

25 March 1974

PROGRAMME OF

ENGLISH, MOTHER TONGUE

- Primary programme
- Secondary programme

ENGLISH, MOTHER TONGUE : PRIMARY PROGRAMME

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. The aims of mother tongue teaching in primary classes have always included the acquiring and improvement of skills in reading and writing. Because of the difficulties these skills present for many pupils, they have been given a great deal of attention and practised through a wide variety of exercises. But increasingly they are now seen, not as isolated activities, but in a context of language growth and development.

As the complexity of language has been realised, and the way in which children acquire it better understood, it has become apparent that the problems of the teacher of the mother tongue are not those of the teacher of a foreign language. The six-year-old child comes to school already able to understand and employ most of the common structures of his native language, and already possessing a considerable vocabulary. During all his school years the lessons concerned with his reading, writing and speaking are only part of his total awareness of language. His more confident grasp of more complicated structures continues to be gained intuitively, as he needs to interpret more complex experiences. The teacher, of course, seeks opportunities for intervention and knows the occasions for direct instruction. But the major part of his skill lies in extending the range of that experience, both at first hand and through literature, in such ways that new demands are made upon the child's language, in listening, talking, reading and writing. The teacher's skill will order his material and his lessons to secure progress in all these modes of language, but his first task is to make certain that the child senses the pleasures and profits of learning to read and write, and of talking with and listening to people, whether teacher or other children.

There will be times when one or other of these four modes will be given immediate priority, but, if they are to be meaningful to the child in school as in everyday life they must be seen to be interdependent and to lead into each other. Every lesson is a language lesson in the sense that the mother tongue is being taught continually - or, perhaps more accurately in the European Schools context, most lessons are.

2. This last qualification is important since there is in any case a significant proportion of children from families where English is literally not the mother-tongue, which may militate against the growth of its usage in the home. In addition, the local reinforcement of English, through television, cinema, or libraries is not extensive.

3. Another feature which may be specific to the English-speaking section is that a number of young children may have had fairly considerable time in a nursery or an infants school before they join the European Schools. Such a school will have provided the child with a range of books and a wide experience of stories and poems, beyond those even of a good home. It may also have organised its teaching and learning in an elastic way, which will have allowed children to progress at their own rates. Thus some of these children at the age of five or six will already be reading or on the point of reading.

4. In aiming at a growing control of oral and written language, enabling children to express themselves and to communicate with others, the following objectives can be listed.

a) Oral English

The prime mode of expression and communication is speech, and Piaget's work has demonstrated the close link between speech and play in very young children. Almost half of their speech is in the category of monologue or soliloquy (ego-centric speech) with the child speaking to himself, even in the immediate presence of other children.

The conclusion to be drawn is that teachers of young children need to make provision for this type of language within the class. Opportunities need to be provided for children to play, in the presence of but not necessarily with other children, in situations which they are creating for themselves. Play situations will stimulate this ego-centric speech, and classroom equipment which includes, for example, a home corner, dolls and dolls' clothes, improvised roadways and airports, constructional toys, water, sand and clay will allow these situations to be created. The purpose of affording opportunities for children to play, and to talk while they play, is to provide for a specific type of speech development, requiring encouragement, or perhaps intervention, by the teacher from time to time. Thus enter incidental conversation, between child and teacher or between child and child; topics of interest to the child from home or his surroundings; topics from his occupations in school or outside response to story, poem or song; the telling of stories whether reproduction or invention. With older children the work grows increasingly sophisticated, and such resources as a tape recorder or slide projector are valuable.

It is with older children, also, that too great a concentration on individual work cards, employed to allow children to get on for themselves, may stifle talk, and inhibit the learning which can only come from attempting to formulate ideas in speech.

b) Reading

i Possibly the most important help and stimulus to reading is a plentiful supply of books which are suitable for the children in each class; the opportunity to display them and make them available to look at, leaf through, read and perhaps borrow; and occasions when the teacher reads from them. It is in such a climate that the teachers' materials and instruction are most successful.

All children do not learn to read at the same age any more than they learn to talk or walk at the same age. There is need for understanding and tolerance and an avoidance of stress, from both teacher and parent, for the late starter. By and large, boys do not come to reading as easily as girls. Conversation, play, story respect for questions, are all helpful, probably essential.

The consensus of research findings indicates that there is no single method of teaching reading that is best for all children all the time. In consequence, teachers tend to use modes of instructions, activities and materials drawn from a variety of sources. There are dangers in this situation. For instance, the freedom of teachers to select their own combination of methods can lead to such differences between the work carried out within classrooms in a single school, that some children may become bewildered and confused. The lack of ordered continuity in the teaching of reading could become grave without regular consultation, and it is imperative that teachers keep themselves informed of new interpretations of this difficult process.

Each school needs for the teachers at least a nuclear collection of books on literacy, and the forthcoming publication of the report of the Committee of Inquiry into Reading and the Use of English will be a major revaluation. In any research on the teaching of reading the single indisputable fact is that the teacher variable is more important than the method or approach.

The most useful line of approach seems to be to regard the acquisition of reading as a process in which a number of inter-related skills and competencies are brought together to discover meaning in print. From this point of view, a "method" of teaching reading would be an organised attempt to structure a programme that enables a child to master those skills or behaviours (eg grapheme - phoneme relationships) which are essential to translate the written code, and at the same time a programme that provides for a developing competency in language (eg the command of information and reasoning). A constant review of such a programme is more valuable than the composition of a rigid programme for all to follow.

ii The fundamental importance of learning to decode print and manuscript can over-shadow the need to develop intermediate and higher skills, and to move towards adult reading. The final objective of fluent, silent reading must be remembered, and here there is no substitute for a considerable supply of books both fiction and non-fiction.

