignments there seemed little evidence that the concept of analysis had been grasped by most of the students. More disturbing, however, was what appeared to be a fundamental ignorance of the culture of the written word. For instance, many described the text writers' intentions as being 'to show the differences between different kinds of writing'. Such a response fails to distinguish between the original use of texts and their subsequent use in the classroom. Also remarkable was a naïve view of advertisements: writers frequently took any claims made in them at face value or failed to distinguish between the writer of the advertisement and the organization wishing to sell the product. However, in my subsequent research into student opinion, I was to find that only a minority of students admitted to finding the content of the texts I had chosen too difficult (see discussion below, section 5.3.5).

TABLE 4
ENG 102 core class: Distribution of grades in all tasks

Figures represent the number of students obtaining grades (vertical axis) for assignments and examinations (horizontal axis)

		Ass1	Ass2	Examination/Aegrotat	Supplementary examination	
FAIL	dnw	05	05	01*		
	0 - 39%	01	06	25	01	
	40 - 49%		08	33	25	04
PASS	50 - 59%		52	28	24	*01
	60 - 74%		21	16	14	
	75% +		03	02	01	

***The student who did not write the examination wrote the supplementary examination as an aegrotat.**

KEY

Ass 1 Assignment 1: Mafikeng advertisement and self analysis
 Ass 2 Assignment 2: Comparison of texts: Descriptions of chicken
 dnw did not submit assignment / write examination

In the examination, a number of students were able to score full marks in the question that required them to identify inappropriate language; most others, however, seemed unable to identify or explain stylistic deviations and tended to respond in terms of content. For instance, while many were able to identify the inappropriate clauses in Text 1.3 (for example, ‘and they will be nice to our friends and fight anyone who doesn’t do what they tell them to do’) and Text 1.5 (for example, ‘while I was having some beers with my friends’), explanations tended to focus on content rather than style or stylistic conventions (for instance, the phrase in 1.3 was ‘undemocratic’ and the writer of 1.5 should not drink beers because they are unhealthy). The second question generated some interesting insights although many students continued to paraphrase. The ‘relevance’ of the poem in Question 3, while provoking some engagement with the text, also tended to have the opposite effect, as students got sidetracked into discussion of the political background to the poem rather than the text itself. The performance in the last question was, on the other hand, generally pleasing,

especially from students who had made the effort to prepare for the examination.

The results for the examination were poor (see Table 4). Only 39 students (43,33% of the class) achieved a pass mark. The pass rate improved marginally when these marks were combined with the assignment marks to calculate the average mark: 44 students (48,88% of the class) passed the module. Twenty students attempted the supplementary examination, fifteen of whom achieved the requisite 50%.

The difficulty that students experienced in ENG 102 is evident if one compares the average marks of the core class (Table 5) with those in ENG 101 (Table 2). While the number of students gaining 'above average' grades (that is, grades above 60%) had only dropped slightly, there was a dramatic decrease in the numbers getting grades from 50% to 59%, and a concomitant increase in those getting grades from 40% to 49%. It is difficult to pinpoint the cause of the higher failure rate. It had partly been anticipated, given the settling in period allowed in ENG 101. It had also been expected that textual analysis would present a challenge to ESOL speakers, even those relatively proficient in the language. There are, however, complicating factors that might have further influenced the class's performance, negatively or positively. On the one hand, the frequent class disruptions resulted in student apathy and made both teaching and learning difficult; on the other hand, my marking attempted to compensate for the adverse conditions by giving credit for any genuine attempt.

TABLE 5

ENG 102 core class: Distribution of final (average) grades

		Number of students	Percentage of core class
FAIL	0 - 39%	10	11,11
	40 - 49%	36	40
PASS	50 - 59%	30	33,33
	60 - 74%	14	15,55
	75% +	0	0

TABLE 6

ENG 102 focus group: Percentages obtained for all tasks

Figures represent the grades (expressed as percentages) obtained by focus group students (vertical axis) for each ENG 102 task (horizontal axis)

	Ass1	Ass2	Examination	Average	Supplementary examination
Student 65	30	35	29	31	
Student 49	0	35	28	21	
Student 47	50	42	39	44	
Student 7	50	50	50	50	
Student 76	50	48	43	47	50
Student 78	50	68	49	56	
Student 19	62	62	63	62	
Student 82	62	50	64	59	
Student 66	80	62	75	72	

KEY

Ass 1 Assignment 1: Mafikeng advertisement and self analysis
Ass 2 Assignment 2: Comparison of texts: Descriptions of chicken
dnw did not submit assignment / write examination

5.3.4.2 The focus group

The generalizations made in the preceding section will now be particularized in an analysis of the performance of the focus group (whose grades are summarized in Table 6). However, in the interests of conciseness, the work of one student from each of the three sub-groups will be analysed in greater detail than the other two. (The remaining two students from each category will receive greater attention for their work in ENG 103 and ENG 104.)

Student 65's work (average: 31%) did not show any evidence of improvement in the second module. In fact, he continued the same practice of lifting material from other sources, apparently unaware of its inappropriateness or irrelevance. This is striking in the first assignment, the advertisement for Mafikeng. Phrases have been borrowed from other texts in the resource book: the result is an incoherent and frequently bizarre patchwork of styles and meanings:

Mafikeng is a very beautiful town situated in the Northern South Africa, in North West Province, on the Molopo River. The population of the town is estimated to 6900. The town is characterised by tall buildings, though markets are also available. Traffic congestion is the main problem in the town. Somewhere, especially during the weekend or almost everyday in

Mafikeng a festival or bashes is celebrated peacefully. Marking the advent of a season. The reaping of the harvest or the triumph of good over evil each festival is a riot of songs and dances. A rich mirror held up to all the Mafikeng. It is the only way to be close to the real Mafikeng and its heartbeat. My country is for peace. But experience crime as it is from all over the world, but we control it in our country. I would like to say 'Welcome to our world in one country as our guest, your enjoyment and well-being are of the utmost importance to us.

The answer also shows little awareness of genre. This lack had also been apparent in the student's response to the first question in the diagnostic test at the beginning of the module: there is therefore no evidence of any learning having taken place since then. Further evidence of his lack of progress is found in the fact that he did not attempt the second part of the question in which he was required to analyse his own writing. The possibility that this might be indicative of his difficulty in following instructions is supported by the same pattern of behaviour in the second assignment. Here he devoted only four lines to answering the task (comparing the two texts) and answered a set of questions that were not part of the task. His performance in the examination continued the pattern in the diagnostic test and the assignments: the use of empty phrases, plagiarism, very poor expression and comprehension of content and little sensitivity to style or differences in genre. He remained completely out of his depth, making no discernable advance on the uncertainty he expressed in his journal earlier in the year.

Student 49's work (average: 21%) was of the same standard. There is no discernable change from the previous module. She continued to misread instructions or simply not answer the question: this resulted in her gaining a mark of 0 for the first assignment. Her writing throughout the module shows signs of very poor comprehension skills and an almost complete inability to express herself in English. Her expression is, in fact, so weak as to obscure any meaning that she might be attempting to convey, as had been the case in ENG 101. **Student 47** (average: 44%) also remained a weak student, although her performance here is still marginally better than that of the other two students. There is some attempt at analysis where this is required but she rarely gets beyond summary of content. While appearing to grasp the idea of style, she has difficulty in actually recognizing it. Comprehension and expressive skills are barely adequate. Her tendency to project her own limitations on to the author of the text, already noted in ENG 101, surfaces at least twice here. This is an obvious reflection of her lack of experience or distance from the texts; it does,

however, point to an attempt (if not success) at critical reading.

There is little to distinguish the work of the three students just examined from that of **Student 7** (average: 50%), although she has been included in the next sub-group. She consistently scored a narrow pass of 50 %. In the diagnostic test, her answers show some attempt at analysis (but this is not usually very insightful, and is, at times, simply wrong) after which she soon lapses into an account of content. The same tendencies characterize her work throughout the module: there is some indication that she has understood what is required of her but she seems to lack the linguistic and analytical skills to do it. There is no evidence of any progress from the diagnostic test, through the assignments, to the examination. There is also no evidence of improvement on the first module, where, with a few exceptions, her marks had also been narrow passes. **Student 76** (average:47%), on the other hand, had weakened. Her performance in the diagnostic test had initially been promising: some ability to analyse language, reasonably fluent writing, evidence of syntactic and stylistic awareness. In the assignments, however, her analysis is vague, her writing does not show much awareness of genre and, like Student 65's writing, passages are lifted indiscriminately from other sources. In the examination, there is again an attempt at analysis but she appears to equate analysis with checking for correctness. Her mark for the examination (43%) was the lowest grade she had received in both ENG 101 and 102 , although she managed to achieve the minimum 50 % required in the supplementary examination.

In the case of **Student 78** (average: 56%), however, the picture is less bleak. Although there is no evidence of improvement, her work is at least consistent with that done in the later tasks of the previous module. In the diagnostic test there is some attempt at analysis in the first question; in the cloze and multiple-choice sections she often gives plausible answers, even if she is not always able to articulate the logic behind her choices. The first assignment was disappointing, achieving only a narrow pass. The writing section amounted to little more than a paraphrase of other texts and bore little resemblance to an advertisement and the analysis contained vague generalizations, repeating information that had been given to her. The following extract is from the advertisement:

Mafikeng is a town in South Africa which was once the site of [sic] British by boers in 1899-1900. The town is located on the north-west province which is

known to be a livestock raising region. Its chief products include cement and foodstuffs. The town was the extraterritorial capital of the British dependency of Bechuanaland until the dependency became independent as Botswana in 1966.

The rest of the 'advertisement' continues in this vein, with little in the style or selection of detail to suggest its genre or the writer's intention. The analysis which follows is vague and uninformative and suggests that she did not seem to have grasped the essential differences between her source material and the text that she should have produced:

As a writer I want to make the reader interested in the place he/she's reading about and know about wonderful places to visit when in Mafikeng ... I have used simple understandable English. I have tried to influence the reader to visit the place by talking about what Mafikeng is known for... The text that I have created is no different from other texts, the only difference is that I have combined parts of all three texts to make one text ...

There is, however, some improvement in the second assignment. The analysis, although incomplete, is more precise:

... Not only is the writer interested in eating but he/she also tries to persuade us to buy this chicken cookbook as it has superb recipes that can be prepared for any occasion. He has used persuasive words like inviting, stimulating, enticing and many more, words that can make a reader rush to the shop and buy the cookbook to try these recipes. In text 19 chicken is a different story. The writer shows other people can easily turn themselves into vegetarians because they believe that every animal has a right to live life to the fullest. In this text we see clearly how Kati's mouth turned bitter after seeing the chicken. The writer has also made us aware that the chicken was given a name ...

In the examination the student also makes a reasonable attempt at analysis although she still often reverts to paraphrase and vagueness. The following extracts from her answer to Question 2 suggest the level of her achievement:

Text 2.2

Is there really more reward in an award winning beer? Language is used in a very playfull manner in this text. As a reader you are not reminded of the dangers of what 'black label' can do to you and not only you but to other people who would be affected. The writter was a bit insensitive when it comes to communicating in this manner.

Text 2.3

Now this was a very thoughtfull writter just like the one in text 2.1. He shows how a person can balance work and play which obviously when mixed

together bring better result. He used well balanced language and a good way of spreading out the words.

In other questions, however, her focus is not sustained and contains summary and paraphrase. The end result is that she just misses passing, with a mark of 49%. When this mark was combined with the assignment marks, however, she achieved a safe pass of 56%. The student had continued the pattern begun in the first module. In ENG 101, her initial performance was above average, but this could not be sustained in the later tasks that, like the work in ENG 102, required an objective, analytical approach. As far as the outcomes of the second module are concerned, there was evidence of achievement, although still very inconsistent and incomplete.

Many of the comments on Student 78 may also be applied to the three students in the top sub-group of the focus group. All had clearly grasped the concept of textual analysis but had, to varying degrees, not mastered the practice of it. All, again to varying degrees, also lacked the vocabulary and sensitivity to the connotations of language to be capable of a full appreciation of the texts given for analysis. These broad generalizations are typical of the work of **Student 82** (average: 59%). While beginning to develop analytical skills, he still lacked the linguistic skills necessary to complete the task. (It was noted, in the analysis of his work in ENG 101 that his writing was often inappropriately informal.) His grades are constantly in the above average range (as in ENG 101) with the occasional drop to a bare pass. (Here, however, the lower marks seemed due to lack of effort rather than lack of ability.) Even **Student 66** (average: 72%), with the consistently highest grades in the focus group, is uneven in his performance. His language use is occasionally inept and his analysis becomes paraphrase. His generally fluent writing and intelligent observation, however, usually compensate for these shortcomings. This, together with evidence of self study (he, had, for example, clearly prepared for the seen texts included in the examination) ensured that he obtained a high grade at the end of the module, missing a distinction by only a few marks.

Student 19 (average:62%) made a good attempt at analysis in Question 1 of the diagnostic test. Even if some of the details were incorrect, his answer revealed a grasp of the issues at stake. In the cloze exercise in Question 2, he was able to offer grammatically and stylistically plausible possibilities. His answers in Question 3 were generally correct, although he neglected to give explanations for his choices. He fared less well in Question 4:

although he identified some of the inappropriate words and phrases, his answers did not suggest an intuitive recognition of appropriate style. The same lack of sensitivity to the nuances of style is evident in the advertisement he created for the first assignment:

Have you ever dreamed of being in a land where peace is the name of the game, music is the tradition of the nation, sport is the trend of the people and love is the talk of the town? Visit Mafikeng, City of Goodwill. A place that is rich with tapestry of history and friendly Batswana people.

The student's vocabulary and knowledge of sentence structure are clearly far superior to those of the students in the other sub-groups. Unfortunately, his linguistic knowledge is not sufficiently sophisticated for him to recognize that the idiomatic expressions he uses are clichés, or to be aware of their incongruity in this passage. In the same way, in the second essay, his writing is generally fluent and accurate and he is able to analyse both texts in a systematic way; however, there are again discordant notes, such as his naïve equation of the narrator with the writer in the extract below:

In 'text 19' the writer presented it in a storytelling way. The text had characters and its theme is to show the reader how bad it is to cook a chicken. The writer's perspective is presented in a storytelling way, and he/she is persuading the reader not to cook a chicken. He is condemning the cooking of chicken.

Both writer's presentations or perspectives of chicken are differing. The first one shows the rightfulness of cooking the chicken and the other is against that. In 'text 18' we come across persuasive words like stimulating, modern, favourite, enticing, entertaining, irresistible, superb, inspiration, etc. These words are all of positive value. The other text is of negative attitude because words used there are of negative attitude. The writer referred the chicken as a human being as he/she was closed to it. He even gave it a name.

The same impression of promise marred by lack of familiarity with the more subtle aspects of linguistic and literary competence characterized his performance in the examination. There are nonetheless some insightful comments, such as the following analysis of the text in Question 2.1:

The writer uses words creatively in such a way that the public will pay attention to the board and want to know what the writer is trying to say. It is rare that words like sex are associated with 14 year olds. The other way that he/she draws the public is that sex and death are not mostly connected. The reader will have an interest in knowing why someone had to die after sex,

then strive to know more about that. We know that you can't easily die from having sex. If someone read this board from a distance, especially big letters "I had sex. Will I die" he/she will move closer to look at the letters written in small, then he/she will understand what was meant there.

5.3.5 Student opinion

At the end of the ENG 102 module, a second questionnaire entitled 'Texts, tasks and tutorials' (see Appendix F-2) was administered to the students. The questions and options in the questionnaire developed out of my observations during the ENG 102 tutorials and subsequent discussions with my 'critical friend'. The response rate was 78 students from a total of 117.⁵⁴ Eight of these neglected to complete the section on tutorials.

In the first question, students were asked to rate the difficulty of the texts used in ENG 102. None considered them to be 'too easy' (0%); 49 respondents (62,82%) thought they were 'understandable'; 29 respondents (37,18%) regarded them as 'too difficult'. Those in the last group went on to attribute the reason for their difficulties as follows: five respondents (6,41%) identified 'the language in the text'; sixteen (20,51%) cited 'unfamiliar ideas, experiences or culture in the text'; while eight (10,26%) thought that they had not had enough time to read and study the text carefully.

In answer to the second question, two (2,56%) respondents thought that the tasks used in ENG 102 were 'too easy'; 62 respondents (79,49%) found them to be 'just the right level'; while fourteen (17,95%) believed them to be 'too difficult'. Six students (7,69%) in the last group attributed their difficulty to 'understanding the instructions'; while eight (10,26%) found it to be in the application of the instructions to the text. Five of the 62 students who had said that the tasks were at the right level nevertheless went on to the next question to offer an explanation for why the tasks might be 'too difficult'. Of these, three students gave 'understanding the instructions'; the remaining two gave 'applying the instructions to the text'. That the students chose these options is perhaps not surprising in view of their inability to follow the instructions in the questionnaire itself.

The responses to these questions seem to indicate that most students were happy with my choice of texts and tasks, in spite of my misgivings arising from their performance in

⁵⁴The total enrollment for ENG 102 was 117 students. Because the students could choose to remain anonymous, it was not possible to separate out the core class of ninety students, as was the case elsewhere.

tutorials. Those who found the texts too difficult emphasized unfamiliarity with content rather than language. A substantial number, however, cited a lack of time for preparation. This could be attributed to a number of factors: the fact that few students had a copy of the book; poor study habits and resources; as well as the numerous disruptions during the module.

Those who found the tasks too difficult were almost equally divided over whether the difficulty lay in understanding or applying the instructions. A noticeably lower percentage found the tasks (as compared to the texts) difficult; some even found them 'too easy'. Here, it is possible that some students found the various activities insufficiently 'academic' to be taken seriously.

The second part of the questionnaire addressed the issue of tutorials. Eight students (10,26%) neglected to answer any of these questions. 65 respondents (83,33%) indicated that they liked tutorials; five (6,41%) did not. 68 respondents (87,18%) thought that tutorials were useful; two (2,56%) did not. 51 respondents (65,38%) preferred working in groups of four or five students; thirteen (16,67%) preferred pair work; six (7,69%) chose the option of working with the whole group.

Students were encouraged to expand on their answers to the closed questions. Scanning these comments reveals a number of similar responses. Reasons given for not liking tutorials were that they were too casual, students did not take them seriously or did not understand what happened in them; respondents also complained of perceived differences between the different groups in terms of work covered and the tutors' teaching styles and emphases. The latter objection also emerged in the responses of those who thought that tutorials were not useful.

The consensus of student opinion seemed, on the whole, to be in favour of tutorials, further divided into sub-groups. The reservations expressed by some of the students also suggested that they were not opposed to tutorials as such, but rather the manner in which they had been run during the module. These comments were noted in the planning for small group teaching in 2001.

5.4 ENG 103: An introduction to literary genres

ENG 104: Grammar awareness

5.4.1 Theoretical assumptions

The intended outcomes for ENG 103 were stated as follows:

- *You will be familiar with the basic features of selected literary genres through the study of representative texts;*
- *You will be able to use the skills that you acquired through reading and studying literature in the development of your writing skills and to enhance your knowledge and effective use of grammar.*

The outcomes for ENG 104 were:

- *You will be able to demonstrate an awareness of the importance of the forms and functions of grammar in the creation of meaning, and will be able to apply this knowledge in your own use of language.*

The areas of grammar covered in this module were those that typically occurred in the texts used for study, as well as those that students were likely to produce in their writing assignments. The use of the word ‘awareness’ in the title of the module implied that, as in the case of language awareness in ENG 101, the aim was to raise to consciousness knowledge that the students had implicitly, or were at least partially aware of. It involved, in other words, a form of consciousness-raising that ‘aims at facilitating the natural acquisition process by making explicit what learners might already know implicitly, giving them more control and helping them to analyse language and then develop, test and modify hypotheses about language use’ (Kilfoil 1990:20).

Although ENG 103 and ENG 104 were separate modules, with a literary and a language focus respectively, in practice, the two were integrated, as the second outcome for ENG 103 actually anticipates. The two modules were, in effect, taught concurrently. In ENG 103 literary study was accompanied by language exercises; on the other hand, some of the prescribed literary texts were held over for study in the latter half of the semester in ENG 104, where they also provided resources for language practice. Apart from pedagogical reasons, the integration of the modules was justified on practical grounds. As was pointed out earlier, the university continued to operate a semester system after the introduction of supposedly self-contained modules: it therefore made sense to think in terms of an integrated

semester course, even though it was nominally made up of two modules.

The theoretical underpinning of the integration of the two modules owes much to Stern's (1991:330) idea of the multiple uses to which a literary text can be put. Many of the prescribed literary texts were, in the course of the semester, studied as literary artifacts, used as the inspiration for speaking or writing practice, linked thematically to other texts and provided a resource for the study of grammatical forms. These multiple uses allowed the texts to be used in the three areas mentioned in the outcomes: literary study, writing skills and grammar awareness.

The second outcome for ENG 103 encapsulates the claims made for a 'language through literature' approach, summarized in Statements 1 - 9. The 'literature through language' approach (Statements 10 - 14) is also implicit in the strategy of integrating the two modules.

Literary study involved the three main genres of prose fiction, poetry and drama. The writing skills component, continuing the process begun in the writing tasks in ENG 102, had two aspects, narrative and argumentative/discursive. It drew on the literary texts for its topics and models. Narrative was the first skill to be developed, chosen for its relative accessibility and immediacy to everyday experience (Abbs & Richardson 1990:9-11) and for the links that could be made to literary study. The more abstract skills of argumentative and discursive writing were subsequently developed on this foundation, using the same topics. The writing activities then fed back into the literary studies as students were required to write critical essays on literary texts. Literary studies and writing skills thus formed an integrated system, complementing and developing each other. Cutting across both areas was grammar awareness: structures naturally occurring in the literary texts and in those produced by the students were highlighted, with those likely to present students with problems (Swan 1994:53) given special attention.

5.4.2 Translating the theory into practice: Methods and materials

5.4.2.1 Voluntary tutorial groups

Staff commitments in the second semester of 2000 meant that it was not possible to divide the class into tutorial groups, as had been done for ENG 102. In the last term,

however, my ‘critical friend’ and I, encouraged by the positive response to our questionnaire, decided to introduce voluntary tutorials. The need for small group teaching was also made apparent by my experience of teaching the grammar component in the first half of the semester. In my journal and lesson reports, I frequently noted the need for more time to practise the structures covered in class. Since the tutorials were not compulsory, the whole class did not benefit from them; from an action research perspective, however, our subsequent findings on their advantages for teaching both grammar and literature paved the way for the introduction of small group teaching in 2001.

5.4.2.2 Team teaching

My own academic commitments elsewhere also meant that I had to share the teaching of the literary components in ENG 103 and ENG 104 with a junior lecturer in the department. He taught some of the poems and the full length drama text, using a traditional ‘literary’ approach in his teaching.⁵⁵ Apart from a brief discussion of diction and imagery in specific poems, he did not pay much attention to the language of the literary texts. The questions he gave in assignments tended to focus on themes and ideas. Nevertheless, language activities using these texts as resources ensured that the principle of integration was retained in my sections of the modules (see, for example, the activities in Appendix C-10). Our contrasting approaches to a literary text also provided a useful point of comparison in assessing student opinion on the benefits of the integrating language and literature.

5.4.2.3 Prescribed and resource materials

Two African literary texts were prescribed: Achebe and Innes’s (1985) *African short stories* and Soyinka’s (1963) *The lion and the jewel*. Students were also required to possess copies of Rose and Purkis’s (1981) *English grammar* (or any other grammar reference book) and make regular use of the computer laboratory to practise grammar exercises, adapted from Murray and Johanson’s (1989) *Write to improve*. The prescribed texts were supplemented with extra materials, some of them adapted from recently published course books, compiled into a resource book. In line with the preferences indicated by the students in their essays on literature, the literary material included attempted to balance the African bias of the

⁵⁵This was my interpretation, based on an interview with the lecturer and an examination (with his permission) of his lecture notes and teaching materials. He also approved my research notes (on which all my comments on his part in the ENG 103 and 104 modules are based) as an accurate reflection of his views (Manone 2000: interview).

prescribed texts with selections from throughout the English-speaking world.⁵⁶ The resource book was divided into three units. The first contained introductory material on stories and narrative; the remaining units dealt with each literary genre. Literature was, however, integrated with language in each unit: most literary texts were followed by language-based tasks (either taken from the original sources or written for the resource book); in addition a ‘Grammar Focus’ box was used to direct the reader’s attention to selected grammatical forms (see examples in Appendix C).

The resource material is summarized below:

Unit 1

- Unit 1 introduced the study of literature with extracts from the essays on literature written at the end of ENG 101. Students were invited to reflect critically on the variety of opinions expressed.
- The theme of story telling was introduced with two extracts from *The thousand and one nights*, in which Shahrazad begins and ends the cycle of stories that will, quite literally, be her salvation. This was followed by an extract from E. M. Forster’s *Aspects of the novel*, in which he comments on the ancient lineage of the ‘story’, also referring to Shahrazad as the archetypal story teller.
- A task then moved the focus to the controversial power of literature. A newspaper report on the withdrawal of Herman Charles Bosman’s *Unto dust* as a South African school set work because it contained the word ‘kaffir’ was used to invite discussion of the strong feelings that telling a story can arouse ‘when it touches on our everyday lives’.
- A series of jigsaw exercises was provided to draw attention to narrative structure. The first contained jumbled cartoon frames, the second jumbled paragraphs. Not included in the resource book, but issued as a handout in the ENG 104 tutorials, was a third exercise consisting of a series of letters which made up a short story (see Appendix E). Students were then invited to reflect on the process by which they reassembled the texts, with the aim of raising their awareness of narrative markers and the narrative function of grammatical forms such tense, pronouns and articles.

⁵⁶Compare Leshoai (1990:124). The writer, once a member of staff of the then University of Bophuthatswana, advocates an emphasis on South African and African literature, but adds that his suggestions ‘do not exclude a judicious mixture of writings from Europe, America, Japan, Russia, China and India with those of Africa’.

- Another aspect of storytelling to be examined in the unit was the traditional fable, as the precursor of the modern short story literary genre. Examples were provided, accompanied by writing tasks and a Grammar Focus box.⁵⁷
- Narrative in a form that combined language and pictures was provided in a selection of short ‘comic book’ stories. They were taken from a booklet issued by the national Department of Health entitled *Open talk*, in which the stories are used as vehicles for exploring sexual issues. The language-based tasks that followed exploited them as resources for discussion and writing. Extracts from the stories rewritten in prose narrative were also provided, showing how the narrative could be presented from different points of view. The Grammar Focus box drew attention to the use of direct and indirect speech in narrative. In this way, both the literary and linguistic features of narrative were explored (Appendix C-2).

Unit 1 illustrated the integrative approach in action. It used ‘story-telling’ as a ‘way in’ to the study of the more obviously literary forms of prose, poetry and drama. ‘Stories’ here encompassed a wide range of texts, such as narrative accounts, traditional stories and comic strips. They consequently also provided a convenient link to the language component: they were used to illustrate the structure of narrative discourse, provide contexts for the study of grammar and be models for the students’ own writing.

Unit 2

- Unit 2 contained only one short story, ‘The Hartleys’, by John Cleaver, reproduced from Murdoch (1992) (Appendix C-3).

Unit 3

- The poetry section consisted of the poem, ‘Unfolding bud’, reproduced from Scalone’s (1999) *Distant thunder*, which explores the nature of poetry itself (Appendix C-5); Mtshali’s ‘An abandoned bundle’ (previously used in ENG 102 in comparison with a newspaper report); two sonnets by Shakespeare; two poems by Serote (following up on the South African poems examined in ENG 102) and a selection of poems with language and literary activities from Lazar’s (1999) A

⁵⁷One of the fables, which I wrote myself, was based on a traditional Tswana story, known to most of the students (see Appendix C-1). The fable (Butler 2003a) was subsequently published in Paran and Watts (2003), accompanied by language-based exercises developed through my experience of using the material in the classroom. In later years, fables and related language activities from Taylor (2000) were also used.

window on literature (see, for example ‘Feeding the poor’ in Appendix C-6).

Unit 4

- This unit contained extracts from plays, with language and literary activities, from Whiteson and Horovitz’s (1998) *The play’s the thing* (see, for example, ‘FOB’ in Appendix C-7).

In the second half of the semester, the material in the resource book was further supplemented with material (in the form of handouts and overhead transparencies) of context-based grammar and writing exercises, using literary texts as well as non-literary texts such as advertisements and newspaper headlines (see examples in Appendix C-11). Material from Karant (1994) was used in tutorials to present and practise grammar in a narrative context, and at the same time, provide practice in listening comprehension.

5.4.3 Assessment and grading

Assessment in ENG 103 was by means of two assignments and an examination, the marks equally weighted in the calculation of the average grade. Both assignments involved the writing of a narrative and drew on the theory of ‘literature through language’ expounded in Statement 11. In the first assignment (Appendix C-4), the students had to write an alternative ending to the short story, ‘The Hartleys’. This exercise had two outcomes, one literary, one linguistic: by taking on the role of the author, students could demonstrate both a critical understanding of the existing story and an ability to write a new narrative. The second assignment (Appendix C-2) involved the reformulation of a comic strip story into a piece of prose narrative. Again, the outcomes involved the demonstration of both linguistic and literary competence: students needed to show an ability to handle the discourse of narrative; make correct use of the relevant grammatical structures (such as direct and indirect speech, articles, tense) and produce a creatively written story that was more than just a summary or paraphrase of the original text.

