

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

WRITING AND THE INNER VOICE: AN EXAMINATION
OF JAMES BRITTON'S LANGUAGE THEORY
AS A PARADIGM FOR WRITING

by

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Writing and the Inner Voice: An Examination of James Britton's Language Theory as a Paradigm for Writing," submitted by Christine Margaret Mowat in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.



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ABSTRACT

This theoretical study examines, elaborates and evaluates the significance of James Britton's language theory as a paradigm for writing development in schools. Britton's theory is explored from within a perspective based in George Kelly, Michael Polanyi, Lev Vygotsky and A. R. Luria. The recognition of the need for a paradigm is prompted by current back-to-basics pressures affecting how and to what extent students learn to write. The uncertain state of knowledge in writing research also suggests the need for a comprehensive theory. The study then is based on a growing recognition of the need for a new context for writing which would encourage the asking of better questions about how students learn to write.

Analysis of the key concepts of representation, expressive language, and participant/spectator roles leads to a view of writing as a specialized form of representation. Writing is seen through the development of an inner writing voice, emerging expressively and strengthened through a gradual differentiation of function and audience. Spectator role writing, although generally a neglected area in schools, is recognized as essential for personally coherent and balanced world representations, and as a complementary means of developing writing competence.

Britton's view of writing as a medium for both personal and cognitive ends is tested by exploration of theoretical extensions, of related research, of other views on writing, and of new trends in rhetoric. Implications from the paradigm suggest: (1) the need to de-emphasize the presently dominant relationship between transactional writing in schools and a teacher-as-examiner audience, and to encourage the relationship between spectator writing and a teacher-learner dialogue; (2) the need to

downplay information retrieval emphases and a testing context which inhibit the student's capacity to write in the expressive mode; (3) a need for the student to view himself as a learner in his approach to writing; (4) the need for expressive talk within the composing process; (5) the need to develop the complexity of one's world representation through committed writing in poetic, expressive and transactional modes; (6) the need to open the range of audiences and functions in student writing; (7) the need to encourage student choice whenever possible; (8) the need to encourage the principle of mutuality in student/teacher relations; (9) the need to develop awareness across the curriculum of the potential for spectator writing for all subjects; and (10) the need for recognition of the seemingly common general restriction in schools of the fullness of writing development through emphasis on the teacher-as-examiner at the expense of writing for a teacher-learner dialogue.

In order to test the practical application of the paradigm, samples of student writing are examined within the context of Britton's theory. Included is a case study of drafts of a student-generated assignment showing detailed development within the process itself.

Writing is seen as one of the most complex and potentially creative ways in which we learn more of ourselves and the world. The writing process emerges as a way of strengthening personal autonomy and learning through the inner ordering of experience. The study suggests that current back-to-basics influences focus wrongly on the accidental, rather than essential heuristic elements of writing. Consideration of Britton's language model as a paradigm for writing in schools suggests that such a view can revitalize writing in schools.

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CHAPTER I

A CONTEXT FOR RE-EXAMINATION OF BRITTON'S LANGUAGE THEORY

It has occurred to me, time and again, when listening to teachers at both high school and university, that the standards of literacy expected of students are those we managed to achieve by the time we graduated.
(Norman, 1976, p. 7)

There is no firm evidence upon which to base comparisons between standards of English today and those of before the war, and the comparisons ventured are sometimes based on questionable assumptions. Nevertheless standards ... of writing need to be raised to fulfill the increasingly exacting demands made upon them by modern society.
(Bullock, 1975, p. 515)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress report shows that essays of 13 and 17 year olds appear to be deteriorating when compared to essays of those tested in 1969.
(Adler, 1975, p. 1)

The above quotations from Canada, Britain and the United States illustrate the range of concern internationally over what has inaccurately been labelled the 'literacy' controversy, a controversy that centres mainly on writing. The last several years have witnessed continuous dialogue and stirrings of controversy demonstrating increasing tension and antagonism. The debate about writing has, in an ill-defined way, become aligned with the so-called back-to-the-basics movement. Ben Brodinsky, an educational journalist, reports that the movement is "usually led by parents, ministers, businessmen, and politicians" (1977, p. 522). In fact, he neglects to include some educators from universities and schools, as well.

There has been little consensus, either within or without the English teaching profession, over the diversity of cause-and-consequence issues related to competency in student writing. It may be that there will always be those who cry 'solecism' to most forms of student writing,

as there may always be those who embrace the flexibility of a largely non-prescriptive writing programme. However, both voices are probably more strident within our time. The present milieu points to a need for an encompassing context through which to examine current concerns.

Recent events have intensified the controversy. In Britain, for example, the fourth in a series of Black Papers since 1969, Black Paper 1977, a collection of articles criticizing educational standards in England and Wales, claims that "modern language teaching in comprehensives is 'poor to mediocre'" (editorial in The Sunday Times, March 20, 1977).

In the United States, discontent has been reflected in constant scanning of SAT scores, surveys of writing abilities for the university bound, and the rise of university remedial writing courses and laboratories. Most recently there has been a general swing back to proficiency testing and emphasis on basic skills in school. A new educational trinity consisting of minimal competency, proficiency testing and a performance-based curriculum is reported in the United States and, "to check whether the performance-based curriculum works, educators are turning to tests of proficiency" (Brodinsky, 1977, p. 524). The result of such activity is predicted:

Testing, testing, testing will spread to an extent hitherto undreamed of. School districts are feverishly looking for proficiency tests and are adopting them as soon as they can find them. The testing industry is making plans to expand.

(Brodinsky, 1977, p. 527)

At the political level, new educational initiatives endorsing the back-to-basics movement appear uninformed by a theoretical context. Growing government hegemony over schools may threaten the professional autonomy of English teachers. "I become quite concerned," stated Kenneth

Goodman in his NCTE response to the President's education program, "when I see state legislators, state departments of education, the courts, Federal agencies, and even the President of the United States entering into these decision making processes ignorant of the issues and the facts" (Slate, 1978). In Alberta, an editorial in The Albertan noted, "Premier Peter Lougheed seems to think that what education in Alberta needs is more provincial interference" (January 5, 1977). Such political initiatives may treat and remove only superficial symptoms without removing underlying problems.

Such vociferous criticism and pressure from conflicting demands on the teaching of English have inevitably affected the morale of English teachers. A Language for Life (1975) reports that there has been "a good deal of uncertainty about the teaching of language" (p. 172), and indecision regarding the shifting focus in curriculum from language improvement regarded as a by-product of talk, writing and literature, to a strictly scheduled and regimented teaching of prescriptive language forms.

In Canada, the Report on English Language Education in Canada (1976) also refers to English teachers' state of unease:

The Committee is of the opinion that discrepancies between policy and training have led to mental dislocation as well as professional uncertainty and anxiety on the part of teachers of English. Oscillation in policy and curriculum certainly do nothing to remedy a situation in which the teacher of English finds himself caught between conflicting expectations--both on his own part and on the part of the educational system and the public.
(p. 5)

Focus on Writing

At the heart of all this ferment is a concern specifically with writing. For many years there has been on-going discussion over the advantages and disadvantages of teaching composition of "a kind that stu-

dents will never write again, and for the best of which there is no literary market"; but "English teachers go on as if they agreed both with the general public that composition is absolutely essential ... yet on the record, nothing in English is taught less effectively, amid more confusion and conflict of theory or hunch" (Muller, 1967, pp. 97-98).

This is not to say that there is any lack of research in the field of student writing. On the contrary, Stephen Sherwin's Four Problems in the Teaching of English: A Critique of Research reports on hundreds of such studies. However, he wryly notes at the end that "research has not charted a sure passage to improved writing" (p. 166). Four questions which he asks in summarizing and critiquing the research are: (1) Does the study of Latin help students master English? (2) Does the study of grammar improve skill in writing? (3) Does the study of linguistics improve student writing? (4) Does writing alone teach writing? In each case Sherwin answers in the negative. The following examples serve to illustrate the kind of research questions reported which focus on short term or single stage writing:

1. A study by Benfer (1935) "does not support the contention that grammatical knowledge (represented by ability to recognize subjects and predicates) affects writing (represented by the ability to recognize complete sentences)." (pp. 124-125)

2. A study by Frogner (1938) concluded that her results "lend no support to the claims made for grammar as being essential in improvement in sentence structure." (p. 128)

3. A study by Smith (1948) showed that "students who had practice in writing in high school but little grammar obtained higher grades in their college courses in writing than did students who had studied grammar but had little work in writing." (p. 131)

4. A study by Buxton (1958) found that "regular writing assignments alone will not result in significantly improved essay writing but that regular writing assignments accompanied by discussion, criticism and revision will improve essay writing." (p. 160)

A Comprehensive Theory

Although such research is valuable, there exists a need for studies which are not tied to such sharply limited questions. Teachers need insights gained from investigations of language development based on a wider conception of the writing process. The examination of work based on a comprehensive language theory should provide teachers with firmer foundations and greater understanding of a developmental view of writing. Recent political planning initiatives, which seem based more on expediency than a carefully researched rationale, point to the need for elaboration of such theory of language learning as it relates specifically to writing.

Since 1966, when the Dartmouth Seminar on the Teaching of English was held, North American English educators have valued the stimulating contact they have received from British approaches to English. In Tradition and Reform in the Teaching of English (1974), Arthur Applebee notes that with the bringing together of fifty English specialists at Dartmouth the "ensuing clash of deeply rooted assumptions about the teaching of English was a cathartic experience for all involved, and sharply altered the professional emphasis of NCTE leaders" (p. 229).

Since Dartmouth, a great deal of interest has been generated by the work of one of the foremost of these British writers, James Britton. Britton's Language and Learning (1970) presents an encompassing view of language, strongly influenced by the work of such writers as L. S. Vygotsky (1962), George Kelly (1963) and Michael Polanyi (1958, 1969). A number of other British educators who write from a similar context have further expanded or complemented Britton's ideas, either theoretically or by empirical research. Such an emerging body of knowledge about language learning has considerable relevance to the teaching of writing,

and, as A Language for Life remarks, has "a great deal to offer to schools and yet (has) not been taken up" (Bullock, ed., 1975, p. 552). A great deal has been learned that remains to be used, to be more fully understood, to be further clarified and explored, and perhaps not the least, promoted. Such information could lend direction to English teachers and educational decision makers on matters relating to writing in the schools.

Summary

This chapter has attempted to illustrate an international concern over the state of language teaching in general and of student writing in particular. The issue was seen both from the literacy view and back-to-basics frameworks to be complex, complex in terms of conflicting perspectives on causes and effects, and complex in terms of political and pedagogical ramifications. It is hypothesized that, within the context of present stresses, further examination and analysis of Britton's language theory as it relates specifically to the development of writing abilities would be helpful.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyse Britton's theory with a view to clarifying selected elements considered relevant to writing, and to examine the theory further in other contexts as a potential paradigm for the teaching of writing. These further examinations are preliminary and exploratory, not definitive.

The intentions of the study are developed in the following manner:

1. Chapter II: A comprehensive review of the paradigm, and an analysis of essential cornerstones in James Britton's language model, followed by a focusing on the writing process itself.

2. Chapter III: A testing of the paradigm by consideration of theoretical extensions and related research.

3. Chapter IV: A further extension and testing by comparison with selected views on writing and by consideration of recent trends in modern rhetoric.

4. Chapter V: An application of the paradigm in an operational context.

5. Chapter VI: A drawing out of implications for the teaching and learning of writing, with a consideration of pedagogical directions for writing, and an examination of the need for a reassessment of current back-to-basics emphases in writing.

At a secondary but related level, the study also attempts a tentative exploration of the efficacy of Britton's framework as a paradigm for writing. Thus, following the review and analysis of Britton's work, the study also considers: (1) its potential for encompassing theory and research based upon it; (2) its capacity to accommodate knowledge from different bases; and (3) its capacity to inform teaching.

CHAPTER II

CORNERSTONES IN JAMES BRITTON'S LANGUAGE THEORY

Many writers have observed that research about the teaching and learning of writing is in a pre-paradigmatic state. The Report on English Language Education in Canada (1976) notes that "there is a singular lack of agreement on the university front on what is wanted" (p. 25); and the Report's examination of Canadian Junior High School Programmes shows a range of philosophies from Prince Edward Island's "A Style for Every Child" (p. 29) to Saskatchewan's fourteen-stage sequential transformational grammar based programme (p. 30).

The suggestion that research about writing is in a pre-paradigmatic state points to a need for a theoretical language framework which will provide an informing and unifying context for writing. James Britton's model for language development seems to answer such a need, providing teachers with the tools to re-examine and reformulate basic questions about writing. As yet, the significance of Britton's theory for writing, the central focus of this study, seems not to have been explored in sufficient depth. Britton's writings reflect values, attitudes and stances towards knowledge which broaden and transform traditional views on writing for teachers.

Since the 1970 publication of his seminal work, Language and Learning, James Britton's views on language theory and learning have aroused interest in Britain, the United States, Canada and Australia. Paradoxically, it is that growing influence generated at the same time as the general swing back to proficiency testing and emphasis on basic skills

which suggests the need for further elaboration and analysis of Britton's thought. Spanning as it does the many fields of language study (philosophy, psychology, sociology, linguistics, sociolinguistics and education), Britton's comprehensive language theory needs careful examination lest it result in misunderstanding and oversimplification.

While one of the purposes of this study is to draw out implications of practical help to the teacher of writing, it is important to reflect on the nature of the theory itself. It goes without saying that a theory must have an executive as well as a contemplative slant (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 70), yet the executive applications may not be transferable into pre-packaged materials or instructions. In fact, a theory such as Britton's, as will be seen, provides a framework which is not easily translatable into simple prescriptions. What an understanding of the theoretical foundations of Britton's thought ought to do, however, is enhance the potential for individual teacher 'translation' in a particular classroom.¹ The teacher, then, of necessity becomes a researcher in his classroom.

This chapter articulates and examines certain basic assumptions of the language theory expounded in Language and Learning. Within this context, a secondary purpose is to look closely at areas of complexity in Britton's thought which may result in oversimplification or misinterpretation. The discussion will proceed first by providing an overview to

1. Other commonly recognized characteristics of a good theory include its squaring with intuition and experience, its usefulness as a test for research, its potential for generating further theory, questions and answers. For a more detailed discussion of theory and the role of human perspective in it, see Michael Polanyi's Personal Knowledge (1958) ch. 1, 4, and George A. Kelly, A Theory of Personality (1963), pp. 102-103.

Britton's theory as a whole, and second, by presenting an analysis of important cornerstones in the theory. Both of these will examine language theory generally. The last section of the chapter will attempt to distill from the general theory whatever seems most relevant to writing. Any supplementary texts referred to are those based on Britton's theoretical framework.

Britton's General Language Theory

The picture-cover on the paperback edition of Language and Learning is richly appropriate: In a face-to-face interchange, two children are seen in animated conversation. The image captures the essence of Britton's theory, that we learn language naturally,² in conjunction with others, through the use of language in real contexts in the carrying out of our own purposes in life. The model applies to learning, and to language learning; and to persons six, sixteen, or sixty.

The world each of us lives in is symbolically created from our experiences by what Britton terms our representations. The representation is the result of several forces: of these, the main one, language, provides the key organizing power. A world representation, though verbally organized, consists of much more than language. In addition, it

2. Britton makes clear that he does not regard this as a negation of the teacher's role. In several sections he points out the role of the teacher in making suggestions and providing material (p. 144), in structuring experiences to result in certain kinds of talk (pp. 140-141), in reading regularly to children (p. 150), in encouraging awareness of differences in language and adapting speech to suit different purposes and occasions (pp. 134-135). And he is most explicit that to recognize the evolution of language does not mean "that it comes without effort on the part of the child and the teacher, but that their efforts are directed towards that growth from those roots" (p. 190).

is characterized as:

Images directly presented by the senses, images that are interiorized experiences of sight, sound, movement, touch, smell and taste: pre-verbal patterns reflecting feeling responses and elementary value judgements: post verbal images derived from myth, religion and the arts. (Britton, 1970, p. 29)

Different personalities and moods are reflected in differing representations of the same experience. New experiences, through the predictive functions of the representational operations, result in constant reformulation of individual views.

Talk, centrally important to Britton's language theory, is seen to be habitually used to fine-tooth comb experience, rake out its inconsistencies and uniformities and help make sense of experience through mutual modification systems.

Running through man's ever-refining construing of the world are two threads--one, the need to symbolize reality in order to handle it, and two, the need to improvise on that reality in order to enjoy and share it. The first function, concerning 'the way things are', is called the participant mode; the second, more concerned with 'the way I feel about things', is termed the spectator mode (Britton, 1970, pp. 106-107).

The roots of the formulation of Britton's language theory, although he meticulously acknowledges all the theoretical influences from diverse disciplines, seem to lie embodied in his own sensitive observation of young children's language, including his own daughters'.

The account given in Chapter Two of Language and Learning of how children learn to speak draws out several principles:

1. Young children's sense of enjoyment of language is shown by focusing on their sense of play, their playing upon sounds, pleasure in the sound of words, and play with sound and ideas.

2. A language repertoire develops through the child's questioning and drawing of inferences. For example:

As new instances crop up of what has once been named, the word becomes a means of building a category, a filing pin upon which successive experiences may be filed.

(p. 41)

3. The markedly individualistic way of learning language by imitation³ is noted, and examples given of unique formulations, which the child has never heard before, such as "spoonfulling it in", "button-up-er", and "a strokely cat." (p. 43)

4. The concomitant processes of movement from speech for oneself to inner speech, and growth of individuation by private association for words as drawn from Vygotsky's work are noted.

5. A development from monologue context-tied speech in two directions, to regulatory and planning functions and to interpretive functions, is seen.

6. Young children's speech forms are identified as:

(a) The running commentary--context bound, private associations for words.

(b) The pre-sleep monologue--subjects chosen deeply felt about; free association of 'ideas', sounds and syntactical forms; recognition that the distinction between play and practice is meaningless here.

(c) The spiel--seeks no practical, communicative or inquisitive ends, is rhythmic, repetitious, is a performance requiring an audience, is characterized as "a kind of celebration, and fragments of past experience caught up into it" (p. 84).

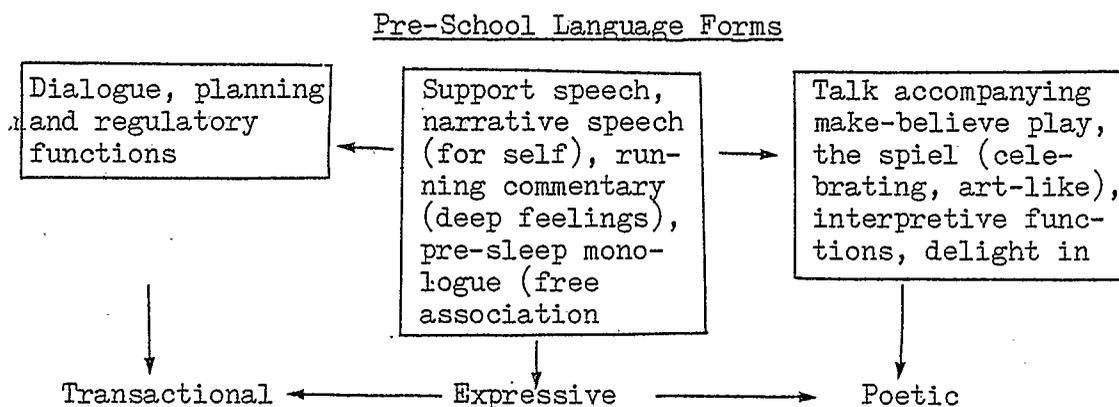
(d) Talk which accompanies make-believe play, "a process of virtually making things happen, at his own choice and in accordance with his own desires" (p. 88). Citing Piaget as support here, Britton says such play helps the child cope with reality by coming to terms with it, compensating for it, or reducing it as a threat (p. 88). Hence, learning how to speak, and learning how to live, to cope, are seen to be inter-related.

3. Similar findings which support the view that when imitation in language learning seems prevalent, it is an idiosyncratically selective imitation, are found in G. Whitehurst and R. Vasta's "Is Language Acquired Through Imitation?" in the Journal of Psycholinguistic Research, (Vol. 4, No. 1), 1975, p. 37; and in Courtney B. Cazden's Child Language and Education, 1972, pp. 29-90.

To summarize the main ideas behind these developmental principles, (1) emphasizes the pleasure/curiosity impetus for language; (2) illustrates that language growth comes through language use; (3) points to the personally selective process of language production; (4) shows that the interdependency of thought and language results in language formulations to draw out personal meaning; (5) finds language development to be a process of adaptability to differentiated forms; as does (6) which discloses language growth as a movement from self outwards.

Two further principles differ in that they describe the kind of environment most conducive to a rich language development: a home which provides talk in infancy with an older person helps language bloom; and person-centred families, as opposed to status organized families, are cited as being more effective in producing talk, discussion and reasoning (pp. 95-96).

Now, it is easier to see how these ideas, drawn from the study of small children's language, move Britton directly to the formulation of his model if the parallel concepts are diagrammed:



The Transactional/Expressive/Poetic continuum represents Britton's tripartite classification of all language use. Expressive language, regarded as the pivotal, germinal form in the model, is described as

relaxed, informal, self-presenting and exploratory. Transactional forms are informative, persuasive, directed to a wider audience and concerned with transacting the business of the world. Poetic language forms are verbal art constructs in which particular attention is paid to their formal arrangements, and which exist as ends in themselves.

Related to this three-function continuum are the two roles of participant and spectator. In the role of participant, a person operates in the world by means of his representation of it; in the role of spectator, he operates directly on the representation itself. As participants, then, we participate in the world's affairs because of our need to act and decide, but as spectators, we are 'on holiday from the world's affairs', contemplating, enjoying, reconstructing, savouring, and evaluating more broadly than is possible as participants.⁴

A final important strand in Britton's theory needs to be considered. A superficial reading of Britton may lead the reader to apply the abstract disjunction between logical thought and feelings to the participant/spectator roles, i.e., the discursive thinking to the participant mode and the feeling base to the spectator. In fact, Britton sees a more sophisticated difference between the two and distinguishes between the end product and the process by which the product is produced. "We do not arrive at logical formulation by processes that are themselves simply logical"

4. Two of the five terms in Britton's model may inadvertently cause misinterpretation. The term 'poetic' requires that it encompass delineations subtle enough to satisfy the requirements not only of poetry, but of other forms of literature as well as the speech art forms, those of the raconteur related to story-telling, drama, gossip and dreams. In addition, a 'spectator' is qualified by Britton as one who participates in the sense of being involved, but not in the sense of having an end outside itself. (See p. 104 of Language and Learning for a more detailed explanation.)