The further skills are probably most easily categorised as understanding or comprehension, although they can only roughly be regarded as successive. The reader must first literally comprehend in order to identify and recall material, and it is this literal comprehension only which many books and reading laboratory materials exercise. They have one grave defect, that they do not satisfy the prime reason for reading, which should be that it is undertaken to satisfy some previous purpose. In addition, since they are convenient classroom exercises and over-used, they may stand in the way of developing skills of reorganisation, inference, evaluation and appreciation which any reading programme should bear in mind.

c) Literature

The role of literature is to bring the child into an encounter with language in its most complex, varied and rewarding forms, so providing him with a personal resource in coming to terms with his experience and his fantasies, and giving him an imaginative insight into other people and their lives.

The teacher needs to be able to present literature which is more mature than the child would seek out for himself or take in by himself. Most commonly it would be presented by reading, but record, tape and radio broadcasts can all assist.

Poetry has a special claim to inclusion in children's education. Carefully chosen poetry will not only throw light on life but will foster sentiments and nourish the imagination. Poetry, therefore, should not be lightly chosen or read to children without preparation. Children enjoy colour and texture of language and sound, unexpected and exciting words and clear images, which help them to see clearly. These are the poetic qualities which appeal to children, and they will gain from stories, poems of action, poems of humour, poems which describe both the world they know and the world they dream about. Even difficult poems sometimes have passages in them which children can appreciate.

d) Writing

A child learns to speak naturally, but he must learn to write consciously. Writing is in part an unnatural activity, and one of the central purposes of a school is to teach the child to write. Writing begins most readily from talk, and the first motivation is provided for a child when a teacher gives shape and some permanence to his stories and news by putting them on paper for him. Children begin to write at ages and stages which vary even more than those they start to read. The child who has been exposed to storytelling and children's books, and to parents and friends who write freely, is more likely to begin earlier and to be successful. He learns to copy and then to write independently for himself.

As children gain in proficiency it becomes clear that the essential requirements in free written work are to have a reason for writing, to have plenty of time to write, and time to finish. The re-telling of stories will help good sequence because this will be controlled by the action of the story. Descriptions of visits and experiences will offer occasion for writing, preceded by discussion which will help in the choice of vocabulary. Time must be found for personal and imaginative writing. As he gets older he reaches towards more impersonal objective writing, which can sustain a degree of exposition. The teachers' influence is greatest when discussion and correction take place between him and the individual. From the study of each child's work, he will know what teaching to give in spelling, grammatical accuracy and punctuation.

e) Language Study

Children acquire most of the grammar of their mother tongue intuitively and before ever they start school. There may still be a case for making explicit a form of linguistic behaviour which they have implicitly assumed, although research does not support the argument. There may be a special case in the European schools, with their considerable emphasis on the teaching of modern languages, so that some pedagogical exchange is possible between teachers of English as a native language and English as a second or foreign language, and teachers of other languages also. If such discussion requires the continuance of traditional grammatical categories, it is imperative that teachers inform themselves of more recent and more carefully refined descriptive grammars, and of their implications for teaching. In particular, stances taken over grammar may valuably be replaced by explorations into usage. Usage is concerned less with the predictable structures and word forms, more with their changing status. A child needs help in acquiring varieties of structures and forms, and in selecting from among them those most appropriate to his purpose.

Children are readily interested in words and their uses. However, not all children will understand abstract terms, and any further teaching of grammar is best left until the transfer to the secondary department. Of course, most children of primary age will be learning a second language, and they will be confronted with some grammar almost from the beginning. But the grammar of English is quite different from that of another language, and the grammar of the latter is much better learned with the language itself.

When primary-age children learn a foreign language, their work in writing and translating can keep pace with the grammar they have learned, but when children use their own language they employ sentences and expressions which range far beyond their knowledge of grammar.

f) Drama

The beginnings of drama are to be found in children's play. As children grow older they act versions of stories they have heard adding to them from their own imagination. At first the play will be through mime and movement, later the children add speech - usually very much to the point, and only secondary to the movement.

As the children get older the dialogue plays a bigger part and as fourth grade pupils the abler children will have little or no difficulty in writing their own scripts. An important aspect of the creativity of dramatic speech as distinct from writing is the inexhaustible fund of acceptable forms and idioms available to children from a very early age; only at the top of the primary school are the children able to interpret satisfactorily other people's plays.

g) Punctuation

The use of some punctuation marks (a period, or question mark) is essential, and direct instruction in them is an economy of time. The use of others (a comma, an exclamation mark) may be a matter of judgment, and the writing of professionals shows that their use varies with a writer's intentions - indeed, the punctuation system is probably not adequate to all of our writing needs. Punctuation should arise from a child's own written work so that its purpose (and its variety) become apparent. Teaching could centre on full stops and commas, and on question and exclamation marks, while speech marks and possessive apostrophes might be left to the fourth grade or later. It may be necessary, and it could be illuminating for the child, to compare and contrast conventional usage in other languages in school eg the use of the comma in German.

h) Spelling

There is no single road to acceptable competence in spelling. Some children are better spellers than others, probably because their visual retention is superior. Many children assimilate correct spelling through reading, but some will need the support of a few rules and of systematic learning of the more common words which present spelling difficulties. Spelling is important, but it must take its appropriate place in the wider sweep of the child's learning, and if one of the main aims of the teacher is to help the child to express ideas on paper, then there is perhaps a reason not to over-stress correctness of spelling in the early stages. Spelling teaching which is based on lists of words almost wholly unconnected with the child's immediate needs is unlikely to be of the same help as that which regards spelling as an integral part of the work which is being done.