Both essays were therefore graded according to literary and linguistic criteria. The same grade categories used in ENG 101 and 102 were adopted. In the assignment on ‘The Hartleys’, the focus was primarily on content: namely the student’s ability to compose an ending that was convincing and consistent with the characterization, plot and themes of the original story. In the narrative writing assignment the assessment criteria in the lower mark range placed the emphasis on grammatical correctness; to obtain a mark above 60% required additional evidence of creative language usage (lively, imaginative writing could, however,

compensate for language errors and ensure that the writer achieved at least a narrow pass). As mentioned in Chapter 3, section 3.2.2, students were not provided with written rubrics in which these assessment criteria were set out. The information was, however, provided in the verbal feedback given in lectures.

The ENG 103 examination (Appendix C-8) also tested both literary and linguistic skills. Question 1 required students to analyse a poem, looking specifically at language use and literary technique. Question 2 was a conventional critical essay type question on one of the short stories. In Question 3 the full text of a traditional fable was reproduced and used as a vehicle for questions with grammatical and literary foci. The final question was another short narrative adapted as a cloze exercise, testing the use of articles. The supplementary examination (Appendix C-9) took the form of a take-home assignment consisting of two questions, the first an essay on a poem, the second requiring students to continue one of the comic strip stories in the form of a prose narrative.

Assessment in ENG 104 followed the same pattern of two assignments and a summative examination, equally weighted and striking a balance between language and literature. The first assignment was an essay on *The lion and the jewel*, set and marked by the lecturer responsible for teaching it. (A sample of the essays was moderated by me to ensure consistency of standard.) The question was: ‘How does Wole Soyinka present [the triumph of] Afrocentricism over Eurocentricism in *The lion and the jewel*?’ In writing the essay, students were expected to apply their knowledge of argumentative and discursive writing.

The second assignment took the form of a discrete item grammar test (Appendix C-12). It differed from the other assignments in ENG 103 and 104 in that the content was not as closely linked to work covered in class but designed to measure a broad range of grammatical knowledge. The items in the test were taken from an old examination paper, Paper 3, ‘Use of English’, in the First Certificate in English (FCE), set by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) as a practice exercise for students studying English as a foreign language. The background description of the examination given in the handbook suggests that it was an appropriate test for ESOL students at their first year of university study. (The ENG 104 students had, in fact, completed at least one and a half semesters of study.) The following remarks are of particular relevance in the context of the English 100 course:

[Students] should be able to produce written texts of various types, showing the ability to develop an argument as well as describe or recount events ... the learner can do office work or take a course of study in the medium of the language being learned (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate 1997:6)

The questions selected for the test were aimed at testing vocabulary and grammar and took the form of multiple-choice cloze, open cloze, sentence transformation, error correction and word formation (1997:28-29). This format might be seen to be at odds with the spirit of language-literature integration, which favours the teaching and testing of grammar in context (as was done in the ENG 103 examination). The test was, however, chosen as a useful instrument with which to examine the students' grammatical competence because it represented an international standard and was easy to mark. It also represented a compromise with the perceptions of those students (and colleagues in the Department of English) who associated language learning with the ability to manipulate grammatical forms (Ngwenya 2000: personal communication).

The ENG 104 examination (Appendix C-13) was again a reflection of the language and literature covered in the second half of the semester. There was a writing skills question, in which students had to write an argumentative essay, a literature question, and two grammar awareness questions, one focussing particularly on logical connectors in a piece of discursive writing. The supplementary examination (Appendix C-14) was confined to a writing skills and literature question.

5.4.4 Teaching the module

5.4.4.1 The core class

The second semester was relatively free of the disruptions that had plagued the teaching of the first two modules of English 100. Similar problems to those at the beginning of the year were, however, experienced at the start of the semester when the university senate waived the prerequisite that only students who had passed both first semester modules were allowed to register for modules in the second semester. (At an earlier meeting the senate had decided to uphold the prerequisites. Student pressure had subsequently prompted it to reconsider its decision.) Their resolution resulted in a sudden increase in student numbers a number of weeks after teaching had begun. This occurred shortly before the first ENG 103

assignment was due. I recorded the matter in my journal, commenting on the probable impact it would have on the assignment. But in spite of this, by now, depressingly predictable beginning to the module, I was also able to record, in the same entry, my impression of a much more successful teaching and learning experience:

Yet in some ways the teaching has been quite successful. Classes have responded well to the stories I took them through in class, trying to mimic the reading process. Grammar so far has been episodic and fragmented. They seem to enjoy grammar lessons, although how much good it does I don't know. There just isn't time to consolidate and practise what is briefly and superficially covered in class. My attempts to link it to literature have worked insofar as they can: used lit. for reported speech and articles, etc., but really it's only the introductory part which, as I say, should be practised for it to serve any purpose (Journal: 29 August 2000).

The increase in the number of students exacerbated the difficulty of effective grammar teaching and led to my decision to reintroduce tutorials after the mid-semester break. Although self-study was explicitly stated as one of the instructional and learning strategies in the module descriptions, there was little evidence that much of this was taking place. The teaching of grammar was an issue that continued to crop up in my lesson reports. The students' performance in the second assignment also confirmed my fear that the grammar teaching had a limited effect.

The constraints of space do not permit a detailed account of the teaching of the whole ENG 103 and ENG 104 modules. Key areas, especially those on which students were tested in assignments and examinations, will therefore be the focus in the rest of this section.

In my journal, I noted the success of two double period lessons in which I had read two of the prescribed short stories to the class, stopping to comment and raise questions *en passant*. My aim, as in Unit 12 of ENG 101, was to dramatize the cognitive processes of a competent, active reader of a literary text. The two stories chosen were 'An incident in the Ghobashi household' (from *African short stories*) and 'The Hartleys' (reproduced in the resource book). They were chosen for their brevity, economical use of language and surprise endings. At strategic points in my reading, students were asked to assess their response to characters, predict future events and interpret the action as the story unfolded.

My choice of 'The Hartleys' was inspired by Murdoch (1992) who uses the story to

illustrate his particular approach to the use of literature in the ESOL classroom. Although some of the details in the story (such as northern hemisphere weather conditions and middle-class holiday conventions) were probably foreign to the experience of most students at UNW, I believed that the central event (the death of an estranged couple's daughter in a skiing accident) overrode these considerations sufficiently to make it a relevant text for study in English 100. Murdoch (1992:2) claims that many of the approaches to using literature in the language classroom tend to ignore the text itself in their concern to use it as a resource for language activities. Apparently echoing the approach of the Reader Response theorists, Murdoch is interested in the interaction between the reader and the text. He argues that the 'essence of any literary experience must be an examination of how the text provokes an inter-subjective experience that generates readings and interpretations'. In more practical terms, he goes on to argue, this involves guiding students 'towards an appreciation of the processes whereby a literary text generates meanings and elicits a response from the individual reader'. The likelihood that there will be a plurality of responses will, at the same time, increase the opportunities for classroom interaction and, consequently, the development of language skills. Murdoch (1992:4) then offers categories for text analysis that reflect 'the relationship between the reader and writer of imaginative texts, and the different levels on which a prose literary text operates'. These are:

1. plot and suspense;
2. characters and relationships;
3. major themes;
4. the method the writer uses to communicate his/her attitudes;
5. reader's response.

Murdoch's (1992:4-5) application of these principles to 'The Hartleys' influenced my teaching of that short story and of 'An incident in the Ghobashi household'. These 'demonstration lessons' of the reading process would, it was hoped, raise the students' awareness, and provide them with skills that could be transferred to their reading of the other prescribed short stories.

The first ENG 103 assignment (Appendix C-4) arose out of the teaching of 'The Hartleys'. In line with Murdoch's (1992) emphasis on the individual reader's response to the text, students were asked to think of and justify an alternative ending to the story. The conclusion of the original story is sudden and somewhat ambivalent: Mr and Mrs Hartley set

off for home, with the body of their daughter, almost immediately after her accidental death. In the final sentence, the writer seems to hint that the tragedy has paradoxically saved their marriage; yet at the same time the length of the journey home is suggestive of the sorrow they will have to endure together: '[Mr Hartley] helped his wife into the car, and after arranging a blanket over her legs, they started the long, long drive.' Such an ending very clearly invites the reader to participate imaginatively in the 'after-life' of the story. In choosing this as the topic for the assignment, it was reasoned that it would allow for a subjective response but at the same time require careful reading of the original text for details (involving at least the first three of Murdoch's categories) from which to develop the new ending. Following the same principle as in ENG 101, the students' critical and analytical skills were to be developed by initially appealing to their personal experiences and subjective responses.

The students' responses revealed some interesting patterns, which illuminate their reactions to the story. A common response, probably arising from African cultural traditions, was that the story should continue to include an account of the girl's funeral and the reactions of the people at home. The parents' apparent lack of emotion in the story's ending was also seen as a deficiency, either on the part of the parents for not showing their grief or on the part of the writer for not depicting it. Generally speaking, most of the responses were in favour of a happy ending: for instance, the girl should have been injured rather than killed, her father should have been able to save her, or if she had been closer to her mother the tragedy would not have occurred, and so on. Another frequent response was also that the ending would have been more 'effective' if the details and implications of the action had been spelt out more explicitly. Both of these reactions seem to suggest a failure on the students' part to distinguish between 'real life' and a work of fiction as an artistic construction requiring an aesthetic response. Their reactions, while lacking in sophistication, are, nonetheless, valid responses to the story and suggest an engagement with the text that has promoted reflection and identification. The following conclusion to one of the essays is typical:

i chose to end the story this way because it is the best way. As an individual, when things like this happens you have to put yourself in the situation, I also chose to end the story this way because it is more harmless to the sensitive viewers [sic]. I took the whole story and put it on my shoulder and think what will have happened when it was me, then after that i thought that i would have suffered a lot. So I took the story again and put it more clever at the end so that everyone be satisfied like the reader and the Hartleys themselves.

An interesting linguistic feature of many of the responses was the apparently incorrect use of modals. Students frequently referred to what the author is ‘supposed’ to do, rather than the more tentative ‘could have’ or even ‘should have’. This may simply be ignorance of the nuances of meaning of the various modals, or it may imply a naïvely prescriptive approach to literature.

The second ENG 103 assignment (Appendix C-2) required students to rewrite one of the comic strip stories in the form of a prose narrative. In working on the assignments, they had been encouraged to adopt a process approach to writing. The size of the class meant that I could not read and comment on all the initial drafts of the narratives; instead students could volunteer to have their drafts commented on in lectures. The rest of the students could then assess their own work-in-progress in the light of my comments. Typical errors in the drafts that were submitted for comment were the use of the past continuous (where the past simple would have been appropriate), careless punctuation (especially in the use of direct speech) and inconsistent use of sequence of tenses. My assessment of the final products, however, showed frequent occurrences of the same errors and little evidence of conscious application of the relevant grammatical rules. Neither the contextual teaching of the structures, nor the exposure to them through the literary texts, appeared to have had much effect. An analysis of the student performance in the first ENG 103 assignment reveals a high pass rate of 78,88 % of the class (71 students), with a significant part of these students scoring 60 % and above (30 students, representing 33.33% of the class). In the second assignment, however, the pass rate drops significantly to 54,44% of the class (49 students), with the bulk of the pass grades between 50% and 59% (29 students, representing 32,22% of the class). A large number, eighteen students (20% of the class), received a grade below 40 % (see Table 7).

TABLE 7
ENG 103 core class: Distribution of grades in all tasks

Figures represent the number of students obtaining grades (vertical axis) for assignments and examinations (horizontal axis)

	Ass1	Ass2	Examination/Aegrotat	Supplementary examination
FAIL				
dnw	04	02	02*	
0 - 39%	18	14		02
40 - 49%	11	21	23	05

PASS

50 - 59%	41	29	37	*01	15
60 - 74%	28	19	14	*01	
75% +	02	01	0		

***The two students who did not write the examination wrote the supplementary examination as an aegrotat.**

KEY

- Ass 1 Assignment 1: Mafikeng advertisement and self analysis
 - Ass 2 Assignment 2: Comparison of texts: Descriptions of chicken
 - dnw did not submit assignment / write examination
-

The generally poor performance in this assignment has significant implications for the theory of language-literature integration. Statement 1 suggests that literature provides a suitable context for the teaching of grammar. One of the outcomes for ENG 103 had further assumed that the grammatical knowledge gained in this way could be transferred to the students' own use of language. The overall performance in the assignment suggests that this had not taken place. The perennial complaint of language teachers about lack of grammatical transfer remained (Kilfoil & Van der Walt 1997:71-72; Parkinson 2001).

In the ENG 103 examination (Appendix C-8), however, students generally scored higher marks for the language questions than for those that dealt with literature. This was not unexpected. The literature questions were of a more conventional nature than the one in the first assignment (although the second question also asked students to comment on the ending of a short story). As essay-type questions, they also tested the students' writing skills. In addition, the lecturer who taught and examined the material in Question 1 complained that

TABLE 8
ENG 103 core class: Distribution of final (average) grades

	Number of students	Percentage of core class
FAIL		
0 - 39%	13	14,44
40 - 49%	31	34,44
PASS		
50 - 59%	30	33,33
60 - 74%	16	17,77
75% +	0	0

students had not developed the necessary skills in practical analysis or the use of

metalanguage, even though his lectures had been aimed at providing them with these tools. Instead, they tended to reproduce the notes given to them in class. The students' poor command of English also detracted from the quality of their answers (Manone 2000: interview). Questions 3 and 4, on the other hand, tested discrete grammatical items (albeit in the context of narrative passages). It was therefore possible for a student with a good knowledge of grammar to score full marks in these questions. But in spite of this advantage, only 58,89 % of the class (53 students, including the two who wrote the aegrotat examinations) passed the examination, not much higher than the 54,44% who passed the second assignment, where grammatical *errors* had led to a poorer performance than in the first assignment. A total of 46 students (51,11% of the class) passed the module on their average mark, a result that was even closer to the poor performance in the second assignment (see Table 7). All this points to the effect, in the long run, of the students' poor performance in the writing skills component, both in the assignment and in the examination.

A complicating factor in the examination was the discrepancy in the marks given for the two literature questions. The marks awarded for Question 2 (marked by me) were, on the whole, higher than those for Question 1 (marked by my colleague). This is probably attributable to the fact that the relevant sections were taught, examined and marked by two different lecturers (who also adopted different approaches to their teaching of literature). It was, however, noticeable that there was generally a correlation between the grades achieved for the examination as a whole and the competence displayed in Question 2, suggesting an 'evening out' of the two extremes, with the high marks for the grammar section compensating for the low marks in Question 1.

The ENG 103 supplementary assignment (Appendix C-9), like the main examination, combined conventional and integrated approaches to literature. The first question required the students to analyse a poem in terms of its thematic concerns; the second, where students were asked to continue a comic strip story in prose narrative, combined the skills previously tested in the assignments. Fifteen of the 22 students who attempted the supplementary assignment achieved a pass mark (see Table 7).

TABLE 9

ENG 103 focus group: Percentages obtained for all tasks

Figures represent the grades (expressed as percentages) obtained by focus group students (vertical axis) for

each ENG 103 task (horizontal axis)

	Ass1	Ass2	Examination	Average	Supplementary examination
Student 65	45	50	40	45	42
Student 49	20	30	30	27	
Student 47	30	50	54	45	50
Student 7	50	40	47	46	50
Student 76	45	55	39	46	50
Student 78	60	55	54	56	
Student 19	59	55	71	62	
Student 82	60	45	64	56	
Student 66	68	80	67	72	

KEY

Ass 1	Assignment 1: Alternative ending to “The Hartleys”
Ass 2	Assignment 2: Narrative Essay
dnw	did not submit assignment / write examination

The first of the ENG 104 assignments was set and assessed by the lecturer responsible for teaching *The lion and the jewel*. In the interview, he indicated that his criteria for assessing students’ written work included coherence, logic and language use. However, credit was given to those students who, while not always meeting these criteria in their writing, nevertheless demonstrated a good understanding of the text (Manone 2000: interview). An analysis of the marks (see Table 10) shows that 48 students (53,33% of the class) passed, with the bulk of the passes between 50% and 60%. There is a corresponding bulge in the marks between 40% and 49%. These statistics point to a mediocre performance by most students, narrowly achieving or missing the achievement of the outcomes. The lecturer, nevertheless, saw the students’ performance here as an improvement on that in the poetry question in the ENG 103 examination. He offered two possible explanations: poetry is generally more difficult than drama; alternatively the students had had more time to understand what he expected of them. He tended to favour the latter explanation: he thought that, in retrospect, he might have assumed too much about the students’ literary competence in the examination question (Manone 2000: interview).⁵⁸

TABLE 10

ENG 104 core class: Distribution of grades in all tasks

Figures represent the number of students obtaining grades (vertical axis) for assignments and examinations (horizontal axis)

	Ass1	Ass2	Examination/Aegrotat	Supplementary
FAIL				
dnw	07	–	04*	*02

⁵⁸See the discussion of traditional assumptions about literary competence in Chapter 2, section 2.3.2, under Statement 13.

	0 - 39%	04	13	19		06
PASS	40 - 49%		31	14	36	06
	50 - 59%		35	15	19	*01
	60 - 74%		12	38	12	*01
	75% +		01	10	0	

***The four students who did not write the examination wrote the supplementary examination as an aegrotat.**

KEY

Ass 1	Assignment 1: Critical essay: The lion and the jewel
Ass 2	Assignment 2: Grammar test
dnw	did not submit assignment / write examination

Following the same pattern as the ENG 103 examination, the marks for the grammar test (see Table 10) were noticeably higher than for *The lion and jewel* assignment: 63 students (70% of the class) passed, 10 (11,11%) of them getting a distinction. It is interesting to analyse the students' performance in an area that had been covered extensively in class and should have been practised in earlier assignments. Question 32 in Part 3 (see Appendix C-12) required the student to rewrite a sentence containing direct speech, using the phrase provided. It was not specified that the new sentence should be in indirect speech, but the prompt makes this inevitable. The question carried a maximum of two marks. A total of 37 students (41,11% of the class) got full marks; 34 (37,78%) were given only 1 mark for a partially correct answer; and 19 (21,11%) received 0. Students who obtained full marks for this question were not necessarily those who scored well throughout the test: their total marks exhibit an even range from above 85% to below 45%. (one as low as 29%). These statistics do suggest some internalization of a grammatical structure highlighted in class, even if the students' continuous writing shows less evidence of it.

The writing skills component was tested directly in the first question of the ENG 104 examination (Appendix C-13). Although framed in general terms, the topic was clearly derived from the comic strip stories on sexuality education that had formed the basis of the narrative writing exercise. The teaching of argumentative writing had, in fact, made use of this connection, using the concrete specificity of the prose narratives to introduce the impersonal objectivity required in argumentative writing. Both language and literary skills were tested in the second question on *The lion and the jewel*. The remaining questions tested grammar awareness through cloze (especially the use of words to create cohesion and coherence in the passages) and questions on modals. The results for the examination were

disappointing: only 33 students, including two who wrote aegrotat examinations (36,67% of the class), achieved a pass mark. However, when this mark was combined with the marks for the assignments to calculate the average mark (Table 11), the pass rate improved dramatically to 53 students (58,89% of the class). The high marks for the grammar test clearly compensated for low marks elsewhere.

TABLE 11
ENG 104 core class: Distribution of final (average) grades

	Number of students	Percentage of core class
<i>FAIL</i>		
0 - 39%	19	21,11
40 - 49%	18	20
<i>PASS</i>		
50 - 59%	35	38,88
60 - 74%	18	20
75% +	0	0

Grammar awareness was not tested directly again in the supplementary examination (Appendix C-14): questions were limited to another argumentative essay and a literary question. This could, in part, explain the poor performance in this examination (apart from the fact that candidates for supplementary examinations are likely to be weak students). Of the 21 students who sat for the paper, only nine achieved the requisite 50% to pass. Low grades were obtained for the writing skills question in particular. In notes I made at the time, I observed that the essays were generally poorly constructed and lacked coherence, showing little evidence of planning. Some only presented one side of the argument in a highly subjective way. Others simply did not answer the question or focus adequately on the topic.

As earlier mentioned, the voluntary tutorials were spent on the practice of grammar. Some tutorials were also used for an exercise in which literature and language work were integrated. In my journal, I noted the difficulty in sustaining any continuity in these non-compulsory tutorials with their ‘floating population’ of students. The students also tended to fall into two extreme camps: on the one hand, highly motivated, articulate, high achievers who appeared to find the work interesting and stimulating; on the other, extremely weak, passive students who presumably hoped to improve their marks by attending tutorials. The commitment and competence of the latter group did not, however, extend to participation in discussions; this tended to be confined to students in the first group. The effectiveness of the

tutorials was consequently as uneven as the student attendance.

In spite of these problems, the integrated work (taken from Mrozowska 1998:26-41: see Appendix E) was generally successful and seemed to vindicate the approach (see also Mrozowska 2000). The story ‘The Good Lord will provide’ was chosen from among others in Mrozowska (1998) because I thought that it would be the most accessible for African students, needing the least background knowledge. In addition, the use of an American dialect in it enabled me to link the story with language work on regional varieties of English, done earlier in ENG 101. The accompanying exercises usually required discussion, negotiation of meaning, speculation and justification of answers. As before, students were often reluctant to engage in group discussion and pair-work but I noted that when this did take place, the tutorials seemed to succeed very well and contributed to the development of communicative as well as literary competence and grammar awareness, as is suggested in Statement 3. Students also showed interest in the language awareness exercises. Irregular attendance at tutorials meant that a smooth progression through the stages outlined in the material was rarely possible; however, since the format allowed for a degree of flexibility, this was not a serious problem. Most students had difficulty in making the inferences that allowed them to ‘read between the lines’ of the story, but showed understanding and appreciation when prompted by me or other students.

5.4.4.2 The focus group

An analysis of the work of the students in the focus group shows the typical performance of students as regards achievement of outcomes in literary competence, grammatical knowledge, transfer of linguistic knowledge to writing skills and academic skills.

Their grades are summarized in Table 9 (above) and Table 12.

TABLE 12
ENG 104 focus group: Percentages obtained for all tasks

Figures represent the grades (expressed as percentages) obtained by focus group students (vertical axis) for each ENG 104 task (horizontal axis)

	Ass1	Ass2	Examination	Average Supplementary/Aeg	
Student 65	52	45	45	47	29
Student 49	38	19	25	27	
Student 47	46	47	43	45	42
Student 7	38	52	48	46	
Student 76	54	64	dnw*	58	*57

Student 78	67	67	44	59
Student 19	70	72	65	69
Student 82	60	72	54	62
Student 66	56	87	74	72

* Student 76 did not write the examination, but wrote the supplementary examination as an aegrotat

KEY

Ass 1 Assignment 1: Critical essay: The lion and the jewel
 Ass 2 Assignment 2: Grammar test
 dnw did not submit assignment / write examination

For the three students who obtained the lowest marks, there was little difference between their performance in each of these skills. There was also no evidence of improvement in their performance since the modules in the first semester. Their work shows limited knowledge or understanding of the literary texts: they either misread them or simply reproduce information from lectures without any consideration of what the question required (Student 65 continued to plagiarize, as he had in ENG 101 and 102.). There is little evidence of any real engagement with the texts themselves. The students also frequently do not answer the question or follow instructions. Expression is generally poor to the point of being incomprehensible. It is, in fact, often difficult to separate the students' poor expression from their apparent misunderstanding of the text, since they are not able to articulate whatever understanding they might have. Their linguistic competence is generally very weak, both in knowledge of the rules of grammar and in their application in continuous writing. Their use of English generally shows a profound ignorance of basic sentence structure and a very limited vocabulary. These general tendencies may be illustrated with a detailed analysis of the work of Student 49 and Student 47 in ENG 103 and ENG 104 respectively.

Student 49 (average for ENG 103: 27%) was given only a token mark of 20% for the assignment on 'The Hartleys'. Her essay did not provide an alternative ending to the story, as required. Where she did refer to the ending, she contradicted herself, first preferring the writer's ending, and then her own (never clearly stated). Her impenetrable language does not make the confusion any clearer. The following extracts are the first and last paragraphs in her essay:

I think the writer is right by ending the story the way it has ended, because in the first place the writer told us about this family Hartleys how they take a long journey to visit mountains and places. Again he told how life goes on about Hartleys family.

...

The writer that why at the end we heard that went on the same day night they left New York because they feel shame about their daughter on the way they argue about the death of their daughter that's why at the end followed their death. Yes, I think my version is more effective than the original because if the daughter doesn't dead they will be live together with harmony and peaceful. Everything can be right track.

The second assignment reveals the same confusion of meaning and language. The following extract from the concluding paragraph shows how none of the grammar lessons on structures typically found in narrative has had any effect on her writing:

Palesa's mother told her neighbour about Palesa who was still young to learn sex with a boy. She saw him last night, walked around the street with a boy and he said to me that she was just a friend. She always worried about coming late at home. Maybe they coped [sic] that things in televisions or films. Everyday when she came home late and said to her that she was worried about that things that he did. She said to me that, haai ma, this is a new democracy, new South Africa. Things are changed. There's no longer past.

Her performance in the examination was no better. She showed very limited understanding of 'An abandoned bundle' and, for the question on the ending of 'An incident in the Ghobashi household', she summarized (inaccurately) the plot of 'The Hartleys'. The mark for the grammar questions was marginally better but her use of language was still far below standard, as the answer to Question 3.5 shows:

The moral of this story how the kings does not show how much they love people according their respectfulness and the behavioural. And to judge their mind how do they answer.

Student 47 (average for ENG 104: 45%) obtained grades for ENG 104 that were consistently below a pass mark. Although her answers did show some basic understanding of the topics, her use of language and grammatical knowledge (as shown in the grammar test and in the examination) were very weak. In his comments on her essay on *The lion and the jewel*, the lecturer mentions its 'major structural flaws': these are certainly apparent, both at sentential and discourse levels. In the grammar test, she scored below a pass mark in all the questions, with particularly low marks in the cloze and error correction questions. In the examination, her knowledge of content was enough to give her a narrow pass mark in the essay questions but poor expression and a poor performance in the grammar questions meant

that she failed the paper. The same happened in the supplementary examination, where she also did not answer the question set for the argumentative essay, repeating the essay she wrote for the corresponding question in the main examination instead.

All three of the students in this sub-group consistently failed to meet the outcomes in the four modules and did not seem to have benefited from the teaching in any way, nor is there any sign of progress through the year. Their skills, both literary and linguistic, were, however, so far below any threshold competence that might reasonably be expected from students studying English at tertiary level that this is not surprising.

The next sub-group of three students did, on the other hand, have potential for improvement. Their performance throughout the year fluctuated around the pass mark, sometimes achieving, sometimes just missing, achievement of the outcomes. Although their general competence was higher than that of those students just discussed, they failed to develop all the requisite skills adequately. While their use of language was generally fluent, it was still marred by grammatical errors, sometimes at an elementary level. In assignments and examination questions their knowledge and understanding of the literary texts was adequate, although frequently presented incoherently: often points were made implicitly, lost among irrelevant or subjective details. Their essays lacked structure and they did not make sufficient use of discourse markers. Theoretical grammatical knowledge, on the other hand, was usually good, even excellent, but not always applied in continuous writing. A notable feature in all three students was that their performance in examinations was usually poorer than in assignments: questions were often left incomplete or not attempted. This suggests a deficiency in study skills, the inability to perform within the time constraints of an examination and also points to the limits in their linguistic competence. A closer examination of the work of Student 7 and Student 76 in ENG 103 and ENG 104 respectively will attempt to provide evidence for these generalizations:

In her essay on 'The Hartleys', **Student 7** (average for ENG 103: 46%) lacks focus. She initially argues that the original ending is effective, without giving any clear justification for her opinion. Yet later she refers to her own ending as more effective, again without clearly explaining what this is. Her writing lacks logic and, although reasonably fluent, contains numerous grammatical errors. The following extracts illustrate both deficiencies:

I think the writer is right by ending the story the way it has ended, because he told us that the only thing which was binding Mr and Mrs Hartley was their daughter. This means their daughter was the only reason for them to stay together.

...
Even though the people thought that they were a happy family but they were pretending. The writer also tells us that the wife of Mr Hartley was always absent minded, I think it means that she was there with them with her body but with the mind and soul he was not there at all.

Her apparent attempt at analysis in these two paragraphs is also noteworthy, since her approach is typical of many students of comparable ability. She has not moved beyond the initial stage of decoding the text: her 'commentary' involves explaining the denotations of words that are not immediately clear to her. In this, she was probably influenced by her recollections of what happened in the English class at school. Another strategy typically employed by many students probably has the same origin: in commenting on a text, they 'grade' it, commenting that the grammar is 'correct' or that the expression is 'good'.

Student 7's narrative essay is little more than a summary of the original text, with consistently incorrect use of tense in the indirect speech. She tends towards summarizing again in the literature questions in the examination, mixing her account with irrelevant and subjective remarks, such as, '*A child is a precious gift from God and each parent should take care and responsibility for his/her child*' and '*Even if your son have done something wrong you will find it in your heart to forgive him and you will be united again and live together again*'. The same tendencies had characterized her work previously. The grammar section of the examination also scored a relatively low mark (21 out of a total of 50). In the supplementary examination there is some improvement in her narrative writing: the account is lively and entertaining, although still characterized by careless use of direct and indirect speech. Her writing here, in fact, seems to encapsulate her work generally: competent and at times even suggesting above average insight or ability, but careless in the details.