(Britton, 1970, p. 215). Similarly, and with the aid of Susanne Langer, Britton describes a verbal art-like formulation as embracing both cognitive and affective aspects of experience. Thus, the processes by which a person arrives at the formulation of a logical statement or at the formulation of a love poem "are likely to be far less differentiated than the products are distinct" (p. 215).⁵

Drawing the threads of this overview together, one underlying theme in Britton's work seems to feed all others: man's way of approaching life, and using language, is seen as adventurous and dramatic, a continuous experiment heightened by expectations and predictions. In the language model, the basic terms 'participant' and 'spectator' roles suggest dramatic action, and other usages such as "theatre of operations" (p. 219) describe our interacting and representing processes. Normally mundane activities such as getting to work are described in vivid scenarios:

From time to time a friend and neighbour of mine catches the same train as I do in the morning. We meet on the platform and the whole body of past experience of each of us offers to each of us a vast area from which to choose a topic to start a conversation. (Britton, 1970, p. 100)

Day-to-day dialogue, caught in tape transcript, reflects the fascination of ordinary lives. Far from vulgarizing our need to be involved in each other's lives, Britton reaffirms principles about learning and

5. Thus, attempts to fragment the language learning process in curriculum building appear hazardous. See discussion of Newfoundland's new language programme which attempts to separate thinking patterns: "Creative thinking in years 7 and 8, Logical thinking in years 9 and 10, Critical thinking in years 10 and 11" (Report on English Language Education in Canada, p. 33).

living, reminding us unashamedly that "our interest in other people's lives is a primary one" (Britton, 1970, p. 115). As participants we have but one role to play in life, but as spectators an infinite number of possible improvisations and rehearsals lie in wait.

The following section is a brief rationale for the form of analysis used in exploring and clarifying key concepts in Britton's language model. The key concepts are representation, expressive language and participant/spectator roles. The analysis attempts, too, to identify possible areas of oversimplification and to head off obvious objections.

A Rationale for the Analysis

The process of actively recreating the wholeness of the theory is simultaneously an assimilative process and a writing task. Although ringing bells of recognition and excitement, early readings of Language and Learning frequently produced stages of hiatus. It was in order to bridge these gaps, and by assuming some commonality in responses to studying Britton, that the methodology of analysis used here emerged.

In one obvious sense, the methodology is a falsification. In selecting concepts for analysis, the lifting and examining of sentences and ideas out of context, literally away from the 'togetherness' of the ideas in the text, results in an inevitable fragmentation. The need to return to Britton, and to his overriding purposes is a need to return to his presentation, his organization of the theory. The lessons of gestalt psychology remind us of the limitations of a selective analysis. That such selectivity alone will not result in unambiguous comprehension is openly acknowledged. On the other hand, the activity of breaking down into parts is a justifiable stage if it be regarded as a complementary stage.

Michael Polanyi, a philosopher from whom Britton draws, supports this description of the process of problem-posing, the coming to know and the communicating of resultant ideas in his essay, "Knowing and Being" (1961). Choosing the example of the definition of a physiognomy, Polanyi distinguishes the two stages of (1) identifying particulars and (2) describing the relation between the particulars. His description of the elucidation of a comprehensive entity demonstrates his belief in the recognition of a whole through identification of particulars,⁶ and the recognition of a group of particulars towards the grasping of their relation of the whole. Thus,

Each new integration of the particulars adds more to our understanding of them than it damages our understanding by somewhat effacing their identity. (p. 125)

The implication for the methodology in this chapter is that, although certain significant features of the theory are isolated, resulting in what Polanyi terms focal awareness of particulars, they are also present in subsidiary awareness in terms of their participation in the whole. Understanding the significance of the elements of analysis is then dependent on some familiarity with the whole theory. We are reminded that:

The alternation of analysis and integration progressively deepens both our insight into the meaning of a comprehensive entity in terms of its particulars and the meaning of these particulars in terms of their joint significance. (p. 129)

At base then, the usefulness of the first part of this study depends on the reader's personal heuristic function of integrating the

⁶. Polanyi points to the "residue of particulars left unspecified" (p. 124) and it is true that in this study only what are considered primary concepts are selected for special study.

analysis to his own understanding of the theory.

Representation: An Individual Mapping Process

In his forward to Language and Learning, Britton lays out a most important cornerstone in his thought:

We use language as a means of organizing a representation of the world--each for himself--and the representation so created constitutes the world we operate in, the basis of all predictions by which we set the course of our lives.

(1970, p. 7)

To Britton, learning, living and using language form a kinship. Since the term 'representation' is central to Britton's theory and a long way from being monolithic in meaning, an examination of the ways in which he uses the term and the origins from which it derives should expedite understanding. In the process of this examination, two questions will be considered: (1) What are the essential meanings of 'representation'? and (2) How does Britton avoid a solipsistic epistemology in view of his emphasis on representation as being "each for himself"?

Using the analogy of a map, Britton describes how a map functions as a cumulative record and a set of expectations concerning a geographical area. Similarly, he sees humans constructing a representation or 'map' of the world as they experience it, and from such a cumulative record built upon past experiences, they generate expectations about the future. It is through this storehouse of habitually honed representations that we are able to make sense of new experiences.

The representation of the world differs from person to person. Yet Britton does not deny a reality 'out there' and refers to both the "internalizing" and "externalizing" (p. 14) aspects of representing. By this he seems to mean that although an individual's representation is

idiosyncratically shaped, there is something there independent of the self to be shaped. In an interesting passage later in the book, Britton refers to a man's world representation retaining "its intimacy with actuality, its fidelity to things as they are" (p. 137) because of the resilience of elements in individual language from childhood always being pegged to reality. Here it is as if Britton ascribes reality to its grounding in first hand experience, differing from the 'reality' which comes from relating ideas or verbally communicating experience.

Britton does not then appear to fall into a solipsistic philosophy in spite of his recognition that all knowledge is in some significant sense active and personal. His position is akin to Immanuel Kant's here: "We can therefore have no knowledge of any object as a thing in itself, but only in so far as it is an object of sensible intuition, that is, an appearance" (Immanuel Kant, 1929, p. 27). However, Britton's stress on language as a primal influence on the creation of our representation sets his view apart.

Definition of Representation

The following list identifies definitions and contexts Britton uses for this fundamental concept, 'representation'.

A representation is:

1. a symbol (p. 13, p. 14, p. 20, pp. 129-193). In the last reference, Britton points out the difference between his interpretation of symbol as representing by analogy, and Bruner's as representing arbitrarily by convention.
2. a partial likeness to the outside world dependent upon personality, mood, wishes, fears and expectations (p. 14).
3. the result of a confrontation between the body of expectations which go to make up a 'world representation' and the present representation of a given moment (p. 15).
4. a pattern or template (this he draws from Kelly) (p. 17).

5. "the successive construing and reconstruing of what happens" (p. 17).
6. a construction system which is never fixed or finished but constantly undergoing evolution (p. 19).
7. a body of expectations, hypotheses, an accumulated record of past experience (p. 15).
8. "a continuing sense of the world that is continually brought up to date" and "the means by which a man brings his past to bear upon his present"⁷ (p. 18).
9. built by each individual and yet greatly influenced by others' representations "so that much of what we build is built in common" (p. 19).
10. "a storehouse of the data of our experience" (p. 28).
11. assisted in its creation and organizations by language, "the means by which all ways of representing combine to work efficiently together" (p. 19).
12. a Weltanschauung, "a view of the world" (p. 32).
13. an interpretation (p. 72). "Interpretation implies making something of the new experience in the light of what is already familiar ... and modifying the total picture towards being consistent with the new" (p. 73).
14. a modification of a view of reality which does not result in fragmentation and disharmony (p. 117) and which is organized according to "the way I feel about things" (p. 118).
15. "a predictive apparatus" (p. 193) and a filing system (p. 194).
16. a synthesis of cognitive and affective modes; an amalgam of both "discursive logical organization" and "undissociated intuitive processes" (p. 217).
17. a response to the actuality that confronts us which "will be a fuller and subtler response than anything we could put into words" (p. 276), a construct of the world about which we can never be wholly articulate (p. 277).
18. created of the actual world so that an individual may operate

7. Britton here details when it is impossible to make a representation: "If what takes place lies entirely outside my expectations, so that nothing in my past experience provides the basis-for-modification, then I shall be able to make nothing of it" (p. 15).

, in it; and is also created so an individual may operate directly upon the representation itself (p. 20).

Numbers (2), (9), (17) and (18) lend support to the earlier supposition that solipsism is avoided. Number (2) proposes a dualistic view of reality, that is, if one's representation is only a 'partial likeness', the assumption of a reality apart from the self is implicit. Number (9) stresses that (except for hermits) our representations are the result of a social as well as individual effort. Numbers (17) and (18), in stressing the actuality that confronts us and the actual world to be operated in, recognize an external world existing independently of the individual self.

A representation, then, is made, not given, and an essential precondition of Britton's thought is "the active nature of man's approach to experience" (p. 16). The world we perceive is largely man-made and throughout his writing Britton is reminding us of this 'Ecce homo' primacy, or, because he argues that much of what we build is built in common, 'Ecce homines'. Thus, Britton appears to refer to two kinds of objective reality, the kind that is 'out there' apart from an individual's knowing it (it may be real for someone else and not me) and the kind that is constructed mutually. Later on, Britton quotes Sapir who says it is the power of language which "enables human beings to transcend the immediately given in their individual experiences and to join in a larger common understanding" (p. 202).

Essential Meanings of Representation

The preceding list appears kaleidoscopic in its diversity. Yet a number of generalizations may be drawn from it about essential meanings of 'representation', a richly textured and multifarious concept.

One observation is that in spite of the seeming finite or rigid-structure words, e.g., 'symbol', 'template', 'construct', 'pattern', 'storehouse', Britton stresses the continuous reconstruing, the fluidity, the tentativeness, the hypothetical nature of the representation. A representation is always in process and never a finished product. This evolutionary aspect of a representation reflects the ever-refined and potentially adaptable state of an individual's understanding or representing.

A second observation is that Britton uses the term representation to refer both to the kinds of representations and to the functions.

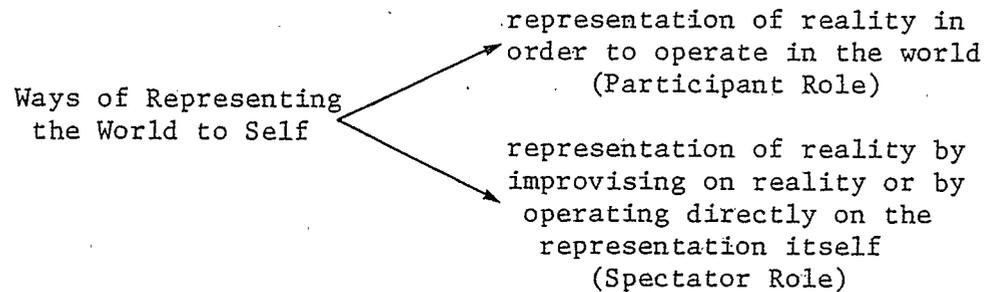
These may be diagrammatically represented as follows:

Kinds of Representation

1. World Representation (a single whole)
 2. Particular Present Representations
(current or recent experiences)
- ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

The relationships between the kinds of representations are illustrated in the footnote on page 23.

Functions of Representation



More will be said about the importance of the participant/spectator functions later. With regard to the kinds of representation, Britton regards the world representation as a single whole, and quotes Piaget's view of growth from a centre, "the new being incorporated only at points where it relates to what is already there" (p. 32). Thus the particular

present representations, those which reflect current or recent experiences, are selected from and matched to the conglomerate of expectations which constitute an individual's world representation.⁸ Consequently, the world representation itself may be modified.

Taking this idea of a world representation a step further, and drawing on the views of the American psychologist, George Kelly, Britton draws a picture of human behaviour as essentially scientific in nature: Man, in this process of representing, is seen as an active interpreter and investigator of reality. In every encounter with experience, we hypothesize, test, modify, consolidate or reformulate our cumulative representation of reality in conjunction with the filter of present experience. It is through constant reinterpretation, selecting and matching, much of it at the unconscious level, that we are able to avoid static, obsolete or totally subjective representations.

Britton's 'representation' is heavily dependent on what George Kelly terms a construct: the two are essentially the same. The roots of Britton's thought may be seen by two examples from Kelly's writings:

1. "The construct is an interpretation of a situation and is not itself the situation which it interprets." (Here the assumption of a reality apart from the perceiver is clear) (Kelly, 1963, pp. 109-110).

8. An example of an interaction between world representation and a particular representation of a given moment would be ten year-old Joey's representation of a particular experience at the circus. When the lion charges his trainer, Joey's present representation reflects both the mood he is in (excited, ebullient) and the enduring features of his personality (fearful, tense). Although his past experiences with the circus lead him to believe that circus trainers usually treat their animals kindly, he now wonders if this trainer had mistreated the lion. This affects his previous world representation and may even colour his view of mankind generally.

2. "By construing we mean 'placing an interpretation': a person places an interpretation upon what is construed. He erects a structure within the framework of which a substance takes shape or meaning" (Kelly, 1963, p. 50).

The active interpreting of reality is here underlined. Construing or representing the world to ourselves is not limited to those experiences which people can either talk about, think privately about, or be conscious of (Kelly, 1963, p. 51). A construct is an ever-flowing process. These quotations show Britton's indebtedness to Kelly for certain mainsprings in his thought. Other influences from Kelly on Britton include man-as-scientist (Kelly, 1963, pp. 4-5), constructs as aids to predictions (p. 12), revision, consolidation or abandonment of constructs (p. 14), denial of exclusivity of personal constructs and recognition of mutual influence of one another's constructs (p. 136).

Language as Representation

We return now to number (11) in the list and the importance of language as being a key way of representing experience to ourselves. Language, as part of the whole representation system, ensures that such representation is not an erratic or subject-to-whim process. The very nature of man as symbolizing animal is reflected in the characteristics of language itself as "a highly organized, systematic means of representing experience" (p. 21). Obviously, an event or an experience differs in kind from a desk or a bus-stop, yet such verbal reification is part of the nature of language use and so of man's way of organizing experience or perceiving reality. Through language we classify, identify themes, segments or phrases. Language then serves to organize and shape our actual experiences and Britton reminds us that we take over in childhood.

the classification of experience embodied in our mother tongue. In considering language as a mode of representing experience, Britton says, "our main stress has been upon its use in turning confusion into order, in enabling us to construct for ourselves an increasingly faithful, objective and coherent picture of the world" (p. 105). Language as the key organizer of experience underlies the non-solipsistic nature of Britton's representation.

Britton makes clear that language development strongly affects our growth as persons. Humans change through the constant confrontation of self to new experience, the Heraclitean flux sifted by talk and thought. Language is the conscious organizer of reality, yet it is impossible to completely reflect whatever we make of any given moment of experience by words alone. Britton acknowledges the subtle subverbal representational patterns which underlie human life and understanding. With Carl Rogers, he acknowledges the unconscious formulations and responses to reality so vital for the purposes of an individual's growth:

A man must be related to his experiences in such a way that his unconscious tendencies are as much respected as his conscious choices. (Britton, 1970, p. 277)

This section has reviewed and analyzed the concept of representation as Britton uses it in Language and Learning. If writing, as one form of language use, represents reality by predicting and interpreting rather than simply recording or reacting, if it presents a partial likeness of the outside world dependent on personality, mood, wishes, fears and expectations, if writing is the successive construing and reconstruing of experience, if it organizes experience according to 'the way I feel about things' and synthesizes both logical and intuitive processes,

then all of these should have far-reaching consequences for the pedagogy of writing and for the training of teachers.

Finally, the importance of the concept 'representation' is underlined by Britton in his article, "What's the Use? A Schematic Account of Language Functions", in which he states that "what distinguishes man from the other animals is not language per se, but the whole process of representation" (Britton, 1972, p. 245).

Expressive Language

Repeatedly in Britton's writings and in other language research generated from a similar theoretical context, the notion of expressive language is regarded as central. As with the concept of representation, its salience is in part due to its complexity, as well as to its evolving meanings in the literature. As Britton says more generally of the reading process, "meaning is an emergent pattern of relationships--more like a negative in the developing dish than it is like a train coming out of a tunnel" (Britton, 1970, p. 161).

This section traces certain origins of the term 'expressive' as it is used in Britton's language model, looks at delineations of the expressive in its relations to the self, explores its function as a matrix from which other writing develops and its function as a learning facilitator. Next, normative statements about the expressive and conclusions from other sources about the undervaluation of expressive language are presented. The section concludes with an analysis of the relations between 'personal language' and the expressive.

The Expressive and Self

Expressive speech has been defined as:

relaxed, self-presenting, self revealing, addressed to a few

intimate companions; ... it moves easily from general comment to narration of particular experiences and back again; ... in making comments the speakers do not aim at accurate explicit reference (as one might in an argument or in a sociological report) and in relating experiences they do not aim at a polished performance (as a raconteur or a novelist would).

(Britton, 1969, p. 96)

It is appropriate to begin with speech in discussing the expressive as a child's natural expressiveness originates with childhood talk. Britton, drawing on Vygotsky, notes that the egocentric pattern which accompanies young children's actions is primarily produced for the pleasure of expression rather than to command or manipulate the environment. To start the reader thinking of common connotations of what is meant by the term 'expressive', Britton reminds us of what 'reading with expression' means, the indication by voice of what I think the writer meant by his words, and also an indication of the way I think and feel. Expressive language, then, is language reflecting 'the way I feel about things'.

In From Talking to Writing, some of the differences between expressive talk and writing are explored.⁹ Peter Medway, a co-worker of Britton's involved in research based on Britton's model, hypothesizes that student writers need to be enabled to find satisfactions from writing which generally do not occur in talk, either because of the complexity of the ideas, or because of the social impracticability. In other words, the transience of talk and the pressure of an immediate audience may impede some kinds of personal idea expansion or exploration. Medway refers to children's enjoyment of writings "which are quite like

9. Dennis Searle also explores this question in A Study of the Classroom Language Activity of a Selected Group of High School Students (1973), in the chapter on "Student Writing" (p. 172).

the spoken language in their expressiveness and general feel, but which it would perhaps be unusual to find actually spoken by a child" (Medway, 1973, p. 10).

Writing which is done for the student's own satisfaction often has this expressive context; that is, it is written in a natural, habitual speech-like tone, although it may be more extended and somewhat shaped. Commenting on a student poem which reflected this habitual speech flow, Medway remarks that "it still feels to him like him speaking, not someone else" (Medway, 1973, p. 22).

The affinity to the self that the expressive has is related to the question of the writer's voice. It is Britton's view that the development of writing abilities is dependent on two seemingly contradictory processes, the leading of the writer-learner out of egocentricism (and writing to an intimate known audience) to a more differentiated impersonal writing for a more generalized unknown audience, at the same time retaining the special personal perspective necessary to give the writing its unity and uniqueness. In other words, Britton and his co-workers hypothesize that the development of writing encompasses a movement from self outwards, yet at no time is the self totally abandoned. Britton puts it succinctly:

Expressive language provides an essential starting point because it is language close to the self of the writer; and progress towards the transactional should be gradual enough to ensure that 'the self' is not lost on the way: that on arrival 'the self', though hidden, is still there. It is the self that provides the unseen point from which all is viewed: there can be no other way of writing quite impersonally and yet with coherence and vitality. (Britton, 1970, p. 179)

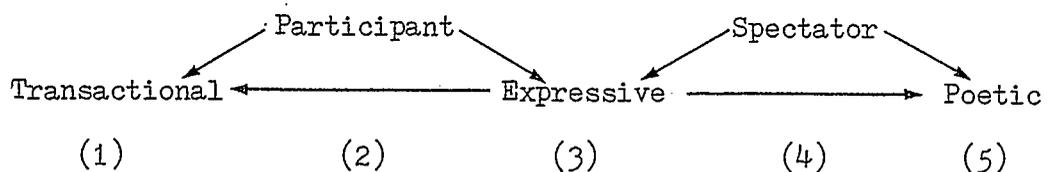
The importance of expressive language in finding the writer's voice, a voice which will be required in even the most objective kinds of writing is clear. Applebee (1973, p. 49) concludes that "to curtail the expres-

sive, to allow its forms to deteriorate rather than to mature, would be sharply to inhibit the development of the individual self."

An interesting and helpful distinction about the relationship of self to expressive is made by Glyn Thomas in "The Process of Writing" (1972). Expressive features, he claims, are not used primarily to tell us about the writer but only incidentally. "In making them (expressive features) explicit he (the student) is communicating what is for him the 'subject' or 'context'" (p. 76). Thus the expressive mode has an important function to play in helping students to clarify their own viewpoints. This leads us to a second basic characteristic of expressive language, its position as a starting point in Britton's model.

The Expressive as a Starting Point

Britton's language model as presented in Language and Learning is a diagrammatic representation of three central language function categories: Transactional (1), Expressive (3) and Poetic (5); and two transitional ones: Transactional/Expressive (2) and Poetic/Expressive (4). All stages encompass a continuum:



As was seen in the discussion of Britton's theory at the beginning of this chapter, transactional language seeks to inform, persuade or instruct, and is concerned with an end outside itself, for example, a piece of scientific discourse. Poetic writing, however, exists for its own sake and is a deliberately shaped verbal construct made for the pleasure of making and sharing it, for example, a story or poem. To regard Britton's model as a prescriptive model for curriculum development would be

to seriously misunderstand its value. Rather than designating towards specificity, the model informs the teacher's view of development. For example, to uniformly prescribe a sequence of percentages of writing in each of the three functions would be to greatly oversimplify.

The importance of expressive language as a pivotal developmental stage in Britton's model is underlined in several sources. First in Language and Learning Britton notes:

It is when the demand is made for participant language that any reader can follow, or to spectator role language to satisfy an unknown reader that the pressure is on for a move from expressive writing to transactional and poetic writing respectively.
(Britton, 1970, p. 174)

Britton et al in The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18) state that "the expressive is a kind of matrix from which differentiated forms of mature writing are developed" (1975, p. 83). In Writing and Learning Across the Curriculum 11-16, expressive writing is described as "the seed bed from which more specialized and differentiated writing can grow--towards the greater explicitness of the transactional or the more conscious shaping of the poetic" (1976, p. 26).