Instilling a habit of consulting dictionaries is probably the most lastingly helpful thing a teacher can do.

i) Handwriting

This is a complicated skill and no child acquires it naturally or easily. While it is being learned, the child can hardly be expected to give his full attention to what he is trying to communicate. Provision needs therefore to be made for the two activities - handwriting and communication - not to interact too forcibly one upon the other. A good form should be chosen to begin with, one from which each child can develop his own style.

j) Resources

Of the material support essential to a teacher of the mother tongue, a plentiful supply of books, fiction and non-fiction, both in a school library and in classrooms, is paramount. Text books of varying kinds will be wanted by most teachers, and opportunities for the duplication of teachers' own material is very desirable.

Cassette tape records and simple recording facilities are increasingly important, with access to a record player, a slide projector, and radio and television programmes where appropriate.

ENGLISH, MOTHER TONGUE : PRIMARY

SCHEME OF WORK

To permit a degree of elasticity and to allow for differences in individual progress at this stage of education, the syllabus is arranged in three bands - Year 1; Years 2 and 3; Years 4 and 5.

YEAR 1

a) Oral English

i. Speech and Conversation

Opportunities for play with materials and in situations which encourage speech, either ego-centric or social. Conversation between child and child - time should be allowed each day for free conversation among themselves. Conversation between child and teacher, or indeed, other adults.

Encouragement to speak about topics of interest to the child himself, and to talk with others about them - arising from the home, the school environment, local environment, books and broadcasting.

ii. Stories, Poetry, Songs

Listening each day to stories is very important to small children, and the wealth of folk, fairy and nursery tales from each country should be explored. Nursery rhymes should be read aloud, recited, sung, as should suitable modern verse. The children can re-tell and re-enact the stories and rhymes, which can also be a source of ideas for painting and a model for inventing their own stories.

b) Reading

The class is likely to contain children who have not yet made any start on reading, but also some who have begun to read in other schools. For those who have not yet started, the gradual building up of a sight vocabulary, through name tags, list of children's names, job lists, weather charts, labels on furniture, nature table, etc. The provision of simple library books, largely illustrated. The use of flash cards and picture vocabulary lists, the introduction of graded reading material, and some phoneme and grapheme recognition.

Those who have made a start will be eased into this programme at suitable points.

Records of progress.

c) Writing

Guidance in the use of books, crayons, paints; rhythmic pattern practice; letter patterns; letters of the alphabet - upper and lower case in print script. Copying (writing over or underneath teacher's version) of captions, names, items of news. Progression to joined print script. Work books, news, diary, stories.

Records of progress.

YEARS 2,3

a) Oral English

i. Conversation

- Incidental and free conversation between child and child, between child and teacher (important in multi-lingual environment).
- Conversation arising out of topics of interest to the child: the home, the school, the class, the previous country, the neighbourhood, people and their work eg the postman, nurse, etc, local events.
- Child encouraged to listen intelligently to others. Listening exercises to promote this, eg identifying sounds on tape, listening walk, retelling of stories, etc. Child encouraged to improve his language by critical listening.
- Extension of topics for discussion as child's interest and knowledge grows. Television and radio, films, games and hobbies, news. Fantasy material - ghosts, adventure, etc.
- Environmental topics: plants, animals, pets, food, clothing, children of other sections in the school, children of other lands, etc.

ii. Stories

Child listens to folk, fairy and nursery tales told or read by the teacher. Child retells story. He creates his own, being allowed to express himself freely. Conversation about stories read. Progression to simply told versions of legends of other cultures, to stories of historical background and tales of adventure.

Stories from child's own reading as he masters the technique.

iii. Poetry, Rhymes and Song

Teacher reads simple poems and rhymes of interest to the children. Children recite and sing. Children compose their own poems having listened to a poem or seen a picture or heard music.

Progression to narrative and nature poems, children memorise poems of their own choice. Group and individual recitation.

iv. Drama

Dramatisation of stories, poems, rhymes. Puppetry as dramatic expression. Children compose their own sketches and dialogues.

b) Reading

Experience and interest based reading, each child progressing at his own level.

- Pre-reading activities:

Oral work as described in (a)

- The extension of a basic sight-vocabulary, eg names, labels, flash cards, wall lists, greeting cards, posters, advertisements, weather chart, news sheet.
 - Reading games: picture and word matching, matching words to words, matching captions to pictures.
- Reading of simple read-write cards.

- Use of suitably, graded reading scheme or schemes.
- Word study, elementary phonic training, word groups.
- Availability of a variety of simple, well-illustrated books both factual and imaginative for children's use in Book Corner or Library. As technique is mastered, children progress to independent, silent reading both functional and recreational with oral reading when necessary.

Discussion of matter read and questioning for comprehension.

Testing and recording.

c) Writing

To enable the child to give written expression to his experience.

- Use of brushes, crayons, chalks, scissors to develop muscular coordination.
- The copying of words or phrases which give meaning to the child's picture or experience (in conjunction with reading Activities).
- Formal letter and rhythmic patterns as an introduction to handwriting. Use of unjoined print script, at first, leading to the development of a fluent and finished style later.
- Child writes words or phrases from memory, eg his own name, labels, captions for pictures etc.