The quality of work produced by **Student 76** (average for ENG 104:58%) is similarly erratic. Her essay on *The lion and the jewel* shows a good understanding of the issues involved, dealt with clearly and systematically. The writing is generally fluent although, like the previous student, characterized by frequent grammatical errors. In the grammar test, she scores a total of 64%, but loses a number of marks in the error analysis section. In the aegrotat examination, her argumentative essay is well thought-out, but poorly structured: the

two sides of the argument are presented independently of each other, without any attempt at linking or synthesizing them. The literature question is handled adequately but, as elsewhere, her language is grammatically inaccurate. The extract below is typical of her writing:

Sidi was happened to be respected by the people of Ilujinle because of the photograph that was seen by all the people and also of all things persuaded Baroka to want to possess her as the chief. She was highly recognised also by Baroka's senior wife, she wanted Sidi for his husband, she wanted this jewel to be possessed by her husband and she did everything to make sure of that.

The performance of the top three students was consistently better than that of the others in the focus group. Grammar knowledge was good to excellent although, with the exception of Student 66, this was not always apparent in their writing. Student 82, in particular, clearly did not edit his writing and frequently made grammatical errors. Student 66's writing, on the other hand, was characterized by successful attempts at creativity. In the argumentative writing essay in the examination, the performance of all three students was noticeably better than that of others in the focus group: essays were carefully structured, coherent and linguistically signposted. The three students also displayed insightful knowledge of the literary texts: in writing about them they were able to focus on the topic and to substantiate claims with detailed references. Of the three students, only Student 66 reached the level of a distinction in any of the assignments or examinations. The sub-group's performance was, on the whole, typical of the more successful students in the core class as a whole. A closer examination of the work of Student 82 and Student 66 in ENG 103 and ENG 104 respectively will attempt to provide evidence for these generalizations.

In his essay on 'The Hartleys', **Student 82** (average for ENG 103: 56%) presented a plausible and clearly argued (although not very original) alternative ending to the story. In contrast to most of the students considered so far, his suggested ending and justification are clearly stated. His language, although free from obvious grammatical errors, could have been improved with editing. The following extract shows the strength and weaknesses of the essay:

My story should have ended when the couple was happy, Anne behaving well, Mrs Hartley being a happy woman and always with her family, living together and skiing together. My story would be like that, as it would have achieved the aim of the Hartley's which was to bring peace in the family and the family would return back to New York in one piece.

My ending is more effective than the original for the above reason, that is it has achieved what was the intentions of the Hartley's couple, it has ended in a way that most people would have expected it to. My ending would in some way be a lesson to some couples out there whose relationships are breaking or had to rebuild their relationships, unlike the original ending of no message, especially because Anne's death was not as a result of the situation of her parent's relationship.

His careless approach to writing resulted in his not achieving the outcomes of the second assignment. In the grammar test in ENG 104 he would score a grade of 72%; yet his writing in the assignment contains numerous errors in the use of tense, as the following extract shows:

Thoko and Tshepo were having a nice time at the park one afternoon. The two lovebirds were playing, chasing each other and splashing water at each other. They were really enjoying themselves.

They then go sit under a tree eating the sweets they have brought along while chatting. Thoko's head on Tshepo's thighs, they talked about their dreams and their future together. They were really enjoying one another's company in a way that it was turf [tough] for each of them to go home, but at the end they kissed and go to their different houses.

The next day at school Tshepo was with his friends at the toilet, telling them what a nice time he had with Thoko at the park, but they were interested in whether he have slept with Thoko yet. He gave them a good reason that there is no need to rush for that because he loves Thoko so much and so does she.

The same kind of writing resulted in a narrow pass and fail in two questions in the ENG 103 examination, in spite of achieving a distinction (80%) for the grammar question.

Student 66 (average for ENG 104: 72%) received a comparatively low mark of 56% for his essay on *The lion and the jewel*; in the grammar test, however, he obtained a distinction mark of 87% and narrowly missed a distinction in the examination with a grade of 74%. In the examination, both his linguistic and literary skills were apparent. His argumentative essay was clearly structured and well written. The opening paragraph is reproduced below:

Open and frank communication about sex and sexuality education may contribute or positively influence the behaviour of young people. Research

has also shown that lack of sexuality education leads to negative influences and, therefore, misguided behaviour. However, in African culture it is taboo to talk about sex to young people.

After this brief but concise introduction, which summarizes the direction the essay will take, the clearly signposted arguments are presented systematically. The writing is fluent and it is clear that the writer has thought about the issues raised in class. The same ordered approach is apparent in the answer to the literature question. The topic is introduced, each argument is systematically presented and developed, a conclusion is finally drawn. In addition to showing knowledge and insight into the text, there is clear evidence that the writing skills learnt in the language component of the course have been transferred to the study of literature.

5.4.5 Student opinion

A third student questionnaire was administered at the end of the second semester (Appendix F-3), focussing on issues relating to the ENG 103 and ENG 104 modules. Unfortunately, the sample was extremely small (fourteen students), the consequence of poor attendance at the last lectures of the year.

In the questionnaire, students were asked to indicate their preference for one of the two approaches to literature. Of the fourteen students who completed the questionnaire, twelve chose the integrated approach; only two chose literature 'by itself'. Only a few comments suggested an intelligent understanding of the choice being made. One student commented that integrating language and literature avoided the monotony which might result from concentrating on one at a time and that a thorough knowledge of grammar was necessary for clear expression in literature; another mentioned that BA (Communication) students in particular needed to develop both linguistic and literary skills. Unfortunately, most of the comments were less illuminating; many, in fact, suggested that the respondents did not have any real understanding of the choice that had been made – or that, if they had, they were not able to articulate it, even in the most elementary terms.

Students were also asked to assess whether or not their grammar and writing skills had improved as a result of work done in ENG 103 and ENG 104. There was an overwhelming consensus that improvement *had* taken place in both areas: twelve students believed that their grammar, and eleven that their writing skills, had improved.

5.5 An extension of the case study: English 100 in 2001

The English 100 course was offered again in 2001. The content and outcomes of the four modules remained largely unchanged. However, a number of factors affected the way in which it was presented and afforded me an opportunity to conduct further research among students and lecturers in the Department of English. The AR orientation of the case study made this possible from a methodological point of view, since the resumption of the research could be seen as the beginning of a new cycle of research.

The intake of first-year students in 2001 increased dramatically as the result of an agreement between the university and the government of Botswana. The increased numbers had not, however, been anticipated and plans had consequently not been made to deal with the new situation. By the end of the first module, after another prolonged registration period, the English 100 class was in excess of 350 students. Lecturing, which had already proven unsatisfactory in 2000, became both strenuous and ineffective. It had become necessary to reduce the number of tasks for ENG 101 to two and the journal was graded only once (and even here the grading process had to be reduced to skimming with random careful reading). In ENG 102, the class was consequently divided into two groups, each with its own lecturer. Even then, both lecturers were unable to complete the work prescribed for the module (I taught ENG 101 on my own; I was not involved in the teaching of ENG 102 at all.).

5.5.1 Small group teaching: ENG 103 and ENG 104

The difficulties in the teaching situation coincided with ongoing uncertainty about the future of UNW as a viable institution. Internally, academic departments were under increasing pressure to justify their continued existence by using resources and personnel to full capacity. Both these factors led to the Department of English deciding that all members of the department should share in the teaching of the ENG 103 and 104 modules, the class being divided into groups of about 25 students each. This marked the beginning of an experiment in small group, collaborative teaching, for which I was appointed the co-ordinator. It was decided that, initially, the materials used in the modules would remain the same. Lecturers were, however, encouraged to develop supplementary materials which, it was envisaged, could be placed in a bank for use by the whole department.

Two of the lecturers, who normally taught only in the English and Academic Studies unit of the department, were at first apprehensive about teaching literature, believing that they did not have the skills to do it. Similar sentiments are frequently reported in the literature by writers advocating the integration of language and literature. See, for example, Holden (1987:74), Gilroy (1995), Minkoff (2006:46) and Paran (2006b:5). Wright (1990b:279), on the other hand, comments on how many literature teachers lack experience in language teaching.

When teaching began in the second semester, I also resumed the journal that I had kept the previous year. Scanning the entries reveals a generally optimistic view of the small group approach, in spite of initial frustration at trying to coordinate the activities of all lecturers involved. Although tutorials had been experimented with in 2000, conditions had never allowed for their full implementation. Now the advantages of small group teaching, both for implementing and reflecting on an integrated approach to literature and language, became increasingly apparent. Those advantages that I noted in my journal included:

- ↪ I was able to assess and remedy any weaknesses in the materials and approaches more easily and quickly; I was less dependent on general impressions, and did not have to wait for the submission of written work to obtain evidence.
- ↪ On the other hand, the small groups offered greater opportunities for obtaining confirmation of the theory of integration. For instance, the students' responses pointed to the motivational power of literature (Statement 2), its ability to generate interest and discussion and so develop communicative competence (Statement 3).
- ↪ I was better able to implement a process approach to writing. All the drafts of essays could be commented on at least once.
- ↪ I was in a better position to tailor the grammar awareness component to the students' individual needs.
- ↪ Listening comprehension, including grammar dictation – as described in Wajnryb (1990) – and speaking skills could also be taught.

Participation by students was, nevertheless, still limited. Most lacked the confidence to speak English in front of their peers. The small groups also highlighted the wide range of abilities within the class (also, of course, the case in 2000, as is clearly apparent in the work of the focus group). This was especially noticeable in the grammar awareness component:

some students appeared to lack any knowledge of the most basic grammatical structures, while others clearly found the lessons boringly elementary. Having to adjust my pace to that of the weakest students returned me to the old problem of not having enough time to present and practise grammar. The following extract from my journal encapsulates both the positive and negative elements in the situation:

A better class to-day. Students did the 'Peanuts' cartoon, re-writing it in direct and indirect speech, working in pairs as I walked around – the greatest difference that small groups have made. But noticeable how many just seem unable to apply the rules – here I could see what remained hidden in the lecturing situation last year. To what extent they will now make the effort is not certain, but I have to move on: tomorrow will go on to a short story as a change of pace and interest (Journal: 22 August 2001).

The weak students also had great difficulty in revising their essay drafts after receiving my feedback, even when the relevant structures had been covered extensively in class.

5.5.2 Student opinion

The general tendencies found in the responses from students to questionnaires in 2000 were again apparent at the end of 2001, when a questionnaire (Appendix F-4) was administered to a sample of ENG 103/104 students drawn from two groups, one taught by me, the other by my 'critical friend'. Some of the questions were the same as those put to the 2000 students; others represented an attempt to focus and refine on the issues of small groups and language/literature integration in the light of subsequent experience. Students were also given the opportunity to make general comments on all or part of the ENG 100 course. Once again, the remarkable consensus of opinion in most areas is worth noting.

The three sections of the questionnaire included a number of questions. For the purposes of the discussion here, however, only the key issues raised will be examined. These may be summed up in the following questions, paraphrased from the original document:

- (1) What kind of university English course would best serve *your* needs/wants?
One that consisted of:
 - (2) literature only
 - (3) practical language skills
 - (4) knowledge about language
 - (5) a combination of the above
 - (6) none of the above options

- (2) Do you prefer being taught in small groups, as has been done in ENG 103 and ENG 104?
- (3) Do you like an approach to studying English that integrates literature, writing skills and grammar awareness?
- (4) Do you think that your knowledge and use of grammar have improved as a result of the work done in ENG 103 and 104?
- (5) Do you think that your writing skills have improved as a result of the work done in ENG 103 and ENG 104?
- (6) Do you think that your knowledge and use of literature have improved as a result of the work done in ENG 103 and 104?

Group A consisted of nine students from my 'critical friend's' group, representing all those present in class on the day that the questionnaire was administered. In response to the first question, three indicated a preference for an English course that focussed on practical language skills; six chose the 'a combination of the above' option (that is, a combination of literature, practical language skills and knowledge about language). Eight students expressed a preference for being taught in small groups. Reasons given included greater opportunities for class participation and discussion, a better chance of understanding the work, greater confidence felt by students in this environment and the belief that lecturers are better able to identify and assist slow learners. Only one student did not prefer the small group option: his/her explanatory comment is, however, illuminating and echoes the fears expressed by some lecturers: *'Lecturers don't provide the same information concerning the teaching mode [sic]'*. Unanimous support (all nine students) was expressed for the integrated approach. Most comments here included mention of the opportunities for creativity.

All nine students believed that their knowledge and use of grammar, their writing skills and their knowledge and use of literature had improved as a result of the integrated work done in ENG 103 and ENG 104.

Group B consisted of fourteen students from my own group. The responses followed lines very similar to those recorded for Group A. In responding to the first question, eleven students opted for the combination of literature, practical language skills and knowledge about language; one chose practical language skills, one chose knowledge about language and one created a new combination of practical language skills and knowledge about language.

All fourteen students in Group B expressed a preference for small groups, a response that was reinforced by subsequent comments on the limited opportunities for class participation in a large class meeting in an overcrowded venue, as had been the case in ENG 101 and ENG 102. The following comment aptly captures the attitude of the respondents:

When looking back at 101/102 there were many students who failed and who supplemented. That does not mean they are stupid, it is only that they relied [relied?] on other students, like I said they needed to have participated. And now 103/104 even though there are students who failed the numbers are far much better than 101/102 because each and every student was like forced to participate and by so doing the lecturer knew or easily identified our problems so we got assistance at an early stage and recovered. What I can say is the system which now used in 103/104 should be put into practice looking at the reasons and the way it was run.

Integration of language and literature was favoured by thirteen students. Reasons given included an appreciation of the creativity involved and the opportunities presented to broaden the mind and develop critical thinking – all echoing arguments frequently presented in the literature on integration. Interestingly, the comments also indicated that the students had unconsciously absorbed – and responded positively to – the task-based, co-operative methodology used in ENG 103 and ENG 104. The one exception commented: *‘I don’t like the idea of studying these [sic] English. I think we should be taught grammar to improve the way we talk’*. (The same student had earlier chosen the practical language skills option.) As in Group A, there was a unanimous perception that knowledge and use of grammar and literature and writing skills had improved.

The students in my ENG 103 group were also asked to write an essay on the value of literature in a university English course, similar to the assignment given to the ENG 101 students in 2000. Of a total of twenty students, sixteen indicated unequivocally their belief that literature had a place in the study of English. The discussion tended to emphasize the idea of literature as ‘language in action’: for this reason they suggested that reading and studying literature could contribute to the development of grammar, vocabulary, and general language skills. Reasoning of this kind tends to confirm the instrumental motivation already noted; some students, however, also included among the benefits of literature the broadening of knowledge and experience, stimulation of the mind and emotions and the promotion of creativity. Two students denied the importance of literature in language study. One reiterated

the importance of grammar, asserting that she regarded literature as *'just stories to enjoy'*. She explained: *'I read literature just to know what's happening in the story and when reading I don't see the point of taking notice of how the grammar is used. I just want to know whether it is something enjoyable or boring'*. The other student appeared not to reject literature in principle: rather, her rejection was prompted by the difficulty that it presented for her personally. Another two students did not express any clear opinion either way: one echoed the sentiments of the student who found literature difficult, but stopped short of describing it as unnecessary.

5.5.3 Lecturer feedback

The involvement of other lecturers in the teaching of the ENG 103 and ENG 104 modules in 2001 provided me with an opportunity to explore their reactions to the issues already raised with the student respondents. At the end of the year, a summative questionnaire (Appendix F-6) was given to the other eleven lecturers. Responses were received from nine of them. These have been numbered randomly L1 to L9.

The questionnaire had two sections. Section 1 consisted of ten questions dealing with the lecturers' experience of small group teaching and the integration of language and literature. Section 2 attempted to explore the principles of integration more thoroughly by eliciting their reactions to the fourteen statements on the benefits of integrating language and literature. Examples were used to illustrate some of the statements to make their possible applications clearer.

The lecturers' responses to the questions in Section 1 are given below. For ease of reference, the questions are stated above each response.

Question 1:

Do you think that our experiment in sharing the teaching of ENG 103 and ENG 104 has been successful?

YES 7 : NO 2

Question 2:

Would you like to continue your involvement in the teaching of the first year modules (i.e. ENG 101, ENG 102, ENG 103, ENG 104)?

YES 8 : NO 1

Question 3:

The English 100 modules attempt to integrate language and literature. Do you feel that you are competent to teach in both areas?

YES 8 : NO 1

Question 4:

Are you satisfied with the integrated approach adopted in the sample materials distributed at the beginning of the semester?

YES 7 : NO 2

Question 5:

Have you developed any additional materials?

YES 6 : NO 3

Question 6:

If yes, would you be prepared to add them to a bank of materials to be used by all lecturers involved in teaching the modules?

YES 7⁵⁹ : Not Applicable 2

Question 7:

Would you prefer to use materials developed by a colleague or colleagues specializing in the first-year course? (The same principle could be applied to all undergraduate modules where the teaching is shared.)

YES 8 : NO 1

Question 8:

Was there enough time in each module to develop the skills specified in its stated outcomes?

YES 3 : NO 6

Question 9:

⁵⁹The apparent contradiction between the statistics for Questions 5 and 6 come from the responses of L4, who answered YES to Question 6 even though he had given a negative response to Question 5. Presumably his response to Question 6 should be read hypothetically: if he *were* to develop additional materials *in the future*, he *would* be prepared, etc.

Have you observed any improvement in your students' use of language as a result of work done in the grammar components of ENG 103 and 104?

YES 4 : NO 2 : NOT SURE 3

Question 10:

Do you think that more staff co-ordination and co-operation are necessary in the teaching and testing of the course?

YES 9 : NO 0

The first four questions focussed on the lecturers' assessment of the experiment: the responses indicate almost unanimous support for it. The remaining questions were directed to the future development of the English 100 course and are not immediately relevant to the concerns of the present study, with the exception of Question 9. This is of particular interest in view of the students' overwhelming perception that their language skills had improved. Opinion among the lecturers was, however, evenly divided. The four respondents who indicated that they had observed an improvement in their students' use of language as a result of work done in the grammar components of ENG 103 and 104 cited evidence from spoken and written activities and assignments. Two respondents had not seen any evidence of improvement in their students' performance. One of these was my 'critical friend', who taught Group A, as discussed in section 5.5.2. In contrast to her perception, all nine students surveyed believed that their use of language had improved. She added the suggestion that the focus of grammar teaching should be on remedial work based on the students' own work. Three others chose the NOT SURE option in the absence of clear evidence either way.

Responses to the statements in Section 2 suggested a general endorsement of the integration of language and literature. The number of responses in agreement with each of the statements never fell below seven. In some instances, agreement was unanimous (statements 4, 6, 11, 14); in others, respondents indicated that they were not able to comment rather than expressing disagreement (statements 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13). Only in four instances did respondents explicitly disagree with the statement (statements 1, 2, 3, 7). For statements 1 - 3, disagreement in each case was expressed by the same respondent (L2).

The negative responses nevertheless represent valuable insights that deserve to be taken into consideration. Detailed discussion of the responses to this section of the

questionnaire will therefore focus on areas of disagreement with the given statements or where comments provide a significant qualification to the ideas articulated in them. Comments that reiterate the essential point of the statement or that appear to be irrelevant will not be examined.

Statement 1:

Literature provides a resource or authentic context for the teaching of grammar and vocabulary.

Agree 8 : Disagree 1 : Not able to comment 0

Eight respondents agreed with the statement; one respondent (L2) disagreed, expressing the view that language and literature should be taught separately. (The same respondent had answered NO to Questions 1 and 2 in Section 1.)

Statement 2:

Because of its appeal to the learners' imagination and emotions, literature provides motivation for language learning.

Agree 8 : Disagree 1 : Not able to comment 0

Here again, there was broad agreement with the statement although one respondent added the significant qualification that the truth of the statement depended on the kind of literature chosen. Dissent came from L2, who appeared to see the statement as irrelevant rather than disputable: *'Students know that they are learning English. They don't need to be motivated. They should be given interesting materials and a lot of exercises. Home work'*.

Statement 3:

The themes and plots of literary works provide stimuli for meaningful debates, discussions and other language tasks which develop the learners' linguistic and communicative competence (for example, debating the relevance of Western education after reading *The lion and the jewel*).

Agree 8 : Disagree 1 : Not able to comment 0

Eight respondents expressed agreement. L2 disagreed: *'The debate cited above is the theme of The lion and the jewel. One doesn't have to set a separate debate'*.

Statement 4:

Literature provides learners with authentic models for the norms of language use (for example, alerts them to differences in register).

Agree 9 : Disagree 0 : Not able to comment 0

All respondents expressed agreement. Two, however, qualified their agreement in their comments. One indicated a need for a variety of literary texts. The other respondent's comment appeared (in my opinion) to amount to a DISAGREE response: *'Yes, but literature texts are not really authentic'*. Here the respondent appears to be pointing to the obvious fact that a literary text is an artifice and so *may* lack the incoherence frequently found in 'real' life.

Statement 5:

Literature assists learners in developing their overall language awareness and knowledge about language.

Agree 8 : Disagree 0 : Not able to comment 1

Eight respondents agreed with this statement; two of them (L4 and L9), however, qualified their agreement, by pointing to perceived limitations in students' analytical skills. One of the respondents (L9) further suggested that guidance from the lecturer was necessary.

Statement 6:

The study of literature helps develop the learners' interpretive and analytical skills (for example, skills of inference) which can be applied to other language-related activities.

Agree 9 : Disagree 0 : Not able to comment 0

The statement received unanimous support, but again with significant qualifications from the same respondents as in Statement 5. L9 reiterated the necessity for guidance from the lecturer; L4 claimed that students *'do not seem to transfer skills from one module to another'*.

Statement 7:

Literature represents language ‘at its best’ and thus provides an ideal model for language learning.

Agree 7 : Disagree 2 : Not able to comment 0

Seven respondents indicated their agreement with the statement; however, two added comments that significantly qualify their agreement. L6 mentioned the *‘danger that students may find unconventional literary expressions attractive and incorporate them into their formal writing tasks’*, L7 commented that the validity of the statement depends on the choice of literature. A similar sentiment was expressed in one of the two DISAGREE responses: L4 pointed out that *‘some literary texts may be inaccessible to some students’*.

Statement 8:

Literature provides learners with insights into the norms and cultural values embodied in the language.

Agree 8 : Disagree 0 : Not able to comment 1

L7, while expressing agreement with the statement, limited its range by adding the phrase *‘of the particular setting or culture presented’*. L9 repeated the point (made about statements 5 and 6) about the necessity for guidance from the lecturer.

Statement 9:

The study of literature educates the ‘whole person’ in a way that more functional approaches to language teaching do not.

Agree 7 : Disagree 0 : Not able to comment 2

The statement received general agreement. None of the respondents provided any comments that modified their responses in any significant way.

Statement 10:

Comparing literary and ‘non-literary’ texts allows the learners to move from the known to the unknown: in this way literature is made more accessible to them.

(for example, comparing the poem, “Journey of the Magi”, with the Biblical account)

Agree 8 : Disagree 0 : Not able to comment 1

L2 developed the statement by pointing out that the technique broadens the students' knowledge through showing that a topic can be approached from different perspectives. L4 reiterated a doubt expressed earlier (Statement 5) about the students' ability to observe features of language apparent to their lecturers.

Statement 11:

Linking the study of literary texts to creative language activities (such as rewriting endings to stories, role playing, rewriting a narrative from a different point of view or in a different genre) makes the text more accessible to the learners and removes some of the intimidating mystique that often surrounds literature.

Agree 9 : Disagree 0 : Not able to comment 0

Respondents were unanimous in their agreement with this statement. L4 also mentioned that his experience with his group provided evidence for the validity of the statement.

Statement 12:

Applying basic ESL/EFL techniques (such as cloze, multiple choice and jigsaw reading) to the study of literature develops language skills and promotes engagement with the text.

Agree 7 : Disagree 0 : Not able to comment 2

There was general agreement with the statement: L4 added the important point that students enjoy the kinds of exercises mentioned.

Statement 13:

Learners cannot develop literary competence without an adequate competence in language. Integration of language and literature helps compensate for any inadequacies in the learners' linguistic competence.

Agree 8 : Disagree 0 : Not able to comment 1

L4 qualified his agreement with the comment that students' metalanguage was generally inadequate. ____

Statement 14:

Developing the learners' sensitivity to how language is used in a literary text

(for example, through elementary stylistic analysis) provides them with a 'way in' to the text, a starting point for the process of comprehension and appreciation.

Agree 9 : Disagree 0 : Not able to comment 0

Agreement here was unanimous, with comments from two of the respondents adding weight to the statement: *'Learning to be sensitive to how language is used does lead to comprehension and appreciation. Appreciating literature takes time and effort'* (L2); *'... and we need to do lots of this before we introduce the 'hard' stuff'* (L4).

The analysis of the responses makes it clear that, with the notable exception of L2, the lecturers involved in the 2001 experiment expressed their commitment to both language/literature integration and to collaborative group teaching.

5.6 Conclusion

At the beginning of this chapter, two questions were posed:

- What effect does the integrated approach have on the development of the students' literary and linguistic competences? Does it, as the theory suggests, work to the benefit of both?
- To what extent does the approach meet students' and colleagues' perceived needs and expectations for a first-year university course in English?

The second question is the easier one to answer. Evidence from questionnaires and self-reflective tasks points to overwhelming support for an approach that integrates language and literature. Both the methodology and materials used in the two years covered by the case study were generally met with approval. The only real challenge to this position, ironically enough, comes from the researcher himself in the perception that responses from students, although positive, were frequently uninformed or based on extremely limited experience. This reservation is, however, strictly speaking, irrelevant to the question, which is concerned with the *perceptions* of students and colleagues, however open to question these might be. At face value at least, the English 100 course appeared to have fulfilled the needs and expectations of all the role players concerned. In terms of motivation and other affectual factors, this is not an unimportant detail.

Answering the first question is more difficult. If 'development' is understood to be synonymous with 'improvement', there does not seem much evidence that this had taken place. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to chart and assess the progressive performance of the students in the focus group as representative of the English100 core class. While there were fluctuations in the grades awarded to them or in the quality of work they submitted, none showed any evidence of dramatic improvement or deterioration. This lack of change was especially apparent in the case of the weaker students. The weaknesses identified in their work at the beginning of the year were still apparent at the end. In the case of these particular students, however, such an outcome was to be expected. Drastic remedial action would have been necessary to bring them to a level compatible with study at first-year tertiary level. Intervention on this scale needed resources that were not provided by UNW.

On the other hand, while it is not possible to claim that the integrated approach *improved* the students' literary and linguistic competence in any obvious way, there is also no evidence of it having *retarded* development in those skills. It should also be borne in mind that the assessment criteria became progressively more stringent: obtaining the same grades throughout the year could therefore be seen as 'improvement' and be cited as evidence that learning had taken place. The question then arises: would the situation have been any different if another approach to the teaching of English had been applied?

To answer this question would require a systematic and controlled comparison of a class taught by the integrated method and one that was not. This is, however, at odds with the case study methodology and the action research paradigm in which the research has been undertaken.

Another comparative approach could be to compare the performance of the class in 2000 with those in earlier years, before the integrated syllabus had been implemented. Prior to the case study, evidence of this kind was, in fact, adduced by the Head of the Department of English in support of the integrated undergraduate programme as a whole. In September 1998, statistics were cited to justify of his claim that there had been an immediate improvement in the students' performance as a result of the introduction of the programme at the beginning of that year. Statistics for the first semester of English 100 (still described by the number code of the old system, ENG 116) showed a pass/fail rate of 194/131, an

improvement on the performance in previous years:121/194 (1997); 90/196 (1996); 101/109 (1995); 23/86 (1994). It is tempting to accept the Head of Department's claim that these statistics were conclusive proof of the efficacy of the new programme, even at its inception, and to attempt similar comparisons with the 2000 class. However, the context of his assertion urges a more cautious interpretation. The statistics are not presented disinterestedly but are an important part of his justification for an increased budget allocation to the department (see Dunton 1998). More significantly, they should also be seen in the context of the pressure on all South African universities to safeguard their financial positions by admitting, and ultimately graduating, more students. A year earlier, the department had acknowledged its need 'to find ways of enhancing student enrollment and pass/graduation figures' (Department of English minutes 07/08/97). Notwithstanding the expressed determination not to diminish the quality of the programmes, the psychological effect of these pressures on lecturers leaves comparison with the old syllabus open to question. Factors such as those would also undoubtedly also influence any attempt to compare the performance of the English 100 class in 2000 with classes in previous years.

A more fruitful line of enquiry might, however, be found in narrowing the focus of the question. Instead of attempting to discern global changes in student performance, it might be more useful to examine the relative success of specific instances of the integration of language and literature within the English 100 course. The fourteen statements make wide ranging claims of the supposed benefits of the approach for ESOL students. Statements 1 - 8 claim that literature can be used to the benefit of language teaching, 'language' being variously understood as grammar, vocabulary, communicative competence and language awareness. It does this by acting as a context, a stimulus, a process or a motivation for language learning. Statements 9 - 14, on the other hand, suggest that literature can be taught more effectively through adopting a variety of language-based techniques. Evidence in support of any one of these claims does not, however, imply the validity of all of them: nor does contrary evidence invalidate the claims of all of them. Equally, in any specific teaching situation, there may be factors that militate against the claims being realized in practice.