In order to understand how the expressive is envisioned as a starting point, additional selected descriptions of the expressive are reproduced here:

1. "It is in expressive speech that we are likely to rehearse the growing points of our formulation and analysis of experience."
(Britton, 1972, p. 247)

2. "It (the expressive) is our principal means of exchanging opinions, attitudes, beliefs in face-to-face situations."
(Britton, 1972, p. 247)

3. "Expressive is not just a stage on route to something else but a way of reciprocally exploring and revealing others and self in conversational utterance."
(Britton, 1972, p. 247)

4. "Expressive language signals the self, reflects not only the ebb and flow of a speaker's thought and feeling, but also his assumptions of shared contexts of meaning and of a relationship of trust with his listener."
(Britton et al, 1975, p. 10)

5. "Expressive writing, being the form of writing nearest to speech, is crucial for trying out and coming to terms with new ideas."
(Martin et al, 1976, p. 26)

6. "The expressive is the means by which the new is tentatively explored."
(Martin et al, 1976, p. 23)

7. "It was observed that talk frequently led to discovery when the students were engaged in expressive language, language close and familiar to themselves, language flowing easily. Heuristic moments, expressed as exclamatory (Oh! I know what it means!) arose out of this expressive talk."
(Washburn, 1977, p. 119)

8. "It is utterance at its most relaxed and intimate, as free as possible from outside demands, whether those of a task or audience."
(Britton et al, 1975, p. 82)

The above quotations illustrate the range of refinement and expansion of what the expressive has come to signify in the literature. Its complexity is reflected in its free movement from spectator to participant (this will be more explicitly delineated in the last section of this chapter), its role in personal and interpersonal exploration (2, 3, 4), and in value, opinion or information exchange (1, 2, 4), its unstructured nature and naturalness (4, 7, 8), its assimilative qualities (5, 6, 7), and its function in rehearsing or practising before moving on to subsequent stages (1, 3, 5). Through all these delineations, the expressive mode is valued not only as a starting point but for what it achieves in itself (2, 3, 8).

The questions may now be put. In what ways is expressive language a starting point? Do learner-writers only need expressive until a certain stage and then forever abandon it? Some ways of answering these questions are implicit in the descriptions of the expressive above. The fact that through expressive functions a learner seems able to ease him-

self into a relationship with a topic and so generate personal commitment to his writing, that he is able to rehearse the growing points of a formulation, and through mutual exchange modify tentative ideas--these suggest that the expressive is often a necessary rough draft or first stage in the composing process. Several writers point out that most writing in elementary schools will be almost wholly in the expressive continuum, that is, within the range of categories 2, 3 and 4 in Britton's model (see page 29). It may be supposed that the need for writing as much in the expressive mode may be lessened at the secondary or college levels when and if control over transactional and poetic forms occurs. For some students whose reading development is such that the internalizing of poetic or transactional forms has not taken place, the expressive may continue to play a major role in all writing production, and may even constitute the only stage in writing. The complex interrelationships between expressive writing (free or loosely structured writing, rough drafts, journals or other forms of verbal monologues), reading, expressive talk and inner speech (discussed in detail in the next sub-section) may be the determining factors in how a writer develops outwards from the expressive starting point.

Expressive language would seem to be a starting point in a further, less mechanical sense. If revving up the motors of personal involvement be a necessary pre-condition for the thinking/writing process, then following the contours of one's thinking, even focusing on parts of the ebb and flow of consciousness, without the pressure of external demands, may provide a lead-in to a piece of writing.

Finally, Britton observes that a mature writer does not grow out

of his need for expressive language as its personal, exploratory functions continue to operate as mature forms of expressive writing. Furthermore, "expressive written-down speech develops into a mature form of expressive writing--the language of intimate letters, of diaries, of notes to oneself or one's own thinking" (Britton, 1973).

What Britton and others seem to be saying about the expressive function is that it can create a personal context and that through this, there is a dual emphasis, language for learning as well as learning language. This leads us to the third characteristic of the expressive to be discussed, the relationship between learning and expressive language. This will entail some analysis of the origins of the term 'expressive'.

The Expressive as Learning Facilitator. The link between expressive language production and learning seems to be widely recognized. In origin, perhaps most is due to Sapir, who stressed the expressive nature of ordinary speech, distinguishing it from referential. Rather than resting with Sapir's notion of the relation between expressive and communicative as being intertwined in complex patterns, Britton's modification distinguishes between predominantly referential or transactional, and predominantly expressive (Britton, 1970, p. 167). Sapir's stress on the embeddedness or context-bound nature of speech was also woven into Britton's conception of the expressive: he quotes Sapir's observation that language is learned "in constant association with the colour and requirements of actual contexts" (Sapir, 1961, p. 10).

A second influence on the development of what is meant by expressive is Vygotsky. Vygotsky sees the direction of a child's thinking

development as one of gradual individualization. With the evolution of speech from listening to others, a child develops 'speech for oneself', a form of speech which is essentially expressive, i.e., non-communicative, and which evolves to what Vygotsky calls inner speech. It is difficult to draw strict lines of comparison between Britton's 'expressive' and Vygotsky's 'inner speech'. For one thing, expressive talk or writing is, of course, external (although 'expressive thought' may be postulated), whereas inner speech is egocentric speech internalized and non-verbal. Yet the springs of inner speech and the expressive both possess affinities with self and learning. As Vygotsky observes, the decreasing vocalization of egocentric speech as children begin to enter school "denotes a developing abstraction from sound, the child's new faculty to 'think words' instead of pronouncing them" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 135). More than just a means of expression and tension releaser, egocentric speech becomes "an instrument of thought in the proper sense--in seeking and planning the solution to a problem" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 16). The movement from listening to others speak to speech for oneself to inner speech is all the more startling when we realize that just because that internalized form, thinking in 'pure meanings', need not be articulated to any listener, it becomes more meaningful to the user. This has significant implications for the writing process.

When we talk of expressive language reflecting the ebb and flow of a speaker or writer's consciousness, and beside that put the notion that the thinking reflected in expressive language is the thinking by which a writer gets into relationship with a topic, we begin to see the relationships Britton is elaborating between self, learning and expressive language.

age. At a simpler level, the authors of Why Write? reproduce expressive writing samples which "tried to catch learning on the wing" (Martin et al, 1973, p. 3), writing which is seen as part of the learning process and not just post facto formulations. It is for this very reason, that the expressive appears to allow the learner to assimilate new ideas, that Martin et al promote the use of expressive language in schools even after the student has learned to use transactional and poetic functions. This position is forcefully and elaborately argued in The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18).

Normative Statements about the Expressive. The expressive is seen to be regarded as a crucial language function and the following normative assertions document that belief. The emphases are this researcher's:

1. "We would hope, for instance, that expressive language may be increasingly seen to play a key role in all learning (even the most subject oriented, as well as in learning to use language); and that the educational value of spectator role activities may come to be better understood and more convincingly argued." (Britton, 1972, p. 251)

2. Expressive speech "is our principal means of exchanging opinions, attitudes, beliefs in face-to-face situations. As such I would judge it to be a far more important instrument for influencing each other and affecting public and social action than any sermon, political speech, pamphlet, manifesto or other public utterance." (Britton, 1972, p. 246)

3. "Most of the writing in Primary School is likely, as I suggested earlier, to be expressive or transitional between expressive and the poles of transactional and poetic. It is desirable that it should be so." (Britton, 1970, p. 180)

4. "The more we worked on this ideas of the expressive function, the more important we felt it to be."

"Until a child does write expressively he is failing to feed into the writing process the fullness of his linguistic resources." (Britton et al, 1975, p. 82)

5. "Believing, then, in the central importance of the expressive both in learning and in learning to write" (Martin et al, 1976, p. 26)

6. "Expressive language has life-long usefulness and should always be part of anyone's linguistic repertoire; it is not to be shunned as a substandard mode which will hopefully wither away as students become more capable and sophisticated." (Goodhall, 1977, p. 7)

7. "It is in expressive speech that we are likely to rehearse the growing points of our formulation and analysis of experience. Thus we may suppose that all the important products and projects that have affected human society are likely to have been given their first draft in talk between the originator and someone who was sufficiently 'in the picture' to hear and consider utterances not yet ready for a wider hearing." (Britton, 1971, pp. 207-208)

These are eloquent testimonies by those who have closely observed the teaching/learning process of the central importance of expressive formulations in language and thought development.

Studies Which Conclude that Expressive Uses of Language in Schools Have Been Undervalued. A number of language studies have pointed to the concomitant emphasis on testing and the devaluing of expressive language use in schools as being responsible for the preponderance of algorithmic writing, or writing which is spurious and lacking in assimilative character or personal commitment. Such a denial of the central importance of expressive language is illustrated by the following:

1. "The demand for impersonal, unexpressive writing can actively inhibit learning because it isolates what is to be learned from the vital learning process--that of making links between what is already known and new information." (Martin, 1976, p. 26)

2. "Teachers who perceive teaching primarily in its testing role are unlikely either to want expressive writing from or to inspire it in students." (Paquette, J., 1975, p. 100)

3. "Emphasis on form resulted in an impersonal and underdeveloped type of writing which did not seem to reflect the ideas or experience of the writer. This type of writing did not seem to facilitate any type of personal or intellectual growth." (Searle, 1973, p. 189)

4. In criticizing the curriculum objectives: "Britton's view of the active personal use of language primarily through spontaneous oral activities and personal writing, is not represented in any significant way with these three courses (English 10, 20 and 30)." (Paquette, M., 1972, p. 94)

5. "One can speculate from the forcefulness of the expressive language that if expressive talk and writing were encouraged at every grade level, the result might be writing that is stronger and more original and thought which represents more nearly assimilated learning."
(Parbs, 1974, p. 97)

The Expressive as Personal Language. Earlier it was noted that man's knowledge of the world, through the process of representation, is in a significant sense active and personal. Since language is regarded as the key way in which we represent the world to ourselves and others, it may be useful to examine the connections Britton and others find between the expressive mode and personal language. In view of what seems a growing trend to dismiss the person-centred society as utopian and merely permissive,¹⁰ examination of the personal aspects of the expressive may be appropriate.

Close connections between expressive language and self, and the need for retention of the writer's voice in all but the most emasculated scientific writing have been noted. Here the focus is somewhat different, yet overlapping, in that personal language, or its effects, rather than self, is studied. Are expressive language and personal language the same? What has been learned about the uses of personal and impersonal language forms in schools? These are primary considerations here.

To begin with, Britton's emphasis on personal language is reflected

10. Historically pejorative connotations related to personal aspects of the word 'expressive' are not what seems meant by Britton. Characteristics suggesting excessive or unhealthy self-centredness, effusively subjective outpourings or narcissism, are not what is meant. Throughout Britton's writings, the self is always in relief against a backdrop of reference to others. For example, see his discussion, following Langer, on 'individuation' and 'involvement', on closeness of independence and dependability, and on the Piagetian de-centring of egocentric ideas through adolescents' discussions (Britton, 1970, pp. 226-232).

in his insistence that children in schools use language for real operations and not for 'dummy runs'. "Deliberate imitation of written models," Britton says, "tends to cut off the writing from the active, individual 'pool' of language resources derived from speaking, and may leave us with a disembodied voice--writing without a writer, or in the worst cases words from somewhere put together without an understanding of what they could mean" (1973). The personal language has to do with the reflecting of what the writer's words mean.

As the evolutionary process of spontaneous language growth accounts for the transition from helpless infant to the five year-old's grip on the world, Britton recognizes that natural process and the language produced at any stage are to be valued. Because the child's personal language is to be so valued, according to Britton, there is then no question of a 'fresh start'¹¹ policy in school. Extensive evidence suggests that if a child's mother tongue is not Standard English, a discrediting, even if only implicit, of his own language, and the initiation of an intentionally didactic, model-based pedagogy to teach Standard English is largely unsuccessful.¹²

Britton's stress on personal language (although, as will be seen,

11. In Canada, the obvious example is our one hundred years of failure in the education of Indian peoples, some of whom come to school speaking no English, and some of whom speak 'Indian-English'. For a further discussion see A Survey of Contemporary Indians of Canada, ed. H. B. Hawthorne, 1967, ch. IV.

12. Although Britton sees a 'fresh start' as discouraging to children's own powers of speech, he sees the function of the school as starting with speech for oneself and helping the child to extend his linguistic powers by extending demands beyond that of his habitual home speech.

he avoids that particular terminology in favour of references to 'one's own speech') derives from his view that language production is largely an individual enterprise. Personal growth, inextricably bound up with an individual's language development, reflects the evolving ability to find one's own responses to and ways of formulating the truth of a situation. Context-bound though personal language is, it mines a richness, a depth, perhaps even truths, alien to impersonal language forms. Commenting on a transcript of five sixteen year-old schoolgirls engaged in expressive talk, Britton concludes:

In indicating, at the end of the extract, the sense of guilt a girl may feel when her parents quarrel, it penetrates deeper, I believe, than a more structured, more objective analysis could have taken these adolescents.

(Britton, 1970, p. 243)

The intricacy and depth of the material to come out of expressive as personal language is one aspect. In contrast, the desire to understand what effects impersonal language have on learning has generated a number of studies. Harold Rosen's oft-quoted passage from an unpublished paper, "The Problems of Impersonal Language", illustrates:

Much of the language encountered in school looks at pupils across a chasm. Some fluent children ... adopt the jargon and parrot whole stretches of lingo. Personal intellectual struggle is made irrelevant and the personal view never asked for. Language and experience are torn asunder. Worse still, many children find impersonal language mere noise. It is alien in its posture, convention and strategies ... these are extremes, many children have areas of confidence and understanding but frequently have to resort to desperate mimicry to see them through.

(quoted in Barnes, 1969,
p. 12)

Lest it be thought that impersonal school language alienate from learning only small school children, the words of a commentator on the college scene in English Journal (September, 1973) create echoes:

In the essays of many adolescents and college students we find

that necessarily and properly personal responses are so expressed --through strenuous and tortuous impersonality--as to deny their essentially personal nature. (Summerfield, p. 868)

"Desperate mimicry" and "tortuous impersonality" suggest not only that the mastery of impersonal language is undesirable, but that students are unready for these stages, that they needed a personal way in first. Other writers have observed the negative learning effects from the teacher's constant use of impersonal language, and the learners' forced acquiescence to produce impersonal language forms. Rosen's description of impersonal language looking at children across a chasm is reinforced by C. J. Newton's study, Teacher's Language and Classroom Learning. There are several points relevant to this discussion:

1. Newton refers to how nearly all teacher instructions in her study had to be repeated and discussed because the children "did not seem to engage with the instructions until they had actually tried the problems and therefore were asking their own questions about them." (p. 82)

2. "Verbal exchange between teachers and pupils, however, often seemed to resemble lines in a play." (p. 85)

3. In discussing impersonal instructional language, Newton characterizes it as prescriptive, linked to authority, often for purposes of maintaining a common purpose and uniform progression in the class. (p. 60)

4. "Repeatedly, pupils who were attempting to work something out for themselves, were required to solve the problem according to the method established by the teacher." (p. 58)

5. "It could be concluded that constant involvement with a questioning process in which the aim was to get the same answer as the teacher, and in which the child's reasoning process seemed unimportant, could have made the children associate the teacher with a kind of truth, albeit a truth with which they did not always agree." (p. 63)

The quotations point to a natural relationship between personal language formulations and learning, the need for expressive language in personal assimilation, and the standardizing and blocking of learning by

use of impersonal language. In a vividly telling example, Newton observes how a teacher's need to control behaviour through impersonal language blinds her to the actual effects of her language, negating the child's learning:

Teacher: Paul, how do we know how to make change?
What's the rule?

Paul: Well, let's see. We would know, we would know how we had to get to say the dollar we gave That's at the end ... so we'd start from the money we had to pay ... say

Teacher (interrupting): You weren't paying attention, or you'd know. The rule is to count from the smallest to the largest amount. Now pay attention.

Paul hadn't been paying attention, but he was able to formulate the rule required. Essentially he had the right idea, but he hadn't expressed it in the terms the teacher had used. Instead he explained the principle as he saw it. The teacher's implication that he didn't know the rule was ironic, for indeed, in expressing the concept in his own terms, Paul had demonstrated that he did know. By censuring his language, the teacher was, in fact, censuring thinking. (Newton, 1974, p. 92)

Drawing out the implications of this sample, one is prompted to speculate on whether the much more subtle censuring of thinking at the secondary and tertiary levels, by means of an exclusive emphasis on transactional essay writing, and concomitant disregard for personal writing, is any more forgiveable.

Coming at the question from another angle, Britton in "Schools and the Mother Tongue" finds that forbidding the use of what he terms here 'home language' (which is very akin to what we have been meaning by 'personal language') encourages silence and non-participation, and eliminates learning from each other. Further, he notes that unexpected learning takes place when the teacher "lowers his threshold of acceptance in order to encourage home speech to be freely used for discussing in groups the

material of the lesson" (1973).

The relationship between the personal base of the expressive mode and learning has been shown. One qualification may be required: because learning, according to writers examined, is seen to accrue from the expressive mode, this is not to deny that learning takes place in the transactional/poetic modes, but that the impersonal learning form will usually come after the learning has taken place. Of course, finer discriminations of different kinds of learning in the learning process may continue through the poetic/transactional poles as well.¹³ Yet as Britton reminds us, if we limp about long enough in somebody else's language (instead of graduating at our own pace and according to our purposes), we may eventually learn to walk in it (Britton, 1970, p. 85). If the transactional and poetic language forms which a learner uses evolve from his own personal contexts then they may become his personal language in another, more sophisticated sense.

That the more difficult impersonal uses of language are required in order to develop fully one's metalinguistic resources is obvious. Nancy Martin observes that the way to develop facility in impersonal modes is through the precursors of expressive talk and personal writing (19 , p. 70). Similarly, Dennis Searle's study suggests that a student needs to translate new experience through expressive language first in order

13. To continue this line of reasoning: if we return to some of the meanings of representation, the direct operating upon the representation itself in the poetic mode may result in a further formed elaboration of some concepts initially assimilated in the expressive. Even the tacit or inarticulate component of a construct of the world may be influenced further outside the range of the expressive. It is obvious, of course, that there is no way we could ever demonstrate this, and yet it is a theoretical extension of the learning representation pattern considered here.

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to make it part of his world view and subsequently present it in less personal language. Searle observed that the attempt to express new material in transactional or poetic form first presented a double burden to the learner: i.e., simultaneously, the struggle to understand and the need to develop a more formal language mode (Searle, 1973).

In answer to the earlier question posed, are personal and expressive language essentially the same, the response must be 'yes', although we have seen that other senses of personal language have been used in the literature. A sense that the disjunctive personal/impersonal confuses an already complicated area leads some writers to suggest eliminating the terms. This may also be because of the somewhat negative connotations discussed on page 37. Thus the authors of The Development of Writing Abilities remark:

It will be seen that our notion of expressive writing moving on occasion towards, or into, the poetic enabled us to dispense with the terms 'personal' and 'creative' writing; and our other spectrum, from expressive to transactional, covers in a more precise way the difference between personal and impersonal writing of an informative kind. (Britton et al, 1975, p. 15)

And, in the introduction to Talking and Writing, Britton uses the word 'tentative' to describe his reaction to the distinction made between personal and impersonal uses of language by other writers in the book. Perhaps the tentativeness comes from his insight into the ubiquitous personal texture of all language use, whether through 'desperate mimicry' and a 'tortuous impersonality' or through a genuine writer voice. Michael Polanyi, whose work has influenced Britton, says, "It is precisely the ingredient of personal passion inherent in and necessary to even the least personal forms of speech which my argument seeks to exhibit"¹⁴ (Polanyi,

14. See Polanyi's Personal Knowledge, particularly chapter 5, for

1958, p. 78).

In spite of his own tentativeness about the terms 'personal' and 'impersonal', Britton defines as personal that language in which the writer or speaker selects and arranges material so as to satisfy himself or, in addition, to communicate his satisfaction to some audience. He then observes that both poetic and expressive exemplify personal language. No doubt the spectator role functions of personal evaluation and re-interpretation of our representations of the world lead Britton to lean heavily on this end of the spectrum. Yet his description of transactional writing in "Schools and the Mother Tongue" (1973) as "the gateway to all further education" demonstrates his significant regard for the development of more impersonal forms.

The preceding explorations have shown various ways in which the term, personal language, has been used. Some writers appear to use it exclusively to relate to the expressive, another relates it both to expressive and poetic, and it has also been used simply to suggest the idiosyncratic context of all language forms. Some writers suggest dropping the terms 'personal' and 'impersonal' altogether, claiming a greater precision of meaning through Britton's model terminology.

In the end, the personalizing of language, to be true to Britton's intentions, refers primarily to the belief that the expressive mode reflects personal, habitual or 'home' language, and that new learning often

14. continued

an extended discussion of the relation of the personal, not the subjective, to epistemology in general and language in particular. Although Polanyi argues that all knowledge can be demonstrated to be personal, "the degree of our personal participation varies greatly within our various acts of knowing" (p. 36).

begins in the expressive; and, secondarily, when the writing has matured to encompass more impersonal forms, it refers to my language, whether it be my use of expressive, transactional or poetic. All language functions can produce my own understandings and meanings. Finally, the personal language of the expressive mode and its role as the language of work-in-progress will be familiar to any writer.

If, as teachers, we do not encourage personal formulations of the ideas and pressing concerns of student writers, we reinforce a cycle of common writing malpractices--dependence on source language, awkwardness from unnatural vocabulary and syntax, and uncommitted writing. It may be that through the personal language of the expressive mode students' views on writing could be liberated from their regard for writing as a difficulty to a view of writing as a medium for extending their powers and understanding. Britton's model postulates a process of dissociation and progressive differentiation of writing abilities as a gradual working out from a strongly established base of expressive language.

Spectator and Participant Roles

The last cornerstone of Britton's theory to be considered here is the distinction between participant and spectator roles. By these terms, Britton distinguishes between the spectrum from transactional to expressive (participant) and the spectrum from expressive to poetic (spectator). In the participant mode, a person is transacting the business of the world: s/he informs, requests information, instructs, persuades, argues, explains, plans, sets forth reasons and conclusions. Action and decision are keynotes here and the mode is tied into practical and social demands. As participants we construct a representation of the world in order to operate in it. For example, when the 1973 Quebec October Crisis occurred,

newscasters were acting in the participant mode in asking for information: How was the government reacting? How many people had been jailed? What criteria were used in rounding up those considered dangerous? The first media reports to reach the Canadian public were objective and expository discourses answering questions such as these.

When the heat of the action had passed, however, evaluations on the appropriateness of government action began to be explored. The framework for discussion was enlarged and in a more detached manner, judgements based on attitudes and feelings began to permeate the news presses. Such discourse was firmly in the spectator role.