Simple read-write activities.

- Writing of simple news, leading to class diary, birthday cards, advertisements, etc as technique is mastered.
- Personal and creative writing in response to stimulus, eg an experience, a visual or an aural image, an imaginary situation.
- Writing for individual and group projects and themes.
- Letter writing.
- Picture and word dictionaries in conjunction with oral work.
- Guidance in how to present and exhibit their work.

GRADES IV - V

Language now becomes a more unified activity as the basic techniques are mastered.

a) Oral English

i. Continuation and development of speech and listening as outlined for younger children. Continued importance of incidental conversation between child and child, between child and teacher, of intelligent and critical listening leading to mature thought and appreciation.

- Discussion of topics arising out of personal experience. Project and theme work at individual group and class level: factual material, surveys, polls, interviews,

commentary. News.

- Topics arising from other subjects: mathematics, environmental study, eg climate, clothing etc, art and craft activities.
- Topical events. Radio and television. Films, Games and hobbies. School outings etc.

Impromptu speech.

- Wide use of books, tapes, films etc.
- General extension of vocabulary in conjunction with reading activities.
- A more formal treatment of oral language children helped in their everyday language by listening critically and imitating the examples of good speech.

Reference to grammatical terms where necessary.

Spelling as required.

ii. Stories

- Narration and discussion of more difficult fairy tales, folk tales, legends, myths and sagas. Tale of adventure, of historical reference and biography.
- Selective reading by the teacher of extracts of good prose with a view to developing a critical and appreciative attitude in the children.
- Access to a wide range of books both non-fiction and fiction, in the school library.

iii. Poetry and Song

Use of anthologies of poetry by the children containing a wide range of lyrical and narrative poetry about people, animals, birds adventure, heroism, travel, etc.

Reading by teacher and pupils.

Discussion and explanation of some poems suited to the ability of the class in order to develop appreciation.

Memorisation of poems of children's own choice.

- Class, group and individual recitation.
- Children encouraged to write in verse. Singing in cases where poems are set to music.

iv. Drama

- Children dramatise plays, stories, poems heard or read.
- Children compose their own plays and dramatise them.

b) Reading

- Extension of reading ability. Reading aloud where necessary.

- Development of functional and recreational reading.

Functional reading for projects and themes. Guidance in selection and note-taking, in the techniques of presentation.

- Creative reading as a stimulus to creative activity-talk, writing, music, drama, poetry, tape recording.

- Increased emphasis on silent reading.

- Extensive use of books and other reading material both fiction and non-fiction. Anthologies of prose and poetry, encyclopedias, reference books.

- The development of reading maturity through responses to selected works.

- Reading tests and records.

iii. Writing

- Consolidation of handwriting skills.

- Development of personal and creative writing - stories, poems, letters, songs, class magazine, news sheet, diaries, dialogues, plays and scripts, events.

- Use of various stimuli, books, films, photographs, experiences.

- Development of objective writing: writing for projects and themes, note taking, reports surveys, etc.

- Direct guidance in presentation of written work, eg punctuation and paragraphing, sentence structure etc as the child requires. Child encouraged to revise and correct.

EUROPEAN SCHOOLS

FEBRUARY 1974

PROGRAMME OF ENGLISH, MOTHER TONGUE, SECONDARY

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. The aims of the mother-tongue teaching in secondary classes are not essentially dissimilar from those in primary classes, however vastly different the literature and other material which the adolescent needs to confront. Much of what has been said in the general considerations for the teaching of English in primary classes holds good for secondary classes. The adolescent, like the child, needs increasing linguistic resources to meet the demands made upon him in living and in learning, and it is the teacher's job to provide abundant opportunity for him to use his language in ways which will most conduce to improvement, and to use it under expert guidance so that he is helped to greater precision, sensitivity and effectiveness. Mother tongue teaching is more process than content, and the main business of the English teacher is not direct instruction in the sense which may be applicable in most other subjects. An awareness of the continuity of teaching and learning in the mother tongue can do something to illuminate some of the problems in secondary classes, when children may show less pleasure in reading and writing. Some similar questions (eg 'What is reading for?') may be asked, even if the answers are not the same. An awareness of the unity of English teaching becomes even more important as specialist teaching emerges, and no one teacher sees all the work that a pupil does. The evidence accumulates that language grows, not so much from formal exercises and trial runs, as through an interaction of writing, talk, literature and experience, the body of resulting work forming an organic whole. Again, different demands are made by different subjects across the curriculum, some of them highly specific. For most pupils the motivation for a greater technical control, which will let them move from simple narrative to sustained generalisation, is the securing of effective and appropriate communication. This motivation all teachers have to supply, often by indirect approaches. Language development in the secondary school requires the co-operation of all the staff.

The re-definition of the principles behind the aims of all mother-tongue teaching in recent years has been brought about by the realisation of the primacy of speech and the importance of talk as a step towards thinking; the study of the living language; training in expression as well as communication; helping children to use language creatively as well as to respond to literature; inventing learning situations which motivate children to acquire vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, grammar, absorbing the implications for teaching of the new grammar and of linguistic knowledge; a concept of 'appropriate' rather than 'correct' English, and the linguistic validity for their own purposes of dialect, regional or social; progress from spontaneous restricted language to more elaborated language. Not all these concepts have been absorbed into teaching, and it has to be recognised that the process is an unsettling one for teachers. In spite of this bewildering situation there are pointers as to the direction to be taken and as to where emphasis should be placed, summed up in a phrase for the over-riding aim of the mother tongue as 'The personal development and social competence of the pupil'.