In the case study described in this chapter, there is evidence in support of the claims made in some of the statements; in others the evidence is, at best, inconclusive. Two broad patterns do emerge, however. Where integration involved an approach or technique that

appealed to the learners' subjectivity or imagination, it seemed to be successful, whether it was in the development of literary or language skills. Where integration seemed less successful was where analytical skills were required.

Instances of successful integration were found in the tasks in ENG 101 where the use of literary texts seemed to lead to engagement with the language awareness topics. Literature was equally effective in its ability to stimulate debate: this was evident in class discussion and writing exercises on literary texts such as *The lion and the jewel* and 'An incident in the Ghobashi household'. Equally, a writing exercise, such as writing alternative endings to literary texts, promoted a personal involvement in the literary text. The benefits worked both ways, to the benefit of language skills and to the benefit of literary appreciation. On the other hand, while literary texts provided the topics and motivation for writing and the resources for raising grammar awareness, they could not ensure that essays would be well structured or that grammatical knowledge would be transferred to writing. For these skills to be acquired as a result of exposure to literary and other texts would have required more time and resources than were available.

The stylistic approach in ENG 102 did not, on the whole, appear to be successful. Students were not able to develop the skills required to separate form from content; even when they were successful here, they lacked the necessary background knowledge that would enable them to interpret the texts. More significantly, most students, even those who consistently achieved the outcomes of the other modules, lacked the linguistic intuition that would have enabled them to recognize nuances of meaning and tone.

On average, half the class managed to achieve the outcomes in their final grades for each module. Of these students, a large proportion obtained grades in the 50 - 59% category. This was a typical pattern in all years of study in the Department of English. From this global perspective, the introduction of the integrated English 100 course did not seem to have any marked effect on the performance of first-year students. Its strengths and weaknesses on a local level have been touched on in this discussion. In the next chapter, these will be further examined in an attempt to identify the factors that limited its success.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

Slowly, however, research is beginning to emerge.

(Paran 2006b: 9)

I will conclude by saying that you have did the best that you can, i loved the way you teaches us, people say different things about you, from my own point of view you are as you are. Keep doing the right thing and the heavenly God will bless you. (English 100 student, essay on literature, 2000)

6.1 Summary of the study

This study has investigated the use of a particular methodology, the integration of language and literature, in a particular context, the first-year English class of ESOL students at UNW in 2000 and 2001. The innovations that were the object of the study developed out of the perceived inadequacy of the more traditional approach to teaching language and literature then current in the Department of English. Although the changes affected the whole undergraduate syllabus, it was argued that the first year of study was of special interest. It laid the foundations for the rest of the programme and, more significantly, it affected the largest group of students in the department, most of whom would not continue with studies in English beyond the first year. The integrated approach was seen to be especially appropriate for students who used English as a second language since it did not take either literary or linguistic competence for granted but attempted to address and meet the actual needs of the students. While both language and literature components were found in the old syllabi, the new approach attempted to reinterpret them in a radical way, from a carefully theorized base, expressed as fourteen statements on the benefits to be derived from the integration of language and literature. The changes were not simply imposed from above, however: as has been shown throughout the study, attempts were made to solicit and act upon the opinions of the stakeholders most affected, the students themselves. All evidence pointed to their approval and support for the integrated approach.

The main focus of the investigation has been the case study conducted in 2000 and 2001 but this was not presented in isolation from the preparation that went into it (such as the production of the materials through which the integrated approach could be realized in the classroom) and the quality assurance practices that followed it. The broader contexts in

which it took place were also presented as essential to an understanding of the case study and its findings. These included the movements for change in English studies in South Africa, the national transformation of higher education, the university's history and status as a HBU, as well as the educational and social background of the student population. All of these were factors to be taken into account in considering the appropriateness and feasibility of the integrated approach.

The case study described in detail in Chapter 5, was, in effect, a description of the integrated approach 'in action', as both process and product. The detailed reporting of the class's performance in the four modules aimed at showing all the elements involved in the teaching and learning processes. However, the findings of the chapter, although revealing local successes and failures, were not conclusive. The question raised at the beginning of the study – whether a method of teaching English, widely discussed and reported internationally, could 'work' in this particular case study – could not be answered without qualification.

To a large degree, this lack of certainty was attributable to the context of the case study. Contextual factors, initially seen as 'background' to the investigation, frequently became foregrounded to the extent that they overshadowed it, at times even making the issue of an appropriate methodology seem irrelevant in the face of larger, more immediate concerns. Since it could not be isolated from them, the factors had a limiting effect on the ability of the case study to provide answers to the question it had set out to investigate. These factors need to be considered before any valid conclusions about the English 100 course can be reached. In the next section, the contextual factors will be considered as limitations to the study. In doing this, comparison with the findings of previous studies in similar contexts in South Africa will be made. With the limitations in mind, an attempt will then be made to assess the course in terms of quality assurance: did it, firstly, have fitness *of* purpose and, secondly, was there fitness *for* purpose? The last section of the chapter will involve a consideration of the study's contribution to research in the area of the integration of language and literature.

6.2 Limitations of the study

In an entry in my teaching journal, made in the middle of the 2000 academic year, I noted the extent to which other issues seemed to be impinging upon my teaching and research foci:

This study began as AR with the aim of improving practice, etc. in the context of change in S[outh] A[frican] education. However, it has increasingly become the discovery of the impossibility of effective teaching, let alone research, in the context of a dysfunctional institution. Linking research with teaching and self-reflection has made me all the more aware of what I have always known. It is impossible to ignore or gloss over issues since everything has to be recorded and analysed (Journal: 8 May 2000).

The journal's function as a therapeutic outlet as well as an objective research instrument should place this rather extreme statement in context. It, nonetheless, shows the way in which background details often assumed a significance that threatened to blur or even distort the focus on the integration of language and literature, both in the classroom and in my research.

These contextual factors were of different kinds. The diagram in Figure 2 in Chapter 3 indicates that the action research on the English 100 course lay at the centre of a series of contexts, each enclosed by one larger. The most immediate context was the educational and experiential background of most of the students, which had not equipped them with the necessary schemata, study skills, linguistic knowledge and literary competence to cope with the English 100 course, even though its aim was to compensate for these gaps. This personal context was contained within the institutional context of UNW, the shortcomings of which have been commented on at various times in this study. This, in turn, needed to be seen within the context of the process of educational transformation in South Africa, also beset with problems in its implementation. In the following sections, these contextual factors will be considered individually.

6.2.1 The student population

Many of the students experienced difficulty in coping with the basic notions underlying and implicit in the concepts 'language' and 'literature', let alone any methodology that sought to integrate the two.

An assumption frequently made throughout the English 100 course was that students learn best through moving from the known to the unknown. One example of this was the technique, used in ENG 102, of using 'more accessible' texts to introduce those texts deemed to be removed from the students' experience. Yet what emerged from the students'

performance in that module was a general lack of familiarity with *most* kinds of text, not only those written in English or in a literary genre. In my discussion of the students' second assignment (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.4.1), I noted 'a fundamental ignorance of the culture of the written word' exhibited in the reactions of many students to the texts they attempted to analyse. Instances such as these suggest the alienation from written language probably experienced by many people in a semi-literate rural society. The pedagogical technique of using 'authentic' texts to facilitate learning has little effect in this context, where written language occurs mainly in the classroom and plays only a limited role in daily life experiences. Similarly, the technique of using 'popular' texts (such as advertisements) to prepare students for the study of more 'literary' texts assumes a literate society in which people are constantly (and usually subconsciously) exposed to written language. This was clearly not the experience of most students in the English 100 class. A further limiting factor was that creative uses of language, even in advertisements, are most likely to be found in texts aimed at an urban, middle-class and predominantly white audience. Texts described in the literature as 'accessible' were likely to be as foreign to many of the students as Shakespeare's sonnets (or, for that matter, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*).

If a large number of the students entering English 100 were lacking in a basic knowledge of the styles and registers of English, the absence of literary knowledge was even more marked. Brumfit and Carter (1986b:29-30), in an early study of the use of literature in the language classroom, posit three situations in which this might take place:

- A. students working in their mother tongue on literature, with a great deal of aesthetically structured speech and children's writing behind them;
- B. students working through a foreign or second language coming from a culture with a well-developed literary tradition, with which they are already slightly familiar (these will probably be a little older than those in (1) above);
- C. Students working through a second language whose experience of artistically organized language is primarily oral, and whose culture may indeed have very different assumptions from those of western Europe (and of the writers of this Introduction) about aesthetics and language.

Most students from UNW clearly fell into the third category, having had only a limited experience of a formal, written literary tradition. This was frequently evident in the

teaching of English 100 course. For instance, in the diagnostic test given to the ENG 102 class, it is significant that none in the focus group identified the third text in Question 1 as being literary in origin.

A related aspect was the absence of a 'book culture' at UNW. Students, not only those who could not afford them, were generally extremely reluctant to buy books, even the English 100 resource books that had been compiled as an alternative to more expensive commercially-produced course-books. This was noted as another impediment to effective teaching in all the modules.

Another limitation to assessing the success of the integrated approach, which showed itself in the tutorials and small group teaching, was the students' difficulty in adapting to cooperative and communicative language learning, both of which are fundamental to most interpretations of the approach. Their behaviour here is partly explained by a lack of experience of these styles of learning at school. It was also symptomatic of a lack of confidence in using English in public or with their peers. On the other hand, many were also not able to practise the kind of independent learning required for keeping a journal.

Although the integrated approach is especially suited to second- or foreign-language speakers of English, it, nevertheless, assumes a certain level of competence in and exposure to the language. As the detailed analyses of the focus group made clear, however, the standard of English of most students was extremely low, a situation often exacerbated by their unrealistic self-assessment of their abilities. Although, in theory, English was the students' second language and medium of instruction for most of their education, in practice, for most it was a foreign language, remote from their experiences outside the classroom.

The students' lack of background knowledge had repercussions for the research as well as the learning process. The study aimed to elicit their opinions as a means of validating the integrated approach. However, much of the data gathered in this way had to be treated with caution. At the most fundamental level, lack of linguistic competence in English meant that many students misread the instructions and questions in the questionnaires. The absence of literary background also meant that many of the opinions expressed in the essay on the value of literature were uninformed or, at best, limited. Most tellingly, their lack of experience meant that they lacked the perspective from which to assess their own learning.

This was revealed clearly in the widely expressed belief in questionnaires in 2000 and 2001 that their grammar, writing and literary skills had improved as a result of work done in ENG 103 and 104. Gratifying though these responses were, some caution is needed in interpreting them. There is little reason to believe that they had as much basis in reality as in perception. Very poor expression in most cases undercut any claims to linguistic competence. There was also a noticeable trend for students to rely on external validation (that is, whether they passed or failed the modules) to determine their own progress. 'Improvement' was, moreover, frequently measured in very specific, limited ways, such as having learnt the difference between 'can' and 'may'. In the case of one of the 2001 groups, claims of improvement in grammar furthermore flatly contradicted the perception of their lecturer, as recorded in her response to a lecturer's questionnaire (see Chapter 5, section 5.5.3). The students' explanations for their perceived improvement also offered very little evidence on which to judge their claims: most comments were too vague (for example, as evidence of improved grammar knowledge and use: *'I learnt to use English better'*), lacked logic (for example, as evidence of improved grammar knowledge and use: *'Because I have passed ENG 103 and I also hope to pass ENG 104. The more we share ideas, the more I grap [sic] information and thus improve grammar'*) or were simply irrelevant (for example, as evidence of improved writing skills: *'I was reading poems for pleasure not knowing that they have themes and the like [sic]'*).

All the factors mentioned here are typical of the student population at South African HBUs. Similar findings regarding literacy, literary competence, perceptions of and real competence in English, the absence of a culture of learning and the difficulty in adapting to new ways of learning are to be found in the literature, as the following examples will show.

The standard of English among black ESOL students at universities and colleges in South Africa has been researched and documented regularly: the findings are consistently discouraging. Evans (1992a:58) quotes research conducted in the late 1980s that indicated that most 'first-year students who have matriculated in the DET [Department of Education and Training, which controlled all education provision for blacks under apartheid education] system are at stage 3 reading level and frequently lapse back into stage 2'. She glosses stage 3 as 'the level which usually extends, in mother-tongue speakers, over the period from about 9 to 14 years of age'. Kilfoil (1994b:43) refers to the 'grossly inadequate linguistic proficiency' at all levels of education and the consequent difficulties students experience as

readers of any English text. More recently, research has been reported suggesting ‘that 82% of students enrolling at tertiary institutions are functionally illiterate, with a literacy level below that of grade eight’ (Nicol 2005:2), a finding which, when compared with Evans (1992a:58), suggests that the situation is deteriorating.

Aitken (1980:59) shows the effect of this linguistic incompetence when she mentions that her attempt at a survey of first-year students at the University of Zululand failed because students lacked the reading comprehension skills to understand, in her words, ‘thirty straightforward questions’. Aitkin (*ibid.*) also echoes my observation that students had not had sufficient exposure to English or the effective learning of English to be able to judge their own abilities realistically: ‘... a very large proportion of our students consider that they have a good command of English – these are students that we consider, for the purposes of studying literature, barely literate’. Similar sentiments are expressed by Muller (1982:204) with respect to students studying English at the then University of the North. Kilfoil *et al.* (2005) report on a related issue of ESOL students at the University of South Africa who did not seem to appreciate the time and effort needed to *improve* on their English language competence.

The absence of a written literary culture among black ESOL students has also been noted. Walters and England (1988:148-149) found that most South African black pupils read very little mother-tongue literature for pleasure. They reproduce a letter from Professor A. L. Mawasha of the University of the North in which he asserts that ‘when Black people “dropped” the oral tradition they did not pick up the reading tradition to an equal degree’. He adds: ‘This makes it impossible for them to describe ACCURATELY what they would like to read’ [emphasis his] (1988:17). The validity of the last statement was borne out by my own survey of the reading preferences of English 100 students at UNW, discussed in Chapter 5.

The literature provides evidence that the English 100 students’ reluctance or inability to participate in class discussions was not confined to students at UNW. Balfour (1997) provides an analysis of uneven participation in tutorials at the University of Natal (Durban) that is similar to my experience of tutorials in 2000 and small group teaching in 2001. South African black ESOL students, are not, of course, unique in this respect: much of the literature on CLT has argued the difficulty of implementing these and similar principles in non-western educational contexts (see, for example, Burnaby & Sun 1989; Pennycook 1989; Watts 2003/4).

The issue of students not having copies of prescribed texts was not limited to the Department of English at UNW, either. Numerous attempts to set up a university bookshop on campus had failed because of lack of student support. Many lecturers attempted to enforce the purchase of prescribed texts by excluding students who did not have them from class, a strategy that was occasionally effective. The problem is also reported by Muller (1982:311) in his study at the University of the North and by Mbali (2006:27) with reference to secondary-school children in Kwazulu-Natal.

It should be noted that the problems mentioned here are by no means only to be found in South Africa. Brumfit and Benton's (1993) survey of teaching literature in a number of countries throughout the world reveals teachers grappling with remarkably similar issues: students lacking a culture of reading and not having any experience in literary study and analysis, inexperienced teachers, the constraints imposed by examinations and syllabi, varying levels of English proficiency among students, large classes, passive learners and so on.

6.2.2 The institutional context

The limitations imposed on the case study by conditions at UNW have been alluded to throughout this study. At the risk of tedious repetition, these contextual factors are summarized below:

- the lack of resources (including teaching staff) that would enable the department to implement the integrated approach adequately or to provide the remedial attention needed by many students;
- lack of certainty or information concerning the government's changes to the system of education and UNW's place in any future dispensation;
- the lack of direction shown by the university management during this period of transition and transformation, which led to uncertainty and lack of motivation among both students and staff;
- mismanagement or *ad hoc* management by the university authorities, which precluded effective planning by academic staff and optimal learning by students;

- lack of commitment and/or capacity by lecturers to make the course sustainable.

These factors undoubtedly limited the efficacy of the case study from the perspective of research as well as from that of learning and, like those discussed in the previous section, often had the effect of blurring the focus. Most could be seen as temporary symptoms of a period of transition, although anecdotal evidence suggests that little has changed since the time of the case study. The last factor, however, is of relevance in considering the viability of the integrated approach outside the strict confines of the case study. While the aim of the approach is to facilitate learning for the students, its methods make great demands on the linguistic knowledge and intuitions of the teacher. This is especially apparent in areas such as textual analysis and stylistics. Walters and England (1988:140) do not recommend the use of language-based approaches for the teaching of South African black high school pupils on the grounds that they are only appropriate for advanced students and 'would require an adequately trained mother-tongue teacher'. The evidence of the class's overall performance in the ENG 102 module seems to suggest that, even at tertiary level, most students had not reached that 'advanced level'. While the authors' insistence on a mother-tongue teacher is debatable, my experience of working with lecturers at the Thaba'Nchu and Marapyane Colleges of Education (where an integrated syllabus based on the English 100 model was offered) and with colleagues in the Department of English at UNW who were not mother-tongue speakers, suggested that many lacked the confidence or the ability to teach material that assumed detailed knowledge of style and register. Reservations such as these are not confined to the South African ESOL context or to non mother-tongue speakers of English, however. MacKay (1993:131), for instance, is sceptical of the claims advanced for stylistics by writers such as Widdowson, and suggests that 'teachers of language/literature and/or stylistics are themselves often unable to do what they require their students to do'.

Doubts about the capacity of some lecturers at UNW to implement the integrated approach effectively are not, however, only found in this specific area. Dovey (1994:294) complained of the lack of a coherent and theoretically explicit approach in the integrated courses that she surveyed (see Chapter 1, section 1.8.3). She was also forced to operate under similar circumstances in her own teaching of a first-year course at Rhodes University (1998:41). The designers of the new English undergraduate programme at UNW attempted to avoid this kind of situation by being as transparent as possible at every point and level of

the programme. Designing a syllabus is, however, only the first step towards its successful implementation. Coherence is only possible if those responsible for implementing the syllabus are familiar with, and committed to, the principles underlying it. They must, moreover, have the competence to translate them into practice. Carless (2001:263-264), writing about the situation in Hong Kong, comments that there, as elsewhere, 'it is common for curriculum innovations to result in a facade of change, but with little noticeable impact on what goes on in the classroom'. He adds that innovation can only be implemented properly if teachers 'have a thorough understanding of the principles and practice of the proposed change'. In the case of UNW, it is by no means certain that this was the case, as was suggested by the findings of a questionnaire administered to all lecturers teaching modules in the integrated undergraduate programme (see Appendix F-5).

The questionnaire attempted to gather data on the perceptions and practices of lecturers who had taught second- and third-year modules in 2000. This data was seen as potentially relevant since, although the focus of the case study is the first-year course, it cannot be seen in isolation from the rest of the undergraduate programme, just as it cannot be isolated from its other contexts. The later modules were designed as developments of the English 100 modules and were conceived on the same principle of integrating language and literature. They were, however, often taught by lecturers who had not had a direct hand in the conceptualization and planning of the programme – unlike English 100, for which I was, initially at least, both the designer and teacher of most sections.

The questionnaire covered a number of issues: one of them, addressed in the fourth question, is of particular relevance to the concerns of the present discussion. To avoid prompting the respondents in any way, the question posed was intentionally vague in its phrasing: *Did you link your module(s) (by means of content, texts, themes, etc.) to any other module(s) taught by yourself or by another lecturer?*. The aim of the question was, however, to determine the extent of language/ literature integration taking place in the programme as a whole. Only two lecturers made any explicit mention of the need to integrate language and literature components. In a personal communication, one of them later gave the example of using literature texts in classroom discussion and exercises to familiarize students with the characteristics of spoken English (Ledibane 2000: personal communication). An analysis of the examination papers set by her for those modules did not, however, reveal any degree of real integration between language and literature. What emerged was that nearly all lecturers

were either apparently unaware of the need to link the two components or were not able to do so.

6.2.3 Higher education: Constraints in the application of OBE in English 100

If the English 100 course needs to be seen in the context of UNW and the implementation of the whole undergraduate programme, it must also be considered in the context of OBE, the informing philosophy behind the innovations in South African higher education. My attempts to assess and evaluate the course were in terms of its outcomes. It was for this reason that the concept was examined in some detail in Chapter 3. There, its short-comings, especially in the context of higher education in South Africa, were briefly considered. But the practical implementation of OBE in the English 100 course also presented problems. To what extent to which I was really able to practise OBE effectively?

As was indicated in Chapter 3, the implementation of OBE at UNW was plagued by uncertainties, many of them about the nature of the methodology itself. Most of these were eliminated in due course. Some problems remained, however. These were due less to a lack of knowledge about OBE than to contextual restraints that prevented effective implementation of its principles. In some cases, the consequence was a modification of 'pure' OBE. For instance, in determining whether students passed or failed assignments and examinations, the traditional numerical percentages continued to be used, whereas OBE tends to conceive of achievement in broad categories such as 'Not Achieved', 'Achieved' and 'Achieved with Distinction' (Kramer 1999:53-76).

In other cases, the contextual restraints undermined, or even contradicted, the new system. An important principle of OBE, derived from the mastery learning model, is that of 'expanded opportunities'; in other words, 'all learners can succeed, if given the time and support that they need' (Kramer 1999:106). Such an assumption is, understandably, particularly appealing in an educational context such as a first-year course at UNW, historically characterized by a large proportion of under-prepared students and a high failure rate. The principle, however, depends on the tacit assumption that resources are available to provide the necessary time and support. These were lacking at UNW in a number of ways. The most obvious impediment was the student-staff ratio: in 2000, the English 100 class

averaged 120 students (taking into account fluctuations in the registration for individual modules); in the following year the average rose to over 350. Usually, a single lecturer was responsible for the teaching and assessment of the whole or part of the course. Classes of this size preclude the kind of attention to the needs of individual learners advocated by OBE. It also means that the four traditional skills of language learning (reading, writing, speaking and listening) cannot be taught and assessed equally. The department did attempt to address the situation by introducing group teaching in the second semester of 2001 and in 2002, as well as in the design of the student-centred materials and activities. But the group teaching could not be sustained because of staff commitments elsewhere and other factors in the academic structure resisted even this kind of intervention.

The context also affected other aspects of OBE. After the introduction of module-based continuous assessment, the university continued to teach and examine within the framework of a semester system. This meant that students who failed the initial module in each semester only received their results at the end of that semester (after the second or fourth module had been completed) and could only sit for the supplementary examinations at the beginning of the following semester. This cumbersome system not only made nonsense of the modularization supposedly in place, but contradicted the OBE principle of expanded opportunity to master the work in that module. No provision was made for those students to be given remedial tuition in preparation for the supplementary examination; if they needed to repeat the module, they had to wait until it was offered at the same time the following year. The economic pressure on the university – and subsequently on the Department of English, as financial responsibility devolved to departmental ‘cost centres’ – also undermined the idea of expanded opportunities: providing resources and opportunities for learners to develop at their own pace was simply not financially viable in a system in which the institution was under constant pressure to ‘find ways of enhancing student enrollment and pass/graduation figures’ (Department of English minutes 07/08/97). The extended registration period that began each semester also undercut effective continuous assessment of the first modules in each semester.

6.3 Quality assurance: Fitness of and for purpose?

Having examined the limitations that various contextual factors placed on the English 100 case study, discussion can now return to the question of the ultimate success or failure of the integrated approach for first-year students at UNW. This question will be addressed in

terms of two issues that emerged as being of particular significance in the discussion of quality assurance in Chapter 3: fitness *of* purpose and fitness *for* purpose. As will be shown in the following discussion, the limitations identified in the previous sections are important factors to consider in any attempt to answer these questions.

6.3.1 Fitness of purpose

Translated into the concerns of this study, the question of the English 100 course's fitness of purpose involves a consideration of whether it was, firstly, an appropriate and relevant response to the needs of first-year students at UNW. Could the integration of language and literature accomplish what its advocates had claimed for it? Could it, in the various ways that are summarized in the fourteen statements in Chapter 2, make both the English language and its literature more accessible to the students, addressing their unique needs? Would it improve their competence in both areas?

The last section of the previous chapter concluded that the extent to which these aims had been achieved was both limited and uneven. Some students, such as the first sub-group in the focus group, made no progress at all in the course of the year; others, such as the second sub-group, achieved a degree of success in certain areas but not in others; a minority, as represented by the third sub-group, achieved a reasonable proficiency throughout the course. What do these patterns suggest about the fitness of purpose of the integrated approach in general, and of its particular application in the form of the English 100 modules? The answers seem to lie in the clash between the implicit assumptions in the integrated approach and the context in which the course was actually presented.

The integrated approach emphasizes the idea of *facilitating* learning, whether of language or of literature. This emerged clearly in the survey of the literature and was expressed in the fourteen statements through the use of words and phrases such as 'accessible', 'appeal', 'assists', 'engagement with the text', 'compensate for inadequacies', 'way in', 'remove the mystique' and 'motivate'. If the application of this approach at tertiary level is in any way controversial, it is because it could be perceived as insufficiently 'academic' or that too many concessions are being made to the students' lack of capacity. But, in fact, it was this emphasis that made the integrated approach an attractive proposition for a context in which the more traditional approaches to tertiary study were deemed inappropriate. Its advocates frequently emphasize that their assumed students are not

specialists in literature or language studies but that integration can make the two fields accessible to them. At UNW, the approach was, moreover, applied within a framework of OBE, which claims that all learners, given sufficient time and opportunity, can achieve the relevant outcomes.

Yet even the integrated approach makes certain assumptions about the threshold knowledge and skills of potential students. The factors discussed in section 6.2.1 suggest that a large number of students did not meet this threshold level, nor were they able to achieve an acceptable level of proficiency by the end of the year: the members of the first sub-group of the focus group were by no means isolated examples within the class. This raises the question of the fitness of purpose of the course. The point has been made at various times in this thesis that the English 100 course needed to reach a compromise between the actual needs of the students and more abstract (and subjective) perceptions of what constituted appropriate academic standards. The implication of this is that if a substantial number of students failed to achieve the outcomes of the course, their needs had not been met and the course had, in this respect, failed to achieve its aim. It was, in other words, lacking in fitness of purpose.

There is, however, also evidence of a more positive nature to set against this conclusion. The work produced by the focus group in 2000 shows that not all students were equally lacking in threshold proficiency. The students in the third sub-group (whose profiles showed that they came from similar backgrounds to others in the class) responded particularly well to the materials and the approach adopted in the course. This does not, in itself, validate the use of the integrated approach: as was pointed out in the conclusion to the previous chapter, their performance might have been identical in any other approach to the teaching of language and literature. On the other hand, the same argument holds true of the weaker students: their results might have been as poor whatever and however they had been taught. Stated bluntly, the integrated approach was no more or less successful than any other might have been.

It should also be recalled that the students, irrespective of their abilities, were almost uniformly positive in their own assessment of the course and the approach adopted in it. The same applies to other lecturers involved in the teaching of English 100. While these perceptions are not in themselves evidence of fitness of purpose (and often even run counter

to my own perceptions), they are also important elements in QA and need to be taken into consideration along with my assessment as teacher/researcher.

6.3.2 Fitness for purpose

The question of fitness for purpose involves asking whether the teaching of the course in the period of the case study was successful in terms of what it aimed to do. If, leaving aside the question of fitness of purpose and accepting the course and the student population as givens, was there anything that prevented the full realization of its potential? That there were factors of this kind was, in fact, the conclusion of the members of the department, as recorded in my third QA report (Butler 2003b). The investigation that culminated in this report had initially set out to address the possibility that the integrated undergraduate programme as a whole lacked fitness *of purpose*.⁶⁰ The department, however, concluded that the fault lay less with the programme itself (although some changes were recommended) than with its implementation,⁶¹ which was affected by the context and environment in which it took place. These were the contextual limitations identified in the sections above. It is perhaps then ironic that the characteristics that made UNW an interesting subject for a case study were also those that hampered it.

Lack of resources as a factor determining lack of achievement by the students should not be over-emphasized, however. Kilfoil *et al.* (2005) describe the poor performance of disadvantaged students at the University of South Africa, in spite of all the resources available to them and the numerous interventions made by lecturing staff. The authors suggest that an explanation lies in the inability of some students 'to act as self-directed learners who can take responsibility for their own learning by optimizing resources and committing time to their endeavours' (2005:120). Evidence from the English 100 case study

⁶⁰The need for the investigation was partly the result of a negative report received from the external examiner of the ENG 302 course in 2003. I was able to observe this class's abilities at first hand when I taught part of the ENG 304 module, 'Critical approaches to literature' later that year. In the introductory lecture, I had asked them to suggest a definition of 'literature'. However, the only definition that the class could agree upon was that literature involved '*any writing that was grammatically correct*'. This is, in itself, a comment on the (in)effectiveness of the first year of study, which for most of the class was in 2001, the second year of the case study. It also points to the observation, frequently made by lecturers, that students failed to transfer knowledge from one module to another. It should, however, be noted that few students majored in English in comparison to the number who enrolled for only the first year of study: these were also rarely those who had performed the best in English 100.