In the spectator role, going back over an experience or anticipating a future one, we relax more--we may even describe it as a kind of play. Rather than the more work-like classifying according to the way things are, spectating involves a classification according to the way we feel about things, savouring and interpreting in prospect and retrospect, in a way that is impossible at the time of happening. Britton describes a spectator as being on holiday from the world's affairs, carrying out personal evaluations of experience which preserve views of the world from fragmentation and disharmony. Spectator processes encompass juggling, modifying, adapting and deciphering activities, and in this sense, the holiday is more like work. Yet spectator mode also includes the liberation from context and the pressure to act or decide, allowing a comprehensiveness and detachment which in contrast produces the sense of holidaying. A spectator shares his experience in order to celebrate it, pay homage to it or "savour feeling as feeling" (Britton, 1970, p. 113).

The soccer coach, analyzing the strengths and strategies of his team in order to decide who plays the next game, answers the question,

"What did you think of the game?" in the participant mode. If this be accompanied by the usual coach expostulations, it will be moving into the expressive end of the participant spectrum. A soccer player, answering the same question may go over high points in the game in a kind of homage paying to his mates, gloating over developments in a more comprehensive manner--for the sheer pleasure of sharing his interpretation. As he talks, the player may dramatically elaborate an episode from the game and his teammates may respond to the way he tells it: this then will be moving towards the poetic pole of the spectrum. "Language to get things done remains intact as a criterion for one role," says Britton, "and language of being and becoming may roughly describe the other" (1970, p. 125).

The sense of holidaying, of reconnoitering or exploring, even over a terrain of serious matters, is reflected in the specific activities Britton identifies in the spectator role--make-believe play, daydreaming aloud, chatting about experiences, gossip, story-telling, fiction, drama and poetry. In spectator mode we "manipulate the representation without seeking outcomes in the actual world" (Britton et al, 1975, p. 80). The holiday is taken for itself, for the pleasures it brings, and the business left behind at home or office is unaffected. Or so it seems. But just as the effects of the holiday may work indirectly to revitalize one's attitude to a job, so the reconstruing of one's world representation will indirectly affect further participant responses. The rhythms of interaction between participant and spectator behaviour are continuous: both are regarded by Britton as necessary for a coherent and balanced representation of the world.

We noted earlier that spectator mode is based on feelings. A

deeply felt reaction to a particular experience may occur without a person's understanding why. That this sense of confusion may be unlocked through the writing process is widely acknowledged, yet as a powerful impetus for writing in schools it has perhaps not been considered sufficiently. The word 'powerful' may provide the clue to its neglect by teachers, for often things related to power trigger underlying fear. Certainly the risk of involvement in students' lives, the coming to terms with the student as person as s/he enlarges conceptions about life through writing, may in part explain the reluctance of teachers in the past to encourage writing in the spectator mode. Yet what we as humans do, suffer, and feel, mould our personalities, and, in large part, determine the way we live. Student writing as literature exploring personal experiences offers secondary experiences which can aid in forming clearer and more detailed self-portraits, strengthening the person behind the writing.

Britton's distinction between participant writing as a means and spectator writing as an end is usefully developed by Applebee:

At best transactional (participant) writing can isolate one strand of our process of construing, analyzing and clarifying its constituent parts; but in the end that transactionally isolated experience must be re-integrated, assimilated, as a functional subsystem within a complex psychological whole.
(1973, p. 344)

Useful, then, as participant writing can be, it is the spectator mode which, with its differing resources of form, allows us to relate fragmented knowledge to our world view.

A final example illustrates both literally and symbolically the need humans have to develop through the spectator mode. A child is leafing through an overstuffed box of family photographs. "Who is this lady in the floppy hat, mommy?" "Is this little boy Daddy?" "Who's that old

man Daddy's with?" The questions come thick and fast. In so doing, the child transactionally gathers knowledge about who cousin Sarah is and about Daddy as an eight year-old with a great-grandfather of his own. Later, the child reconstrues his personal framework positioning himself on that day in the total perspective of the history of his family's generations; sometime later, he may move on to an evaluation of his life as one person in relation to the whole of human history. This process occurs in a largely ineffable and unconscious manner, widely different from a cumulative analytic mode. A furthering and sharpening of this largely unconscious process may occur as a result of the very process of putting it into words in speech: The culmination of such a significant reorganization of one's world view may come through writing. This view of writing as one of the most complex forms of representation will be explored in more detail in Chapter III.

The role of spectator holds a special fascination for the English teacher. Taylor, in Readers as Spectators: An Exploration of Adolescent Response to Literature in Group Discussions concluded that spectator language "revealed greater depth and variety of response than this teacher had been aware of by many years of tests, essays, and class discussion", and that "it might be doubted whether material which fails to produce any spectator-role talk has any significant effect on the revision of personal constructs of reality" (1977, p. 114). The question raised by Taylor of whether there be identifiable developmental spectator response stages points up a similarly unanswered question for writing research.¹⁵

15. Although the transactional function has been broken down into eleven sub-categories (see Function Categories chart insert at back of The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18)), neither the poetic nor

Perhaps because spectator role writing envelops what Britton terms global contextualization (1977, p. 35) as opposed to the piecemeal contextualization of the participant writing, and perhaps because it exists as a verbal construct or an end in itself, it seems more concerned with the whole person. "In participant activity it is the construction we place on the now--the current encounter with actuality--that we attend to: as spectators, it is essentially the total--that we are concerned with" (Britton, 1970, p. 125). If spectator writing involves the whole person whether autobiographically or fictionally, it will offer the writer deeply grounded satisfactions. Such writing flows from the sense of trust and interest the author anticipates from the reader, putting a significant onus on the professional relationship the teacher creates with the student. Such writing, too, incorporates values, attitudes and beliefs which are corroborated or modified through a trusting relationship. A spectator writer presents himself in the way in which he would like to be known or pictured. "Acceptance of what he (the writer) offers confirms for him that picture, and this is probably the deepest kind of satisfaction to be had from the whole process" (1977, p. 36). Finally, the writing which develops at the poetic end of the spectrum with its stress on form offers a total aesthetic and creative satisfaction which need not be elaborated.

Writing: The Process

This chapter has examined in some detail selected central concepts

15. continued

expressive has sub-categories to guide writing research, although Applebee has sketched out a model for literature.

in Britton's language theory. It is through the key concepts of representation, expressive language and spectator/participant roles that Britton's theoretical framework for language growth is largely formulated.

Man is seen by Britton as a creature who, both at the conscious and unconscious levels, habitually represents the world to himself, and who, largely through language, represents his world to others. This unceasing activity of representing so characteristic of human behaviour manifests itself in talk, thought and writing. Britton looks at writing as a specialized form of representation, a more conscious sharpened form of the process, and he quotes Vygotsky to illustrate:

The changes from maximally compact inner speech to maximally detailed written speech require what might be called deliberate semantics--deliberate structuring of the web of meaning.
(1962, pp. 99-100)

There is something like a translation process here from what has been referred to in this study as the inner voice to the structuring of the web of meaning on paper. The translation, or writing process, is not like finding the pieces of meaning and fitting them together; it is rather the making of the puzzle pieces and then the solving of it. Since "inner speech is to a large extent thinking in pure meanings", the transition to writing is "a complex dynamic process involving the transformation of the predicative, idiomatic structure of inner speech into syntactically articulated language" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 148). The idea of a simple translation from one language to another is insufficient as a description because thought does not have a twin counterpart in words. There are conceptually two points at which fumbling may take place--at the point of inner speech where the meanings are formulated, and at the point of verbal formulation where the meaning is 'translated'. Writing,

then, is seen for most as a fumbling, pioneering process best fleshed out by the writer's experience, not the language of someone else's experience. Polanyi observes that,

Higher degrees of formalization make the statements of science more precise, its inferences more impersonal and correspondingly more 'reversible', but every step towards this ideal is achieved by a progressive sacrifice of context.

(1958, p. 86)

Britton describes writing as a process by which aspects of experience can be tied down, "catching, exploring and fixing the fleeting moment, or imposing some order upon intractable events" (Britton, 1970, p. 249). To meet these needs, Britton suggests that the mainstream of writing in English lessons will be in the spectator mode.¹⁶

Shaping experience in order to share it (Britton, 1970, p. 253) is one important description of writing Britton uses: the sharing is more important with the younger writer, and the value of shaping follows upon it. The shaping or representing of experience requires closer examination, and like Britton, we draw on Polanyi here. Put over simply, writing is a form of learning, a way of making meanings. Polanyi's distinction between focal and subsidiary aspects of learning are illuminating here:

Subsidiary awareness and focal awareness are mutually exclusive. If a pianist shifts his attention from the piece he is playing to the observation of what he is doing with his fingers while

16. This he qualifies in two important ways: first, he notes that a writer's mode of writing should come to be influenced ultimately by what he reads (p. 260); and second, the development of impersonal transactional writing is also regarded as an important stage. That Britton is not proposing just egocentric talk and spontaneous overflowing of self onto paper without regard to form or audience is an important caveat.

playing it, he gets confused and may have to stop. This happens generally if we switch our focal attention to particulars of which we have been previously aware only in their subsidiary role.
(1958, p. 56)

The analogy with writing is obvious. The kind of stage-frightened, pretentious writing which occurs when writers anxiously rivet their attention to the next word or sentence, instead of to their overriding purposes in writing, is common. This is particularly glaring when the student has no purposes in writing other than to hand in a teacher-imposed writing assignment unrelated to his own experiences or design in life. Like the mastery of skills (riding a bicycle or learning to use a saw) the mastery of writing relies on an act of groping, an exploration involving personal knowledge of which the agent is only subsidiarily aware as part of the complex achievement.

The 'translation' from inner voice to written articulation involves a drawing forth of tacit components of our knowledge. Owing to the ultimately tacit character of all our knowledge, Polanyi observes that "we remain ever unable to say all we know" and "in view of the tacit character of meaning, we can never quite know what is implied in what we say" (Polanyi, 1958, p. 95). One of the advantages of writing may be that we are able to draw out implications because of the holding, sharpening process more easily than we can in talk. This in turn explains part of the difficulty peculiar to writing, the handling of a greater number of relationships and greater complexity.

A further important observation of Polanyi's is that the manifestation of latent learning is unpredictable because there can be an indefinite range of 'performances', or, as we are focusing on writing, written productions, depending on the situation in which the writer

finds himself. Thus writing as a tool for learning understandably involves a groping for words and ways to tell what we know, a movement from one relationship or association to another. To put an experience into words is to make meaning more explicit, to express the self, to draw what is part of our inner representation out and present it in a new form to ourselves and others. Thus the choice of a particular form for writing from across the continuum from poetic to transactional must be made by the writer according to his purpose and the demands of the kind of representation required.

Another difficulty in learning to write is the moving out from the personal centre to a publicly acceptable presentation of ideas, a process as we have noted that Britton terms decontextualization. Often first attempts are still blurred by the writer's own personal context dependency. The tense and agonizing search for the right words to bring explicitly to life the author's ideas for others reflects this stage. The social context, the determining effect of audience, is a facet which will be considered in the next chapter.

"Only those voices from without are effective which can speak (or write) in the language of a voice within" (Burke, 1950, p. 39). There are two senses in which Burke's statement supports Britton's view here: the sense in which the writer's self, even if hidden, provides the unseen point from which all is coherently viewed (see page 28), and the sense in which the audience is used as a touchstone to the writing self, for the form in which the writing appears. This writing up from within is the voice which speaks compellingly and truthfully. It is a voice which grows roots down into its readers, presenting representations in

such a way that they are recognized as the reader's representations, not artificially created or superficially imposed. Socrates' reference to the individual's inner voice is "the word which he finds in his own bosom" (Phaedrus, p. 278). Britton's emphasis on the expressive mode as a matrix in the development of writing abilities amounts to the same thing.

To Britton, writing as a form of representation serves personal development in various ways. We need only return to some of the definitions of representation in this study (pp. 12-15) to be aware of this. Writing reflects the world of the writer, reflecting his mood, wishes, fears and expectations. The conscious construing or reconstruing (Piaget called it assimilation and accommodation) of writing, subsuming a new element under one's world view, or formulating new or modified world views, enlarges and changes the personality and values of the writer in a more conscious, and perhaps, more responsible manner than happens at the purely natural level of living. A piece of writing as a storehouse of the data of experience allows its author to be more discriminating in the preservation of ideas, allowing a scrutiny, a refining and discarding which is probably more careful than in talk.

The importance of the expressive mode for writing development has been explored in detail. The need for teachers to be aware of this as an essential link in the learning/writing process is clear. The heuristic capacity, the elasticity and the tentativeness, the way in which it enables various parts of our lives to come together and adjust the meaning that our experiences can come to have by means of its exploring, rehearsing qualities--these are all characteristics of the expressive mode which make it invaluable in the writing process. One of the pres-

sing demands for individual teachers, in view of past undervaluing of expressive uses of language, is to examine whether these uses occur in their own classrooms, and to plan situations related to writing in which the development of participant and spectator modes is capitalized on to improve student writing, and ultimately to serve personal and cognitive development. More will be said about learning and cognitive development through writing in Chapter III.

CHAPTER III

EXTENDING THE WRITING FRAMEWORK

Extending Through Theory

A hidden, and valid, assumption of the contemporary polemics of the back-to-basics movement is that writing is essential to the preservation and progression of our culture. Why we need writing, what its values are, are large questions, but ones we must answer--for ourselves as well as our students.

The answer we cannot avoid if we adopt Britton's framework is that we write in order to facilitate our learning. Learning is the umbrella term used to cover a number of more discrete activities. Among these Britton finds the writer's need to "wrestle with his thoughts, work and rework his formulation or projection or transformation of experience" (1970, p. 248). In this way, the need for experimentation and drafting in the writer's process is focussed upon.

In "Their Language and Our Teaching" (Summer, 1970), Britton draws out the strengths of a learning theory based on learning, in contrast to Skinnerian theory based on teaching. As an experienced educator, Britton sees learning as part of the continuous weaving of our lives in the school of experience. As a learner, the engagement of interest comes from the process involving much more than simple acquisition. The learner must create a personal context, and for this Britton points to the functional importance of expressive talk and writing. Learning is seen as "a process of making finer and finer discriminations, and so building a more and more complex picture of the world" (p. 12). Such learning is so closely related to our lives that it satisfies our very purposes for living.

Writer as Person

Here then is the crux of the matter for writing. Writing which reflects the student's natural curiosity about some matter, which is committed, in the sense of using the writing, the learning, for his own unfolding, is the kind of writing we need to provide for and encourage.

Britton's references to representations of changing states of the self in writing suggest that a primary value of writing is its relation to personal development. Such a purpose ought not to be overlooked or denigrated by teachers who understand that education involves relationships with whole persons. In an important statement, Britton elaborates:

Perhaps one of the first ways in which adolescents begin to achieve through their writing a maturer view of themselves and the world is by looking back into their own childhood. They look, as it were for their own roots in a common soil. The mere act of contemplating a period in life when things seem to have been less transitory, more stable, may in itself be salutary for them: to realize its continuity with the present may help a sense of order to grow, an order embracing past and present, and providing at times, a key to the solution of some of the riddles they are now confronting.
(1970, p. 253)

In other words, Britton here sees a very practical and personal purpose for writing, the creation of a perspective and a positioning of the self in that perspective. For adolescents, the imminent concerns of approaching adulthood provide innumerable possibilities to be explored in writing. Yet it is true for all of us at any age that a writing through, an exploring of concerns, is related to personal development. Britton reproduces an interesting example of a sixteen year-old's written "outburst" (p. 259) which at once criticizes the coercive authoritarian conditions of schooling and idyllically envisions a mutually voluntary teaching/learning situation. This piece, written by a boy who had already failed G.C.E., is seen by Britton to be asking, obliquely at least, 'What will

become of me?' This question, "The Question of a Lifetime", as Britton titles his last chapter in Language and Learning, is perhaps the hidden question behind all such writing. This brings us full circle to the question posed at the beginning. In some sense, the answer to why we value writing is because we value ourselves.

To put it thus bluntly is perhaps a disservice. Suggesting that writing always makes clearer to the author who he is is to greatly oversimplify what has been stated earlier, that it is always I who write, and I who mean. This is what I believe Britton intended when he refers to the question of a lifetime as "What will become of me?" Our writing inevitably involves our representations of the world. When Britton's daughter Claire wrote at fifteen that her age represented a change "from the outdoor to the indoor" (Britton, 1970, p. 225), she was sharpening her realizations about herself now with herself then. The many fragmenting selves of the adolescent, "the ferment of self-questioning, doubting, experiment and counter experiment" (1970, p. 225) provide grist for the learner/writer's mill. Claire voices the risk of such writing for teachers and learners both: "I sometimes think I would rather live my life on the surface, and so not write" (p. 230).

The view of writing as a tool for learning, if universally applied, would reduce to cinders the largest proportion of writing activities at desks around the world. Writing which merely classifies, retrieves, reorganizes in logical fashion, or records, has value, but, as an underpinning to justify writing programmes for students, it is insufficient.

Claire unconsciously alludes to that part of the process of writing referred to earlier, the drawing out of tacit knowledge onto the page, the coming to know what we know. This of course does not preclude research

or the garnering of outside-self information: It merely emphasizes the personal contribution to each act of knowing or writing. Britton reminds us of this when he notes that "the formulation made by someone else--the words prescribed--can never be adequate for (an individual's) ... response to a situation" (1970, p. 233). Thus the need in adolescence and later, when the childlike trust in other's formulations has passed, to carve out one's own experience, values and ideas. Within each act of writing is the possibility of bringing to life dormant possibilities, of easing, as Britton puts it, the "sense of misfit" adolescence brings.

So far we have discussed spectator uses of writing. Britton is very specific when he discusses the development of transactional writing. Such writing he sees as the joint responsibility of teachers of all subjects, and advocates a staff-agreed-upon policy for language across the curriculum¹ (1970, pp. 263-264). There is every reason why such a suggestion should be extrapolated to colleges and universities. This leads to another reason for valuing writing, its effect on thinking.

Writer as Scientist

In Britton's view, the writer is a scientist. As scientist, the writer sets up hypotheses and tests them in the early drafts. Yet the hypothesizing, testing, modifying and concluding go on throughout all stages and drafts of the writing. The efficacy of writing/thinking rather than merely thinking is commonly acknowledged. In The Passions of the Mind, Stone says of Freud that, "he thought even more clearly with a pen in his hand than he did while walking the streets of Vienna"

1. See Language, the Learner and the School (1969) and Harold Rosen's Discussion Document, "Towards a Language Policy Across the Curriculum", pp. 119-168.

(1971, p. 394). The ingenuities of the complex relationship between thought and writing bear closer scrutiny.

There are two aspects relating thought and writing to be considered here. One is the imposition of new cognitive demands on the writer. Unlike speech which is language and so symbolic, written language is language frozen at a second level of symbolism in graphic form. Unlike oral speech which relies on gesture, intonation and other situational aids, written speech must inhibit such connections, yet develop through verbal formulations the attendant meanings which such immediate experience offers. The Soviet psychologist Luria states that "written speech ... is deprived of this sympractical context, and therefore it must be more detailed, contextual, or to use Bugler's term, symsemantic" (1969, p. 141).

A second aspect of the relationship has to do, not with imposing cognitive demands, but with yielding new cognitive benefits. An illuminating parallel (Mowat, W. M., in conversation) may be drawn from an experiment on birds described by Lorenz in his Behind the Mirror (1976, p. 154). The subjects, birds normally with a distinctive song pattern, were deafened at birth, and the development of their 'songs' noted. The birds developed an 'amorphous noise' which contained the general pattern of the song but which they were unable to refine or crystallize. The birds needed to hear themselves in order to develop the 'natural' clarity of their song. Obviously, there was need for the feedback from innate auditory templates in order to develop quality in the bird's song. Analogously, a writer as producer using a visual medium depends on the graphic feedback for writing/thinking. In fact, it is probably true that man's language and learning abilities are improved by the graphic feedback of writing. Again, Luria puts it succinctly, contrasting writing

with speech:

(Writing) assumes a much slower, repeated mediating process of analysis and synthesis, which makes it possible not only to develop the required thought, but even to revert to its earlier stages, thus transforming the sequential chains of connections into a simultaneous, self-reviewing structure. Written speech thus represents a new and powerful instrument of thought.
(1969, p. 142)

Thus, Luria's view of the writer as thinker coincides with Britton's image of the writer as scientist.

With this extension of the framework for viewing writing for both cognitive and personal development, we now turn to writing research publications by the British Schools Council Projects, two books and six monographs, for insights which are more practical, although grounded in the theoretical framework expounded so far.

Extending Through Research

The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18) (1975) is the first-stage report of the Schools Council Research study on writing. Based on two dimensions, Britton's function categories and sense of audience categories, the study examined over 2,000 scripts to chart writing development across subjects in the schools.

Audience

The classifying of audience in conjunction with function refines the study of writing by producing correlational data. Sense of audience categories may help explain school writing which is formula writing, totally-uninvolved-but-follow-the-assignment-writing: Such pieces "may be shaped solely by the demands of (his) audience and not by the complementary pressure to formulate ideas in a way which satisfied the writer" (Britton et al, 1975, p. 64). In Chapter V, discussions on kinds of assignments and the writing teacher's role will pursue these ideas in more detail.

The sense of audience categories describes the relationship between writer and reader. Writer to self, to teacher, and to wider known and unknown audiences comprise the main divisions.

Within the writer-to-teacher category are differentiations which are especially revealing: the teacher audience viewed as trusted adult, as partner in a teacher-learning dialogue, as source of a professional, yet personal relationship, and as examiner, is shown to affect student writing in directly measureable ways.

The adjustment of writer to sense of audience is acknowledged in the principle that "audience is inherent in the social contract of all language use" (Britton et al, 1975, p. 60). However, unlike the immediacy of the context of situation for speaking, the writer must represent to himself the context of situation (p. 61). We have already referred to Luria's recognition of cognitive demands made on the writer because of deprivation of sympractical context. Here we see that this is a double-edged demand, because not only must the writer represent to himself the absent context, he must do it in a way which also represents to others, by internalizing his audience.

The inner voice of the writer must complement his sense of audience: if the readers envisioned be congregation, he must be preacher; if laymen, he expert. Again, we noted Luria's recognition of the cognitive benefits from writing, the slow yet productive recycling of analytic and synthesizing processes. Yet even this process is two-tasked, getting the ideas to work for self and then audience. "The writer must carry out a procedure of self editing, of arresting, reorganizing and adjusting his message for his absent audience" (Britton et al, 1975, p.62). Such attention to audience reinforces the sophistication inherent in the act of writing.

A main distinction made by the researchers within the teacher audience category is the one separating pupil-to-examiner from pupil-to-teacher. The point here is neither to naively suggest that someone who teaches cannot also examine, nor to assume that good writing is never done for an examiner. Rather it is to point out the general inhibitory effect of the teacher-as-examiner audience on writing development.