2. As in the primary programme, the English-speaking section has to take account of those for whom English is not a mother-tongue, especially the children of Danish families. The problem may be easier in the future when most of such children will come to the secondary classes from the primary school. But at present there is an acute difficulty in equipping the children with enough technical language to manage other subjects in their curriculum.

3. The objectives of the teaching in the secondary classes may be listed in the same order as those of the primary.

a) Oral English

The importance of oral English, of talking and listening, remains fundamental. Indeed, for those for whom English is a second language, even more so. They can improve in oral English, while the more complicated demands suddenly made on their powers in written English may halt their progress. To advance in spoken English builds confidence.

The importance of being able to listen is so closely bound up with the ability to speak that it is perhaps specious even to treat the two separately. It would seem nevertheless that the emphasis in the classroom should be sometimes on exercises which made increasing demands on the children's listening powers, training them in the essential areas of concentration and critical response. From an early stage drama, with the listening demands it makes on those participating, has an important role to play. Class discussion and debate, with the class sometimes dividing into groups and different pupils taking on the roles of chairman and secretary, are practical and interesting ways of sharpening listening skill. The tape recorder and broadcasting receiver can be used to advantage here too, bringing in different listening situations. At later stages of the secondary school more sophisticated listening situations can be devised, indeed will often arise naturally in the course of language activity - comparisons between 'slanted' material and straight information, for example, work in distinguishing tones, inflections, implications, and critical listening to professional recordings of literature.

The main problem facing the teacher in speech is an organizational one. While children can be listening, reading and writing at the same time in the classroom, it is obviously not possible to have them all speaking together. The problem intensifies as classes get larger. The European School situation creates further problems of organization where many Danish children, for whom English is still a foreign language, cannot be expected to respond in certain categories of conversation where they lack the necessary linguistic experience.

Yet for some pupils in the European Schools the classroom is the only place where they have the opportunity to speak English. Their environment is a non-English one. At home, even for some native speakers, the language spoken is not English. For all the children the lack of exposure to the 'living English' situation of their contemporaries in English speaking countries must surely result in some kind of a loss in their language experience. They are not experiencing the total bain linguistique.

The problem is a formidable and challenging one and the special circumstances prevailing in the European School situation demand special attention to the development of meaningful articulate speech - the more so when the close connection between command of the spoken language and the range of one's written language is remembered.

As the teacher's basic role in creating a situation where discourse will be stimulated is the providing of the stimuli for discussion and ensuring that the discourse continues at the appropriate level, both discussion with the entire class and discussion in carefully constituted groups would seem to be priorities. The general class discussion will, perhaps, exceed the linguistic skills of some children at times, but this very stretching of their powers can be effective teaching, if the teacher is aware of their limitations and of the amount of concentration that can be reasonably demanded of them. It may be wise at times to offer relief and to provide the opportunity for consolidating aspects of the

discussion to allow a group to detach themselves from the main discussion and write up, for example, some of the points which have been talked about.

Group discussion would seem to be a most useful way of ensuring maximum participation and at a level as far as possible appropriate to the group. Here teacher intervention is essential to ensure that discussion does not degenerate into gossip.

b) Reading

All pupils in the secondary school can read without difficulty and so their course can concentrate its attention on their understanding of the experiences (literary, para-literary, and non-literary) in which they engage, and on the nature and quality of their responses. Traditionally, their reading matter has been drawn from literature, often in the past from older classics of literature. Only those books which have been studied in the classroom, or extracts from which have been either read in anthologies of passages or offered as exercises for explication, have been taken into account. The study of literature has had a twofold function - the enrichment of pupils' language through reading and the enrichment of their experience and the consequent development of their personality through the human situations portrayed. A realisation of the need to start with books with which pupils are quickly engaged has led to the reading of many more contemporary authors, and the selection of texts less because they illustrate the output of a great writer or are typical of a period or a genre, and more because they touch upon pupils' concerns. To find modern writing which has patently inherent value as well as immediate appeal is not necessarily easy, but for a good many pupils it is the only way in which they may enter into the heritage of literature. But, additionally, the teacher has to take account of leisure reading and of the role of fantasy in such reading. Perhaps one of his most important tasks is to develop the reading habit, to increase the amount and range of pupils' voluntary reading and to look to the growth of discernment outside the classroom as well as in it. He may want to ponder the place of film and broadcasting in the extension of imaginative experience.

But, while few things are more valuable than a reading habit which finds pleasure in a wide range of books, the teacher has to take his pupils beyond browsing or seeking vicarious satisfaction in identifying with fictional characters. He has to cultivate from the beginning appropriate ways of formulating responses to reading, helping pupils to recognize a writer's tone and intentions, and identifying the importance of form as well as content. This objective involves the teacher in a more intensive study of some reading, sharpening to what with older pupils it is not too solemn to call criticism. For the first three years such a process might be termed comprehension, but it is always seeking to go beyond simple literal understanding to an awareness of how the author is using language and shaping his work. Sometimes, for this kind of teaching, collections of extracts are employed. But there are advantages in giving concentrated attention to an important key passage or scene in a novel or play. There are still more advantages in being able to use a whole piece of writing, and the lyric poem, the short story and the short play have much to offer in a classroom setting.