⁶¹See Chapter 3, section 3.3.2.

at UNW indicates similar patterns of behaviour.

The limitations imposed by the various contextual factors discussed in this chapter point to the need for further investigation in another cycle of AR. This, however, lies outside the ambit of the case study, which is concerned with the implementation of the English 100 course to a particular group of students at a particular time and place. Ultimately, perhaps, the success of the course depended on the students themselves: their own motivation to succeed and the extent to which they, as individuals, were able to use the input they received to their own advantage.

6.4 The case-study as action research

The previous section focussed on the case study from a pedagogic point of view, primarily considering its effect on the students in the English 100 class at UNW. However, as the choice of the two epigraphs to this chapter is meant to imply, in AR the role of the teacher is combined with the role of the researcher. This section will focus on the latter aspect.

In making the English 100 course the subject of a case study, the aim was to examine it from a number of perspectives. Data were gathered to provide a rich and detailed picture of all the elements that went into it, from the time of its theoretical conception to its implementation and subsequent evaluation. Using the paradigm of AR enabled me to present this process 'from within' and share the intimate understanding that my position gave me. At the same time, to balance this subjectivity, attempts were made to incorporate into the research findings the insights and opinions of others involved, such as students and colleagues. Theoretical and empirical research also attempted to set it in the wider context of international developments on the integration of language and literature for ESOL students, while at the same time acknowledging the local context with all its specific characteristics and constraints. In assessing the case study as research, the question must therefore be asked: To what extent has it made a useful contribution to on-going research in the area?

Maley (2001:182-3) mentions the relative lack of published empirical research on the integration of language and literature in ESOL. Most studies, he claims, are done for AR degree purposes and consequently only available to a limited readership. He, nevertheless, acknowledges their value:

They are welcomed for their focus on specific, local contexts. Although this makes their conclusions difficult to generalise with confidence, they nevertheless offer suggestive avenues for application and variation in other specific contexts.

Five years later, Paran (2006b:9) echoes Maley's initial reservation: research has been limited, and theoretical rather than empirical. He quotes the call, made by Quirk and Widdowson (1985:210), more than twenty years earlier, for more research 'so as to discover the basis for learner preference, the factors which cause difficulty in interpretation, the effect on learners of different types of text, literary and otherwise, and in general the way in which the learning of language and literature could be seen as complementary'. In spite of this, Paran claims, literature has continued to occupy a marginal role in second language learning and teaching and he reiterates his belief in the need to look at 'what happens with real learners in real classrooms' (*ibid.*).

Yet Paran's (2006b) remarks are made in the context of an introduction to a collection of case studies on the use of literature in English language teaching and learning throughout the world (Paran 2006a), and he goes on to argue that these studies have gone some way in addressing the need for detailed and specific data (Paran 2006b:9), having previously noted (2006b:2-8) how they reflect a number of current trends in the teaching and learning of literature in the ESOL classroom, such as the integration of language and literature, the range of text types and writers being taught, the role of the learner and the effect of different environments and settings, attitudes to literature and the variety of approaches available. One of the case studies, Butler (2006), which reports on the main issues covered in this thesis, is cited as contributing to the discussion in a number of these areas. Nevertheless, Paran (2006b:9) reiterates the need for 'some data gathering of the most basic type', singling out the following areas for further descriptive research (2006b:9-10):

- the extent to which literature is taught in educational systems around the world;
- how much literature students are reading;
- the use of literary texts in TESOL materials and course books, and whether there is any difference between materials produced for local and global markets;
- the approaches taken by teachers to the use of literature in the

- classroom;
- the reactions of learners to these approaches;
- differentiation between learners, according to factors such as age, educational setting, specific countries and situations;
- the participants' perceptions of, and attitudes to, the advantages of this way of learning;
- testing literature in an L2;
- research on literature learning in other second languages.

I would argue that the present study has continued the line of theoretical research that, according to Maley (2001:182-3) and Paran (2006b:9), has been predominant so far. With its detailed account of the English 100 case study, it has, however, also extended the empirical data base in the way advocated by them and previously by Quirk and Widdowson (1985:210). The fourteen statements on the benefits of integrating language and literature that were used in Chapter 2 as a framework within which a survey of the literature could be undertaken were intended to be more than a summary of existing perspectives: they represented an attempt to create a coherent theory on which to base the case study. As such, they were meant to contribute to the theoretical discussion of how language and literature can be integrated. From a practical point of view, however, the statements also informed the design of the course and the development of materials; finally, their claims were subjected to the evidence provided by 'real learners' in a 'real classroom' (including the constraints imposed by them). It was here that theory blended with description and provided the kind of basic data called for by Paran (2006b). The detailed reporting of the teaching and learning processes was meant to give weight to the practical aspect of the research and provide the empirical evidence on which the statements could finally be assessed. Data reflecting students' opinions and preferences (such as their views on literature) and the lecturers' responses to the statements, based on their own experience as ESOL teachers, provided further concrete evidence of the implications of the theories in a specific setting.

From a national perspective, the empirical data provide a record of the application of the integrated approach in a period of educational transition. They have brought to the surface some of the advantages, as well as the weaknesses, of the theory; this information will be of use to anyone contemplating the same approach to ESOL teaching under similar circumstances. The links made between the integrated approach and OBE are a further

contribution to creating an understanding of the former's potential in South Africa. Internationally, as the inclusion of my account in Paran (2006a) attests, the case study has made a contribution to the on-going dialogue in the field. Even if, as is typical in AR, its findings are sometimes inconclusive, it has provided another perspective and a set of responses to some of the issues that Paran (2006b) and others have identified. In some ways, it has validated the theory; in others, it has pointed to limitations and gaps.

AR emphasizes the contribution that research can make to the personal development of the researcher as a practitioner. This aspect also needs to be taken into account in an assessment of the success of the case study as research. From this perspective, it can be described as wholly successful. The initial theoretical research was illuminating, intellectually stimulating and made me aware of the considerable diversity of approaches and opinions in the field. As an extended exercise in reflective practice, the case study itself enabled me to articulate and examine my assumptions about language and literature, especially as regards their place in ESOL teaching. It provided me with an opportunity to document and reflect critically on my practice at a particular time and place in a way that will affect my future development as a teacher and academic. Collaboration with colleagues also made it possible for me to expand on or reassess these views. The elicitation of students' opinions – normally unspoken or submerged – added a further dimension to the data, one that is frequently ignored in academic planning and discussion. Even when – as was sometimes the case – these views were limited or uninformed, they provided insight into a world from which the teacher is often excluded. The research process was creative as well as scholarly: translating the theory into classroom practice through the development of materials and classroom tasks was an interesting and enriching experience, especially since it was here that the challenges offered by the context were the greatest. Viewed from this personal perspective, the words of the student quoted in the second epigraph to this concluding chapter are, then, perhaps as fitting a comment on the ultimate success of the English 100 case study as any other.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A Extracts from the ENG 101 materials
A-1

UNIT TWO: LANGUAGE AWARENESS
Language around you

-
Outcomes:

- ▶ *You can demonstrate a basic awareness of language in everyday use around you.*

-
▶▶ **Getting started**

Write down all instances of language that you have encountered since you woke up today (e.g. conversation, greetings, labels, advertisements).

Indicate whether they were spoken or written, the specific language involved (English, Setswana, etc), etc.

▶▶ **Texts:**

TEXT 2

Mafeking, mkt. tn. of South Africa, NE Cape Prov. Site of siege of British by Boers (1899-1900). Former extra-territ. Cap of Bechuanaland. Pop. 8 000.

Collins Dictionary of People and Places

TEXT 3

Eight decades ago the name MAFEKING burst into the world's consciousness during the protracted and bitter siege of the town. Today the focus is again on the unique little town, and it would perhaps be appropriate to take a look at the rich tapestry of history woven around it.

▶▶ **Comprehension and discussion: Texts 2 — 3**

Text 2

- ▶ The *Collins Dictionary of People and Places* was published over twenty-five years ago, in 1975. One would expect some of the information in it to be out of date. Can you find any evidence of this in the description of Mafikeng in Text 2?
- To whom does the word *Boers* refer? Could the word be used to convey different meanings?
- The description is very brief: the writer provides only a few facts about Mafikeng. How did the writer decide *which* facts to include? What kind of

- audience did he/she probably have in mind in writing this description? (*Hint: The dictionary was published in London.*)
- What details would *you* provide if you were asked to write the entry for a new version of the dictionary?
- What stylistic features in the text are typical of the kind of English used in a dictionary or encyclopedia?

Text 3

- Where would you expect to find a description such the one in Text 3? (There are a number of possible contexts.)
- In what way does the language of Text 3 differ from that of Text 2? In what ways does it differ from the paraphrase below? Quote specific words and phrases that show the differences.

80 years ago many people became aware of the name “Mafeking” because the town of that name was besieged. There is interest in the town again at present, and so it may be appropriate to consider its history.

- What is the reason for this difference in style? What does it suggest about each writer’s intentions?

Tasks and Activities

- Think about the names of streets and places in an area with which you are familiar, especially names that have changed recently. Do these names reveal anything about the people who live or have lived there (e.g. their history or politics)?
- Can you think of any other situations where language plays an important part in our everyday lives?

A-2

UNIT THREE : LANGUAGE AWARENESS

You and your languages

utcomes:

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- ▶ ***You can reflect on your use of language as part of your personal identity and as a means of self-expression.***
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▶▶ Getting started

Language profiles:

Here are some examples of language profiles

Language profile : Abigail Hlatshwayo

I was born and brought up in Soweto. I attended primary school and part of secondary school (up to Standard 8) in Soweto. My home language was Zulu, but I can speak Xhosa and Sotho because our neighbours were speakers of these two languages. The language of instruction at primary and high school was Zulu, and English was taught as a school subject. When I completed standard 8 my parents sent me to Swaziland for further education.

In Swaziland I was sent to an English medium school where Coloureds were the majority. (Coloureds in Swaziland speak English as their home language..) The school which I attended was situated in the south, which is predominantly Zulu speaking. But most of the Swazi students at the schools spoke Siswati as their mother tongue because they were from Manzini and Mbabane. Code-switching was inevitable in this multilingual setting.

Because of my township variety of Zulu I became a centre of attraction. Each time I said something in Zulu, I would be corrected. I ended up using English in class and at the hostel.

Today, I'm in a different linguistic environment. My children speak to me in English and I do the same to them. But when I'm angry, I speak Zulu because I express my emotions well in it (that's what I think). My domestic helper is Tswana, so I speak to her in Setswana. At church I use a lot of Setswana. But as soon as I'm conscious that I've made a mistake, I switch to English. I use Zulu to chat to members of the congregation who are Zulu speakers.

At work I speak English, Setswana and Zulu. I use all three when I speak to colleagues who are also multilingual.

There is a lot more I could say about my language profile, but time does not allow it.

Language profile: Ian Butler

My mother's grandparents settled in Kimberley, in what was then the Cape Colony, over a hundred years ago. They had come from Scotland. My father's family came from Ireland at about the same time. My ancestry is still evident in my name: *Ian* is a common Scottish name, and *Butler* was originally Irish.

We still speak English as our first language, although South African English is in many ways different from the varieties spoken in Britain to-day.

At school I studied Afrikaans as a second language. Afrikaans is widely spoken in Kimberley, and often serves as a means of communication between people who speak different languages. In my family we tended to be prejudiced against Afrikaans people, and so I was reluctant to use in language in everyday life. Even now my mother will not speak the language, even though all her neighbours are Afrikaans-speaking. They speak to her in Afrikaans: she answers them in English. If shop assistants address her in Afrikaans she pretends that she does not understand! Sometimes I also do this, although I should know better! I use Afrikaans mainly to communicate with my Setswana-speaking gardener who cannot understand much English.

In high school I also studied Latin. Even then, the subject was not taught in many schools, but some people considered a knowledge of Latin to be a sign of a good education. Nowadays I find my knowledge of Latin

useful in guessing at the meanings of words in Spanish and Italian.

At university I majored in English. I also studied isiXhosa, but the course was very theoretical, and I was never able to speak the language fluently. Now I have forgotten almost everything I learnt. I have twice tried to learn Setswana, but each time I gave up after a few lessons. Part of the problem was that I had bad teachers. The other reason was that I was not sufficiently motivated: I knew that I didn't really need it in order to communicate, so I gave up quickly when it got too difficult!

Language Profile: Yusuf Cassim

My great-grandparents came to South Africa from India in the late nineteenth century. Their mother tongue was Memon, a dialect of Hindi. My parents continued to use the language, but I can only understand a little of it. I can also understand (but not really speak) other Indian languages through watching Indian films. Like many other South Africans of Indian descent I now regard English as my first language.

When I was young, I attended a Muslim school in Durban. Part of our religious instruction involved learning Arabic, the language in which the Quran was originally written. In those days Afrikaans was not taught in schools in Natal: when my parents sent me to school in Pretoria in Standard Five I found it very difficult to catch up with my classmates who had been studying Afrikaans since they started school. I wasn't very motivated to try anyway, because we regarded it as the language of Apartheid, the "language of the oppressors".

At university I had to take "Latin Special" because the subject was a requirement for a law degree, and I had not studied it at school.

When I worked as a magistrate in GaRankuwa I picked up a little Setswana through listening to the court interpreter. I was able to work out the meaning of words from the context in which they were used.

➔ Texts:

TEXT 4

Digging

Seamus Heaney N. Ireland, UK b. 1939

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; snug as a gun.

Under my window, a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we picked
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God, the old man could handle a spade.
Just like his old man.

My grandfather cut more turf in a day
Than any other man on Toner's bog.
Once I carried him milk in a bottle

Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up
To drink it, then fell to right away
Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods
Over his shoulder, going down and down
For the good turf. Digging.

The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awoken in my head.
But I've no spade to follow men like them..

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests.
I'll dig with it.

➔Comprehension and discussion: Text 4

- What do you think the speaker means in the last three lines of the poem? How have the descriptions in the poem led him to making this statement?
- ▶ In what ways is language important to a poet? How does the poet suggest this in the poem?

Tasks and Activities

- Write your own **language profile**, similar to those that you have been shown.
- ▶ Interview your friends to get their language profiles.

A-3

UNIT FIVE : LEARNING AND KNOWING A LANGUAGE

Ou

tcomes:

- ▶ *You can use your personal experiences as a language learner in developing your understanding of the nature of language learning.*

➔

Getting started

Think about and describe your experience(s) of learning a language. What were your feelings, emotions, motivation, etc.?

➔Text:

TEXT 6 **ON LEARNING SOTHO**

(for Isaac Sephoka)
Christopher van Wyk

I was a young Sotho boy then
a baby wetting a layette of words
and all of you laughed boisterously
when I swore at myself
not knowing the difference then
between 'nna' and 'wena'.
And I'd impress all the ladies
with 'dumela ausi!'
or 'moratiwa!' when I was randy.

The words crawled at first
no matter how they tried to walk
among the grown, bombastic men.
Oh I was a child again
joyfully sucking on the tits

of a language new to me
though it had always been
dangling invitingly from Agnes who makes the tea
or Mrs Mabuja who sweeps the office.

Thank you for your patience brother
and your English to guide my Sotho.
I'm growing now
and one day I will be as big as you
and Joseph and Walter and Lucky.
Then I will also laugh when you do
or cry
and understand why.

➔➔Comprehension and discussion: Text 6

The poet uses a number of **metaphors** in the poem.

- ▶ Identify the metaphors, and explain the comparison being implied in them;
- ▶ What is the poet suggesting about the process of learning a language?
- ▶ How would you describe the **tone** of the speaker in the poem?
- ▶ Is the speaker's experience of learning Sotho similar to any language learning experience that you have had?

➔➔Lecture: What does it mean to know a language?

What knowledge is involved in acquiring a first language and/or in learning a foreign/second language?

Reference: Barry Jones: *How language works*

Tasks and Activities

- Try to analyse your own **feelings** as a student of English. Are these feelings related to any sense of success or failure in the subject?
- ▶ Think of some of the most important differences between your first language and English. Which aspects of English do you find the most difficult? Why?

A-4

UNIT SEVEN : ENGLISH AROUND THE WORLD

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utcomes:

- ▶ *You can recognize some of the characteristics that distinguish regional varieties of English.*

▶▶Getti

ng started

- ▶ Using the map below, identify the various parts of the English-speaking or English-using world.

Now try to answer the questions below:

1. Paraphrase or explain the meaning of the following words and phrases
 - ▶ **late** (e.g. **My uncle is late.**)
 - ▶ **just now** (e.g. **I'll do it just now.**)
 - ▶ **a stop nonsense**
 - ▶ **a checkers**

- ▶ Do these words refer to the same things ?
 - ▶ **chocolate / sweets / candy**
 - ▶ **truck / lorry**
 - ▶ **apartment / flat**

2. What do you think the following words mean?
 - ▶ **pikinini dok**
 - ▶ **pikinini pik**
 - ▶ **hair bilong fes**
 - ▶ **hair bilong maus**

If you were able to guess the meaning of the first two, you should be able to work out the meaning of the following phrase from the Bible:

- ▶ **gutnius bilong Jisas Kraist, Pikinini bilong God**
3. Which of the following sentences is correct?
 - ▶ **I'm going to write to my friend.**
 - ▶ **I'm going to write my friend.**

➔**Texts:**

TEXT 8

from Ronnie Govender: The Lahnee's Pleasure

The play is set in the bar of a hotel in a small town in Natal. Three characters appear in the extract below, all South African Indians. Sunny is the barman. One of his customers is Mothie, earlier described as "a middle-aged labourer in worn-out overalls". The other customer, described as "about 35 years old and neatly dressed", is known only as "the stranger". Here, Mothie, clearly upset, relates an incident that has recently taken place.

MOTHIE: I want to do so much for my children, bhai. I don't want them to battle like me. I work hard, bhai – Sunny you know for yourself. Five o'clock, bhai, five o'clock I'm on that tractor. I want to do so much for my children.

SUNNY: I know Mothie. Why don't you go home and have a rest – you can come back later.

STRANGER: I think that's a very good idea Uncle.

MOTHIE: I don't want to go home Sunny. If I go home I'll only sit down and cry.

(Stifles a sob.) My boy, Prem, he saw it Sunny. . .

SUNNY: What did he see? What happened?

MOTHIE: First time thing like this happen in my family. Disgrace. What I must tell my brothers and sisters, what I must tell my brother-in-laws, my sister-in-laws . . . what I must tell them?

SUNNY: Why you worrying about them, they not looking after you.

MOTHIE: Disgrace. I tell you Sunny, it's a disgrace. First time thing like this happen in our family. What a good name I had. Nobody can say anything about my family. *(Wipes away a tear.)* My boy, Prem, he's a clever fuller. Every time I go home, first thing I ask for is my boy. He listen so nice to me. Yesterday he's hiding. I washed and all, and I thought funny, where's my boy. I call him, he's crying. I say son, why you crying and he says. . . he says he come home lunch time from school because he left his homework book behind. The front door was closed. He came through the back door. He saw my daughter, Sunny, he saw my daughter. She was sleeping with one man. *(He breaks down.)* She was sleeping with one man. How you like that? Since my wife died, I bring her up like one gold. I give my children everything. Look my position. I don't buy for myself. I give my children everything. I want my children must marry nicely, not like this. Every penny I get, I put one side, that one day word will come for her and I'll marry and I'll give it. Now she gon do a thing like this to me, she gon do a thing like this. When my son told me I got mad. I gave her one punch in the mouth. See here – teeth marks. *(To STRANGER)* You too look, bhai. But she never fall down. She just run away. Now don't know where she's gone.

SUNNY: Don't worry, Mothie, she must be one of your connection's place. Don't worry, you'll find her.

MOTHIE: Why she must do this thing to me? Why she must do this thing to me? Never mind, give me nother one wine.

TEXT 9

from Chinua Achebe: No Longer at Ease

The passage below is taken from No Longer at Ease by Chinua Achebe. The novel tells the story of Obi Okonkwo, a young man from the village of Umuofia in Nigeria. Obi has recently returned from university in England to become a civil servant in Lagos.

The Umuofia Progressive Union, Lagos Branch, held its meetings on the first Saturday of every month. Obi did not attend the November meeting because he was visiting Unuofia at the time. His friend Joseph made his excuses.

The next meeting took place on 1 December 1956. Obi remembered that date because it was important in his life. Joseph had telephoned him in the office to remind him that the meeting began at 4.30 p.m.. ‘You will not forget to call for me?’ he asked.

‘Of course not,’ said Obi. ‘Expect me at four.’

‘Good! See you later.’ Joseph always put on an impressive manner when speaking on the telephone. He never spoke Ibo or pidgin English at such moments. When he hung up he told his colleagues: ‘That na my brother. Just return from overseas. B.A. (Honours) Classics.’ He always preferred the fiction of Classics to the truth of English. It sounded more impressive.

‘What department he de work?’

‘Secretary to the Scholarship Board.’

‘E go make plenty money there. Every student who wan’ go England go de see am for house.’

‘E no be like dat, said Joseph. ‘Him na gentleman. No fit take bribe.’

‘Na so,’ said the other in unbelief.

At four-fifteen Obi arrived at Joseph’s in his new Morris Oxford. That was one reason why Joseph had looked forward to this particular meeting. He was going to share in the glory of the car. It was going to be a great occasion for the Umuofia Progressive Union when one of their sons arrived at their meeting in a pleasure-car.

TEXT 10

Alex Dodd: “If this is salvation, Lord help us.” *Weekly Mail*, 2-8 Oct. 1992

The text below is the introduction to a piece of investigative journalism on unemployment.

“My name is Jenny Fourie. I’ve been hanging around Hillbrow for about three weeks now. I was staying with my family on the Bluff in Durban but, you check, I couldn’t take the crap anymore. My old man lost his job on the docks around May and my mom’s just had another kid and drinks like a fish.

“I was picking up all the flack ‘cos I flunked out of my hairdressing diploma... So I reckoned Jo’burg’s where the jol and the dosh is at, so screw this for a bad joke and pushed off. At first I had a jol — on the scene with some connections I met begging for cash for a half jack at Highpoint. I dossed at their porsie in Yeoville with their hippie chinas for a section. But they skopped me out and now I’m in the dog’s basket. Gies, I wish I was a bloody dog with a basket. You check, it would be kind of a whole stack easier.”

That was the story I’d planned to tell in bits and pieces through the night I was going to spend in a shelter for white down-and-outs in Benoni. But I never got there and never got to tell my neatly devised little story, because the going got a lot more tough than I’d bargained for and if I really had been Jenny Fourie I’d probably have been raped.

TEXT 11

from Fatima Dike: *The First South African*

The play is set in Langa township, near Cape Town.

*In the extract below one of the characters, **Max**, introduces himself to the audience:*

Fade up on Max, smartly dressed in the latest fashion. He carries a paper bag. He pulls a new sporting jacket out of it.

MAX: Heyitha, hoezit, sweet? Lovely. I’ve got this jacket here, beautiful pure wool. The label is ‘EMBASSY’. I can let you have it cheap. It was a suit before I got it in town, but if you would rather have the suit, I can get you the trousers tomorrow . . . No, getting the trousers won’t be a problem. I’ll get it in

the same way that I got the jacket . . . Here's the price tag . . . No, no, no, I was not going to charge you that amount. You see the suit costs this much, and the jacket will be half the price of the suit. But I want half the price of the jacket. Look, you can wear this jacket with a red or yellow shirt, or even a white shirt for that matter . . . Also, I've got this pyramid handkerchief (*pulling it out of his pocket*) here, your bhasela for buying this jacket. You can put it in the top pocket, and you'll look really nice, I mean umnyengezo my laiti . . . I only want R16 that's all. After all you're my friend, anybody else would have had to pay me R20 for this jacket. You can see for yourself it's good quality . . . Nee maan Jack, jy sien, jy praat nie soos 'n bra nie. I need money now. Look, if I were to be arrested, where would I get the money for bail from, heh? And you know that lawyers demand high fees nowadays to defend shoplifters. O.K. let's do this. I'll keep this jacket till Friday . . . O.K.? . . . (*shrugs*) Well, if you don't trust me, daais jou indabas . . . You see, that's a small time clever. He thinks he's going to jive me, but he forgets that I have heard this story of 'Come on Friday' a million times before. If he refuses to pay me, can I have him arrested for breach of promise? No dice. You see, in this game you've got to be sharp, or else you'll be everyone's target. Maybe he thinks I'm going to sukkel to sell this jacket. But he forgets, this location is full of moegoes. Langa is vol moegoes maan. When my friend Rooi comes, we'll make a plan. (*Someone whistles off stage.*) Ah huh, pink pyjamas, that's him. That's Rooi. Ek sê majita, sien julle summer-time neh?

Exit Max

TEXT 12

Selected Entries: A Dictionary of South African English

TEXT 13
Some differences in vocabulary
between South African and American English
(taken from *USIS ELT News* (February 1992))

South African

academic staff
account
autumn
bakkie
bill
biltong
biscuit
bonnet
boot
bottle store
braai
chips
cot
cotton
drawing pin
estate agent
flat
garden
geyser
globe
ground floor

American

faculty
bill
fall, autumn
pick-up truck
check (in a restaurant)
(beef) jerky
cookie
hood (of a car)
trunk (of a car)
liquor store
barbeque
french fries
crib
thread
thumb tack
realtor
apartment
yard
hot water heater
light bulb
first floor

mark (verb)	grade
mielie	corn on the cob
nappies	diapers
pavenment	sidewalk
petrol	gas
pram	baby carriage
revise (verb)	review
robot	traffic lights
serviette	napkin
stoep	porch
take away	carry out / to go
takkies	sneakers / tennis shoes
tin	can
tomato sauce	ketchup
torch	flashlight
trousers	pants
vest	undershirt
wndscreen	windshield

TEXT 14

Chan Wei Meng: “I spik Ingglish”

Chan Wei Meng, a student from Singapore, wrote this poem while studying English at the University of Otago in New Zealand.

CHAN WEI MENG, ‘I spik Ingglish’

I speak English
 To a foreign friend –
 ‘I don’t understand what you’re trying to say!’
 ‘How come? I spik Ingglish what!’

I spik Ingglish
 In Home –
 ‘Hungry? You want fried lice or mee?’
 ‘I eat Can-tucky cheeken, can or not?’
 ‘Listen! Study Ingglish, earn more mannee.’

I spik Ingglish
 In school –
 ‘Everybody read – sing sang sung.’
 ‘I sing Maly hab a litter lamb.’
 ‘Attention! School close at one.’

I spik Ingglish
 In Work –
 ‘You know, the komputer cannot open, izzit?’
 ‘I donno, got pay or not?’
 ‘Remember – customer is always light, pease.’

I spik Ingglish

In Shop –
'Hello, can I hepch you?'
'I looksee first'
Buy now! they is vely cheep and new.'

I spik Ingglish
Everywhere
Understand?

from: Rob Pope: *The English Studies Book*.

TEXT 15

A Cameroon Folktale

Sehns no bi foh daso wan man

Sohm taim bin bi we trohki bin disaid sei sehns pas mohni, so, i bin bigin foh gada sehns. i tek smohl sehns foh ehni man wei i mithop. i swipam foh graun an i kasham as i fohl foh di skai. ehni taim we i fain sohm smohl sehns, i tekam, putam foh sohm big pohl. i gada di ting foh plenti dei. i gada di ting foh plenti yia. i gadaram sotei i poht dohn fulohp foh sehns. trohki tink sei i geht ohl di sehns foh di hol graun foh i poht.

Wisdom belongs to everyone

At one time Tortoise decided that wisdom was more precious than wealth, so he began to collect wisdom. He took a little from everyone he met. He swept it up from the ground and caught it as it fell from the sky. Every time he found a piece of wisdom he took it and put it in a large pot. He gathered it for many days. He gathered it for many years. He gathered it until his pot was full of wisdom. Tortoise believed he had all the wisdom in the world in his pot.

Todd (1979), in Janet Maybin and Neil Mercer: *Using English: from conversation to canon*

➔Comprehension and discussion: Texts 8 — 14

Rewrite Texts 8 – 14 in standard English. Doing this will help you to identify some of the obvious features of each of the varieties.

Tasks and Activities

- Read the passages in **Text 15**.
Compare the original version, written in **pidgin English**, with the **standard English** version following it. Some of the words in the pidgin English version resemble standard English words which are similar in meaning (although these words are not always used in the standard English version of the folktale).
For example:
 - *sehns* in the pidgin English version is similar to the standard English word *sense* (*wisdom* is used in the standard English version);
 - *mohni* in the pidgin English version is similar to the standard English word *money* (*wealth* is used in the standard English version).

Now identify other words or phrases like these in the pidgin English version, indicating which standard English words they resemble.

- **Try to define the characteristics of at least one of the ‘Englishes’ found in Texts 8 — 14 (or in any other example that you can find).**
- ▶ Write about your own experience of using English, as Chan Wei Meng did, perhaps in the form of a poem.

UNIT TEN : SPOKEN AND WRITTEN ENGLISH

0

outcomes:

- ▶ *You can show an awareness of the stylistic differences between spoken and written English.*

••

➔ **Comprehension and discussion: Texts 21 —23**

Compare and contrast **Texts 21 and 22**. In what ways are they similar, and where do they differ? Which typical features of spoken language do you find in **Text 21**? (Can you think of any others, not found here?)