We need to be clear about how the researchers saw writing-to-an-examiner audience. First, it aims at "a culminating point rather than a stage in a process of interaction" (Britton et al, 1975, p. 69). Additionally, it is seen as writing which is a response to a demand to be met rather than an invitation to be accepted; it is writing which merely mirrors instruction without the writer's active involvement (copying from a text or reproducing notes); it is writing which leads only to a verdict rather than operates as a link in a chain of interaction (of course, some final products will not be written to an examiner audience); or, it is writing for the kind of teacher "whose everyday teaching consists in leaping from test to test" (Britton et al, 1975, p. 70).

Results

The results relating to categories of audience are revealing. Although the pattern of writing to teacher-as-examiner is well established in year one (40%), it continues to rise to year seven (61%). Thus a cumulative increase over the years in writing for teacher-as-examiner, and a corresponding decline in writing for the teacher-learner dialogue was found (Britton et al, p. 132). Furthermore, 95% of all writing was found to be in the writing-to-teacher audience leaving only 5% for all other categories. Thus the emphasis is on writing for narrow school needs to the exclusion of writing for the larger heuristic purpose.

With regard to the function categories which have been described in Chapter II, and with due regard placed on the major contrast between results on the one hand in English and religious education, and on the other in geography, history and science, the authors draw these conclusions:

The overall tendencies of the sample suggest the dominance of transactional writing, and, within that category of the analogic level of the informative subdivision² In addition the evidence of writing in functions other than the transactional is relatively slight. Expressive writing is minimally represented through the sample and the amount of poetic writing, while significant in the first three age groups, declines markedly in the seventh year. (Britton et al, 1975, p. 173)

From the analysis on the interaction of audience and function it is of interest to note the central contrast made between transactional informative writing on the one hand (and a relation to teacher as examiner) and on the other, expressive and poetic (and a relation to teacher-learner dialogue). An unavoidable conclusion is the lack of development in actual school writing in contrast to that envisioned by the model.

Writing and Learning

A second Schools Council text, Writing and Learning Across the Curriculum 11-16 (1976) represents a second research stage, exploring the significance of phase one findings by translating into practices policies designed to improve the writing of secondary students.

There are two aspects of the discussion which have particular importance here. One relates to the earlier focus on the relation of thought to writing. The authors, Nancy Martin et al, ask how we can see learning processes from students' writing. This is a vital, though subtle, question for writing teachers, one which only experience with growth in student writing will help to answer. The authors remind us that some

2. There are four levels of analogic writing, of which the "higher" two, speculative and tautologic, remained at a low incidence level.

of the signposts for what to watch for in recognizing learning in writing are in question form. What is happening in each piece for the writer? Is the writer making a genuine communication or a spurious one? Is there any enthusiasm or interest which conveys itself to the reader? The questions point to a central focus in this study, the need for the writing to be "coloured by the writer's own voice" (Martin et al, 1976, p. 66). Through many writing samples, the sense of positive engagement with the subject, the writer offering his own experience, thoughts, feelings or observations in conjunction with the more factual information, underlines the success of writing which allows expressive features or formulations. Worthwhile writing is always seen as reconstruction, not simple playback. The book is rich with excellent suggestions for the encouraging and nourishing of expressive writing--such as using story-telling and speculating activities to help children make sense of new information.

Set against these observations are the socializing influences of some school systems bound in by a textbook framework, an information retrieval mentality and a constant testing context--all factors inhibiting the student's capacity to write in the expressive mode. Out of that forceful contrast came the understanding that learner writers must be allowed relatively unsystematic exploration of new ideas without fear of censure, and freedom from the demands of a polished performance, even if the ultimate educational goal is exactly that.

A second valuable focus in Writing and Learning is the discussion on how the writer views himself as a learner. Excerpts from an analysis of writing by Steve, a 13 year old, are reproduced here:

This piece of work or any other has not been done really for the teacher.. This I can easily say but what is the reason? This is much harder to answer. I think one of the reasons

is that I enjoy writing these things because it clears my mind to some extent ... I have started pieces of work thinking I knew it all and then finding that I knew nothing about it The same thing occurs when I come back to a piece of work I have already done to use it for something else or improve it. This was the first big project I did and now when I look at it I marvel at how pathetic it is I have placed emphasis on the wrong things and made all the mistakes I was warned about ... so it ended up in my eyes a great failure. But I have learnt more from that project than any other piece of work ... so it was only a failure in terms of what it was, not what was learnt from it. (Martin et al, 1976, pp. 127-129)

Steve's discussion is extraordinary: The confidence with which he assesses his position as learner implies a near partnership relationship with his teachers. His observation that he writes for himself to "clear his mind" reinforces Luria's description of the thinking/writing process. His sense of being an autonomous student, who learns, who fails, who then moves forward, is striking. We need to know what kinds of teaching situations, interactions and responses help students to achieve such a positive learner self-image.

London Schools Council Monographs

The six monographs to come out of the writing Across the Curriculum Project present a challenging array of strategies, analyses and pupils' written work--all of which deepen and extend in practical ways the informing context Britton constructs for the writing teacher. Although the eight Schools Council Writing Project publications derive from specific levels of education, the principles which emerge appear applicable to all learner writers.

The co-authors of Why Write? (1973) state their lack of interest in "the development of writers as writers" and their commitment to "writing as a means of development--cognitive, affective and social" (p. 2). Rather than teaching students the differences between transactional, expressive

and poetic kinds of writing, they suggest the teacher should set up situations for writing with clearly stated purposes and varied audiences. They see the sense of function developing through wide experiences in writing for differing audiences and purposes. More specific suggestions are offered on how the teacher might effectively structure the situation for writing--by talking with students about what their writing is for and for whom, by helping students enter the whole situation, for example the life of a peasant, by drawing out similarities in their own lives, in this case similarities as students subject to authority. Pre-writing activities such as explorations through talk or dramatic improvisations are also proposed.

In From Talking to Writing (1973), Medway investigates the question this chapter opened with. How can we justify the teaching of writing? From a starting point focussing on the power talk generates for learning, Medway moves to a consideration of the powers inherent in writing. An obvious one is the extension of the power to find the right words by being able to go back to the writing. Unlike in talk, "what one really wants to say can be pulled clear of the debris of rejected words and phrases ... displaying no sign of the mess and sweat of its making" (pp. 5-6). Noting the liberating absence of an immediate audience to try out or explore ideas or resolve personal matters, Medway also perceives the complexity or social impracticability of developing some ideas through talk.

Medway observes that writing in poetic or transactional modes allows the development of more complex representations; and that these should be set in the framework of purposeful tasks which carry the child forward in some way, not merely produce recitation of what was known. This perspective is contrasted by transcripts of children's views on school tasks

which children see as right or proper, necessary--but completely pointless (p. 16). Medway's final writing sample illustrates how the expressive drive behind a topic allows the writer to talk it out on paper, an effective counter to 'pointless task writing'.

"Are pupils likely to write more--and more discriminatingly--if the range of writing audience and function is held open rather than closed down as they move up the secondary school?" (p. 26) is the question Keeping Options Open (1974) sets out to answer. The implied answer, 'yes' has the important corollary that in the school from which the writing samples came, two optimum conditions were in effect: (1) Staff relationships with students were based on the principle of mutuality and (2) wherever possible, student choice was built in. The authors claim that their samples of successful writing were not hunted down but common, and further support for the success of the strategy came when "many of the students to whom we talked were enthusiastic about what they had written. They saw writing as a genuine form of communication" (p. 6).

From Information to Understanding (1973) takes upon itself the deceptively simple question of what is involved in the learning of new ideas. Through a fascinating series of transcripts and notes, we 'see' how learners reconstruct information in an excitedly committed and comprehensive manner. The capturing of this process is a feat in itself, since what goes on between learner and information usually occurs 'out of sight', and even out of the awareness of learners themselves. Here, however, the selective skill of the interviewers and the authors' fine commentary has the effect on the reader of shining a brilliant light momentarily into a shadowy cave. The monograph allows the reader the rare experience of living through and feeling on his pulses the specific learnings of these

schoolboys.

The mode through which this learning takes place is expressive (although the forms change from dialogue and monologue speech forms to pamphlet writing). How such committed learning is generated is recognized as largely unanswerable--yet the conditions under which it happened are listed: (1) availability of a flexible expressive language; (2) the sense of a sympathetic and interested audience; and (3) genuine communication as a transaction in a social situation. In turn, these suggest that the writing situation be structured to encourage student writing for learning, that teacher-examiner audience be decreased and that writing situations which relate to students' interests and needs be created.

The last two booklets, Language and Learning in the Humanities (1975) and Writing in Science (1975) adapt Britton's model to writing and learning in subjects other than English. Interestingly, Robert Parker's paper in the former indicates that history, geography, classics and science all require the kind of thinking inherent in 'poetic' writing for the fullest learning to occur. The excellent narrative writing reproduced ("My First Day in the Workhouse") illustrates convincingly for history. One hypothesis put forward as a reason for including poetic writing across the curriculum is:

Poetic writing necessitates the combined functioning of certain mental operations which tend to be separated in transactional writing. Operations like classifying, generalizing, speculating, theorizing tend to happen one at a time in transactional writing. The combinatorial nature of metaphor forces a simultaneity of these functions. (p. 48)

Again, there is reinforcement of Britton's view of the need for both participant and spectator uses of language across the span of subject areas.

Writing in Science suggests that science worksheets often start

with the abstract and attempt to pass on knowledge to students without their first having created a personal context for understanding. An alternate worksheet starting with the concrete and getting the pupil to make his own deductions is given. The traditional demands made on students as writers in science to produce short sentence or phrase answers seemed to the authors to be insufficient to facilitate the fullness of learning required. The benefits of expressive writing in science³ are illustrated by student historical accounts of scientific discoveries, accounts of imaginative transformations of facts and problem solving, and accounts of student-generated experiments.

This completes the extension of Britton's framework for writing through the more practical discussions to come out of the Schools Council research. The monographs reveal how useful Britton's paradigm promises to be to teachers across the curriculum. In Chapter IV, we move further afield to consider Britton's view, both within the wider historical framework of rhetoric, and by uncovering parallels in two important American views on writing.

3. See also R. Southwell's Mediating Science Experience Through Talk (1977) for an exposition on how expressive talk helps students gain understanding of scientific principles.

CHAPTER IV

OTHER SELECTED THEORY OF COMPOSITION

Gaining perspectives by scanning further afield in the present, and by looking back, as Britton reminds us, is a common human activity. Like the boy in Chapter II thumbing through family photographs to get a clearer picture of his own place in history, here snapshots of important views on writing are examined in order to better understand the implications of Britton's paradigm. The purpose in this chapter is not exhaustive coverage of all relevant literature. Rather, its intent is to pull together strands deemed significant to this study which further refine and confirm the directions of Britton's theory for writing.

Two American writers whose theories of discourse are similar to Britton's are considered first. Unlike the bulk of American research on the teaching of composition dealing with the limited questions empirical research demands, Emig and Moffet's work remain unique as descriptive studies. From there, we turn to look at rhetoric, the historical effect of classical rhetoric on composition and some recent developing trends in modern rhetoric which may be accommodated to Britton's framework.

The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders (1971) by Janet Emig has been described by many writers as a pioneering piece of research. Emig tape-recorded eight students composing orally as they wrote, and based her analysis of the process on the assumption that composing aloud in some sense reflects or parallels the writer's mental process. A chief virtue of this case study approach to writing is its success in capturing humanistic data from composing in process. Apart from that, for purposes of this study, there are a number of striking intersections in Britton and

Emig's thought brought out through the juxtaposition of their work.

The reflexive and the extensive are the two dominant modes of composing Emig identifies as the theoretical bases for her study. Drawing on Britton's notion of function categories, Emig writes that "the notion that all student writings emanate from an expressive impulse and that they then bifurcate into two major modes is useful and accurate" (1971, p. 37). However, to support her change in terminology, Emig objects to Britton's terms, poetic and communicative (she means transactional), first, as being "freighted with connotations that intrude" (p. 37). This has been examined and clarified earlier in this study (p. 14). And second, Emig claims that the terms "are too absolute ... they specify absolute states--either passivity or participation" (p. 37). Again, earlier discussions of Britton's work showed writers to be 'participating' equally in both modes; and the claim that the terms specify absolute states represents a misjudgement of Britton's view which are emphatic as to the active nature of the learner across the continuum of functions.

More interesting, however, is the manner in which Emig elaborates her own terms in ways strikingly coincident with Britton's. The reflexive mode is defined basically as a contemplative mode, focusing on the writer's thoughts and feelings concerning his experience. The writer himself forms the chief audience and the style is tentative, personal and exploratory. In contrast, the extensive mode is seen as the mode which focuses on the conveying of a message and constitutes an impersonal and often reportorial style. Emig's data show extensive writing to be chiefly school-sponsored, reflexive to be chiefly self-sponsored. It seems unnecessary to point out that Britton's participant/spectator distinction is essentially the same one Emig has made, except that Britton articulates the implica-

tions of the two modes in more detail.

In turning back to Emig's approval of Britton's categorization of the expressive as a matrix, it is, at least in the 1971 study, unclear whether Emig assents to all the implications of expressive which this study has identified. However, as the title of her essay "Writing As A Mode of Learning" (1977) attests to, her view of the writer as learner and scientist is explicitly formulated here.¹

A number of other important parallels may be drawn between Emig and Britton. Britton's pointing to the overemphasis on transactional writing in schools at the expense of personal engagement, and Emig's echoing statement about students' preference for extensive expository writing are similar. Voicing her concern over this monolithic school sponsored writing, Emig is blunt:

The major kind of essay too many students have been taught to write in American schools is algorithmic, or so mechanical that a computer could readily be programmed to produce it: when a student is hurried or anxious, he simply reverts or regresses to the only program he knows, as if inserting a single card into his brain.
(1971, p. 53)

Interesting, too, is Emig's observation that with Lynn, her prime case study, the choice of subject seemed to reveal "a certain fear of feeling" (p. 73), an attitude which encouragement of spectator role writing would help overcome. Similarly, Emig remarks on the nature of the students' dutiful desire to please minimally in school-sponsored writing, and their concomitant lack of an aesthetic vocabulary to express joy or satisfaction in completion (p. 87). Most memorable is this observation:

At no time does any of the students ask aloud any variants of the questions: "Is this subject important to me?" "Do I care about writing about it?"
(Emig, 1971, p. 89)

1. In this article, Emig (like Britton) draws on Vygotsky, Luria, Kelly, and Polanyi for support. The article seems destined to become a classic in the field of writing.

We have seen that Emig's perceptions on the need for student sponsored and reflexive writing echo Britton's. Her conclusions also point to the need for peer and other non-teacher audiences for writing, and for attention to and time for the stages in the process of writing. The striking identification noted of Emig's modes of discourse with Britton's function categories points up the value of Britton's paradigm for writing.

James Moffet

A second North American educationalist whose views have strongly influenced contemporary discussion of the teaching of writing is James Moffet. Moffet's views, like Emig's, share so many similarities with Britton's that it seems useful to explore certain dominant features, supporting again the validity of Britton's theoretical framework.

It is of more than historical interest that Moffet's four category scale of abstraction of the relation of a writer to his topic is the basis from which the seven informative categories of the transactional originated (Britton et al, 1975, p. 85). Moffet explains this scale by referring to Martin Buber's distinction between I-Thou and I-It, and the increasing formality and abstraction which accompanies the movement to the I-It end of the scale (Moffet, 1968(b), p. 11). The similarity of movement will be recognized from the development from expressive to transactional in Britton's continuum. Like Britton's stress on a movement from an expressive centre, Moffet is vitally concerned in his student-centred approach not to "slight(s) the internal processes of the student" (1975, p. 16). In other words, the close links between egocentric speech and expressive writing at the beginning of writing growth are noted by both. "The primary dimension of growth," says Moffet, "seems to be a movement from the centre of the self outward. Or perhaps it is more accurate to

say that the self enlarges, assimilating the world to itself and accommodating itself to the world" (1968(b), p. 59).

Moffet sees the inadequacy of a standardized unidirectional view of language development. We may note a familiar emphasis and overlap with Britton in this significant passage by Moffet:

Does a child merely climb the ladder slowly over the years? No, for growth is more intricate than that. Embryology provides the best metaphor: a simple cell becomes more a complex organization by differentiating itself into specialized parts at the same time that it maintains integrity by continually interrelating these parts. Mental growth, too, consists of two simultaneous progressions--towards differentiation and towards integration. (1968(b), p. 29)

Britton enlarges this insight by his focus on the alternation of synthesis and analysis in the growth of a person's world representation; and in translating to language growth in particular, Britton discerns a process of differentiation and a movement towards wholeness of understanding through spectator role language.

Concerned that the use of language, rather than its study, form the basis of a writing programme, Moffet, in a chapter entitled "Learning to Write by Writing" argues strongly against decomposition. With reference to the use of exercises in teaching writing; Moffet sees students adopting a simplistic approach by avoiding thinking strenuously in subtle or complex ways; they write to answer the demands of the exercise, generating content which is flaccid and mundane. This way of learning about writing inevitably affects their attitudes and "they write things they know are stupid and boring" (Moffet, 1968(b), p. 207). Moffet holds that exercise strategies ignore the need to learn and find one's own meaning through the writing of complete pieces of committed discourse.

Finally, Moffet promotes the production of a large volume of writing

in schools, as much for the benefit of thinking, reading and speaking as for composition. This integrative view is similar to Britton's emphasis on language growth for the ultimate refinement of one's personal representations of the world. In Moffet's formulation, "language learning must go beyond and below language itself" (1968(a), p. 501).

We now turn to the historical overview of the effect of traditional rhetoric on composition and a look at some new developments.

Rhetoric

In western civilization, interest in using language effectively dates back at least to Empedocles (475 B.C.) whom Aristotle named the inventor of rhetoric. The roots of classical rhetoric are well known from Aristotle's Rhetorica and De Poetica, both of which emphasize discrete components and form. Although oral discourse was the focus here, the classical prescriptive influence, with its attendant rigor and discipline, has had a profound effect on the teaching of writing. In the eighteenth century, the early prescriptive tradition in English derived from the adoption of the method of teaching Latin and Greek, and resulted in the emphasis on correction and attempts to regularize the English language (Applebee, 1974, pp. 6-7).

The rhetoricians of the late 1800's bent their efforts in 'composition teaching' to the teaching of rules, the pointing out of errors, and the presenting of professional models. Since that time, vast research and theoretical distances have been covered, particularly with the advent of the tape recorder and computer as research tools, and with the gathering of data on language acquisition, language development and the nature of learning, from psychology, linguistics, psycholinguistics, anthropology and education. Britton himself is clearly within the tradition of those

who perceived the traditional rhetorical categories of narrative, description, exposition and argument inadequate.²

The Four Traditional Modes

Dating from 1776, the four modes of discourse have been referred to as seemingly unassailable because of their 'ex cathedra tradition'; and it seems due to their 'mysterious orthodoxy' that their unquestioned presentation has continued (Britton et al, 1975, pp. 3-4). Emig (1971) makes the observation that because the classical texts on traditional categories antedated the development of psychology, they took no account of the press of the individual personality on writing:

How the writer feels about the subject matter and how his feeling may influence what he writes--the affective dimension--are not really considered in these texts.

(p. 16)

A model which encompasses the process of writing, both at the individual level through drafts, and at a wider developmental level through years, seems difficult to accommodate through static traditional modes. In "Modes of Discourse" (1976), D'Angelo notes that the classical rhetorical categories have continued to this day under various guises as "a part of a complex of changing conventions" (p. 111). He uncovers a 1914 English Journal article registering early dissatisfaction with the traditional modes:

The difficulty I have most often met in attempting to organize such courses has its roots in the present classification of the form of discourse. It does not view the process of composition from the side of thoughts or ideas the writer has to express, and particularly of his purpose in expressing these.

(Leonard, p. 202)

2. See The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18) for a detailed discussion of the weaknesses inherent in the traditional taxonomy (pp. 3-6).

Leonard's objection to focusing on the products of composition rather than on the process has an obviously contemporary ring.³

For nearly two hundred years now, composition texts have flooded the market with advice on writing. Moving back and forth from an orientation in the four forms of discourse to a concern for correct usage and grammar, the themes in such books seem unchanging--the topic sentence; development by definition, classification, time order, cause-effect; diction, logic and so forth. This building-block approach suggests that the learning to write process is a tidy, largely rule-governed activity: The learner-writer should be able to be taught the rules and apply them. Writing is thus viewed as a fully conscious and rational procedure. Although the allure of regarding writing as largely analysable is understandable, Emig points out weaknesses in texts promoting such views:

The authors and editors of these texts neither state nor imply that they have tapped any of the following possible sources of data, if not substantiation (a) introspection into their own processes of writing; (b) accounts by and about professional writers; and (c) accounts of and about secondary students, the audience to whom their advice is purportedly directed.
(1971, p. 15)

Such widespread neglect seems surprising. However, there are a growing number of studies not subject to such neglect, such as Britton's Language and Learning, and others examined in this chapter.

A theory of writing based on audience and function categories is more appropriate to a developmental view of learning. The psycholinguistic nature of Britton's function categories relates more than do the traditional modes to the developing complexity of students' representations and the

3. However, his suggested reclassification into primary divisions of PRESENTATION OF FACTS and INTERPRETATION OF FACTS is only superficially similar to Britton's spectator/participant division.

developing complexity of the writing tasks they take on as a consequence. The four modes of discourse approach to writing is based on the idea that all writing can be classified on the basis of form. The central facet of Britton's theory, that through different functions in writing we represent reality through a continuum of differentiation, matches the dynamics of personal and cognitive growth. Britton's model focusses on process, not product. Further, the combining of literary, rhetorical and informal modes within Britton's model results in the all-encompassing nature of its framework--every piece of discourse is subsumed under it. A transcript of a conversation, a memoir, a novel, free writing or a loosely structured exploratory piece of writing cannot be incorporated into the four traditional modes.

New Emphasis in Rhetoric-Heuristics

Such observations as those made above are not to be regarded as a wholesale dismissal of all rhetoric. New strands (or newly re-appearing) in modern rhetoric are being identified. As Halloran argues in the ambiguously titled "On the End of Rhetoric, Classical and Modern", "the end of rhetorical analysis is to discover a man in his words, whether that man is the Ciceronian Orator or the lonely modern anti-hero" (1976, p. 631). Or, we might add, the learner-writer exploring his own representation of the world through writing. Some recent writers have argued that it is through rhetoric that the self and its world are constructed, and that self-identification, not persuasion, is the key term for a modern rhetoric (Halloran, 1976, p. 626). Further, if modern rhetoric be concerned, as is claimed, with the definition of one's world and self, then literature takes its place as part of rhetoric. All such emphases are in accord with Britton's theory.