In the sixth and seventh years the balance between intensive study and extensive reading becomes more difficult to maintain. An intensive study, perhaps described as practical criticism and characterised by an 'explication de texte' approach, offer pupils tools for critical analysis which help him in his judgment of non-literary as well as literary material. But without wider reading, and without sufficient reading of whole texts, he may find it difficult to reach any adequate standards of criticism. An extensive approach, especially one which seeks to cover a representative collection of national literature, is in danger of providing only superficial information.

There is a difficulty, too, in making sure that literature for the fifth, sixth and seventh years is chosen primarily for its human and humane values rather than its illustration of social, political or moralistic views. The thematic grouping of books, often attractive to pupils can throw a selection out of balance. One field which has not yet been sufficiently explored, and which seems to have an especial value for the European schools, is that of literature in translation, world literature as well as European. Its inclusion should not encroach on the responsibility of modern language teachers, for there is a great deal from which to choose. The English-speaking section should additionally take account of the work in English by Irish and American writers.

c) Drama

Drama is as important to the adolescent as to the child, but it is more difficult to organise. It requires more space and is more likely to need extra material resources. It may have to draw in pupils without experience of educational drama when they were younger. Drama employs non-verbal forms of communication, and, in improvised role-playing, unscripted language; it has wider functions than developing linguistic competence of a formal kind. Indeed, a difficult script may be a handicap. It is an area in which teachers are less likely to be experienced, and where, with older pupils, it is more likely to approximate to theatre and to be directed to an audience. Nevertheless, its very particular function throughout the secondary school course should be remembered, and it should be part of every pupil's educational experience.

d) Writing

Writing is the linguistic mode which holds most difficulties for the primary child, and these difficulties are intensified for the pupil in the secondary school. Quite suddenly, a new set of demands are made upon him in wider subject fields, where he may not be immediately interested and where a teacher may not easily accept responsibility for any failure in communication. A pupil is quickly bewildered and finally discouraged. It is an especial problem for pupils for whom English is a second language, and it is imperative that the writing tasks asked of them should not be beyond their powers at that moment and so leave them with a sense of defeat. Such a class may have to allow its pupils to work in different ways until they all gain sufficient competence. The third year is a particularly vulnerable point in the course. The nature of the syllabuses in many subjects results in more writing tasks which require exposition, inference, and hypothesis, while the beginning of instruction in history and geography in the foreign working language curtails opportunities for using English. The programme must provide, as pupils grow more competent, regular opportunities for writing at different lengths on a range of topics, and in a variety of styles and manners. Occasions for sustained writing in an ordered sequence, whether as narration, description, exposition or argument, become increasingly necessary. These rhetorical categories are probably inadequate, and newer models of writing, in which a sense of audience is recognised, are nearer the realities of writing problems. A model which seems to have a special relevance to the teaching of English in the European schools has been offered by James Moffett in his book 'Teaching the Universe of Discourse', analysing two ladders of increasing abstraction. The first is the relation of speaker to listener; the second is the speaker's attitude towards his subject.

The capacity to write is developed by the teacher recognising the increased demands that can be made, and not by exercises. Language does not develop in a straight line through a succession of points which have been identified and reached. Pupils have to return to similar tasks in greater depth.

If the difficulties are intensified for the pupil, so are the problems of assessment and improvement for the teacher. The question which teachers ask continually of all but the quickest pupils is "How can I get my pupils to write grammatically?", and, as the pupils get older, they seek short cuts. There are none. At a deeper level, the difficulties of the mazes in sentence structure (and probably of seemingly haphazard punctuation) arise from the continuum of the spoken and written forms of the language. At a more obvious level, an improved understanding of the conventions and niceties of written language, and a greater attention to them, result from the teacher's scrutiny of the pupils' writing. Exercises to establish minor matters following diagnosis may well be beneficial; but research concludes that exercises in vacuo, to establish rules which must be adhered to, have little effect.

In the fifth, sixth and seventh classes it is likely that the writing required from pupils will bear upon literature more precisely, but the need for linguistic resources to comment on ephemeral work and non-literary language in the everyday world has still to be recalled. One of the contributions of the study of literature and its criticism is the building up of these resources.

e) Language Study

As anxieties over the ability of pupils to write acceptably standard English increase in the secondary years, so does the concern over the nature and effect of the teaching of language.

The disturbing aspect is, perhaps, twofold. The science of linguistics is still in its infancy, relatively speaking, despite the revolution it has already created in modern language teaching. In the teaching of English as a mother tongue practical application of linguists' findings has been much slower than in the field of foreign languages. Consequently, for the moment, the problem of how to proceed with the task of developing pupils' linguistic skills defies the possibility of creating a comfortable, graded and self-sufficient programme such as was possible, until very recently, when the English curriculum was structured on what was, indeed, an outmoded model for Latin. With the old curriculum there was a neat, compartmented progression through the "parts of speech", phrases, clauses, to the main divisions of prose composition. The difficulty was, however, that the kind of analysis and description, possible for a dead language of which, generally speaking, only one form was known - the written form of the educated classes - was totally inadequate for dealing with the complexity and variety of a 'living' language. The dilemma facing many teachers of English today is whether they should reject the traditional curriculum for language teaching before they have found a substitute with reasonably clearly defined stages of progression or continue with an inadequate syllabus which at least has the advantage of appearing to have progressive stages.

The second disturbing aspect is the number of implications inherent in the findings of linguistic research which are at the root of this present dilemma. The old notion of correctness has, to a great extent, given way to the concept of appropriateness and effectiveness in the use of language. Of course all notion of correctness has not been abandoned - what is implied is that correctness is often not an absolute but that it can vary at different registers of communication. For the teacher used to operating within the simpler framework of 'right' and 'wrong' this is a major change in perspective. The terminology for describing language, long consecrated by traditional teaching, has been rejected by linguists as inadequate, and doubts have been cast on the value of many traditional practical exercises such as clause analysis.