Now compare the two dialogues in **Text 23**. The first was scripted for an English language textbook; the second is a transcript of an authentic conversation. Which do you think is the more realistic? Which is more suitable for teaching English?

Tasks and Activities

- ▶ Observe and note typical features of spoken English around you. e.g. “you know”, “sort of”.
- ▶ Try to make a transcript of a stretch of spoken English (live, or from radio or TV)
- ▶ The passage on the next page is the transcript of an elderly man’s account of how, as a boy, he helped care for sick and dying people in Grahamstown during the Influenza Epidemic of 1918.
 - Identify **five** features typical of spoken English found in the passage.
 - Now imagine that you are the journalist who interviewed him. Write a report based on the information in the transcript (taken from the tape recording you made when you interviewed him). To write the report you will need to extract all the **relevant** information and write in a style appropriate to **written English**.

Background notes:

‘flu	a shortened form of influenza , a disease
T. Birch & Co	the name of a shop in Grahamstown
Armistice Day	the day on which the First World War officially ended

*Within any **regional** or **historical** variety of English, such as those examined in previous units, a further distinction can be made between **spoken** and **written** English, each of which possesses its own grammatical rules. Spoken English is not inferior to written English, as people often think.*

However we need to be careful when making a distinction between written and spoken language: there are many exceptions to the differences that we have noted in the texts in this unit. For example, a formal speech may have many of the characteristics of written language; on the other hand, someone writing an informal letter (or e-mail message) to a friend may try to imitate the characteristics of informal speech.

Extract from an interview with Mr Claude Swailes, Kimberley, 1980

Now ... the 'flu..... the news we got of the 'flu in Grahamstown was round about ... March 1918.....then ... we heard rumours of it and we also saw features in the papers where people were dying all over the world but particularly in Spain... that's how some people called it the Spanish 'flu and from there it gradually comes to er South Africa...first Cape Town got struck, Port Elizabeth, to Fort Beaufort and Kimberley afterwards...but when it raged through er through Grahamstown round about from er ... er August, September, October, November... we were shifting beds from the training college and ...then putting them in the sh... in the drill hall.....and I know quite a lot of my friends died there ... in there the drill hall ... we worked there for about two or three days then they opened up the Shaw Hall right opposite the Grand Hotel and I worked there for quite a while ... that's with working at T. Birch & Co. and we would close up ... we'd start at half past eight but we'd close at five o'clock ... and then ... we'd sit at our house and then we'd go out at about half past seven and take over our duties at the different places ... I worked at Shaw Hall for quite a while and I saw quite a number of people die there over the week-end ... we never worked on Saturday ... and we used to take medicine... I had to take medicine to some of the people in town and when we went in the front door, there was nobody up, everybody was in bed and ... er... you dished the medicine out to them... there was people a family by the name of van Dyk which I knew very well ... afterwards the ... the daughter became a...became a nurse here...so er...but that's ... that's the one the part of it...another part was when my sister and I went the.. to work the night shift in one of the hospitals in the location...there we saw crowds being carried out one particular case was an Indian with yellow shoes I can still remember his shoes and he was carried out but while he was passing his temperature was taken and they took him back his temperature ... his heart was still beating and we took him back to... er to his straw... it was just straw with blankets chucked over it...I remember one day ... I got sick myself ... huh ... and er then of course I never got out of bed until about three days before Armistice and I remember going down town Armistice Day ... and then it gradually ... it eased off and er ... of course the worst had got over ... and er one of the pills we used nightly was Dover ... Dover pills ... and er there ... was a chap... the name of Wright... Newton Wright ...and Bill Hurley and myself ... the three of us were injected by the doctor but it didn't seem to help at all because we all caught ... we all caught the 'flu and er ... well ... things eased up quite a lot but we know that er we were told ... So er the old Chinese people I'd met a Chinese and he turned around and said you know that in China it was quite a common thing this type of 'flu but er I really don't know about that because er ... it went right through the world ... this ... 'flu ... how ... why it should happen nobody knows.

A-6

**UNIT TWELVE : TALKING ABOUT ENGLISH
AN INTRODUCTION TO ANALYSIS AND METALANGUAGE**

Outc

omes:

- ▶ *You can to apply some of the processes involved in the reading, interpretation and analysis of language.*

➔➔Getti

ng started:

A linguistic strip tease, performed by your lecturer!

➔**Texts:**

TEXTS 26

TEXTS 27

TEXTS 28

➔**Comprehension and Discussion: Texts 26 – 27**

Using **Texts 26 and 27**, determine the importance of background knowledge in the understanding of a text.

Tasks and Activities

Read **Text 28** carefully, and then answer the questions below:

- What was your first reaction on reading the heading, *Discover Asia in Malaysia*? Is there anything odd about it? (Make sure you know where and what Asia and Malaysia are.)
- Read the rest of the text. Can you explain what the writer was trying to suggest in the heading now? Is its meaning clearer? Why did the writer choose to introduce the text in that way?
- What kind of text is it? What features does it have that are typical of this kind of text? It also contains features typically found in a different kind of text. Can you identify them? What effect is the writer trying to achieve?
- How do the pictures relate to the words in the text? (In the original text the pictures are brightly coloured.) Comment on the overall layout and design.
- How has language been used in the text? What is significant about the vocabulary and sentence construction?

TEXT 26

TEXT 27

The cock is sweet with rice
If one could get a little oil
With a little salt
And a couple of onions –
Oh, the cock is sweet with rice.

Never mind how many cocks there are:
Even twenty or thirty of them will be contained
In a single chicken basket
Made from the palm tree!

TEXT 28

**Advertisement: “Give an old lady a kick” (*House & Leisure*, March 1998)
Used as an overhead transparency in Unit 12 “Getting Started”.**

A-7

Final Task

ENGLISH 101: FINAL TASK (replaces Task from Unit 12)

This task **and** your journal are to be handed in on **Friday, 17 March 2000**. All outstanding tasks are also to be submitted by this date. No late submissions will be accepted.

In their journals, tasks and questionnaire answers, ENG 101 students have expressed differing views about the place of literature (or particular kinds of literature) in an English course.

What do *you* think? Is it important, or even necessary, to read and study literature in English?

If you think that it is, *why* do you think so? And what kinds of literature would you like to read? Novels, short stories, poetry, drama? Modern literature or literature from the past? Literature written in South Africa or from other parts of the world? Explain why you would make these choices.

If, on the other hand, your answer is “no”, then explain why you say so. What aspects of English do you think are more important? Why?

Your answers should be about two pages in length.

Supplementary Task

ENGLISH 101 2000

Supplementary Task

Students who obtained below 50% as a final mark for the ENG 101 module, and who wish to try to upgrade their marks, should submit the following task by **Friday 21 April 2000**.

In a short essay (not more than two pages) try to answer the following question:

Why, in your opinion, were you not able to achieve a pass mark in English 101?

APPENDIX B Extracts from the ENG 102 materials
B-1

Diagnostic test

Question One

The texts below are extracts from three different sources. Read through them carefully. What is the probable source of each text? What do the texts have in common with each other? In what ways do they **differ** from each other?
(*You answer should not be longer than two pages. Do not simply summarize each text. Focus on how each writer is communicating with the reader.*)

Text 1

**KENYA
PRIDE OF AFRICA**

Land of breathtaking contrasts, Kenya stimulates the senses and captivates the imagination

Have you ever dreamt of escaping to a place where the scenery takes your breath away, where exotic animals roam free and where the local people greet you with a smile? You could have been dreaming of Kenya. With its long history of sharing its infinite variety and natural good fortune with visitors, Kenya is the perfect introduction to Africa.

Text 2

KENYA, republic in Africa, bounded on the north by Sudan and Ethiopia, on the east by Somalia and the Indian Ocean, on the south by Tanzania, and on the west by Lake Victoria and Uganda.

The plant life of Kenya is diversified. Along the coast are forests containing palm, mangrove, teak, copal and sandalwood trees. Forests of baobab, euphorbia and acacia trees cover the lowlands to an elevation of approximately 915 m. Extensive tracts of savanna, interspersed with groves of acacia and papyrus, characterize the terrain from about 915 to 2745 m. The principal species in the dense rain forest of the eastern and southeastern mountain slopes are camphor and bamboo. The alpine zone contains large senecios and lobelias.

Kenya is renowned for the great variety of its wildlife, especially the big game animals associated with the African savanna. The major species are the elephant, rhinoceros, zebra, giraffe, lion and other large cats. Many of these are protected in national parks and game reserves, but hunters have severely reduced the number of large animals, such as the elephant and rhinoceros. Kenya abounds in birds and reptiles, the latter including the python and cobra.

The great majority of Kenya's population is black African. The country also has small numbers of Asians, Europeans, and Arabs. The black Africans are divided into more than 30 ethnic groups belonging to four linguistic families: Bantu, Nilotic, Parailotic and Cushitic.

Text 3

Out in the Indian Ocean, off the north Kenya coast, between the fiords of Taka-Ungu and Vipingo, are the shallows of Vuma.

They are banks of flat, submerged prairies, covered in long seaweeds growing out of old coral gardens. Restless underwater currents constantly stir the pale green-grey blades of the plants. They shudder, tossing languid manes, like savannah grasses bent by the invisible fingers of the Highland wind. Large shoals of fish of all descriptions come to graze here from the depth of the ocean, like the gazelle and antelope on the Enghelesha plains.

Vuma had acquired a sinister reputation when a number of dhows had sunk in a series of storms, and the shipwrecked crews had been devoured by sharks. Such stories were invariably told when someone mentioned the place.

Question Two

In the text below there are several words missing. Read through it carefully, and then fill in the gaps with suitable words.

The Song of Sunrise

The ___(1)___ of daybreak
___(2)___ the shroud
of the night from the sky, and the morning
___(3)___ through the blankets
like a baby rising from its cot
to listen to the
___(4)___ of the bell.

Arise! ___(5)___!
All Workers!
___(6) ___(7)___! To work!
You must go!

Buses ___(8)___,
Trains ___(9)___.
Taxis ___(10)___.

I ___(11)___ in the queue
with feet that ___(12)___
on the station platform,
and ___(13)___ into the coach
that squeezes me like a ___(14)___
of all the juice of my ___(15)___.

Question Three

In the text below a number of words and phrases have been left out. Choose the word or phrase that

you think is most suitable for each gap from the alternatives listed below the passage. In each case indicate *why* you think that that word or phrase is more suitable than the others.

Imagine ...(1)... cocktails on a yacht on the moonlight Caribbean. ...(2) ..., and we'll show you how. A star-dusted sky. Waves of white gold. The wonderfully exotic Caribbean. Don't just dream about it. ...(3)... . A Caribbean cruise with KUONI is easier (and probably far less expensive) than you ever thought possible. Follow the ...(4)... trade winds to your very own coral ringed island. KUONI has the expertise, the experience, the international back-up — and ...(5)..., the imagination to create the breakaway cruise of your ...(6)... .

Advertisement for KUONI travel agency

(1)

- ▶ sipping
- ▶ drinking
- ▶ consuming
- ▶ swallowing

(2)

- ▶ For further details you are advised to contact KUONI travel
- ▶ Give us a call
- ▶ Telephone KUONI
- ▶ If you are incapable of doing this

(3)

- ▶ Make the appropriate arrangements
- ▶ You can't afford it
- ▶ Do it!
- ▶ Dreams are lies

(4)

- ▶ spice-laden
- ▶ north-westerly
- ▶ commercial
- ▶ warm

(5)

- ▶ yes
- ▶ in addition
- ▶ also
- ▶ it also has

(6)

- ▶ dreams
- ▶ plans
- ▶ financial circumstances
- ▶ hopes

Question Four

Read through the texts below. In each text the level of formality has been disrupted at various points by the insertion of **inappropriate vocabulary**. In each text you should:

- ▶ identify the inappropriate words or phrases;
- ▶ suggest words or phrases that more in keeping with the style of the text.

4.1 *Teacher's report*

James needs to realise that success is the result of hard work and consistent effort. At present, he is being a real pain because he is so bone idle in class. If he wishes to do well in the examination, and achieve a grade which will do justice to his considerable ability, he must pull his socks up – and sharpish.

4.2 *Biology exam paper*

Q1 As they pass from testis to oviduct during and after mating, mammalian sperms will pass through each of the following structures except the:

1. uretha
2. vas deferens
3. vagina
4. bottom

Q2 When the water in which a certain species of frog is living contains 5 cubic centimetres of dissolved oxygen per litre the frogs remain totally submerged but, when the oxygen content falls to 3 cubic centimetres per litre, they go up to the top for a breather.

As a result of reading the information above, do you have any inkling about how frogs breathe in water?

4.3 *Memo from a university professor to his staff*

Can I remind you that travel claims must be submitted *promptly*. Other departments, I learn, are not paying claims which are more than two months late. In particular, please remember that the financial year-end is now 31st July. Claims not submitted by 15th August will be substantially delayed by year-end procedures, and screw up our budgeting. Please get your claims in ON TIME.

4.4 *Extract from a hotel brochure*

Reception of guests

The Hotel endeavours to have rooms ready to receive guests by noon, and it is hoped that departing guests will courteously assist in making this possible by getting a move on and not hanging about in bedrooms on the day of departure.

B-2

Unit One : Text and Context

Exercises 1 and 2 below both contain statements in random order from three completely different sources. In each case your task is to reassemble the original texts from which the statements were taken.

In each exercise, divide the statements up into three groups according to their probable sources. Then arrange the statements in each group in order, so that they

read naturally.

Exercise 1

- (1) Allow the fruit to steam in its own juice for a further 15 minutes.
- (2) So she hated it when that infuriating Keith Scott seemed to go out of his way to suggest that her heart wasn't in the affair.
- (3) That's why we created 'Portfolio', a brand new concept in saving.
- (4) Put them into a fireproof dish with the water, and a tablespoon of the sugar.
- (5) She knew that he loved her — in a calm settled way rather than any grand passion — and that he would make her a good, kind husband.
- (6) Ensuring that the lid is tightly sealed, put the dish into a preheated oven, Gas Regulo 6.
- (7) So that way, you can have your cake and eat it too.
- (8) Pour over the top, and serve with double cream.
- (9) Melodie Neil and Jed Martin were old friends.
- (10) Mix juice with the brandy, mulled wine, and rest of the sugar.
- (11) We do, too.
- (12) Wash and core the apples, taking care to remove all the pips.
- (13) In short, when she became engaged to him she knew exactly what she was doing.
- (14) Spoon out the cooked apples and arrange them attractively in rounds on a serving plate.
- (15) Do you feel that you never get a fair share of the capital cake?
- (16) Slice finely.
- (17) Portfolio is a high interest investment account that makes your money work for you, while still giving you access to your capital.
- (18) Reduce temperature to 3 after 10 minutes.

Adapted from: Carter, R et al. (1997). *Working with texts*. London: Routledge.

B-3

[from Unit 3: Comparison of texts]

Task:

Text 3 is a description of Mafikeng, taken from the same source as Text 1.

Write an advertisement for a travel agency in which you describe Mafikeng as a tourist destination. Use Text 3 as your main sources of information, selecting whatever details you consider relevant to your purpose.

Now try to answer the following questions:

1. What do you think the writer's intentions were in Text 3?
2. What was *your* intention, as the writer of the advertisement? Did it influence the way in which you wrote the advertisement? Explain what you have tried to achieve in it, justifying your choice of details and language.
(Imagine that you are telling this to the representative of the travel agency for which you have written the advertisement: you must show him/her that your advertisement will persuade readers to visit Mafikeng.)
3. In what ways does the text that you have created differ from the text that you were given? Be specific in your answer.

TEXT 3

Mafikeng, formerly Mafeking, town in northern South Africa, in North West Province, on the Molopo River. The town is located in an important livestock-raising region, and its chief products include cement and foodstuffs. At the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899, the settlement was attacked by Boers but was defended by a British garrison; after a siege of seven months it was relieved in May 1900. The town was the extraterritorial capital of the British dependency of Bechuanaland until the dependency became independent as Botswana in 1966. In 1980 the community was made part of Bophuthatswana, a black African homeland of South Africa. At that time the spelling of the name was changed from Mafeking to Mafikeng. In a reorganization implemented in 1994 under South Africa's interim constitution, the Bophuthatswana homeland was dissolved and reincorporated into South Africa, and Mafikeng became part of North West Province. Population (estimated) 69 000.

B-4

[from Unit 3: Comparison of texts]

Read the following two texts, Text 18 and Text 19, and answer the questions on Text 19.

TEXT 18

The Little Chicken Cookbook is an inviting, stimulating collection of recipes for the modern cook who wants to present this favourite ingredient at its very best — both in traditional dishes and in new ideas and contemporary variations on classic themes.

Chicken has become the first-choice meat for family cooking and entertaining at every level, and this irresistible new book presents an enticing and colourful collection of over 30 superb

recipes in five sections, with ideas and inspirations for every type of menu, occasion, special event and entertainment: Starters & Light Meals; Classic Dishes; Lunches & Suppers; Salads for All Seasons; and Dinner Party Dishes.

book-jacket: *The Little Chicken Cookbook* (Ultimate Editions, 1996)

TEXT 19

It was time for lunch. Time for pulling crackers and wearing silly hats – which Michael and I wore around our skinny necks and my dad had to tear slightly to fit over his wide forehead. Time to swap cracker rings for small clown games, and for me to beg for doll's rattles. For Michael to argue over who would pull the wish-bone.

'Ta-ra,' called my dad, making a big thing of Dora's giggling entrance with the two enormous chickens. And then Ouma appeared, smiling from the kitchen, with a plate.

'This is specially for you, Kati,' she said, pride in her surprise, leaking from her every gesture.

'What, Ouma?'

I could see though. My mouth had turned bitter. But it couldn't be! Surely she couldn't have done that. I think that's when I realized that the day was going to go wrong. From here, from this moment, when things weren't as they should be, till . . . till the things that happened later.

'It's your little chicken, your very own Christmas chicken.' She placed the small-boned meat in front of me, hunched and brown now with cooking. There was no sign of the lively feathered who'd strutted its white body through the *hok* the day before.

'It's the chicken, *my lief*. The one you chose, remember?'

'I can't . . . I can't eat it.'

I choked on the saliva which was filling my mouth, and the table blurred.

'*My magtig*, now what's wrong? It's just a chicken.'

'Her name is Sheba. She not just a chicken. Stop calling her a chicken.'

Darkness took me from behind then, sliding in on both sides of my head. I could hear Ouma's voice somewhere far away.

'*O my magtig*. But this is a *pieperig* child. She gave the chicken a name. On a chicken farm, where we eat chickens every day. It's just lucky she wasn't born on a farm. All right, take it away, Michael . . .'

'I'll eat it, Ouma . . .'

'No you will not, Michael. Don't cause more trouble than you can help. Give it to Dora. Tell her she can eat it.'

The helpless darkness receded as I stared at my empty Christmas place, littered with cracker debris. All that was left was that burning – the burning which couldn't be blinked or swallowed away.

'Settle down now, child. Don't take it so hard.'

Richards, Jo-anne (1996). *The Innocence of Roast Chicken*. London: Review.

QUESTIONS

- Who is telling the story? What is her relationship with the other characters mentioned in the passage? List and briefly describe all the characters involved in the action described here.
- A number of Afrikaans words and phrases appear in the passage: what do you think the writer's purpose was in using them?
- In some cases the speech is clearly attributed to one of the characters (for example, *called my dad*). In others, the reader is expected to follow the course of the conversation and deduce who is speaking at each point. Read through the passage again, marking each turn in the conversation with the name of the character speaking.
- Now imagine that you are one of the characters (not the narrator) in the passage. Describe what you saw and heard as if you were reporting the incident to someone afterwards. Pay particular attention to how you report the dialogue.

Task:

Through a careful analysis of both texts, show how the writers of Text 18 and Text 19 have presented chickens from two completely different perspectives. Try to explain exactly how each writer attempts to persuade the reader to share his/her perspective. (*Remember: what is **not** said in a text is often as important as what **is** actually said.*)

B-5

**University of North West
Department of English
2000**

EXAMINATION

Module : **ENGLISH 102**
Introduction to textual analysis

Time allowed : **2 hours**

Marks : **100**

Examiner : **Mr I Butler**

INSTRUCTIO

NS TO CANDIDATES:

- ▶ Answer all questions.
- ▶ Your answers will be assessed on both content and your ability to express yourself in clear and grammatical English.
- ▶ Read the instructions in each question carefully. Do not simply summarise the texts provided.

QUESTION ONE

In each of the texts below there are phrases or sentences written in a style that does not match the rest of the text.

In each text you should:

- (a) identify the inappropriate language;
- (b) explain **why** it is inappropriate;
- (c) suggest a better way of expressing the same information.

Text 1.1

The period of the contract shall be 12 calender months, commencing on the day immediately following the signature hereof, that being regarded as the first calender month, and ending at midnight on the same day 12 calender months thereafter, provided always that the terms of this agreement shall be effective from the date hereof. When this time is over you can take out another one for a little bit longer, provided that notice is given, in writing, thirty days in advance.

extract from a legal contract

Text 1.2

Dear Visitor

Welcome to Our World in One Country! As our guest, your enjoyment and well-being are of the utmost importance to us. We want your visit to be special, we want you to leave us with great memories, and we hope that you will return over and over again. All foreigners are consequently required and hereby instructed to observe correct safety precautions while resident in this country to make your holiday as happy as possible.

Have a great day, have a great stay, and go well!

extract from a pamphlet welcoming tourists to South Africa

Text 1.3

My government reaffirm their support for the defence of the free world, the basic concept of the Atlantic alliance, and they will be nice to our friends and fight anyone who doesn't do what they tell them to do. They will review defence policy to ensure, by relating our commitments and our resources, that our armed forces are able to discharge their many tasks overseas with the greatest effectiveness and economy.

extract from a speech in parliament

Text 1.4

There was a soft look in Zusiwe's eyes as she gazed into his eyes, and her face wore a smile like sunshine. She felt a gush of love for Bhuqa. He stirred in her a passion which her lover, Ntabeni, was incapable of rousing. In the following body organs:

- (a) the heart;
- (b) the mind;
- (c) the stomach

she felt certain unusual and irregular physical sensations. Something warned her that their love was likely to be deep and dangerous, and her passion as irresistible as the current of the Xesi river when in flood. Only traditional modesty prevented her from accepting Bhuqa's love there and then.

extract from the novel Hill of Fools

Text 1.5

I wish to apply for the post of Co-ordinator of Youth Projects, recently advertised in *The Sowetan*. I saw the advertisement while I was having some beers with my friends, and they said to me that I should apply for the job because they thought that I would be very good at it, and it would pay a lot of money. I have a BA from the University of North West. I am at present employed in a clerical position at the Department of Manpower and Training in Mafikeng.

extract from a letter of application

[5 x 3 = 15 marks]

QUESTION TWO

The following slogans appear on billboards and posters in Mafikeng. Comment briefly on how their writers have used language as a creative means of communication.

Text 2.1

I had sex. Will I die?

Siphiwe. Age 14

S'camto on € Thursdays at 6 pm

talk about it **Life**

Text 2.2

There's more reward in an award-winning beer
Black Label

Text 2.3

Work hard

Play hard

Coca Cola

[10 marks]

QUESTION THREE

Write a detailed analysis of the following poem, showing how the poet has used language to express his feelings.

THE FACE OF MY MOTHER TAKES THE SHAPE

James Matthews

the face of my mother takes the shape of
a frightened mouse
at the sound of a policeman's step
the fear-filled flutter of her heart
a bird ensnared
my father freezes his feelings at the demand
for a pass
and i watch the fire in his
eyes slowly die
as his hands grope for the right to survive.

[25 marks]

QUESTION FOUR

Text 4.1 and Text 4.2 have a common topic: both examine the question of how Africans were affected by European colonization.

Analyse both texts, comparing and contrasting the ways in which language has been used in them. Focus especially on Text 4.2, showing how the writer's presentation of the topic makes it different from Text 4.1.

TEXT 4.1

The passage below is taken from the chapter in which the writer describes the early stages of European conquest and colonization in Africa.

For the African peoples the most important factor at this stage of colonial history, however, was probably not the issue of European settlement or its absence, not the relatively concrete issues of land and labour, certainly not the difference between the policy of one colonial power and another, but the far more intangible psychological issue of whether any given society or group was left feeling that it had turned the colonial occupation to its own advantage, or alternatively that it had been humiliated. To a large extent this was a result of the accidents of occupation in each particular territory. Every occupying power inevitably made both friends and enemies. Every occupying power, before it could train a local army or police force, needed native allies and was prepared to accord substantial privileges to those who would play this part.

from: R. Oliver and J. D. Fage *A Short History of Africa*.

TEXT 4.2

The passage below contains a conversation that takes place after Okonkwo's return to Umuofia. Obierika has told Okonkwo about the many changes that have taken place in the village during the years that he has lived in exile.

Okonkwo's head was bowed in sadness as Obierika told him these things.

'Perhaps I have been away too long,' Okonkwo said, almost to himself. 'But I cannot understand these things you tell me. What is it that has happened to our people? Why have they lost the power to fight?'

'Have you not heard how the white man wiped out Abame?' asked Obierika.

'I have heard,' said Okonkwo. 'But I have also heard that Abame people were weak and foolish. Why did they not fight back? Had they no guns and matchets? We would be cowards to compare ourselves with the men of Abame. Their fathers had never dared to stand before our ancestors. We must fight these men and drive them from the land.'

'It is already too late,' said Obierika sadly. 'Our own men and our sons have joined the ranks of the stranger. They have joined his religion and they help to uphold his government. If we should try to drive out the white men in Umuofia we should find it easy. There are only two of them. But what of our own people who are following their way and have been given power? They would go to Umuru and bring the soldiers, and we would be like Abame.' He paused for a long time and then said: 'I told you on my last visit to Mbanta how they hanged Aneto.'

'What has happened to that piece of land in dispute?' asked Okonkwo.

'The white man's court has decided that it should belong to Nnama's family, who had given much money to the white man's messengers and interpreter.'

'Does the white man understand our custom about land?'

'How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says our customs are bad; and our brothers who have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad. How do you think we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us? The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.'

'How did they get hold of Aneto to hang him?' asked Okonkwo.

'When he killed Oduche in the fight over the land, he fled to Anita to escape the wrath of the earth. This was about eight days after the fight, because Oduche had not died immediately from his wounds. It was on the seventh day that he died. But everybody knew that he was going to die and Aneto got his belongings together in readiness to flee. But the Christians had told the white man about the accident, and he sent his *kotma* to catch Aneto. He was imprisoned with all the leaders of his family. In the end Oduche died and Aneto was taken to Umuru and hanged. The other people were released, but even now they have not found the mouth with which to tell of their suffering.'

The two men sat in silence for a long time afterwards.

Chinua Achebe : *Things Fall Apart*

[50 marks]

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION

Module	:	ENGLISH 102 Introduction to textual analysis
Time allowed	:	2 hours
Marks	:	100
Examiner	:	Mr I Butler

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

- ▶ Answer all questions.
- ▶ Your answers will be assessed on both content and your ability to express yourself in clear and grammatical English.

QUESTION ONE

The box below contains statements in random order from **three** completely different sources.

(a) Under three headings, **TEXT A**, **TEXT B** and **TEXT C**, put the original **three** texts together again, arranging the statements in their correct order.

[24]

(b) Briefly describe the strategies and knowledge you made use of in performing the task in (a).

[6]

1. **'I'm okay. No. I'm in Nevada now. I was in Colorado.'**
2. **Cover and cook for thirteen minutes, stirring half way through cooking.**
3. **Most of them are only several times the diameter of our solar system, yet they emit more energy than an entire galaxy**
4. **'Hello? You there? It's Perce, Ma.'**
5. **'Won another bull ridin' Ma. Hundred dollars.'**
6. **Leave to stand, covered for ten minutes before fluffing up with a fork.**
7. **'Yea. Real good rodeo. I was goin' to buy you a birthday present with it but I ran out of my boots....'**
8. **that quasars are the most distant objects ever detected.**
9. **'No, Ma, I haven't been in hospital since I told you. I just bought some boots, that's all, Ma.'**
10. **Place the rice in a large bowl. Stir in the boiling stock, salt and oil.**
11. **Quasars are extraordinarily intense energy sources.**
12. **of over 150 billion stars! Some astronomers believe**

QUESTION TWO

Write a detailed **analysis** of the text on the next page (page three), showing how the writer has used language as a creative means of communication.

[20]

QUESTION THREE

Write your own version of the fable of the hare and the tortoise, set in modern South Africa.

[50]

APPENDIX C Extracts from the ENG 103 and 104 resource material
C-1

Here is another African folk-tale. You might be familiar with one of its many variations.

Why the donkey won't move: A story from Southern Africa

Once upon a time, long ago, when the animals could still speak (as the Tswana people say), Donkey, Dog and Goat were friends. They lived together at a cattle post, far away in the Kalahari desert. But one day they decided to go and live in the city. Life at the cattle post was dull and they wanted to have some fun.

They got up early in the morning, long before the herd boy was awake, and went to wait at the side of the road under a big thorn tree. Soon a bus appeared and stopped for them.

“Where are you going?” asked the conductor.

“To the city,” they replied. “Will you take us?”

“Yes, of course,” he said. “Get in.”

It was a long way to the city, and the three friends soon fell asleep. But after a while the conductor woke them up.

“Fares, please!” he said, going to each of the passengers on the bus.