The questions surrounding writing, however, are more complex than the choice between one scheme for classifying discourse over another. Implicit in the way the whole writing process is conceived is an all-important assumption about what writing is for. Richard Young, in "Invention: A Topographical Survey" (1976), states:

It is no accident that the gradual shift in attention among rhetoricians from composed product to the composing process is occurring at the same time as the re-emergence of invention⁴ as a rhetorical discipline. (p. 33)

Young distinguishes three views of the writing process. The first, and perhaps most common, he characterizes as linear, unidirectional, a think-first, then write process. The thinking first is broken down into choosing a subject, getting information, making an outline. The writing consists of drafting, revising and editing. This at first sight seems a quite reasonable view, and one that is reinforced by the linear-line-appearance of the graphics of writing.

However, a second view of writing is more complex: The process is seen as a cyclical movement from conceptual problems to editing problems.

This cyclical conception grows out of the assumptions that problems of content are finally inseparable from problems of style and structure and that composing is inescapably a recursive, trial-and-error procedure; heuristic procedures only reduce the number of trials needed.

(p. 34)

The third, and, for our purposes in this study, most important view of writing is that which sees the writing itself as a heuristic for discovering content. This conception tends to make the formal methods of

4. Articles which develop the notion of invention into specific strategies for teaching include Paull and Klegerman's "Invention, Composition, and the Urban College" (1972, pp. 651-654); and Paull's "Invention: Understanding the Relationship between Sensation, Perception, and Concept Foundation" (1974, pp. 205-209).

invention redundant and the content arises from the immediately available knowledge in the writer's mind and the "unanticipated discoveries prompted by the activity of putting words on paper" (p. 35). The parallels with Britton's views on writing as a form of learning are clear. If the writing process has, as its starting point, a commissioned subject of little interest to the student, the heuristic will involve merely finding related things to say about it. The scope for learning here is inevitably restricted--more restricted than if the thesis be writer-established and developed. In fact, the learning process in the former instance is largely a retrieval procedure, and the writing may be of no more import to the student than another classroom exercise.

Although there is no single encompassing description of all composing, it seems that the linear view may have inadvertantly been promoted in schools through the stress on transactional modes at the expense of writing as heuristic in the spectator mode. Writing in the expressive and poetic modes (as seen in Chapter II) may produce writing which is more difficult to explain in terms of its generation and procedures, yet these may ultimately result in insights which provide the reader with a deeper sense of his own understanding. In a review of composition texts based on different conceptions of the writing process, Marjorie Donker compares four approaches to teaching writing, ending with Donal Stewart's The Authentic Voice: A Pre-Writing Approach to Student Writing. The title itself echoes concerns of this study, and Stewart's stress on the role of writing as self-discovery underlies what has been observed here about new emphases in modern rhetoric. A caution must be given. Such interest in the fundamental sense of individuality does not preclude ultimate attention to clarity, logical development and the niceties of

style.

A last strand to be identified in modern rhetoric as important for our purposes is its regard for pre-writing as a facilitator of creative thought. Young (1976) points out that the popularity of the term 'pre-writing' grew out of Rohman's work, for example, his "Pre-Writing: The Stage of Discovery in the Writing Process" (1965). Interest in pre-writing is reflected in various ways in the literature. In "An Advanced Composition Course That Works", Stewart stresses personal writing through journals, and option sequences which give students "a chance to discover themselves and the topics upon which they may like to write" (1974, p. 200). His view is that a merely cognitive grasp of principles of writing is inadequate for improvement. Southwell discusses free-writing as a way of reassuring both remedial and other students that they have plenty to say in writing in "Free Writing in Composition Classes." He points to the rewards of prewriting:

Students who write only what they want to can't help but write personally, with feelings, and this personal quality of free writing (and students assure me that it has it) begins eventually to transfer itself to their papers. Students start writing papers which grow out of their feelings, papers containing ideas they care about. (1977, p. 683)

The emphasis shared by Britton and writers discussed here on the heuristic potential in prewriting (expressive use of language) and creative thought repudiates a pedagogy of writing which dwindles to the art of editing. The writing teacher's role, according to these views, encompasses the fostering of creative behaviour.⁵

5. There is no question here of academic concerns being subverted by the concern with self-discovery in writing. Neither the rhetoricians referred to, nor Britton, are promoting an anti-intellectual emotionalism. One advantage of starting with the expressive and personal writing is that it promotes healthy attitudes to writing, writing seen neither as esoteric or precious but as a natural and useful activity.

If with Emig and Britton we see writers not as machines but as persons, we come to understand the profundity of the heuristic effort in this highly evolved form of human behaviour, writing. Polanyi writes powerfully of the effects of the combined quickening of the heuristic impulse with a more emphatic act of commitment (1958, pp. 336-368). A person's enjoyment of his own ingenuity in the discovery of a solution to a problem (in its widest sense) seems the deepest justification and motivation for writing. The "intimation of a hidden rational relationship which is felt to be accessible by an heuristic effort" (p. 366) spurs professional writers and scientists as much as learner-writers or pre-schoolers playing.

Teachers of writing can facilitate students' heuristic impulses, helping them to find reasons for and ways of writing. Yet, Young makes clear that such facilitation cannot be reduced to teachable rules:

Although systematic heuristic search is neither purely conscious nor mechanical, intuition, relevant experience and skill are necessary for effective use. The use of heuristic procedures is, by implication, acknowledgement that the psychological processes involved in invention are too unpredictable to be controlled by rule-governed procedures.

(1976, p. 2)

It is appropriate in this study based on Britton's work, to end a chapter surveying contributions to knowledge about writing by others by returning to his framework. Significantly, Mina Shaughnessy, in her exhaustive bibliographic essay, "Basic Writing", concludes her survey of texts with Language and Learning. The essay recommends an inclusive set of readings on writing Shaughnessy considers essential for a sound background about writing for college writing teachers. She ends a bountifully researched discussion of one hundred and ten texts and articles with this:

Finally, James Britton's Language and Learning ... is a sensitive attempt to trace the development of language in the child and to distinguish the different functions of language that develop as

the child matures. Many of the strands of research we have touched upon here are brought together in Britton's work in a way that makes them seem close to the concerns of the teacher.
(1976, pp. 166-167)

The italics are this writer's. Shaughnessy voices a theme which has been stressed throughout this study, that Britton's view provides a paradigm for writing teachers which provides a unifying and informing framework. Britton's developmental view of writing and the philosophic, linguistic and psychological views upon which it is based, help the teacher learn how to see, respond to and work with pupils and their writing.

This chapter has attempted to draw together selected current ideas on teaching writing in North America. It does not claim, by any means, to have touched on all such writing; rather, it has tried to tap the pulses of a select group whose work bears directly on a view of writing as heuristic. The fact that so many minds are working towards answers in the field of writing gives evidence of the need for an encompassing paradigm for writing. It has been a purpose of this study to suggest that Britton's theoretical model answers such a need.

In the following chapter, examples of writing are presented with discussion as to how Britton's view informs the teacher in structuring, receiving and understanding writing. Again, there is no attempt at exhaustive illustration of Britton's thirteen categories of writing. An attempt is made, however, to define Britton's theory further in an operational context through presentation and discussion of writing samples. In Chapter VI, conclusions and implications are presented.

CHAPTER V

DIMENSIONS OF THE PARADIGM MADE OPERATIONAL

The purpose of this chapter is to explore aspects of the writing experience considered significant in this study, through examination of selected samples of writing. The learner-writer samples extend beyond school age to further exemplify the usefulness of Britton's paradigm for understanding the writing process. The samples selected attempt to illustrate in an operational context, how Britton's framework sets a stage for the writing teacher and learner-writer to enact together the fullness of writing development.

The Writer's Purposes

The purposes of the student-writer are often systematically disregarded in linear approaches to composition. Yet careful reflection on one's own successful, sustained and conscious learning experiences reveals that the learning process proceeds from intent. Intention is inextricably, though not exclusively, linked to self-generated writing. One of our purposes as writing teachers is to facilitate the development of students who generate their own reasons for writing. Teacher-assigned writing often results in perfunctory pieces which merely satisfy minimum demands. However, if the assignment is regarded as being the writer's own task, it may result in engaged writing. In their research, Britton and his co-workers were concerned with this difference:

When a writer wrote to satisfy himself as well as fulfill the task, he seemed better able to bring the full force of his knowledge, attitudes and language experience to bear on the writing, which was carried to a conclusion on some sort of 'rising tide'. The quality of involvement was distinguishable in writing which permitted expressive uses of language or was in the poetic mode. (1975, p. 7)

Recognition of the need for student commitment in writing is urgent, for no feedback of whatever sort can help the unengaged learner. Lack of attention to this matter has already been noted by Emig's observation that no one in her study considered whether the subject was of importance to the writer: The point was to do it because it was assigned. Emig points to the delicate balance which exists in the giving of assignments. Setting too many variables for writing may cause students to feel too constricted to write well. Yet for others, the wide-open freedom may result in their inability to cope, and in a sense of too great an ambiguity.

The first sample of writing, in spite of its flippant parenthetical opening and closure, embodies the engagement referred to. Written for a university freshman course, its assignment did not constrict this writing.

A thousand words, you said. A thousand words on anything. One picture would suffice if I could find one that showed what I meant to say. If indeed I mean to say anything at all.

I could speak of Camus, but he's become a bit boring lately.

There's a group of four girls sitting at a table some distance from me. Three of them sit facing the fourth. The girl who sits alone looks self-assured--she must be to hold this position in such an awkward configuration. The three sitting side by side look rather awkward; the one on the end seems positively embarrassed. She-by-herself and she-on-the-end are talking. The other two watch them as they speak, their heads moving side to side, perfectly synchronized, as they focus on whichever one speaks. One of these two leaves. The girl by herself continues to speak. She wears a concerned, sincere look--the kind I do not take for truth. She has sincere-looking, intelligent-looking glasses--the kind that are fashionable these days. She could be talking about life or concern for people--it all points that way: the posture of her body, the way she gestures with her hands. The two across the table have become individuals--one watches carefully, she does not seem to know how to deal with what is being said. The one on the end sits down in her seat--slouched--she is unhappy and bored, but no longer embarrassed.

When they leave, they walk closely together, arms folded across their bodies.

That is existence, absurd or not. It is a complicated sequence of thoughts, gestures, emotions--and interactions between all these and between people who experience it.

It is youth trying to cope with problems that have no solutions--can only be ridden out with time. It is age trying to grasp some meaning, some theme, in the jumble of memories they

carry with them.

Existence is poetry and hatred, analyzing and ignoring; it is speaking to a friend you don't know anymore, climbing the mountain to reach a virgin spring; it is writing papers for university courses.

Kafka said, "Man cannot live without a lasting trust in something indestructible within himself." Some people have this trust as purely a function of faith. Some people have the trust but need to put a name to it--need to see something of it to allay the fear that it is not really there or that it isn't anything they want there.

A thinking man is a fearful man--he fears what he may learn to know as truth, and he fears that what he already knows is not truth.

Thinking is not a comfortable attribute to be possessed of. I am uncomfortable all the time. But it doesn't really matter, even to me--I can conceive of no other way to be. There is always music in the air--be it only a sorrowful melody. There is forever poetry in the earth, though it speaks of pain.

To know is all that anyone can really desire--the only differences lie in what one wants to know; and yet it's all the same for we can only know life--within ourselves, within the universe. If it's all an illusion, that doesn't matter either, for we shall never know it.

What a lousy thing to do to someone--make them read this. I wouldn't blame you if you never got this far. I can't even be sure that any of this is anything I believe. One can only know what one thinks, so I shall keep on thinking. Thinking and sorrowing and living.

(Kathy, 21 years)

This writing is the work of a student who knows how to make writing work for her. One wonders if the instructor realized this. His comment, "You have an excellent, if untrained mind" suggests that he had some more orthodox form for the writing in mind. Yet, in spite of its unevenness, the writer accomplishes a great deal. The expressive-poetic nature of the writing reflects changing tensions and interactions of feelings. The postures of life are here--awkward, embarrassed, self-assured, sincere, intense, bored, unhappy, observant, uncertain--and the writer acknowledges them all, absurd or not, as the essence of life. By means of nameless silhouettes, the writer mimes the human condition for her reader: solitude, authority, communion. More than that, she reaches deeply for ideas to explain herself

to herself, facing the unease she feels perhaps more strongly through her own words. The writer's inner voice is clear because she listens, plumbing the depths within herself, using the writing to reach further. With Britton, she recognizes that "the need to withdraw, to take refuge from living, is at one and the same time an expression of the need to reorganize and press on" (1970, p. 267). Her self consciousness is both a burden and a necessary condition of her life.

Objections may be anticipated here. To those who would raise the questions about the lack of student intentions, Britton acknowledges that our job as teachers involves awakening fresh intentions. "Good teachers," he says, "already see their job very much in terms of being ready to fan a (student's) flame of interest, however flickering: that is, they are working on intentions before attending to means" (1977, p. 37-38).

Expressive Writing

Unlike the first sample by a confident writer (who is insecure about her instructor's reaction), this second example is by a reluctant writer, a first-year remedial writing student in a community college. However, she, too, is beginning to find herself able to work out what she wants to say, though in more unfinished form, through expressive writing.

All through this course I have been writing essays on what I feel and things that happen around me. Sometimes it would take up to five drafts before it would turn out right. I would get very frustrated and feel like throwing all my work in a Dragon's burning mouth of fire. When I write a paper, I make the simplest mistakes, things like spelling, or putting the comas in the wrong places. Even forgot to put periods in, and capitalize sentences. It seems sometimes I am not in the writing mood and I will just sit and daydream and not even write two words. It seems like my sentences wont make sense and things wont go together. Paragraphs are always mixed up and many other unreal mistakes.

This is the second time I have enrolled in this course and I find that the second time things are alot clearer. I can understand everything a lot more. I feel though sometimes I

have a rubber hand which is bouncing around writing anything it likes, and nothing is correct.

(Jean, 19 years)

The writing illustrates how Jean is able to clothe her frustrations and awareness of the difficulty of writing in her own personal way. Her writing is primarily an explanation to herself (and to her teacher) for which she draws on a repertoire of images ("Dragon's burning mouth of fire" and "rubber hand") which would be unusual for her to use in speech. In fact, in speech, Jean found it difficult to expand the implications of an idea to anything like the extent she has done here. (It is equally true, of course, that some people demonstrate great facility in precise thinking through talk.) So, for Jean, the writing explores the significance of her struggle with writing in an expansionary manner foreign to her in talk.

The sample is interesting in another sense as well. Jean's sense of powerlessness with regard to the mechanics of writing is reflected in her use of "it seems" twice, her delineation of mistakes as "unreal" and her bizarre image of her rubber writing hand "bouncing around writing anything it likes." Certainly these language examples are self-presenting. In her preoccupation with the mechanics and correctness of her writing, Jean seems to overlook the fact that when she writes for her own purposes in a relaxed way, as she does in this sample, her inner voice emerges and she writes effectively. Can the pleasure she feels in using her two vivid analogies be doubted?

Similarly, an octogenarian in a nursing home writing to the son of her friend, Pauline, who had just died, writes expressively about her loss and explores the significance of the friendship:

Dear H _____,

Just a few lines to thank your family for the lovely plant. I put it in a little planter Pauline gave me a year or two ago now on my birthday. That will remind me more of her. I do not need anything to do that, I can't get her off my mind, you can never imagine how I miss her. I can see her sitting here in the little crome rocking chair, after she got feeling badly I persuaded her to sit in the other one and that is more comfortable, when it cam time for her to go to her room, I took her after she wasn't able to go bye herself. She was the best friend I ever had. We loved each other so much. We would always have a nice good kiss. A's mother is the only one I can go to now to talk about Pauline. She loved Pauline too and crys when she tells the last time she saw her.

I do not go out of my room now only to eat and go to Mrs. S to talk about Pauline. I feel the same about Pauline as I do about my late husband. If I can't have him, I don't want anyone.

The writing here is cathartic because of the nature of the occasion of the writing, but this is not an a priori feature of the expressive. The writing may also be described as exploratory and intimate, and addressed to a trusted audience. It may be that through the writing some of the strengths of the friendship were articulated for the first time. In retrospect, this eighty-year-old finds comfort in reminding herself, through expressive writing, that she was able, at her age, to give up the best chair in her room to make Pauline comfortable, to walk her back to her room giving her physical support, and to express comfort to her addressee, the son, in reaffirming the worth of his mother through her declaration of love. The letter lets us feel the kind of person the writer is, and there is little doubt of its reflection of her own voice. In Britton's terminology, expressive writing is very like written down speech.

The next sample serves to illustrate that expressive writing need not be about the writer's personal life, although it is still conversational and self revealing. The eight-year-old writer had lived on an Indian reservation for several weeks one summer and her writing indirectly

reflects her personal experience. Her teacher had asked her to discuss conflicts arising amongst Indians, Metis, fur traders and settlers in the 1880's. Here is what she wrote:

The Indians wanted to stay on the land they were on and keep on doing what they were doing. They didn't want other people there with them and they didn't want a railroad. But the settlers were against them, they did so want to have the land. They got it. Poor Indians! The fur traders wanted to be rich and have the Indians drunk. They were mean! The Metis liked the Indians they didn't really like the mean fur traders. I guess some did but then they were mean like the fur traders.
(Vicki, 8 years)

It is revealing that this expressive writing allows its author to avoid the more common generalizing and stereotyping (all Metis hated the fur traders) by making the differentiations she does in her last speculative "I guess" statement. This reflects a point made earlier that expressive writing seems to catch learning on the wing.

A Case Study in Writing Development

To say, as Britton does, that "our intentions have the effect of unlocking tacit powers within us" (1977, p. 37) and that expressive writing can catch learning on the wing is not to suggest that this is a straightforward or even a totally conscious procedure. On the contrary, the complex interactions of thought, graphics and feelings which proceed as the writer wends his way through the stages of the composing process may even astonish the writer.

The next sample differs from previous ones in that it attempts to catch 'learning on the wing' in a new sense. The sample consists of two drafts of a single assignment and this dual presentation is an attempt to plot the development of writing ability through process. This form of development, more easily accessible to study than development over many months or years, is one which, to this researcher's knowledge, has appeared

rarely in the literature; and yet, along with information about the teacher/student interviews, such case studies provide valuable information.

The student here begins by writing transactionally, probably due to former school socialization. As has been observed, the expository essay seems to have become, in many classrooms, the only acceptable form of writing practice. It has gained wide acceptance because it is supposed to be objective, scientific and specialist, and it narrows and partitions its subject matter. In a world bent on production, efficient industrial models and time-management studies, it is easy to see how expository writing has earned its place of importance. We have seen how Britton and Emig have criticized this exclusive emphasis on expository writing. Referring to a survey on introductory composition textbooks, John Harris quotes a characterization of expository writing as being "an abstract, denatured process that occurs outside of history, place, social circumstance and selfhood" (1977, p. 10).

The student writer here, Nadine, was a first-year Leisure Education student in a community college. Although Nadine's work contained many mechanical errors, she was a learner-writer who was excited by the discovering of her own ideas through writing. This was illustrated by her painstaking rewrites which often involved discarding many pages before she was satisfied.

Two drafts, Draft One and Draft Three, of a paper written for the college's required composition course, are reproduced here. The dramatic changes from Draft One to Draft Three grew out of the expressive talk,¹

1. See W. M. Mowat's The Energy of Talk (1977) for a dramatic illustration of the power of expressive talk to unleash new learning.

thought and writing which occurred. During the student/instructor interview, the writer began unconsciously (and unself-consciously, too) enacting some of the scenes which were developed in Draft Three. Instead of simply informing the instructor, the student was spectating on her experiences, going over them for the pleasure the memories of the people and incidents gave her, and reworking them in the light of her own intentions in writing the piece. She had moved right into a spectator mode of expression. Forgetting the urgent decisions about what 'facts' concerning the half-way house to tell, she ruminated and evaluated in a more comprehensive way the experiences of her summer job. The difference between her own voice speaking and the written reportorial first draft is startling.

Arthur Applebee (1973) has caught exactly the import of this change from one mode to another in this paragraph from The Spectator Role:

When we move out of the expressive in the opposite direction, away from the objectivity of the transactional mode, we do so by increasing our concern with Langer's 'subjective feeling'. Here we are concerned with processes which operate within the individual rather than with those that are developed as external social tools. The constructs involved will be neither specified nor, ordinarily, fully specifiable--they are systems of implications which are built independently by each reader. Rather than an external, objective, impersonal conclusion, such a discourse leads to a complex, slow, internal formulation of the relationships among the relevant constructs.

(p. 56)

It is useful to keep these ideas in mind while reading Draft One.

DRAFT ONE
(Untitled)

I worked as a recreation person in a halfway house for mentally disturbed adults this summer. I really wasn't sure what I was getting into when I accepted the job. I was told that most of the residents have been in mental institutions, some for a long time. The first question I asked during the phone call was if I would have any help. My boss assured me that I would and that the people were not difficult to handle. I still felt uncomfortable.

It took me only a few days to realize the house was a home. The residents were suffering from paranoid schizophrenia; a personality disorder for which elaborate and systematic delusions of persecution and grandeur exists. Most of the residents were almost recovered, but still "little" voices and "fantasies" remained. Trusting other people, for them, took longer than normal. The house looked like any other house on the block and to the residents it was home. Each person was responsible for their own room and took turns with household chores. I found the unit very realistic, like a family. Some residents were very close friends while others could not stand each other. Nevertheless, they understood each others moods and seemed to treat each other accordingly to the situation. During the summer, I frequently got warned by the residents of who was in a bad mood or who didn't take their pills. Not taking medication was a type of rebellion for the residents.

The house's policy was to make the residents as independent as possible. Health care, personal appearance and money management was implemented according to individuals. The management made a few T.V. presentations on the house for community awareness on mental health. The house was associated with the Skeena Mental Health Association and all of the residents were seen bi-weekly by a psychiatrist. The house also wanted the residents to take part in the community as much as possible. I took the residents to shows, the swimming pool and holiday events.

Terrace is a community which is still a bit isolated from other cities and especially from new ideas. The Osborne Guest Home still remains a questionable topic to the residents of Terrace. But the people who have been involved with the house, or live in the neighborhood have noticed the change in most of the older residence and accept the house for what it is. I heard one lady comment that she thought Peter (one of the residence) was completely nuts, just by his appearance when he first arrived, but now that he dresses properly and talks to people, he is just like everybody else.