However, while the teacher is still discovering how much of the new grammar he can incorporate into his work and how much of the old is still needed for pedagogical discussion, the pupil is interested in words and their ways. Perplexities over usage, especially social usage, afford a route into grammatical and lexical matters, and eventually, for the sixth and seventh years, into areas of study drawn from the structure of language, the history of language and philology.

f) Punctuation

Some punctuation is essential to the quick grasp of meaning, most obviously the period. Such marks, guides to a reader's eye and understanding, call for attention and are an easy matter for direct instruction, and, if necessary, repeated practice. Others, most obviously the comma, can depend upon individual judgment, and are most readily illustrated from children's own writing, or from the variant practices of professional writers. With some children at some ages a 'rule', even if only a part-rule, may be less confusing, particularly if they are also at the same time learning another language where the conventions may be more strictly observed.

But while punctuation should not be ignored, it should not overshadow things of greater importance. There are usually more important things to say of a badly constructed sentence than to point out the absence of a comma or a mis-spelling.

g) Spelling

Like punctuation, spelling clearly demands attention, but, again, not so much that it prevents the teacher from considering more fundamental errors. It also lends itself to some direct instruction, although pupils vary a great deal in visual acuity, attention and recall. The habit of consulting a dictionary is clearly a help, but it is not a cure-all and can be time-wasting. This is a field where greater care may be aroused indirectly through an interest in words - the English spelling system is more systematic than is sometimes alleged.

h) Resources

Mother-tongue teaching needs the support of facilities much more than has always been allowed. Books must be available in considerable numbers to permit teachers to find those which they can read and study successfully with their classes. There is room for class collections as well as a school library, and even for a school bookshop. The teacher ought to be able to supply individual copies or small sets of books for group work as well as class readers. Access to duplication assistance so that he can use his own material and not just textbook sources is especially important. English teachers need cassette tape recorders, and access to recording facilities, to record player, slide projector, radio and television.

i) The needs of Danish Pupils

Reference has been made on several occasions to the special problems presented by children for whom English is not a mother tongue. These do point especially to the necessity of particular equipment (eg tape recorder and headphones) and materials (eg a particular range of books, especially for younger children), and to the advantages of group work within classes, if teachers can continue to organise lessons in this way.

MOTHER TONGUE, ENGLISH - SECONDARY

SCHEME OF WORK

Following the general considerations of the preamble, the pattern of work to be covered in the years of the secondary course is set out below. Books are not prescribed, whether language course books or literature, but close liaison over the selection of books should be maintained between schools to minimize any problems caused by the transfer of pupils between the European Schools.

Two matters of continuing concern from the first year to the seventh are PUNCTUATION and SPELLING. Both of them clearly demand attention in the ways that are elaborated in the general considerations. But in the later years of the course there will be particular pupils who will continue to demonstrate difficulties, which will often have to be dealt with individually rather than by group instruction.

Similarly, throughout the course, the most reliable approach to LANGUAGE STUDY is the observance of language in use, both spoken and written, and in a variety of situations and context. Such an approach begins from interest, and introduces the terminology necessary to illustrate complexities in usage and the differences between idiomatic and standard English. Pupils should not be confused by varying grammatical terms, but it is important that teachers accept that languages do not show structural identity, and that even similarities may be more apparent than real. Emphasis should be given to usage rather than to definition or function. In particular, it is from pupils' own written work that the words or practices which they find difficult will have to be diagnosed and help given. Selective sympathetic assessment of their efforts, and assistance in finding acceptable alternatives to errors, is vital.

YEARS 1,2

The work of these two years has so much in common that taking them together avoids some confusion as well as frequent repetition. It is not easy to delimit practices to one year or the other, especially when pupils may have very different linguistic resources at their command. The years are a bridge between the primary school programme, and the separation of the secondary school curriculum into subject fields, each with its own specialized approach.

a) Oral English

- Opportunities of listening as well as speaking. Listening to sounds as well as voices; identifying, describing, categorising; inventing sounds (in creative, dramatic work).

Listening to readings, to records, to broadcasts, to topics of programme made by older pupils.

Retelling and summarising.

- Help in reading aloud to improve clarity, fluency, liveliness, feeling. Practice with tape recorders, in a mini-lab situation. Choral speaking may be a useful preliminary for the less certain.

- The experience of talking freely and openly with teachers and to each other (in groups). It is important to remember that hesitant, incomplete formulations, all that some pupils can manage, are a necessary step to more confident speech, and patience with this stage is necessary.

- Prepared talks on personal experiences and interests. Talks for different purposes to relate to different audiences (perhaps best attempted after preliminary drama exercises).

- Class or group project in preparing programme on tape. (Perhaps best attempted in later part of second year - it can lead to a variety of other English work.)

b) Reading

- The capacity to comprehend, both literally and in more subtle ways, taking in an author's tone and intention, is best taught indirectly, however it may be tested or assessed. Use of passages from books that are being read together, from books readily available, and from up-to-date and relevant material prepared by teacher.

- Resources of a library.

- Encouragement of extensive reading by making books available in class collections and school library, talking about them, reading from them, using them as ways into writing or drama. More difficult books offered by teachers' reading. The especial importance of myth and legend.

c) Drama

- Movement and mime.

- Individual, pair and small group work. Improvised scenes.