Donkey paid his money and got a ticket. Then Dog paid his fare, but he paid too much and the conductor did not have any change. “I will give you your change when we reach the city,” he told Dog.

Goat did not have any money at all, but she did not tell the conductor. “I will pay you later when we reach the city,” she said.

After a long time, the journey ended. As soon as the bus stopped at the station, Goat jumped out and ran away. The conductor was very angry. “I will not give you your change,” he told Dog. “I will use it to pay for Goat’s fare.”

But Dog wanted his money and barked loudly at the conductor.

Donkey climbed out of the bus slowly. He was not interested in the argument because he knew that he had paid his fare.

And that is why, even to-day, when a bus passes through a village in the Kalahari, the goats run away from it. They are afraid because they know that Goat did not pay for her trip to the city. The dogs bark at the bus because they are still waiting for the change that the conductor did not give to Dog.

But the donkeys take no notice of the bus and stand in the middle of the road, right in front of it. They know that, long ago, Donkey paid his fare, and so they are not afraid of any bus. One day, when they are ready, they will get on a bus, and go to the city.

In another variation, Donkey, Goat and Sheep travel to the city by bus. Donkey pays his fare (for which the conductor owes him change), but Goat promises to pay his and Sheep's fare when they reach their destination. On the outskirts of the city, Goat asks the driver to stop so that they can relieve themselves. The bus stops, and Goat, followed by Sheep, runs off into the veld. The conductor, in revenge, refuses to give Donkey his change. After a short fight in which Donkey kicks the conductor and the driver, he is thrown off the bus. Today donkeys still stand by the road, waiting to stop the bus that will bring them their change. Goats run away, knowing that they have not paid their fare, and sheep, like sheep everywhere, continue to follow them.

I Butler, 'Why the donkey won't move', *Story telling in ELT*.

EXERCISE 9

Although its details are modern (the animals travel to the city by bus!) the story, like the Zulu folk tale on the next page, belongs to a very old tradition of story telling. Like many ancient myths, they represent an attempt to explain incidents and phenomena from daily life.

Drawing on your own experiences, write a similar story.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

- Revise **Direct and Indirect speech**.
- Note the use of the **past and present tenses** in the story. Contrast verbs depicting **past actions** with those depicting **habitual actions**.

C-2

EXERCISE 4

Read the two comic strip stories in *Open Talk*. Think about and discuss the topics at the end of each story.

EXERCISE 5

Do you think that the topics in *Open Talk* are suitable for discussion in the English 103 classroom? Give reasons for your answer.

EXERCISE 6

In the passages below the first four frames of another story from *Open Talk* have been rewritten as *prose narrative*. Each passage presents the story from a different **point of view**

1. Busi and I have always been very close. So it would have been impossible for me to hide my happiness from her. Although, really, I didn't want to hide it from anyone: I wanted to share it with the whole world!

"Hey, Sinki! What's going on with you?" she asked me when she found me singing in the kitchen. "You are so happy these days – like a young girl!"

At first I pretended I didn't know what she meant; but then I just couldn't keep the secret any longer! I told her to close the door.

"Busi, I feel like I'm in love again."

I'll never forget the look of surprise on her face!

2. I thought I knew my sister Sinki better than anyone in the world. That's why I couldn't believe it when she told me that she had fallen in love again. "Sinki! You are a married woman!" I said.

It all began when I heard her singing as she worked in the kitchen. I asked her why she was so happy.

3. Busi and her sister Sinki shared everything. One day Busi heard Sinki singing in the kitchen.

"Hey, Sinki! What's going on with you?" she asked her.

"With me?" Sinki answered innocently. "Nothing, why."

"You are so happy these days – like a young girl!"

Eventually the truth came out. Sinki felt as though she was falling in love again!

Can you identify the point of view in each case?

Now rewrite either "Parents & Children: Learning to talk" or "Young Love: Making choices about sex" as a prose narrative. Tell the story from the point of view of any of the characters.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

- Study the rules governing the use of **Direct and Indirect speech** carefully before writing your prose narrative.

[extract from 'Parents & children: Learning to talk' in *Open talk*]

C-3

The Hartleys 2

The Hartleys 3

The Hartleys 3

The Hartleys 4

C-4

EXERCISE 1

The short story, “The Hartleys”, ends with the accidental death of Anne Hartley, followed by Mr and Mrs Hartley’s preparations for ‘the long, long drive’ home.

Think of an **alternative ending** to the story.

(a) Briefly summarize another way in which the writer **could** have ended the story;

(b) Explain why you have chosen to end the story in this way by relating it to the plot, themes and characterization in the story as a whole.

Your answer should be between two and three pages in length.

EXERCISE 2

The short story, “An Incident in the Ghobashi Household”, ends with the following words, spoken by Zeinat:_____

“Isn’t it better, when he returns, for your father to find himself with a legitimate son than an illegitimate grandson?”

What does Zeinat mean? Do you think that her question provides an effective ending to the story? Do you agree with her ‘solution’ to the ‘problem’.

C-5

UNIT THREE: Poetry

Understanding What a Poem Does

The language of poetry is generally quite different from the language of stories and novels, also known as prose.. Poets often choose unusual words and combine them in an unusual way that is very different from everyday language. This special use of language can confuse a reader at first. But with repeated readings, a reader can develop a much deeper understanding of a poem. Read the following poem by Naoshi Koriyama.

Unfolding Bud

One is amazed
By a water-lily bud
Unfolding
With each passing day,
Taking on a richer color
And new dimensions.
One is not amazed,
At first glance,
By a poem,
Which is as tight-closed
As a tiny bud.

Yet one is surprised
To see the poem
Gradually unfolding,
Revealing its rich inner self,
As one reads it
Again
And over again

C-6

You are going to read another poem. But first look at the following definition:

charity (noun) money or help given to people who are poor, sick, etc.

1. Do you think that charity is a good or bad thing? Why?
2. When do people give charity? What do they give?

The title of the poem is “Feeding the poor at Christmas’ by Eunice de Sousa, a writer from Goa in India. From the title, can you tell

1. *who* gets the charity?
2. *what* they get?
3. *when* they get it?

What other predictions can you make about the poem at this stage?

Now read the poem:

Feeding the Poor at Christmas
Eunice de Sousa

Every Christmas we feed the poor.
We arrive an hour late: Poor dears,
Like children waiting for a treat.
Bring your plates. Don't move.
Don't try turning up for more. 5
No. Even if you don't drink
you can't take your share
for your husband. Say thank you
and a rosary for us every evening.

No. Not a towel and a shirt, 10
even if they're old.
What's that you said?
You're a good man, Robert, yes,
beggars can't be, exactly.

In the poem, we hear the words of the speaker, a person who is helping to feed the poor at Christmas. But we don't hear the poor people to whom the speaker is talking. Try to turn the poem into a two way conversation.

'Beggars can't be choosers.' What does this expression mean in English? Complete the following definition:

Poor people must take they can get, and must not hope to exactly what they

Do you agree with this expression? Explain your answer.

Do you agree with the following sentences about the poem? Discuss them with another student.

The people who feed the poor at Christmas

- are very kind and generous.
- think that they are better than poor people.
- don't show any respect for poor people.
- like telling poor people what to do.
- show a lot of love for poor people.
- think that poor people are like small children.

Find evidence in the poem to support your views.

[exercise adapted from: Gillian Lazar: *A window on literature*]

C-7

UNIT FOUR: Drama

Reading plays

The extracts and exercises in the following section have been taken from Valerie Whiteson and Nava Horovitz, *The Play's the Thing*

1

David Henry Hwang: *FOB*

“FOB” stands for Fresh Off the Boat. In this extract from the play, Grace, who was born in Taiwan but now lives in California, explains how difficult it was for her to feel she belonged in the U. S. The extract is a monologue, a long speech by one person.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Past tense

Contractions

LITERARY FOCUS

Monologue

GRACE:

Yeah. It's tough trying to live in Chinatown. But it's tough trying to live in

Torrance too. It's true. I don't like being alone. You know, when mom could finally bring me to the U.S., I was already ten. But I never studied my English very hard in Taiwan, so I got moved back to the second grade. There were a few Chinese girls in the fourth grade, but they were American-born, so they wouldn't even talk to me. They'd just stay with themselves and compare how much clothes they all had, and make fun of the way we all talked. I figured I had a better chance of getting in with the white kids than with them, so in junior high I started bleaching my hair and hanging out at the beach – you know, Chinese hair looks pretty lousy when you bleach it. After a while, I knew what beach was gonna be good on any given day, and I could tell who was coming just by his van. But the American-born Chinese, it didn't matter to them. They just giggled and went to their own dances. Until my senior year in high school – that's how long it took for me to get over this whole thing. One night I took Dad's car and drove on Hollywood Boulevard, all the way from downtown to Beverly Hills, then back on Sunset. I was looking and listening – all the time with the window down, just so I'd feel like I was part of the city. And that Friday, it was – I guess – I said, "I'm lonely. And I don't like it. I don't like being alone." And that was all. As soon as I said it, I felt all of the breeze – it was really cool on my face – and I heard all of the radio – and the music sounded really good, you know? So I drove home.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions based on the scene from the play.

1. Do you think that Grace's mother wanted to take her to the U.S. before she was ten years old? How do you know? Copy the words from the text that tell you.
2. What do the Chinese-American girls talk about?
3. Why does Grace decide to hang out with the white students?
4. What does she do to fit in with them?
5. What happens when Grace takes her father's car for a drive?

POINTS TO CONSIDER AND DISCUSS

1. What do you think Torrance is?
2. Give some examples of why it might be difficult to live in Chinatown.
3. Why do you think that Grace says it's tough to live in Torrance?
4. Why do you think she doesn't like to be alone?
5. Grace was put in the second grade in the U.S., even though she had been in a higher grade in her home country. Why? Was that fair? Was it a good idea?
 - Why don't the American-born Chinese girls at her school have anything to do with Grace?
 - How long do you think she continued to bleach her hair?
 - Who do you think that Grace is talking to when she makes this speech?

LANGUAGE

Contractions

One reason that Grace's speech sounds so natural is that she used many contractions in her speech. Many students of English as a second or foreign language think that full forms are more correct than contractions. Using the full forms makes their speech sound unnatural and bookish.

Here are some of the most common expressions that are usually spoken in a shortened or contracted form:

"TO BE"	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
I am	I'm	I'm not
you are	you're	you aren't, you're not
he is	he's	he isn't, he's not
she is	she's	she isn't, she's not
it is	it's	it isn't, it's not
we are	we're	we aren't, we're not
they are	they're	they aren't, they're not

"TO HAVE" + PAST PARTICIPLE	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
I have heard	I've heard	I haven't heard
you have heard	you've heard	you haven't heard
he has heard	he's heard	he hasn't heard
she has heard	she's heard	she hasn't heard
it has heard	it's heard	it hasn't heard
we have heard	we've heard	we haven't heard
they have heard	they've heard	they haven't heard

MODALS + VERB	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
we will see	we'll see	we won't see
Jim will see	Jim'll see	Jim won't see
I would like	I'd like	I wouldn't like

The word "can" is confusing. When you say something like "I can do it", pronounce the word "can" as "cn". The negative form is "can't".

To improve your pronunciation and intonation, read aloud the following sentences from Grace's speech, making sure that you use contractions. Try to record yourself so you can listen to how much more natural you sound when you use contractions.

1. It's tough trying to live in Chinatown.
2. It's true.
3. They wouldn't even talk to me.
4. They'd just stay with themselves and compare their clothes.
5. It didn't matter to them.

6. That's how long it took me to get over this thing.
7. I'd feel like I was part of the city.
8. I'm lonely.
9. I don't like it.
10. I don't like being alone.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

1. What kinds of things do people find different when they move to a new country?
2. If you have moved to a new country or town, what was easy or difficult for you? Explain.
3. Write a letter to friends or relatives in another country to warn them about problems that they might have when they move to a new country. What advice would you give them?

C-8

2000

Module : ENGLISH 103
Introduction to literary genres

Time allowed : 3 hours

Marks : 100

Examiners : Mr I Butler
Mr D Manone

Second Examiner : Mrs A Hlatshwayo

IN

STRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

- ▶ Answer all questions.
- ▶ Your answers will be assessed on both content and your ability to express yourself in clear and grammatical English.

QUESTION ONE

Show how Mtshali uses language and the techniques of poetry in advancing his thematic material in “An Abandoned Bundle”.

AN ABANDONED BUNDLE

Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali

The morning mist
and chimney smoke
of White City Jabavu
flowed thick yellow
as pus oozing
from a gigantic sore.

It smothered our little houses
like fish caught in a net.

Scavenging dogs
draped in red bandanas of blood
fought fiercely
for a squirming bundle.

I threw a brick;
they bared fangs
flicked velvet tongues of scarlet
and scurried away,
leaving a mutilated corpse –
an infant dumped on a rubbish heap –
‘Oh! Baby in the Manger
sleep well
on human dung.’

Its mother
had melted into the rays of the rising sun,
her face glittering with innocence
her heart as pure as untrampled dew.

QUESTION TWO

“Isn’t it better, when he returns, for your father to find himself with a legitimate son than an illegitimate grandson?”

The short story, “An Incident in the Ghobashi Household”, ends with these words. Do you think that they provide an effective ending to the story? Explain your answer.

[25]

QUESTION THREE

Read the short story below carefully, and then answer the questions that follow it.

The girl who loved her father as she loved salt

A folk tale from Skopelos, Greece

Once upon a time there was a king who had three daughters who, like all princesses, did nothing.

One day, the king called his daughters to him.

“I want you to tell me how much you love me,” he said.

The first daughter said: “I love you as I love gold.”

The king was very pleased. He clapped his hands and when his servant appeared, he said: “Bring the best gold bracelet and put it on her arm.”

It was done as he commanded.

Then the king called the second princess and asked her: “How much do you love me?”

“Father,” she said, “I love you as I love silver.”

Again, the king clapped his hands and ordered the servant to bring the princess a beautiful silver necklace.

Then the king called on the third princess.

“How much do you love me?” he asked.

“I love you, father, as I love salt.”

“Salt?!” said the king, and became so angry that he immediately ordered the princess to be dressed in the poorest clothes and sent away, far away, and never be seen at the palace again.

The girl put on a cotton dress and left, her eyes swollen with weeping and her heart broken.

In those days there were neither cars, nor trains, nor ships, nor anything else. But there was a caique tied to the quay in Volos.

“Where is this caique going?” asked the princess.

It was going to Skopelos.

“I’ll go to Skopelos too, and live on dandelion leaves,” thought the princess as she boarded the caique.

When they reached Skopelos, the princess found a job working in a taverna. She was smart, and, as a princess, had had some education. Soon she began cooking delicious food, making tasty salads, and laying tables royally. Everybody marvelled at her and went to the

taverna to eat. And soon Skopelos began to acquire a reputation. People came from far away to visit. Money began coming into the island.

The owner of the taverna liked the girl and married her.

And slowly, their business grew. They built a large hotel, the first one on the island.

At this point we're going to leave the girl for a moment, and have a look at how the king was doing.

The king's other two daughters got married. He never asked about the third because, you see, he didn't like it when she said she loved him as she loved salt. One day, the king read in the newspaper that Skopelos, the 'convicts' island (because once only convicts were sent there), was developing nicely. It had a hotel, rooms to let and good food.

"Shall we go on a holiday?"

"Oh yes, let's".

They **(1)** **(board)** the yacht – this man was, after all, a king, and so he had everything – and soon they **(2)** **(find)** themselves in Skopelos.

The police were, of course, notified that the king was coming so that the appropriate preparations **(3)** **(can)** be made.

So a policeman went to the hotel on the island and said: "To-day the king is coming with his daughters and sons-in-law to eat and drink here. Please prepare something special."

The owner's wife ordered that chicken and lamb be **(4)** **(cook)** with all herbs and spices, except for salt.

"Not even one pinch of salt is to be **(5)** **(add)**," she said.

The hotel now had a staff, so the cooks prepared the food. On the day the king was to **(6)** **(visit)**, the princess **(7)** **(put)** on her old clothes. Then the table **(8)** **(lay)** with silver plates and gold forks. A royal table.

The king arrived and **(9)** **(start)** eating.

"What kind of food is this?!" exclaimed the king and called the taverna owner's wife.

"There's something missing from the food," he told her.

"What can be missing?" she replied. "You have gold spoons, gold forks, silver plates. Everything is gold and silver."

"Don't try and fool me!" said the king. "Taste some and see. Do you like this food?" But she kept saying the same thing.

Silver plates, gold forks...

"I don't care about the gold and silver," shouted the king. "I can't eat this food."

"Why, Your Majesty, what's wrong with it?"

"There's no salt in it."

"Ah, Father," she said. "You see? You can't live without salt. I told you I loved you as I loved salt, and you became furious. Now see if you can eat gold and silver."

"Oh, my child," said the king.

"I'm not your child. The taverna owner who picked me up off the street is both husband and father to me. You can have your riches and gold. I'll stay here."

The king left, but his daughter and her family lived happily ever after on the island of Skopelos.

From an unpublished collection of folk tales by Maroula Kliafa. This fairy tale was told to the anthologist by Evangelia Xintari from Skopelos. She'd heard it from Stavris Petsetos.

3.1

lines 42 - 54

A man walked into __ (1) __ bank in America and handed __ (2) __ note to one of the cashiers, __ (3) __ young woman. __ (4) __ woman read __ (5) __ note, which told her to give __ (6) __ man some money. Afraid that he might have __ (7) __ gun, she followed __ (8) __ instruction. __ (9) __ man then walked out of __ (10) __ building, leaving __ (11) __ note behind. However, it was not __ (12) __ successful crime. __ (13) __ man had no time to spend __ (14) __ money because he was arrested __ (15) __ same day. He had made __ (16) __ stupid mistake. He had written __ (17) __ note on __ (18) __ back of __ (19) __ envelope. On __ (20) __ other side of __ (21) __ envelope was __ (22) __ man's name and address. This information was quite enough for the police to get their man.

[11]

C-9

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
ENGLISH 103
2000
SUPPLEMENTARY ASSIGNMENT**

QUESTION ONE

Mtshali's poem connects social evils within the ambit of socio-economic deprivation in apartheid South Africa. What is Mtshali's attitude in treating these social maladies in "An Abandoned Bundle"?

AN ABANDONED BUNDLE

Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali

The morning mist
and chimney smoke
of White City Jabavu
flowed thick yellow
as pus oozing
from a gigantic sore.

It smothered our little houses

like fish caught in a net.

Scavenging dogs
draped in red bandanas of blood
fought fiercely
for a squirming bundle.

I threw a brick;
they bared fangs
flicked velvet tongues of scarlet
and scurried away,
leaving a mutilated corpse –
an infant dumped on a rubbish heap –
'Oh! Baby in the Manger
sleep well
on human dung.'

Its mother
had melted into the rays of the rising sun,
her face glittering with innocence
her heart as pure as untrampled dew.

QUESTION TWO

The last picture in the comic strip story, "Parents and Children: Learning to Talk", is of Palesa's father forbidding her mother to speak to her about sex.

Write a short **prose narrative** (about one and a half pages in length) in which you continue the story.

[50]

C-10

ENGLISH 104: *The Lion and the Jewel*

Class discussion and activities

Characterization

- (a) Imagine that you are directing a production of *The Lion and the Jewel*. What advice would you give to the actors playing the parts of Lakunle, Sidi and Baroka? Choose a passage spoken by each of them, and describe in detail the gestures, movements, intonation, etc necessary to make the character convincing.

- (b) ‘What if ... ?’ What if Sidi had accepted Lakunle’s proposal of marriage at the end of the play? Try to imagine another act to the play entitled, ‘The next morning’.
- (c) Imagine yourself as one of the characters. What would *you* have done in the same situation?

Plots and themes

- (d) Imagine that you have been asked to design a book cover and write a ‘blurb’ for a new edition of *The Lion and the Jewel*. How would you persuade potential readers to buy the book?
- (e) What are the characters’ attitudes to the ‘modern’ world? Quote from the text to justify your answer. Who do you sympathise with the most? What do you think Soyinka’s attitude is?
- (f) Read the newspaper article on the attached page. How do the events reported in it relate to the themes and events in *The Lion and the Jewel*? Does reading the report affect your reading of the play in any way?

News report

Rural children at risk of kidnap-marriages

By Charity Bhengu

YOUNG girls in rural and remote areas are being abducted, sexually assaulted and forced into marriages as part of a customary practice called *ukuthwala* or *shobedisa*.

Academics and rights activists have denounced the practice, saying it is in conflict with the Constitution and good moral values and standards. It is practised mostly by Xhosa, Zulu and Southern Sotho people.

It also violates criminal law on abduction and statutory rape, the Child

Care Act, the Marriage and Recognition of Customary Marriage acts, they said.

The act, which came into effect in November last year, does not permit minors to marry because they are under the age of consent.

While the constitution describes a child as any person under the age of 18, the progression from childhood to adulthood in customary law does not depend on chronological age alone.

It is rather determined by phases, not only by physical and intellectual

maturity, but also by initiation and puberty. The Human Rights Commission is handling a case of a 15-year-old girl who was abducted two years ago and forced into a marriage with an older man in Engcobo, Eastern Cape.

The Women's Legal Centre in Eastern Cape is dealing with a case of a young girl who escaped child wedlock recently after an arranged marriage by her parents who plead ignorance.

The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) said it had also received reports of the ongoing violation of children who are earmarked at birth and later abducted and tamed until they succumb in exchange for lobola.

"We have also received complaints about the custom and have decided to organise training on the Marriage Act and Recognition of Customary Marriage Act for the chiefs," said CGE head of complaints unit Ms Mmathari Mashao.

Mashao said the customary traditions were protected by the

C-11

Sentences

EXERCISE 1

Re-write the following newspaper headlines as full grammatical sentences:

19. Lower attendance at the Pretoria Show
20. Church still not really sorry for apartheid
21. Borneo's forests up in smoke
22. Local show a success in Canada
23. North West to benefit from Olympics — Mayor

EXERCISE 2

The advertisement below contains many incomplete sentences. Study it carefully and decide what is missing from each sentence fragment. Re-write the advertisement, using full, grammatical sentences.

Now compare your version with the original. Which is more effective? Do you think that the writer of the advertisement was justified in ignoring the rules of

Constitution but people were free to practice their customs only within the framework of the Constitution.

Albert Mncwango of the KwaZulu-Natal traditional structure said:

"*Ukuthwala* is also known as *ukuganisa*.

"African customs define who we are. My grandfather had 24 wives and some of them were brought to him by their parents. Times have changed. Our customs now have to accommodate human rights values."

Social Development Department spokesman Mr Mbulelo Musi said: "We have a duty as the Government, guided by the Constitution, to protect the interests of the children and outdated customs that tamper with the rights of children should be reviewed."

grammar?

The watch of the future.
From Rado.

Rado DiaStar "Ceramica". A new chapter in watch history. Case and bracelet perfectly blended into a timepiece of enduring value. Made from a unique material: high-tech ceramics. A scratchproof object of the future that looks just as beautiful after years as on the first day. Uncompromising. Sleek. Beautiful. Boldly created as an embodiment of the essential. For people who value what really counts: perfection of form with lasting worth.

A different world
RADO
Switzerland

C-13

2000

**Module : ENGLISH 104
Grammar Awareness**

Time allowed : 3 hours

Marks : 100

**Examiners : Mr I Butler
Mr D Manone**

Second Examiner : Mrs A Hlatshwayo

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

- ▶ Answer all questions.
- ▶ Your answers will be assessed on both content and your ability to express yourself in clear and grammatical English.

QUESTION ONE: Writing Skills

Write a short essay (not more than two pages) in which you present **arguments in favour of and against** sexuality education for young people.

You may, if you wish, illustrate your discussion with references to stories, poems and any other relevant texts that you have read.

Your answer will be assessed in terms of your ability to express yourself clearly and grammatically in a well-structured essay.

[40 marks]

QUESTION TWO: Literature**Wole Soyinka: *The Lion and the Jewel***

Critically discuss Soyinka's treatment of the education system in Africa, with specific reference to Lakunle.

[30 marks]

QUESTION THREE: GRAMMAR AWARENESS

3.1

Provide suitable **words** for the gaps in the text below. The first gap **(0)** has been completed as an example.

In your answer books write down only the number and the word that you have chosen.

For example: **(0)** **as**

Note: Give only **one** word for each gap.

GLOBAL ENGLISH

Global English exists **(0)**..*as*.. a political and cultural reality. Many misguided theories attempt to explain why the English language should have succeeded internationally, while **(1)**..... have not. Is it because there is **(2)**..... inherently logical or beautiful about the structure of English? Does its simple grammar **(3)**..... it easy to learn? Such ideas are misconceived. Latin was once a major international language, despite having a complicated grammatical structure, and English also presents learners **(4)**..... all manner of real difficulties, **(5)**..... least its spelling system. Ease **(6)**..... learning, therefore, has little to **(7)**..... with it. **(8)**..... all, children learn to speak their mother tongue in approximately the same period of time, **(9)**..... of their language.

English has spread not so **(10)**..... for linguistic reasons, but rather because it has often found **(11)**.... in the right place, at the right time. **(12)**..... the 1960s, two developments have contributed to strengthening the global status. Firstly, in a number of countries, English is now used in addition to national or regional languages. As **(13)**..... as this,

an electronic revolution has taken (14)..... . It is estimated that (15)..... the region of 80% of worldwide electronic communication is now in English.

[15]

3.2

3.2.1

Provide suitable **words or phrases** for the numbered gaps in the passage below: In your answer books write down only the number and the word or phrase that you have chosen.

English – an African means of literary expression

(1)..... in other spheres of African life, since independence the use of English in creative literature has been seriously questioned, most forcefully by Ngugi wa Thiong'o:

An African writer should write in a language that will allow him to communicate effectively with the peasants and workers in Africa – (2)....., he should write in an African language. As far as publishing is concerned, I have no doubt that writing in an African language is as commercially viable as writing in any language. Market forces might even have the added advantage of forcing those who express themselves in an African language to strive for local relevance in their writing because no peasant or worker is going to buy novels, plays, or books of poetry that are totally irrelevant to his situation. Literature published in African languages will have to be meaningful to the masses and therefore much closer to the realities of their situation.

(3)..... these arguments, Ngugi has found few followers in practice; possibly (4)..... he forgot that peasants and workers may be no more literate in an African language (5)..... in a European language (depending on the educational system). He may (6)..... have overlooked the fact that English is now an African language in some sense, and accepted as such by many Africans. (7)..... he may have failed to recollect that realism is not necessarily directly reflected in literary language. (8)....., it is also important to remember that English has served as a medium of African expression since it first found its way into the continent, and won international recognition with the Nobel Prize award to Wole Soyinka in 1986. For at least two centuries English has been used for letters and diaries, for journalistic reports and accounts of travel, for literary comment and political tracts, for sermons and public speeches and fiction of all types. Some of these are very interesting from a linguistic point of

view. (9)..... is borne out in many excerpts from early African writings in English.

[9]

3.2.2

Briefly explain the meanings of the following modals, as they have been used in the lines indicated:

should (line 5)

might (line 9)

may (line 20)

[6]

[30 marks]

C-14

2000

Module : **ENGLISH 104 – SUPPLEMENTARY
Grammar Awareness**

Time allowed : **3 hours**

Marks : **100**

Examiners : **Mr I Butler
Mr D Manone**

Second Examiner : **Mrs A Hlatshwayo**

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

- ▶ Your answers will be assessed on both content and your ability to express yourself in clear and grammatical English.

QUESTION ONE: Writing Skills

The story, “Young Love: Making choices about sex”, ends with Thoko’s letter to Tshepo.

Has Thoko has made the right choice in ending her relationship with Tshepo?

Write a short essay (not more than two pages) in which you present **arguments in support of AND against** Thoko's choice.

[50 marks]

QUESTION TWO: Literature

Wole Soyinka: *The Lion and the Jewel*

Critically discuss the portrayal of Baroka and Sidi as the "Lion" and "Jewel" of Ilujinle.

[50 marks]

APPENDIX D Integrated undergraduate English programme

Department of English

The undergraduate English programme:

General Outcomes:

The English undergraduate programme consists of twelve equally weighted modules. It has two streams, literature and language. In some modules the streams are integrated; in others they are separated while still linked within the overall design of the programme, having been designed to complement and reinforce each other.

The focus of the programme moves gradually from a concern with practical language skills and foundational knowledge in the initial modules, to a more theoretical, analytical orientation in later modules. The last two modules (ENG 12.01.303 and ENG 12.01.304) enable students to develop an overview of the work they have done throughout the entire programme, drawing on the skills and knowledge they have acquired.

Throughout the programme emphasis is placed on critical thinking. Students are encouraged to adopt a reflexive and critical approach to the process of learning. Consequently, both the course content and the learning process are presented in as 'transparent' a manner as possible. For example, the fact that there are different critical options for analysing works of literature is foregrounded, to discourage the idea of any "received" interpretation.

The aim of the language stream is to provide students with a theoretical knowledge of the English language as well as to develop their practical skills in using it as an effective means of communication. It seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- to provide students with the resources and opportunities to develop their ability to use English effectively, appropriately and critically;
- to provide students with the metalanguage and analytical skills needed to discuss and explore the ways in which English functions in society;

- to lay the foundations for further study in the discipline.