Whenever someone asked me what the residents were like at the house I replied, "Just like everybody else, except they have alot more ups and downs."

As we can see, Draft One illustrates the seriously informative function which the author sees for herself. She is unnecessarily meticulous in informing the reader about personal doubt and fears about the job, uses the new job-related terminology ("paranoid schizophrenic", "delusions of persecution and grandeur") to define resident behaviour, carefully marshalls arguments as to how the house was a home, itemizes strategies utilized to help residents develop independence, and attempts to generalize

about what mentally disturbed adults are like.

In the student/instructor interview after Draft One was submitted, the instructor concentrated on four areas:

1. She reassured Nadine that her summer experience was an excellent source of data for writing, and that even in this first draft there were rich insights.

2. She questioned what the thesis statement was: Are mentally disturbed residents in a half-way house the same as normal people except they have more ups and downs? What are residents of a half-way house like? How was the house a home?

3. She zeroed in on the people, getting Nadine to talk freely about incidents she remembered involving her 'charges' and about her own reactions. She asked Nadine to write down immediately, in some personal shorthand form, some of these anecdotes.

Draft Two, although far from perfect, presented a totally new framework. After Draft Two had been written and submitted, the student felt more satisfied and confident about the content and was thus counselled on the spelling and mechanical problems for Draft Three, which follows.

DRAFT 3

My summer job this year is planning and implementing a recreation program in a psychiatric half-way home. I must be crazy, I thought, to accept a job like this, but finding out what the word "crazy" really means will be an unusual experience.

I casually scan the residents. They are sluggishly sinking into couches, puffing on cigarettes while staring at the television. Barely a word is spoken. I find this difficult to understand, since most of the shows up north are re-runs. They must have seen that old western before. Leaning back in my chair, I contemplate what recreation I could do for the next two months. I spot a coffee urn on the kitchen counter. Constant T.V. watchers usually like coffee, too. Out of instinct, I hold up a package of coffee and yell "Does anybody want coffee?" Storms of answers flood the once silent room. Paul, a young man with gentle blue eyes, helps me make the coffee. Dan, another resident, paces the kitchen floor, supervising. Suddenly hard rock music pounds my ears. At least they're alive, I thought, but I have to get them out of this suffocating house!

Dragging our feet on the gravel, clutching baseball equipment, bags of food and a case of beer, we head for the city park. I have to stop occasionally to keep everybody in line especially Ron. He tends to walk in the middle of the road, and pay no attention to cars zooming by. About the third time I tell him to

keep off the road, he replies with every swear word he knows.

As I am telling him to watch his language, he begins to walk slowly up to me, shifting his muscular body from side to side. Out of sheer fright I crack a ridiculous joke about him being the jolly green giant and me the little green sprout. The punch line is "You would look awfully stupid squashing a bean sprout!" Ron roars with laughter. Soon he begins telling me about his Cadillac. He could have brought it with him today, he says, but he left it down in the Canary Islands. I look at his faded clothes and old shoes. Then I tell him about the car I would like to have, emphasizing the "would like to". His face darkens with a droopy frown. Then he asks how much a Cadillac would cost, just in case he has to buy another one. Ron bums a cigarette off of me and wanders off to share it with Martin.

Paul, at only 25 years has a Master's Degree in Zoology and is an expert pianist. But Paul doesn't like to be a genius anymore. He even refuses to read. Sometimes he becomes a "zombie" and walks miles, just staring into space. One time he gave away all his clothes so he could be poor. He thinks poor people aren't smart. When I question some of his "odd" behaviour, he says it's the vinegar in the salad that makes him so crazy. Paul likes to be helpful, and will do anything you ask, if his "little voice" agrees with it. Paul, Chris, Dan and I walk downtown one day, just to spend some money. As we wander through the "Sight and Sound", Paul stares at the piano. I approach Paul with a cheerful act:

"Paul", I say, "Would you play a song for me? I would love to hear you play!"

Paul tries to say yes, but his voice is telling him not to. Meanwhile Dan has settled himself on the piano seat and is playing chopsticks. Paul pops back into reality. I almost die laughing when he puts his hands to his ears and whispers, "Maybe I better play so we don't get kicked out of here!" Paul plays beautifully and all by memory! Later in the day, Dan tells me that he learned how to get Paul to play by playing chopsticks. He says Paul's motivation is like Beethoven's and his Unfinished Symphony.

I arrange a softball game with the staff members of a local old-folks home. Through past experience, I discover that the residents always change their minds at the last moment about participating in activities. The excitement of the event has to be spontaneous so I wait until the last minute to tell them. Then I begin rounding up people to play, Dan's answer startles me. He says no. He loves softball and had played in games before! When I ask him why, Dan states he doesn't like serious games. I try to convince him that it is a fun game. No dice, he won't budge! I ask him why he doesn't like a serious game. He pours out a long story about an "all star" team he once belonged to: his older brother and his friends were on the team. Everytime there weren't enough players, they would drag Dan along. If the team won, they would have a party which Dan was not invited to, but, if they lost, it was Dan's fault. Dan admits that some people are like that, but it still hurts. I leave Dan to his own judgement whether he wants to play or not and I go on to ask

Aggie. Aggie says she will play. Dan asks me if the girls are allowed to play. When I reply yes, he quickly picks up the baseball equipment and hurries towards the door. On the way out, he mumbles something about "if the girls are playing, it can't be a serious game." The male chauvinist strikes again!

Marie asks me if I would walk to the store with her. On the way, I notice that she looks worried and her hands are trembling. She replies, (just as she knew I was going to ask), that the School Board, the place where she works, hasn't phoned her yet to go back to work. I suggest that she phone them in a couple of weeks or so, because the office is open only during school months. Marie is still worried. She says that they won't ask her back again and that the other staff doesn't like her. Marie asks me to phone for her. I give in and tell her I will phone.

Actually, I knew I could find out the facts behind Marie's problems. So that night I talked to Mr. Griffing, my landlord. He is a manager of the board, and had hired Marie. He assures me that Marie has done her job well and he would be pleased to have her back. He had assumed that she would return. He phoned Marie the next day. That was the first time I saw Marie smile!

Donny, comes back from Manpower carrying his suit jacket and untying his tie. I am about to say hello. The last thing I see is a frying pan flying across the room. I guess I didn't duck fast enough. When I wake up, I calculate that Donny has been refused a job again. Danny is the "farthest gone" in the house. He has regressed to almost a child. He has an attention span of about five minutes but it only takes him that long to skunk me at chess! I'm his target for a chess player, and unfortunately, his outlet for aggression.

Allan creeps up behind me.

"Howdy, honey," he says with a John Wayne accent. "My, you know, we're going to miss you around here. Even Ron and this cowboy!"

Ron gives me his usual pat on the head, (instead of a handshake), and hands me my jacket, book, wallet and other things that have been missing for the last two months!

I tell them I am going to miss them too. That is true, I will miss them.

Allan replies in his normal voice (which isn't heard too often); "Everybody is crazy, some more than others. Soon I'm going to make it out there - in that crazy world - and try not to be crazy!"

As I stroll through the busy downtown stores, I take a good look at the people. He's right, I thought, everybody is crazy, some more than others. And it's hard to tell the difference.

From the beginning of Draft Three, we know that the writer is more relaxed. She engages in a play on the word 'crazy', yet she clearly presents the problem the writing should solve: what does 'crazy' mean to

someone who has worked in a psychiatric half-way house? By writing in the present tense, she lures the reader into her world and we "casually scan the residents" with her.

What does this writer learn in the process of her own writing? It is helpful to refer again to Applebee's description of spectator language:

The constructs involved will be neither specified nor, ordinarily, fully specifiable--they are systems of implications which are built up independently by each reader ... such a discourse leads to a complex, slow internal formulation of the relationships among relevant constructs. (p. 56)

What Applebee means by the slow internal formulation of "systems of implications" is clarified in Draft Three. The presentation of scenarios of interactions between the author and her 'charges' do not explicitly demonstrate clear objective data at all. We have to dig away at the implications to realize, as Nadine did through rewriting, that recognition of a diversity of problems and personalities is the only way to learn about mental illness; and that the underlying respect for each individual makes all the difference in the way s/he responds. In fact, the reader of Draft Three can draw out implications about how skillfully and sensitively Nadine worked with the residents, an aspect which had not outwardly been part of her purpose at all. Nor is the notion of 'mentally disturbed people' fully specified, for the reader must formulate and generalize in his own way from the examples. The insights that come from seeing Dan, a resident who like a good therapist tricks Paul into playing the piano, or from seeing Ron, who had been boasting about his Cadillac, helped by Nadine's ingenious but honest reactions about the car she would like to own--these provide mines of richness which the reader can exploit in differing ways. Nadine's "I tell them I am going to miss them" and "That is true" rebuts more cogently, if subtly, the notion that the resi-

dents are crazy, a species apart from the rest of the human race.

Through the examples shines an acceptance of the idiosyncracies of people and an abiding sense of humour ("The male chauvinist strikes again", "You would look awfully stupid squashing a bean sprout"). Hence the writing, through the personal voice, helps the author come to know more fully what she knew all along, to bring to the surface meanings buried in the realms of tacit knowledge. No wonder Nadine decided to use the piece as a testimonial when applying for jobs!

One point perhaps needs to be clarified here. There is no question of one mode of discourse being superior to another. Learners need to develop all the forms of language possible to meet differing functions and audiences. If the writer's intention had been to write a formal report of her job for her employers, she would very correctly have chosen a transactional mode. In this case study, the reframing and rethinking of Draft One by a movement from participant to spectator opened gates of meaning that the writer was unaware of in the participant mode. The writing resulted in what Applebee called "the slow internal formulation of the relationships among the relevant constructs." And ironically, in reflecting more of the author's personal involvement in learning, the writing reveals more to readers. The intermediate expressive stage in this instance helped Nadine to sharpen her purposes and bring a greater vitality and detail to her writing.

The use here of spectator role well illustrates Britton's point about writing: "The writing may be the act of perceiving the shape of experience,--not the evidence that it has (once) been perceived" (quoted by Dixon, 1967, p. 44). Such writing as heuristic also illustrates current emphases in modern rhetoric.

The Role of the Teacher

The role of the teacher is of such importance to the conception of writing development offered here that consideration of its nature cannot be ignored. Once again, Britton's paradigm offers useful directions to the writing teacher. Britton sees the teacher's role as essentially non-authoritarian, a relation of reciprocity, of acceptance of each other as persons.² Yet the relationship is also seen as professional; that is, it is not a laissez faire, permissive or pseudo-affectionate liaison. The teacher does have authority but with the difference that, in the long run, it is derived from the group itself (Britton, 1970, p. 187).

The establishment of this reciprocal person-to-person relationship is based on the development of trust. Learner-writers require assurance that their social experience is a valid and significant base for writing in the spectator role where the main reason for writing is to share one's experience and views as a person, and not the more utilitarian purpose of transactional mode. Britton reports on an experiment which sets out to eliminate the examiner-relationship from the teacher's written responses to writing, noting that "the effect was described as dramatic" (Britton et al, 1975, p. 199).

To illustrate the effects, here is a seven-year old trying out her writing wings in a Social Studies unit. Happily, there is no sense of teacher-as-examiner audience:

2. A persuasive illustration of how the acceptance of the student as a person and an understanding of how their personal lives affect their work in writing class is A. Vicker's Language in the Centre (1977).

I am Captain cannon! I steal treasure maps! I have ten boats. I have ten people in my crew. I live in creek house and eat nice fish. oh oh here comes the pirates I stealed the map from! I have to get the treasure before them. There is the island and I went to fast for them and they can't remember were to go yea!

(Vicki, 7 years)

As a grade three pupil, Vicki has potentially little autonomy in her life, yet what power lies behind those words, "I am Captain cannon! I steal treasure maps! I have ten boats. I have ten people in my crew." The creative flight of a small school child's role to that of a villanous employer of ten requires the kind of mental assertiveness assumed to be productive of cognitive growth. The sense of immediacy experienced as Vicki wrote is clear: "oh oh here comes the pirates I stealed the map from!" As well, there is a sense of exhilaration in the escape from the pirates in "I went to fast for them and they can't remember were to go yea!" (Vicki had just discovered the joy of the exclamation mark in this piece!)

At age eight, the same sense of freedom is shown:

Went to Confederation Park to find leaves last Friday. And we also went to look at the garden. We found lots of leaves. One girl found nearly enough to fill her desk. We saw the cement kind of tower that wasn't very tall. In it was alot of history. We had a snack of alot of good things. We spotted leaves at one place. We rolled down a hill and had lots of fun. Anyway I forgot to tell you what we had for a snack. We had orange juice and cheezies and raisens and sesame seed crackers. It was a good snack for tried people. David chased Lori and me. When Sheila cam back he chased her too. What a day! It was great fun. I've been there before but it does not matter. We went on Bus B which is my bus. Two people came with us. Tanya's mother and Shannon's grandmother too.

(Vicki, 8 years)

Several thoughts arise from this piece of writing. One is that Vicki's teacher certainly must fall into the interested reader/trusted friend category rather than the teacher-examiner category. Such a teacher

is the kind to whom one would write, "Anyway, I forgot to tell you" And a perceptive teacher would certainly benefit from the insights s/he could gain from reading such writing. Dimensions of Vicki's world are made obvious: "lots of leaves" are enough to fill a desk, Bus B is her bus, the "two people" singled out are seen as not part of the familiar class group, but as sudden new elements; a "tower", although not tall, had in it "alot of history", and being chased by David is a source of great pleasure. Unlike the role-trying-on of Captain Cannon, here Vicki is summarizing, making observations, drawing conclusions ("It was a good snack for tried people") and settling possible worries ("I've been there before but it does not matter.") This 'report' then not only gives an account of the class outing, but also expresses a personal response to it. The writing helps to organize Vicki's perspectives, raising the number of possible 'wise moments' for teacher help.

Writing which gives the teacher a wider understanding of her pupils' perspectives and attitudes is also seen in this boy's work:

Once a tiger named Biggest of the Cats became king of the African jungle. The reason is simply true, he was biggest of the cat family.

One day it so happened that Biggest of the Cats met a girl. They went to the movies together and ate popcorn sodas and chocolate bars etc. Biggest of the Cats purposed to the girl three months later. He paced the floor 3000 times before she gave her answer. At midnight the girl tiger answered his purposeul and the answer was a delightful answer called yes. At that very moment Biggest of the Cats fainted. The girl was a nurse so she poured water that was cold on his head

(Alex, 9 years)

Such writing shows in a tangible way how a child's world representation shapes his view of the world, happy-ever-after endings with "a delightful answer called yes" and sexual stereotyping notwithstanding.

Spectator writing, too, can indicate links between the child's use

of language and the satisfaction of deeply felt, usually unconscious needs. Here is a child writing from first-hand experience, clearly without the pressure of a teacher-examiner audience. We can speculate that the writing helped the child believe in herself.

One winter day, walking down the ravine,
 I saw white glistening falling snow,
 The tips of the grass, one bird flying fast,
 Trying to keep warm.
 I noticed the bare trees all hidden with snow,
 And the snow all piled up in the hidden holes.
 Oh dear! my toes are cold.

(Carol, 10 years)

Transactional Writing

Finally, and lest it be thought that the encouragement of good transactional writing be not part of the intent of Britton's view, two samples of transactional writing are included here. The first example derives from an unpublished collection of student writings by prison inmates written in the summer of 1978. The instructor characterizes the writings with the emphasis this chapter began with, commitment. Her own comment is revealing:

One aspect of the writing here defies evaluation, and that is its commitment. Most of the students were immediately prepared to write; many used the course as an outlet to express thoughts and insights that perhaps only the time for reflection available to them can allow.³

(Neilson, 1978)

It is irony, indeed, to observe the conditions of prison as generative of the freedom required for the development of the inner voice of writers.

Here is one of those voices:

3. Lorri Neilson's collection is reserved in the Mount Royal College Library, Calgary, Alberta.

Almost eleven years ago, I was thirteen years old and I took my first toke of gold, within a year I shot speed and was gobbling LSD in quest of knowledge. I believed that I had found it, I believed in peace, love, and drugs as a way of life, as a finishing stage in the movement of mankind. Foolish? Of course, but it wasn't then, and I certainly wasn't the only one.

In Nazi Germany, Hitler drove his people into a frenzy with ravings of a pure race, and a new level of society within reach. Lenin, Marx, Mao, Manson, were not all related in aspirations, but in the manipulation of human beings they were masters, and they are but a few in only the last one hundred years of time. They all arrived at times when their particular notions were food and drink for people whose lives were hanging on threads. And they kept coming, new leaders with new ideologies, more and more attractive concepts just waiting for hungry people to give their lives for. We've all read about their failures, how do they continue to bring whole nations, states, or groups down with them? As I write now, I know that in my lifetime, I will be caught up again and again in some new improved system of thought. Some new lifestyle stuffed down my throat with the power of a sales pitch not much different than the idiocy of the "We do it all for you" McDonald's slogan. It seems to me that mankind is waiting, we're waiting for something and we don't know what, and the instant we find it, something "better" arrives in the guise of "new", with banners flying. We were born waiting and most of us will die waiting. I cannot believe that we are such insignificant beings that we would wait for nothing. Somewhere within us is the certain knowledge of a freedom that exists somewhere, or there would not be a word in our language that attempts to define it.

There are very few things that people do, think, or say, if any, however well they might be concealed that cannot be attributed to one overall destination. However many men or women may twist and pervert this idea to suit their own definition of it, to me, only amplifies the fact that freedom is our motivation. Whether or not our glorious technological state has brought us any closer to it or not, it is the product of this same motivation.

Without some inbred conceptualization of freedom as a concrete, obtainable fact, I do not believe mankind could have persisted to where we are today.

The last sample is also written from prison, but was an unsolicited letter written outside the class for a specific purpose. The sensitive and diplomatic awareness of audience (a committee of college administrators), and the intense feeling of need to influence decision makers by the writer make this a unique piece of writing. It seems a good example of self-generated transactional writing.

Dear Sir(s):

There are two points I must make before I begin my tirade. First, this letter is directed to the person(s) who decides to discontinue the courses from Mount Royal now being offered at the Drumheller Institution. Second, if the courses are not discontinued--please forgive.

Most of my information is hearsay, yet I imagine the debate goes something like this: one man was killed and another was beaten at the institution. Our faculty members are teaching at Drumheller and their lives may be in danger. Do we, or do we not, continue teaching in such an atmosphere? Undoubtedly the frequent number of hostage taking incidents recently will influence the outcome of this discussion. Hopefully, this letter will counterbalance the media effect.

This is a penitentiary and we do have our share of psychopaths; however, the statistics may show that we are in better shape per capita than Calgary is. After all, we haven't had any rapes this year. There are male and female secretaries, counselors, nurses, and teachers working here, who realize their jobs aren't particularly hazardous, and go about their tasks.

The female who works in Drumheller probably has one of the safest jobs there is. It reminds me of the code of the old west: we don't have many "gals" around here, so let's look after the ones we've got. If any "sick" inmate was to make a move towards a woman (or male) teacher he would be hung from the nearest gun tower.

Lastly, I would like to point out how your reluctance to work here impresses me and some of the other students. Most of us have put a lot of work into these courses and will obviously be disappointed if we are unable to continue; yet there is a point I feel is more important than this. It concerns the content of the courses which were being taught here.

In Humanities we were taught about prejudice, discrimination, inequality, and stereotyping. We were often shown how one group of people would incorrectly view another group, and consequently, treat them unfairly. The "heroes" of the course were not the politicians and the discoverers from other history courses; they were the people like Louis Riel, who were concerned with the problems facing minorities and try to help them.

The psychology course explained the developmental stages of life. It was pointed out time and time again how an individual's successful development was contingent upon the understanding, care, and devotion of others. The psychologists we were taught about and learned to respect were all concerned with the mental and social problems of others.

Interpersonal psychology. What a course this one was turning in to. The instructor was trying his best to show us how much of today's troubles are due to communication problems. The teacher felt that if people worked at improving their understandings, trusts, and communications, the world would be that much better because of it.

In the english course we were learning how to express our

thoughts and feelings on paper. This practice stimulated much reflection and "soul searching" on my part and I'm sure I shall benefit from it. The teacher was excellent, and I can't imagine her being afraid to come back to teach us more.

Again I would like to note that if my perception of this issue is way off base, I apologize. On the other hand, if what I say is correct, I would like to point out that I, for one, have not failed to notice the discrepancy between what your teaching and what your practicing.

Out of place, maybe, but still
Respectfully,
R _____

Evaluation

The question of evaluation of writing is always thorny. Yet Britton's theoretical framework provides the writing teacher with some helpful directions for evaluation. It seems useful to regard evaluation from two perspectives. The less important one here is the assignment of grades for administrative purposes. The more important one for our purposes is the teacher response or feedback by which students' writing is facilitated. In a spring speech at the University of Calgary in 1978, Britton underlined this perspective by reminding listeners that the laying down of a verdict rather than a response is a wrong-headed way of going about evaluation.

In Writing and Learning Across the Curriculum 11-16, the authors reproduce a piece of writing by a teenage boy narrating the escape of a fox from a hunt. Although the writing has sentence fragments, abbreviations and severely confused punctuation, it reflects well the rhythm and excitement of the hunt, providing a sound base for development. The teacher's response was:

I'm not very impressed. Your work is mediocre, lacking real control and care. You will force me to take the matter up with other staff unless you produce work of higher quality.
(Martin et al, 1975, p. 105)

It is easy to imagine what effect such a threat might have. Certainly

this reaction does not reflect any awareness by the teacher of the need to move towards the writer's intentions and help him. Teachers will need to know students well to judge what they 'can take' and when. The purposes of written comments will change at different stages from encouragement, to more direct guidance, to reality. If steps were to be designated, it would probably be a movement from gaining fluency to controlling organization to practising editing skills. In contrast to the above response, here are some samples of written responses to college students. These would probably be supplemented by oral comments as well.

(1) Encouragement:

S_____ --you are making great strides in your writing: I can't believe this is the same student whose life was so dull she had nothing to write about! There are several vivid observations in this (e.g. "the slight arch of the horse's neck when excited", "the contrast of the snow trickling", and "the awareness that time, too, seemed to be washing away") which are most effective.

E_____ --you amaze me! The difference between Draft #1 and Draft #2 is astounding. This draft is brimming with confidence and verve. I enjoyed the very natural flow of your writing, and your attention to detail.