The literature stream of the programme aims to involve students in an investigation of the nature of the literary text and of different critical and linguistic options for analysing works of literature. Through the study of selected texts the literature component seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- to familiarize students with a wide range of formal options that can be employed within the major genres of prose, poetry and drama, in order to build students' awareness of the scope and nature of the literary field, and to build their skills in identifying the particular qualities of literary discourse;
- to sensitize students to the possibilities literature offers for the articulate discussion of major issues in human experience.
- to assist students in developing a sense of the history of the English language and its formal properties;
- to provide a forum within which students can develop skills in critical literacy and practice the transferring of those skills across a wide range of texts.

In addition to studying the core of prescribed literary texts (mostly drawn from the African literary tradition), students are expected to carry out further, guided, reading of their own. In this way they will deepen and widen their understanding of the issues raised in class, and be exposed to a more cosmopolitan mix of literatures in English..

During the first year of study (the first four modules) and for entry to the second year, students proceed according to a series of prerequisite regulations. This is in recognition of the foundational nature of these modules. Thereafter (throughout 200 and 300 level studies) there are no prerequisites.

Formal examination remains an important component in assessment of students' progress through the programme. Other modes of assessment, such as journals, assignments and oral examination, are, however, also used, and are of crucial importance. (Details are found under descriptions of individual modules.)

ENG 100

The first-year modules are designed to provide an introduction to university studies, drawing on and consolidating students' existing knowledge and experience, while at the same time laying the foundations for more advanced study. The emphasis on practice aims at discouraging rote learning. Students are provided with opportunities to take control of their own learning and to develop their observational and analytical skills. They are encouraged to develop a critical, questioning attitude to the assumptions underlying the practice of language in general and to the use of language in literature.

ENG 12.04.101 INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH STUDIES

Level : 100

Credits : 6

Prerequisites : Matriculation symbol D Higher Grade or C Standard Grade or their equivalent

Description : In the first module students are introduced to basic (foundational) concepts in language and literature, in the context of actual English usage. As important as the concepts themselves is the process of self-discovery through which students are led to them. The module also encourages self-reflexiveness in that students are encouraged to adopt a

critically questioning attitude to the assumptions underlying the practice of English as an academic discipline.

Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 60
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 10 hours
Independent study and preparation: 30 hours
Type of learning: Formal
Assessment : Continuous assessment in the form of a personal journal.

ENG 12.04.102 INTRODUCTION TO TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Level : 100
Credits : 6
Prerequisite : As for 12.01.101
Description : Ideas of textuality are examined in this module. Students are able to develop and practice their analytical and language skills through the analysis and creation of a variety of texts representing a cline between the “literary” and “non-literary”. Special emphasis is placed on the literature in Africa.
Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 60
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 10 hours
Independent study and preparation: 30 hours
Type of learning: Formal
Assessment : Continuous assessment: Two assignments and one test

ENG 12.04.103 INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY GENRES

Level : 100
Credits : 6
Prerequisites : ENG 12.04.101, ENG 12.04.102
Description : In this module students increase their awareness of literary texts as elements in a wider social discourse. The emphasis is on the enhancement of students’ foundational competence in recognizing the particular formal qualities of literary texts and in identifying basic features of literary form and language. At the same time students are introduced to the basic features of specific genres, studying representative texts in:
 - prose fiction (with emphasis on the short story and on the nature and development of narrative art);
 - poetry (a study of generic forms and functions);
 - drama (a study of generic forms and functions).
In addition, students are encouraged to appreciate the value of literature in performance (poetry and drama as a social activity).
Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 60
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 10 hours
Independent study and preparation: 30 hours

Type of learning: Formal
Assessment : Continuous assessment: two assignments and one test

12.04 104 GRAMMAR AWARENESS

Level : 100
Credits : 6
Prerequisites : As for 12.04.103
Description : Here students' ability to communicate effectively in English is consolidated and extended through contextualized study and use of its grammatical forms and functions, using a variety of texts, literary and non-literary.
Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 60
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 10 hours
Independent study and preparation: 30 hours
Type of learning: Formal
Assessment : Continuous assessment: two assignments (60% of total mark)
Exam paper (one and a half hours) (40% of total mark)

ENG 200

In the second year of study the literature and language modules are designed to complement and reinforce each other as parts of an integrated English course. The first two modules are designed with students' immediate experience and practical needs in mind. Modules ENG 12.04.203 and ENG 12.04.204 present specific historical and critical approaches to language and literature, enabling students to consolidate and contextualize their knowledge and skills.

ENG 12.04.201 SOUTH AFRICAN LITERATURE

Level : 200
Credits : 10
Prerequisites : 12.04.101, 12.04.102, 12.04.103, 12.04.104.
Description: : The objective of the module is to explore the representation in literary texts of the history, culture and aspirations of the people of South Africa. The texts studied include representative works from the genres of drama, autobiography, fiction and poetry. In this module students further develop the analytical skills they acquired in modules ENG 12.04.102 and ENG 12.04.103, and in so doing will refine their appreciation of the characteristic features of oral, traditional and modern modes of literary production, and of the nature and function of specific genres. At the same time, during the course of this module, students will be introduced to the advantages of studying literature from a regional perspective and will be encouraged to explore literary texts as the products of specific societal, historical and ideological formations.
Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 100
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 20 hours
Independent study and preparation: 60 hours

Type of learning: Formal
Assessment : Continuous assessment: Two assignments
(60% of total mark)
Examination (one and a half hours)
(40% of total mark)

ENG 12.04.202 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: SPOKEN AND WRITTEN ENGLISH

Level: : 200
Credits: 10
Prerequisites : As for 12.04.201
Description : Making use of the literary texts studied in ENG 12.04.201 and other texts, this language module builds on the work done in the first year, and further develops students' theoretical knowledge and practical skills in written and spoken English.
Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 100
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 20 hours
Independent study and preparation: 60 hours
Type of learning: Formal
Assessment : Continuous assessment: Two assignments
(60% of the total mark)
Written examination (one and a half hours)
Oral group examination (Fifteen minutes)
(40% of the total mark)

ENG 12.04.203 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH AND OF POETRY IN ENGLISH

Level : 200
Credits: 10
Prerequisites : As for 12.04.201
Description : Students are able to see the English language in the context of its history and on-going development. This process is also examined from a literary standpoint, providing a comprehensive view of the practice of poetry, encouraging students to recognise the diversity of poetry from different historical periods and from different cultures.
Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 100
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 20 hours
Independent study and preparation: 60 hours
Type of learning: Formal
Assessment : Continuous assessment: Two assignments
(60% of total mark)
Examination (one and a half hours)
(40% of total mark)

ENG 12.04.204 LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND IDEOLOGY

Level : 200

Credits :	10
Prerequisites :	As for 12.04.201
Description :	During the course of this module students are encouraged to adopt a more critical, questioning approach to the norms of English language usage and to the integrity of the text than hitherto, thus moving beyond the communicative competence and awareness of language that they have developed in modules ENG 12.04.101, ENG 12.04.102, ENG 12.04.103, and ENG 12.04.104. A primary emphasis here is on the examination of representations of aspects of race, class and gender in literary and other texts. The module seeks to raise students' awareness as to how textual analysis can provide insights that enable the construction of social, cultural and political commentaries. The module offers students the opportunity to interrogate the cultural and political constraints and opportunities within which individuals and societies live, by leading evidence from prescribed texts. Throughout the module students will engage in group work exercises, examining their own life experience (with special emphasis on race, class and gender issues) in relation to insights drawn from textual analysis.
Duration :	Half semester module
Notional study hours :	100
	Contact sessions: 20 hours
	Group work: 20 hours
	Independent study and preparation: 60 hours
Type of learning:	Formal
Assessment :	Continuous assessment: Two assignments (60% of total mark) Examination (one and a half hours) (40% of total mark)

ENG 300

In their third year the modules are structured in a way that offers students the opportunity of increasing specialisation in either language or literature, which they may choose to continue in their post-graduate studies.

The language modules have a more theoretical orientation than those in the first two years of study: students are thus given the opportunity to reflect on the language skills that they have been developing. Similarly, the literature modules combine the examination of individual texts with a study of literary technique and critical approaches to literature.

The focus on an interface between the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and its practical application is given further expression in the Long Essay research projects.

ENG 12.01.301 LANGUAGE: THEORY AND APPLICATION STYLISTICS, THEORY OF GRAMMAR AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Level :	300
Credits :	15
Prerequisites :	As for 12.04.201
Description :	This module examines three aspects of language study from theoretical and applied perspectives. Linguistic insights are applied to the systematic analysis of literary

and other texts in Stylistics. The concept of grammar (which has been regarded from a mainly pedagogical perspective in earlier modules) is here examined from the point of view of a variety of theoretical approaches. Finally, the process of first and second language acquisition is looked at from a various theoretical standpoints, together with the practical implications of the study for related disciplines and vocations.

Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 150
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 20 hours
Independent study and preparation: 110 hours
Type of learning: Formal
Assessment : Continuous assessment: Two assignments (60% of total mark)
Examination (one and a half hours) (40% of total mark)

ENG 12.02.302 AFRICAN AND WORLD DRAMA AND PROSE FICTION

Level : 300
Credits : 15
Prerequisites : As for 12.04.201
Description : This module aims to build on the foundational competence students have gained in modules 12.04.103 and 12.04.201, consolidating their awareness of the characteristics of specific genres and — in shifting beyond a focus in earlier modules on South African materials — broadening students' appreciation of African and world literature.

Prose fiction has been selected that demonstrates a variety of authorial options regarding voice, narrative technique, characterisation, and so on, enabling students to build up a sense of the possibilities of the novel form. Those texts selected from Africa and the African diaspora have been chosen to reflect the different ways novelists have tackled major issues such as the colonial experience, slavery, the conduct of a neo-colonial elite, and the social functions of religion.

The plays that have been selected represent crucial periods and/or formal options in the development of dramatic form, including the festival theatre of ancient Greece, the Elizabethan theatre, Nigerian festival/total theatre, late nineteenth-century European realism, and the didactic theatre of Brecht. Students will be encouraged to study these texts both in terms of their formal procedures and their possibilities in performance, thus developing an active sense of the nature of literary drama. Group work is emphasised in this module as students rehearse and present scenes they have selected from the prescribed texts, and as the groups critique each others' presentation.

Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 150
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 20 hours

Type of learning: Independent study and preparation: 110 hours
Formal
Assessment : Continuous assessment: Two assignments
(60% of total mark)
Examination (one and a half hours)
(40% of total mark)

ENG 12.01.303 LANGUAGE IN SOCIETY

Level : 300
Credits: 15
Prerequisites : As for 12.04.201
Description : This module enables students to develop an overview of the language work they have done throughout the entire programme, allowing them to draw on the skills and knowledge they have acquired. Students are able to apply their knowledge of and skills in language to their lived experiences. After introducing general trends and principles in the study of language in society, the module focusses on conditions in South Africa. It covers topics such as multilingualism, gender and language, language planning and code-switching.
Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 150
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 20 hours
Independent study and preparation: 110 hours
Type of learning: Formal
Assessment : Long essay, representing a cumulative account of student's work in language throughout the programme.
(100% of total mark)

ENG 12.02.304 CRITICAL APPROACHES TO LITERATURE

Level : 300
Credits: 15
Prerequisites : As for 12.04.201
Description : One objective of this module is to alert students to the world's tradition of critical theory, with particular emphasis placed on critical initiatives by African scholars such as Ngugi. (A more detailed examination of the history of critical theory and practice forms a key module in the Department's Honours programme.). The major task of the module is, however, to encourage students to undertake an overview of the critical and analytical procedures they have been exposed to during the course of their BA English major and to enhance their reflexive competence as regards their own critical and analytical practices. Group work will provide a major resource here for peer- and self-evaluation.
Duration : Half semester module
Notional study hours : 150
Contact sessions: 20 hours
Group work: 20 hours
Independent study and preparation: 110 hours
Type of learning: Formal
Assessment : Long essay, representing a cumulative account of student's work in literature throughout the programme.
(100% of total mark)

APPENDIX E ENG 104 tutorial material

‘The Good Lord will provide’, by Lawrence Treat and Charles M. Plotz
Unit 2 from *Adventure for the reader* by Hanna Mrozowska

Appendix F Questionnaires

F-1 Student questionnaire: February 2000
ENGLISH 100
2000
Questionnaire

1. Name:

2. Student number

3. Are you full-time
part-time ? (*underline the correct answer*)

4. Which languages do you use regularly? (Next to each language, indicate whether your knowledge of the language is **POOR**, **AVERAGE** or **EXCELLENT** and if it is your **mother tongue**.)

Language	Knowledge of language / Mother-tongue?

5. What is your highest educational qualification (e.g. matric)?

6. What is the highest level at which you have studied English?.....

7. What was your matric symbol for English? (*circle your answer*)

A B C D E

8. Indicate how you studied English at matric level (*underline the correct answer*)

1st language higher grade 2nd language higher grade

1st language standard grade 2nd language standard grade

Please answer the following questions as honestly and as accurately as you can. All answers will be treated in the strictest confidence, so please feel free to say exactly what you think. There are no right or wrong answers. Any comments or suggestions that you offer will be given serious consideration and will assist us in the on-going development of the English 100 course.

(Continue your comments on a separate sheet of paper, if necessary)

9. What do you **expect** to study in a course in English at a university?

10. What do you think would benefit **you** the most in a university English course?

Why have you registered for English 100?

Listed below are some of the many possible reasons that someone might have for wanting to do English 100 at UNW. For each reason, indicate on a scale of 0 to 5 how important it was in your decision.

5 4 3 2 1 0
 very strong reason.....not at all relevant

11	You have to do English because of the requirements of your degree or another course that you have chosen.	
12	You obtained good marks for English at school (or any other place where you have studied it).	
13	You think that you will do well in studying English now.	
14	You were encouraged by other students who did the course in the past.	
15	You want to learn more about English language and literature.	
16	You think that a qualification in English will help you get a job.	
17	You think that English will help you to communicate with and understand people who do not speak your language.	
18	You want to learn about the cultures and traditions of English-speaking people.	
19	You think that knowing English is a sign of being an educated person.	
20	You are interested in reading and studying literature (e.g. novels, poetry, drama).	
	<i>Add (and then grade) any other reason (a maximum of three) that you can think of:</i>	
21		
22		
23		

Listed below are a number of possible ways in which lecturers and students could behave in a learning situation. For each description, show on a scale of 0 to 5 to what extent you agree or disagree.

5 4 3 2 1 0
 strongly agree.....do not agree at all

24	The lecturer is an expert in his/her subject: students should not challenge his/her opinion in any way.	
25	In lectures, students should listen to the lecturer carefully and memorize everything he/she says.	
26	The lecturer only provides the students with guidance and opportunities for learning.	
27	Students should work together in pairs or groups.	
28	Students should work entirely on their own, without consulting each other.	
29	Students know best what they need to learn: their wants should determine the content of the course.	
30	If a student fails an examination/test/assignment, it is the student's own fault for not working hard enough.	
31	If a student fails an examination/test/assignment, the fault lies with the lecturer for not teaching properly.	

32. Do you have any other comments?

F-2 Student questionnaire: End of ENG 102, 2000

ENGLISH 102

2000

End of module questionnaire: Texts, tasks and tutorials

TEXTS

Did you find the texts used in ENG 102

- ▭ too easy ?
- ▭ understandable ?
- ▭ too difficult ?

If you answered *too difficult*, what do you think gave you the greatest difficulty? Choose only *one* of the options below.

- ▭ the language in the text
 - ▭ unfamiliar ideas, experiences or culture in the text
 - ▭ not enough time to read and study the text carefully
 - ▭ another reason (*please specify below*)
-
-

TASKS

Did you find the tasks (including assignments and tutorial work) used in ENG 102

- ▭ too easy ?
- ▭ neither too easy nor too difficult, just the right level ?
- ▭ too difficult ?

If you said *too difficult*, what do you think gave you the greatest difficulty? Choose only *one* of the options below.

- ▭ understanding the instructions
 - ▭ applying the instructions to the text(s)
 - ▭ you could not see the point of doing the task (*why* you were doing it)
 - ▭ another reason (*please specify below*)
-
-

TUTORIALS

Do you like tutorials?

- ▭ YES
- ▭ NO

Explain your answer

Do you think that tutorials are useful?

- ▭ YES

NO

Explain your answer

Do you prepare in advance for your tutorials?

- YES
 NO

Explain your answer

In tutorials, do you prefer working in

- pairs
 small groups (4 or 5 students)
 as a group

Explain your answer

**F-3 Student questionnaire: End of second semester, 2000
ENGLISH 103 and 104
End of semester questionnaire**

ENGLISH 103 and ENGLISH 104 consisted of three components: **Literature, Writing Skills and Grammar Awareness.** We would like to know your reaction to how these three areas in English Studies have been presented.

(Continue your comments on a separate sheet of paper, if necessary)

All responses to this questionnaire will be treated in the strictest confidence. Please be completely honest in your answers!

Name..... Student No.....(optional)

1 LITERATURE

Your lecturers have adopted **two different approaches** to the teaching of literature:

- ▭ **Integrating literature with writing skills and grammar awareness**
Example: In “The Hartleys” you were asked to create your own alternative ending (creative writing);
Example: Linking the theme of “An Incident in the Ghobashi Household” with the comic strip stories and the topics of the narrative and discussion essays;
Example: Using literary texts (such as the extract from *The Innocence of Roast Chicken* and the folk tale *The girl who loved her father as she loved salt*) to teach or test grammatical rules.
- ▭ **Teaching literary texts on their own**
Example: *The Lion and the Jewel*

Which approach to literature do you prefer?
 (Tick your preference)

- ▭ literature integrated with writing skills / grammar
- ▭ literature by itself

Please explain your choice above:

.....

.....

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.....

.....

.....

2. GRAMMAR AWARENESS

Do you think that your knowledge and use of grammar have improved as a result of the work done in ENG 103 and 104 (lectures and photocopied material)?

- ▭ YES
- ▭ NO

Please explain your answer:

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. WRITING SKILLS (Narrative and Discussion essays)

Do you think that your writing skills have improved as a result of the work done in ENG 103 and 104?

- ▭ YES
- ▭ NO

Please explain your answer:

.....

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.....

4. Many of the texts and activities dealt with topics relating to young people and their sexual experiences. Do you think that these topics are suitable for discussion / study in a university English course?

- ▭ YES

NO

Please explain your answer:

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.....
.....
.....

5. Any further comments on ENGLISH 103/104?

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.....
.....

6. Any comments on the whole ENGLISH 100 course?

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.....

.....*Thank-you for your help!*

**F-4 Student questionnaire, November 2001
ENGLISH 100
2001
QUESTIONNAIRE**

SECTION 1

This information requested in this questionnaire is needed for research purposes only. All answers will be treated in the strictest confidence. Please answer as truthfully and honestly as you can. Continue your answers on a separate sheet of paper if necessary. Your name and student number will be used only as a way of checking that all students have completed the questionnaire

1. Name:

2. Student Number:.....

3. Country of origin (eg South Africa, Botswana).....

4. What languages do you use regularly? (Next to each language, indicate whether your knowledge of the language is **poor, average or excellent** and if the language is your **mother tongue**)

<i>Language</i>	<i>Knowledge of language/Mother tongue</i>

5 What is your highest educational qualification and where was it obtained?

(e.g. Matric/ South Africa)?/.....

6 What is the highest level at which you have studied **English**?

7 What was your matric (or O-level/A-level) symbol/grade for English?

.....

8. Indicate how you studied English at matric level (*underline the correct answer*)

1st language Higher grade

2nd language Higher Grade

1st language Standard Grade

2nd language Standard Grade

9. Why did you register for English 100?

10. What kind of university English course would best serve *your* needs / wants? One that consisted of:

- literature only
- practical language skills
- knowledge about language
- a combination of the above
- none of the above options*

* If you chose the last option, please give details

11. Any further comments?

SECTION 2

Looking back at Modules 101 and 102...

Rate the following aspects of ENG 101 and ENG 102 on a scale of 0 to 5:

5 4 3 2 1 0
completely satisfied.....not at all satisfied

ENG 101

▶ range of topics covered in the module	0	1	2	3	4	5
▶ texts used in each unit	0	1	2	3	4	5
▶ lecturer's explanation of the topics	0	1	2	3	4	5
▶ class participation in lectures	0	1	2	3	4	5
▶ lecturer's assessment of tasks	0	1	2	3	4	5
▶ keeping a journal	0	1	2	3	4	5

Comments.....
.....
.....
(continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary)

ENG 102

▶ range of topics covered in the module	0	1	2	3	4	5
▶ texts used in each unit	0	1	2	3	4	5
▶ lecturer's explanation of the topics	0	1	2	3	4	5
▶ class participation in lectures	0	1	2	3	4	5
▶ lecturer's assessment of tasks	0	1	2	3	4	5

Comments.....
.....(continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary)

In the questions below, please underline the correct response:

- ▶ Did you have your own copies of the workbooks or regular access to one?
Yes No
- ▶ Did you prepare for lectures by reading the texts in advance?
always usually sometimes / never

- ▶ How often did you participate in class discussions (asking questions; answering questions, etc)
always usually sometimes never
- ▶ Did you work on your own to complete the reading and tasks not covered in class
always usually sometimes never

Comments.....

SECTION 3

ENGLISH 103 and 104

-
1. Do you prefer being taught in **small groups**, as has been done in ENG 103 and 104?
Yes No

Please explain your answer

.....

2 INTEGRATION OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

ENGLISH 103 and ENGLISH 104 consists of three components: **Literature, Writing Skills and Grammar Awareness**. Your lecturers have attempted to **integrate** these three components in their teaching.

Example: In “The Hartleys” you were asked to create your own alternative ending (creative writing);

Example: Linking the theme of “An Incident in the Ghobashi Household” with the comic strip stories and the topics of the narrative and discussion essays;

Example: Using literary texts (such as the extract from *The Innocence of Roast Chicken*) to teach or test grammatical rules.

- Do you like this approach to studying English?
Yes No

Please explain your answer

.....

3. GRAMMAR AWARENESS

Do you think that your knowledge and use of **grammar** have improved as a result of the work done in ENG 103 and 104?

- Yes No

Please explain your answer:

.....

.....

4. WRITING SKILLS (Narrative and Discussion essays)

Do you think that your writing skills have improved as a result of the work done in ENG 103 and 104?

Yes

No

Please explain your answer:

.....
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.....
.....
.....

5. LITERATURE

Do you think that your knowledge and use of literature has improved as a result of the work done in ENG 103 and 104?

Yes

No

Please explain your answer:

.....
.....

5. Any further comments on ENGLISH 103/104?

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6. Any comments on the whole ENGLISH 100 course?

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Thank you for your help!

F-5 Lecturer questionnaire: December, 2000
Department of English
New undergraduate syllabus: Second and third years of study in 2000
Questionnaire to lecturers

Dear colleagues

Could you please spare a few minutes (before lecturing starts again!) to answer the questions below? All responses will be treated in the strictest confidence. This is not an official enquiry:
all information received will be used for my private research only.

As part of my research, I would like to link my case study of the first-year modules to the work that the students do in their second and third years of study. For this I need to know more about how other lecturers have interpreted and presented the modules that they teach or have taught.

Note: The questions below refer to your teaching in the year 2000 only. Please write your comments on a separate sheet of paper if the spaces provided are insufficient.

.....

Name:.....

1. Please tick the modules that you taught in 2000. If you shared the teaching of the module with anyone, please indicate this.

- ENG 201 South African literature
- ENG 202 Discourse analysis: Spoken and written English
- ENG 203 History and development of English and of poetry in English
- ENG 204 Language, literature and ideology
- ENG 301 Language: Theory and application
- ENG 302 African and world drama and prose fiction
- ENG 303 Language in society
- ENG 304 Critical approaches to literature

If possible, please provide me with copies of course outlines, examination papers and assignment questions.

2. Did you have any difficulty in interpreting and/or putting into practice the description(s) of the module(s) as given in the Calender?

- YES
- NO

If your answer was YES, please explain why:

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Did you find six weeks sufficient time to teach a module?

- YES
- NO

If your answer was NO, please explain why:

.....
.....
.....
.....

(4) Did you link your module(s) (by means of content, texts, themes, etc.) to any other module(s) taught by yourself or by another lecturer?

- YES
- NO

If your answer was YES, please give details:

.....
.....
.....
.....

5. How would you describe the balance between theory and practice in each of the modules that you taught?

For example: 40% theory / 60% practice.

.....
.....
.....
.....

6. How would you rate the students' general performance (in assignments, tests, examinations) in comparison with their performance in the old syllabus?

- POORER
- THE SAME
- IMPROVED

7. Can you suggest any improvements / changes to the modules as they are described in the Calender?

- YES
- NO

If your answer is YES, please give details:

.....
.....
.....
.....

8. Any other comments?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank-you for your help!

F-6 Lecturer questionnaire: December, 2001
QUESTIONNAIRE TO ENG 103 / 104 LECTURERS

Dear Colleagues
Could you please spare a few minutes to complete this questionnaire? The aim is to gather data for my research; but the findings will also enable us, as a department, to plan our teaching next year. I have focussed on what seem to me to be the most important issues: please feel free to comment on any other areas that you think are important. All responses will, of course, be treated in the strictest confidence. I will summarise my findings in a brief report to be submitted to the department for discussion early in 2002. Please continue your comments on a separate sheet of paper, if necessary.
Thanks
Ian

SECTION 1

Please circle the response that you have chosen.

1. Do you think that our experiment in sharing the teaching of ENG 103 and ENG 104 has been successful?

YES

NO

Please motivate your answer

.....

.....

2. Would you like to continue your involvement in the teaching of the first year modules (ie ENG 101, ENG 102, ENG 103, ENG 104)?

YES

NO

Please motivate your answer

.....

.....

3. The English 100 modules attempt to integrate language and literature. Do you feel that you are competent to teach in both areas?

YES

NO

Please motivate your answer

.....

.....

4. Are you satisfied with the integrated approach adopted in the sample materials distributed at the beginning of the semester?

YES

NO

Please motivate your answer

.....

.....

5. Have you developed any additional materials?

YES

NO

Please give brief details

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.....
.....
.....
.....

6. If yes, would you be prepared to add them to a bank of materials to be used by all lecturers involved in teaching the modules?

YES

NO

7. Would you prefer to use materials developed by a colleague or colleagues specializing in the first year course? (The same principle could be applied to all undergraduate modules where the teaching is shared.)

YES

NO

8. Was there enough time in each module to develop the skills specified in its stated outcomes?

YES

NO

9. Have you observed any improvement in your students' use of language as a result of work done in the **grammar components** of ENG 103 and 104?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

On what evidence do you base this response?

.....
.....
.....

10. Do you think that more staff co-ordination and co-operation are necessary in the teaching and testing of the course?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

Please motivate your answer

.....
.....
.....

SECTION 2

INTEGRATING LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

The following claims have been made about the benefits of *integrating language and literature in English studies*. Based on your experience in teaching ENG 103 and 104, please indicate whether you **agree** or **disagree** with the claims, or are **not able to comment** (You may not be able to comment if, for instance, you did not use a particular approach in your teaching.) A space has been left under each statement for any further observations you might want to make. Continue your comments on another page if necessary.

A. LANGUAGE THROUGH LITERATURE

1 Literature provides a resource / authentic context for the teaching of grammar and vocabulary.

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

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.....
.....

2 Because of its appeal to the learner’s imagination and emotions, literature provides motivation for language learning.

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

3 The themes and plots of literary works provide stimuli for meaningful debates, discussions and other language tasks which develop the learner’s linguistic and communicative competence.
(e.g. debating the relevance of Western education after reading *The Lion and the Jewel*)

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

4 Literature provides learners with authentic models for the norms of language use (e.g. alerts them to differences in register).

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

5 Literature assists learners in developing their overall language awareness and knowledge about language.

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

6 The study of literature helps develop the learner’s interpretive and analytical skills (e.g. skills of inference) which can be applied to other language-related activities.

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

7 Literature represents language ‘at its best’ and thus provides an ideal model for language learning.

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

8 Literature provides learners with insights into the norms and cultural values embodied in the language.

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

9 The study of literature educates the ‘whole person’ in a way that more functional approaches to language teaching do not.

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

B. LITERATURE THROUGH LANGUAGE

10 Comparing literary and ‘non-literary’ texts allows the learner to move from the known to the unknown: in this way literature is made more accessible to him/her.
(e.g. comparing the poem, “Journey of the Magi”, with the Biblical account)

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

11 Linking the study of literary texts to creative language activities (such as rewriting endings to stories, role playing, rewriting a narrative from a different point of view or in a different genre) makes the text more accessible to the learner and removes some of the intimidating mystique that often surrounds literature.

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

12 Applying basic ESL/EFL techniques (such as cloze, multiple choice and jigsaw reading) to the study of literature develops language skills and promotes engagement with the text.

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

13 Learners cannot develop literary competence without an adequate competence in language. Integration of language and literature therefore helps compensate for any inadequacies in the learner’s linguistic competence.

AGREE DISAGREE NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....

14 Developing the learner’s sensitivity to how language is used in a literary text (e.g. through

elementary stylistic analysis) provides him/her with a 'way in' to the text, a starting point for the process of comprehension and appreciation.

AGREE

DISAGREE

NOT ABLE TO COMMENT

.....
.....
.....