(2) Guidance:

E_____ --A good attempt at a first draft with some nice touches of humour. I feel a tension reading this, however. The movements from past to present suggest this first horse-ride is being painfully reconstructed, almost stereotyped. How about some personal, concrete details of when you first mounted--your own unique reactions? Be careful about using cliches ("thundering hooves", "plunged headlong", "howl of disbelief"). Stretch for your own words and ways. Will you try again, reworking this in a second draft?

T_____ --You are putting yourself into this and it has fine potential. At the moment, it has lots of material--some too general. Ask yourself--what is my purpose in writing this? This will help plan the organization and give the writing unity. What are the main points you want to make? You need to do a fair amount of cutting, too. On to Draft #2!

(3) Reality:

H_____ --I feel that this isn't working. At the college level, you need something more to put your teeth into. You need to ask yourself some hard questions--Who am I writing to? What is my purpose in writing? If your thesis is "gardening is hard work", is that enough to challenge your reader? The writing here is very general. If you still want to develop this, I suggest some research. Don't be discouraged by my comments. Let's talk.

This last example would happen rarely and only when the teacher had found other positive characteristics in the student's writing over a period first.

Leslie Stratta has reflected the same theoretical basis as Britton's in his appendix article, "Some Considerations When Marking", and says,

By approaching pieces of writing ... in a positive rather than a negative frame of mind, we are more likely to discover where, and in what manner, the pupil has succeeded. And by taking the trouble to dig below the surface appearance, the teacher demonstrates that he is genuinely interested in what the pupil is trying to say. (1973, p. 207)

Such a supportive approach accepts as a starting point the pupil's present standard, yet suggests ways the learner-writer could profitably improve or reshape the writing. For the writer, talking over the work while it is in progress with the teacher or peers, is another gainful approach. Moving selectively through student problems would seem more effective than dealing with all the problems at once. Students who are swamped by syntactical and organizational corrections and inadequacies will almost certainly be demoralized.

Many of the views reflected in this study see in the combining of the teacher-examiner audience and writing growth a misalliance. We end this discussion by reminders from Emig and Britton on this important aspect of writing evaluation.⁴

4. See also Mary H. Beaver's enlightening article on strategies

Most of the criteria by which students' school sponsored writing is evaluated concerns the accidents rather than the essences of discourse--that is, spelling, punctuation, penmanship, and length rather than thematic development, rhetorical and syntactic sophistication, and fulfillment of intent.

(Emig, 1971, p. 93)

Similarly, Britton and his co-authors observe that it may be because of deeply entrenched examination policies that spectator-role writing which offers so much for student development is inhibited in schools:

We need to discover ways of arriving at reliable evaluations of language behaviour that is not measureable in any single direct fashion. We cannot go on allowing the threshold of school achievement--across the curriculum--to be kept down to the level of directly measureable language performances, such as the use of analogic informative writing.

(Britton et al, 1975, p. 201)

This chapter has explored dimensions of Britton's paradigm for writing within an operational context. It may have appeared throughout this study that writing competence is achieved in isolation from other language activities; yet Britton steadily views language as incremental growth occurring through interaction of writing, talking, reading and experience, with the most successful teaching influencing the nature and quality of this growth.

The questions of commitment and student intention stand out here as perhaps the most difficult and sensitive aspects of teaching. The questions of what language activities to instigate, in what order and with what follow-up are easily controllable. The really tall order for writing teachers (or for any teachers, for that matter) is to aim for a certain intensity of commitment in learner-writers. And this shifts

4. continued

for evaluation incorporating student involvement, "Individualized Goal Setting, Self-Evaluation, and Peer Evaluation" (1977, pp. 135-156) and, on the subject of measuring student growth for administrative purposes, Charles R. Cooper's "Holistic Evaluation of Writing" (pp. 3-31).

dramatically the whole pedagogical framework from the teachers' teaching purposes to learner-writers' purposes. The whole role of the teacher is to locate with each individual "the source of a drive powerful enough to compel utterances and grapplings with other people's utterances, that stretch his capacities in language to the full" (Medway and Frew, 1978, p. 68). Patience is required to refrain from being seduced back into more traditional make-work strategies: Disguising this anxious period by running through what Britton terms dummy-run exercises will tend only to retard the process. Getting to know students well is the only way teachers will be able to help generate the triggers of motivation within each. High educational aims? Indeed they are.

Britton sums up this vital need to recreate or merge the real intentions of life with intentions in school:

So often in the past we have tried to make a fresh start, at the risk of cutting off the roots which alone can sustain the growth we look for. It is not only that the classroom must more and more merge into the world outside it, but that the processes of school learning must merge into the processes of learning that begin at birth and are life-long.

(1970, p. 129)

In the following final chapter, explicit consideration is given to the significance of the main theme of this study, writing and the inner voice. The study then draws together major conclusions and implications of Britton's language theory for writing.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

We know intuitively what our inner voices are. As participants in a world of action and decision, we often overlook that sound of self making meaning inside us. Yet we are aware, as we listen to a conversation (for example), of a voice 'inside our heads' responding, reformulating or questioning; or we can 'listen' to ourselves speaking, hearing more in ourselves than what we say, and so append our original productions because of the inadequacy of our words. Listening to ourselves as writers, and judging by the same criteria we would apply to pieces of writing by others, means that we have confidence in our roles as writers. The articulation of a theoretical framework for the development of writing in this study has essentially been an exploration of the implications of the inner voice.

To refer to the voice of writing may seem paradoxical. Yet Britton and others remind us that although the processes of writing and speaking are very different, writing is rooted in speaking. Early development of writing naturally relies more heavily on speech experience and the expressive mode.

Voice is a particularly appropriate term to apply to writing in several senses. When we refer to the literal recognition of a person's voice, we suggest that the sounds naturally made by an individual are characteristic of that person and distinguish him from others. The evolving of a 'sound' in writing which is distinctive yet natural or authentic is what is meant here by finding the writer's personal voice. The sense

of 'giving voice to an emotion' is important here, too: Ideas which matter to us or are connected to our affective natures are 'voiced'. On the other hand, if we have 'no voice in the matter' we regard the situation as, justly or unjustly, restricting our right to express a choice of view. Learner-writers need to feel their rights to express and explore their world views freely. This is a situation which students often remind us seems impossible in many institutions.

Closely related is another sense in which 'voice' is appropriate. In distinguishing between the active and passive 'voice' of a verb, wide difference in the behaviour of the subject is observed. In the following propositions, 'she' is psychologically two entirely different people:

She decided to write.
It was decided she would write.

In the view of writing expounded here, writing which at every age and stage is regarded as a creative process, the active, responsible participation of the writer is essential. Among many others, Jung has reminded us that a creative act is the antithesis of mere reaction.

'Inner' is chosen purposely as well. Most of us are aware of the social turbulence of our era, of the pressing needs for education to strengthen and draw out the 'inner person' in learners. Overriding the important goals of helping prepare students for universities and jobs is the goal of helping people to cope with a society beset with organization-man ills: The tragic consequences have resulted in the diminishing of selves and in the hollow men who populate our world.

The inner development referred to, however, always occurs within a social context. Vygotsky has pointed out that the egocentric speech of small children is derived organically from the social context, and

the metaphorical inner voice also implies an auditor/responder. Our need of others in understanding and validating knowledge represents a necessary social confirmation.

The term 'inner voice' as it relates to writing focuses on the writing process as a writing up from within, a movement from self outwards, however awkwardly or misleadingly spatial that description may be. We need not be deterred by the stress on self. Our society, with its industrial-model efficiency, draws a chain of negative associations after the term self. What is considered undue attention to self is reflected in such words as 'self-indulgent', 'self importance', 'self pity', and 'self seeking'. The virtues of repression of self are mirrored in the terms 'self-effacement', 'self-denial' and 'self-sacrifice'. However, the self, or inner voice we regard as a necessary matrix in a learner's writing growth is one associated with self-possession, self-determination and self-consciousness--not self-consciousness, and far more than the converse of this.

The Study

Designed to develop a paradigm for writing based on Britton's language theory, this study has concentrated on an exploration of the significance of the writer's inner voice. The framework was developed in Chapter II by a detailed examination of the key concepts in Britton's theory of representation, expressive language and spectator/participant modes, focussing then on the writing process itself. The process of writing was seen to be characterized as intrinsically related to the developing personality and experience of the writer; in fact, it was seen as one of the most complex and potentially creative ways in which we represent the world to ourselves and others. The recognition that writing

may draw out tacit components of our knowledge also showed that writing is a way of representing ourselves to ourselves. In addition, the development of writing, according to the view mapped here, is seen to be a gradual loosening of dependency on the personal contextual centre as moves are accomplished to formulate more publicly presentable ideas. The need, however, for even experienced writers to use this expressive personal growing and learning centre in the writing process was identified.

In Chapter III, the theoretical framework was further extended and the unifying purposes of spectator and participant role writing for personal and cognitive development were shown. Included in this chapter, too, were more practical discussions of selected research-based publications illustrating findings about writing related to Britton's theoretical model. Chapter IV reviewed the significance of Britton's theory for writing by consideration of a wider perspective of composition and rhetoric, discovering new trends in modern rhetoric analogous to Britton's emphasis on written language as a tool for learning. Two important American educationalists in the field of writing, Janet Emig and James Moffet, were also seen to have parallel and supporting views on writing. Chapter V attempted to define by illustration what many of the implications of the writing paradigm examined would mean in practice. In this final chapter, the purpose is to draw together conclusions from the study, and to suggest implications for teaching, teacher training and research.

Conclusions and Implications

Britton's theory was seen to be based on the assumption that language development from childhood to adolescence provides a model for all

language learning. Stated simply, Britton (1970) extrapolates from his empirically derived developmental model to suggest the following:

1. Growth in the language forms of speech, writing and reading all follow a similar conceptual development rooted in the interrelated processes of personal and cognitive growth. It is through the use of language that we organize our representational processes.

2. Narrowing for this study's purposes to writing, the view makes use of a model to suggest that development occurs from a predominantly expressive, affective and egocentric core in two directions, one to a more formal transactional communication directed at a wider audience, and the other to the formation of a poetic verbal construct which stresses form.¹

3. Within each function, writing is regarded as a tool for discovery. The emphasis in learning to write is on the process of inquiry and of the heuristic potential of writing for the individual.

A growing number of educators were seen to subscribe to the views expounded here, understanding that many traditional assumptions can no longer form the basis of a writing programme. Although there are vast gaps in our knowledge about the writing process, it seems justifiable to wonder why so much that we do know is not used. We know the impossibility of educating all students to the same level of performance in the written language. We know that the pedagogical strategy of extensive marking of what is wrong is ineffective. We have recent studies (Laque and Sherwood, 1977, pp. 42-44) which show that most paragraphs of professional writers do not follow the development of textbook methods (example, reason, chronology, contrast, and so on). We know that the expository essay is not the bedrock of writing achievement. Yet many writing programmes continue to

1. Perhaps we need to be reminded of Applebee's careful qualifications lest we begin to see the functions in too categorical a fashion: "We find expressive devices being used for rhetorical effect in highly differentiated, formal writing, just as we find highly referential discourse within the expressive mode (1973, pp. 50-51).

be based on these assumptions.

Writing as the development of thought and individuality is a way of overcoming helplessness, of generating greater personal autonomy. Yet its potential is so complex that it takes many years of slow, often imperceptible development. Even when a learner-writer seems to have reached a plateau of development, with a new piece of writing, the awkwardness and ill-ease may return. Students have traditionally been expected to commit themselves to an essay subject assigned by the teacher as examiner. Such restrictions seem to reinforce negative attitudes to writing and contradict what we believe about the importance of student intention in writing.

Back-to-basics proponents rightly point to a renewed stirring of interest of writing in schools. Britton's theoretical paradigm, however, shows that the crisis in writing is more serious than the critics' surface treatment indicates, and that measures designed to improve literacy by limiting curriculum to directly testable and measureable writing activities will narrow growth rather than support it.

The assumption in this study has been that writing as a medium for personal and cognitive development is basic. The kind of development envisioned by Britton's perspective shows that the deification of yesterday's teaching of writing is blinkered. For too long, writing has been regarded by students (and teachers) as an activity to be suffered, even as punishment, and the kinds of writing in schools have most often been restricted to impersonal classificatory writing. Donald Graves, who researched the status of writing for the Ford Foundation, refers to the strategies for avoiding writing in American education--preoccupation with handwriting, grammar exercises, spelling workbooks and punctuation exercises, all activities he regards as preliminaries and avoidances (1978, pp. 635-640).

Like Britton, Graves stresses response to content as being the primary teacher consideration, with language conventions being dealt with only when the final draft is being readied for an audience. The common knowledge that even professional writers acknowledge their debts to proof-readers is often strangely ignored.

Britton's language framework points to the need to start with the expressive mode and gradually develop both transactional and poetic ends of the continuum. Both ends are needed, one to symbolize reality in order to handle it, and the other to improvise on reality in order to enjoy and share it. The latter, the spectator mode, has been shown in this study, as in many others, to have been neglected and to require greater attention to right the balance.

Writing in this study has been seen as a means to explore ideas, speculate, celebrate (or mourn) aspects of one's own life, thoughts and feelings, writing which helps us explain our experiences and purposes. Such writing means classrooms which are, in Moffet's terminology, student-centred rather than subject or teacher-centred. Writing teachers, according to this view, must create environments which Britton reminds us are "far more hospitable to children's own intentions than at present they are" (1977, p. 37). The creation of the cordiality of the classroom is a first step in setting the stage for full writing development.

The second step grows out of this setting of cordiality. The primacy of the expressive mode has been discussed at length, but its need in diverse forms has not been made explicit. Many studies based on Britton's theory have emphasized the potency of expressive talk in the classrooms, and the value to learning of such talk in groups, pairs or with the teacher. The usefulness of such talk preceding expressive, transactional or poetic writing has been persuasively demonstrated (Paquette, M., 1972; Paquette,

J., 1975; Parbs, 1974; Bullock, 1975; Martin et al, 1976). As well as expressive talk, expressive writing and 'expressive thought' stages are interspersed throughout the composing stages. How the teacher structures the situation so that students have both the benefits of writing in community and in isolation is a highly important consideration.

To speculate on the creation of classrooms envisioned above (and this is not to overlook the fact that some such classrooms already exist) may stimulate questions as to whether this simply makes classrooms too comfortable, or whether what is really required is more discipline and prescriptive standardized instruction. Yet the latter appear to be the very conditions upon which unhealthy attitudes to writing have flourished, where writing strewn with unassimilated fragments or mirroring rigidity of structure and lack of commitment abound. There is a strong implication from this study that the kind of teaching which insists on writing which is superficially 'correct' interferes with the natural springs of language development upon which Britton's view is based. By stressing the springboard of expressive language, Britton also envelops the developmental language principles, iterated in Chapter II--particularly the pleasure/curiosity impetus for language use, and, the need for idiosyncratic formulations in the expressive mode to draw out personal meanings first. The cordiality of the classroom referred to should give time and space for thinking aloud, for musing, for exploring and clarifying ideas with or without the help of others.

If the basics in writing are not the small-focus technical things like correctly spelled words and correctly placed commas (although these will, of course, ultimately be of concern), the focus is on the broader elements of meaning and purpose. Such a view of writing has been seen to

derive from an understanding of the psychological bases of learning, not from the kinds of linguistic and rhetorical analyses often done in university.

One of the conclusions to be drawn from Britton's framework has to do with changing traditional dependence on a prescriptive sequence of 'things to teach'. This pedagogy has, in the past, given the teacher a specific function and a sense of security, but it has concomitantly denied the learner the potency and responsibility which he needs to develop as a writer. Instead of this focus on the structure of the subject, Britton's framework leads us to focus on the structure of the learner. The teacher is seen as an experimenter with each new learner, trying to find ways of generating openness and reflection, helping the student see himself as a writer who finds personal value in writing. The function of the writing teacher is to establish non-threatening challenges, or help the writer establish his own, encouraging idea exploration and different viewpoints. Britton's framework provides the informing theoretical context teachers need to construct the sensitive networks necessary within their own classes:

We see our categories and their theoretical backing as possible means towards an understanding of what goes on in writing and what might go on. We certainly do not see it as any solution to turn it into a sequential programme and teach them.

(Britton et al., 1975, p. 198)

Although this means that teachers would not prescribe a percentage of class writing to be, say, in the poetic mode, it does mean that they would encourage writing in all functions when it seemed appropriate for the writer to move to more complex forms of writing for a wider audience.

The writing envisioned by Britton is the antithesis of what one writer called "SAP--Standard Academic Prose", lifeless, bloodless, voice-

less--but correct" (Harris, 1977, p. 12). SAP could be represented by the image of a mask, but a mask devoid of all expression. Writing with an authentic voice and with the commitment of a purposeful endeavour means affirming one's world representation, ultimately affirming one's self.

If, as Britton believes, learning, living and using language form a kinship, then the more students write in ways which are satisfying and self-enhancing, the more will they be able to draw out of themselves, feeling the surge of power which writing can give. The map of the world we draw as we write enriches our personal storehouse of experience; and writing is seen to refine in more subtle and broader ways than other forms of representation. "The pen is mightier than the sword", ancient adage though it be, ought never to be obsolete: As we move towards the last decades of our millenium, it takes on new meanings in a world largely dominated by machines--corporate and political as well as conventional. The pen as an appendage to the brain and heart of man can reveal truths and strengths unknowable by any other means.

Far from being solipsistic in his view of how man represents the world to himself, Britton presents a view of writing in schools which enlarges the world in common of student writers through sharing of student writing and through the use of peer audiences.

My personal language, the language which reflects my social status as well as my uniqueness in the world, is what Britton means by the language of the expressive mode. Britton accords great respect to this uniquely personal language core, for he sees it as the language centre for each person--the form of language, perhaps, by which a person can not only be most himself, but probably wherein he is most vulnerable as well. Yet because this is regarded as essential to the developing writer's

voice, the teacher will need to be a sensitive and skilled facilitator of this development. A didactic pedagogical model based solely on Standard English and taught through the blinkered perspective of correctness appears to be an inadequate model for writing growth. The need to begin with the learner-writer's own language possessions, to filter experience through the expressive first before moving outwards, has been shown.

Noted, too, has been the need to tap the powerful springs of feelings, the senses of misfit and fragmentation for the self-motivation of writers. This makes the educational situation more hazardous, but eminently more rewarding for both teacher and learner. The medium here must be the encouragement of spectator writing, and this requires a foundation of trust and attention to individual needs. The need for small classes and special training of or awareness in teachers is implied. The deeply grounded satisfactions which come from the total writer involvement in spectator writing offers a forum for corroboration or modification of personal world representations.

The need for teachers to accept a certain amount of unpurposeful appearing activity in the classroom may be difficult for some. Freeing students from the constant demand for polished written performance, encouraging the use of writing for relatively unsystematic explorations of ideas and generating more work-in-progress writing first requires less tidiness and more tolerance from the teacher. How the writing teacher's role has evolved, as seen from Britton's framework, cannot be underestimated. Emig, too, sees the teacher-centred presentation of composition as an anachronism, and the learning of new roles, relationships, and perspective, if teachers are to be allowed the place of significant others

in student writing, is implied. If writing is one of the most complex of human activities, as many believe it to be, then the teaching of writing reflects a difficult challenge indeed. Such an endeavour deserves strong and encouraging professional development support.

At the close of The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18), several suggestions for experimental innovation based on Britton's paradigm are made. These include strategies for encouragement of expressive and speculative uses of writing, for setting up peer group audiences, for counter-ing inhibiting pupil assumptions about writing, and for eliminating 'ex-aminer relationship' from a teacher's written responses. Not the least of these is the suggestion of the development of language policies across different subjects in schools, and the setting up of "conferences and courses which cut across curriculum boundaries, to look at theoretical ideas about the relation of writing and talking to thinking and learning"² (Britton et al, 1975, pp. 199-200). The need, too, for college and uni-versity faculty involved in the teaching and planning of freshman and remedial writing courses to examine the theoretical and philosophical bases for teaching writing is also implied.

Finally, more research devoted to all areas of writing development is needed. Graves observes the discrepancies which exist between reading and writing.

For every one hundred dollars spent for reading materials only one is spent for writing. For every two hours spent on teaching reading, only five minutes are spent on teaching writing Research in writing is decades behind that in reading Re-search dollars for reading in relation to writing are at the

2. Such courses have been successfully held at the University of Calgary's Summer Institutes in English sponsored by the Education Faculty in 1973, 1975 and 1977.

one hundred to one ratio Teacher preparation also insures continued imbalance between the teaching of reading and writing. In a random survey of 36 universities, we find that 169 courses were offered in reading, 30 in children's literature, 21 in language arts, and only two on the teaching of writing.

(Graves, 1978, p. 638)

The conditions Graves notes give us a new perspective. To glibly refer to a return to the basics in writing, when the fullness of writing development envisioned by Britton's framework is so far removed from what has on a large scale ever been achieved in schools, is seen according to this view, to greatly oversimplify the issues. What is basic will not be achieved by behaviour management nor large-scale testing programmes, for as Kenneth Goodman reminds us, "the child--if we come back to the child, we'll be truly back to the basics" (1978).

The back-to-basics issues seen in the light of this study of Britton's language theory has new answers to use in response to the question, "What is basic about writing?" What is basic about writing is "the choice of what to say and how to say it" (Schiller, 1967, p. 22). What is basic about writing is its function prior to communication, the "self discovery, the presentation of experience to oneself for one's own satisfaction" (Martin and Melford, 1971, p. 156). The basis of a true literacy "is in the primordial right of a person to (write) a true word" (Hoychuk, 1977, p. 7). These writing voices speak from a paradigm similar to Britton's. If our society truly desires a literate people, such a view provides us with fresh impetus.

Britton's theoretical paradigm revitalizes writing in schools. Traditionally, it was thought that to give, to teach, the principles of writing was a sufficient pedagogy for learning to write. This ignored how what was offered would be received. "By his own uses of language," Brit-

ton says, "in speech or writing or thought, a child must find out for himself what we tell him" (Britton, 1971, p. 222). Student writing of the sort envisioned here, writing characterized by commitment and pervasive exploration, is worlds apart from current procedures of proficiency testing and emphasis on skills in isolation. Britton's careful theoretical paradigm provides an informing context for writing: It is a context of which administrators and other decision makers ought to be aware to aid them in the development of school writing programmes not yet structured to reflect this view. Britton's view that "learning in school should merge and be part of an individual's total, purposeful, adaptive, living-and-learning" (1977, p. 9), supported as it is by its comprehensive rationale, deserves wide teacher recognition and translation.

Finally, it should be noted that Britton's theoretical position is one which continues to evolve through many hands and heads and classrooms. Its power, in one sense, lies in its potential for diverse teacher translation; in another, more basic sense, for its potential to develop all the ingenuities of learner-writers.

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