- Building a dramatic situation.

- Role playing.

- Interpretation of narrative.

d) Writing

- Regular opportunities for writing in as many ways as possible, after appropriate stimulus and careful preparation.

- Description, narrative, report, personal journal, letter writing; turning a short story into a radio script; free choice of form (including verse).

- Writing at different lengths, for different purposes, to different audiences; often by an indirect approach.

- Some copious sustained writing, for those who can attempt it, eg a prolonged story.

Preliminary shorter exercises on especial problems, eg writing of dialogue, conventions of correspondence.

- Playing with words, eg light verse, for form magazine.

- Keeping of personal dictionaries, reading records, anthologies.

- Exercises on specific linguistic matters from diagnosis of faults in writing.

YEAR 3

The language demands made on pupils in this year are not new, but they are intensified. In particular they are asked for more objective forms of writing, both statement and exposition. Demands are also made by teachers with varying expectations, sometimes requiring specific forms. Thematic approaches are valuable and emphasize the unity of all language work. Pupils of this age should be able to maintain interest in a topic through 4-6 weeks. They might build on the myths and legends read in the first two years, eg modern interpretations of the Trojan conflict.

a) Oral English

- In extending the work of the first two years some measure of formality in discussion through debate or committee procedure.
- Listening to dramatic or oratorical nuances in stress and intonation; variants of English pronunciation.

b) Reading

- Any considerable introduction of project work will mean the discovery, interpretation and selection of printed material of all kinds. But difficult for a project to take account of literature for its own sake, not as an illustration of a theme. Pupils of this age have usually outgrown 'children's fiction'; there is no 'adolescent fiction'; and film and television make them familiar with mature subjects and sophisticated treatment. Periodicals and cheap paperbacks supply pulp or ephemeral reading. For adult books within their linguistic competence, but with enough substance for serious consideration, help provided by lists offered in various compilations on teaching pupils of this age.
- An especial place for translations from modern European literature, both short stories and short plays.

c) Drama

- Work from scripts, both writing their own and interpreting the work of dramatists. Important to get beyond playreading, and to remember techniques of casting and rehearsal. Selection of key scenes from longer plays for detailed dramatic consideration. Use of the microphone.
- Background to the theatre; stage, costume, design, music.

d) Writing

- The projects should provide starting points for oral and written composition of all kinds; may properly include note-taking, but the prime consideration is occasions for imaginative writing - not, of course, restricted to the projects.
- More elaborate exercises in response to reading, film, radio, etc calling for more technical vocabulary.

YEAR 4

In the fourth year the topics should be more demanding, perhaps subsumed under some such title as 'Man in Society'. Work might continue along those lines for a number of the pupils, but for others with more linguistic capacity the programme might turn primarily to the study of literature.

a) Oral English

- By this time much oral work should be part of the preparation for written composition of one sort or another, and of the discussion of literature. Some time given to the art of being interviewed - broadcast models may offer a useful start.

b) Literature

- Pupils' tastes and abilities will vary quite widely and necessary to provide for this difference by group study. But valuable to have literary experience in common, eg:
- Careful selection from anthology of modern poetry.

- Anthology of poetry in translation (not only European).
- Records of modern poetry, including versions in original languages of translations.
- A novel of sufficient depth, but not too difficult language (eg Huckleberry Finn).
- A play of wide appeal (eg Brecht 'Mother Courage').
- Short stories (eg Joyce) including translations (eg Maupassant).

At the same time, every provision should be made to extend pupils' leisure reading.

c) Drama

- The extension of dramatic methods at this stage may turn upon accommodation and facilities. Some kind of studio and recording facilities make possible more elaborate work.

d) Writing

- A similar balance to that in the third year preserved, but a large proportion of writing generated from the reading of literature.
- More scrupulous attention to accuracy of vocabulary (eg prefix, suffix); care over structure (eg prepositions, complex sentence construction); use of dictionary (eg derivations).

YEAR 5

a) Language

- Study of para-literary and non-literary language (eg newspaper, magazine, popular reading, poster, broadcast).
- Exercises in writing, calling for definition of attitude to subject and audience.
- Exercises in essay bearing upon examination.

b) Literature

A selection of 4-6 books from:

- Modern authors of substance, in a variety of genres (eg Ibsen, Shaw; Hardy, Conrad, Lawrence, Bellow; Yeats, Eliot).
- Contemporary authors (including an anthology of poetry).
- Some literature in translation.
- Authors from heritage of literature (eg Shakespeare, Sheridan; Dickens, George Eliot; Donne, Byron).

It might be necessary to provide a reading programme of simpler literature for some pupils, probably entirely modern.

YEAR 6

- a) Analysis and criticism of unprepared texts, prose and verse.

- b) An author and his background (eg Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Dickens, Eliot, Yeats)
- three selected texts for intensive reading.
- c) A genre (16th-20th centuries) - texts for rapid reading.
- d) Linguistics and the mother tongue - varieties of English.

YEAR 7

- a) Analysis and criticism of unprepared texts, prose and verse.
- b) Intensive study, one of the following:
 - i. An author (eg Shakespeare - Twelfth Night, Macbeth, Troilus and Cressida)
 - ii. A period (eg 19th century - Wordsworth 'Prelude', Dickens 'Bleak House', Chekhov 'The Seagull')
 - iii. A genre (eg George Eliot - Henry James - Conrad)
 - iv. A theme (eg Ibsen 'The Master Builder', Shakespeare 'King Lear', Sophocles 'Oedipus Rex')
 - v. Literature across frontiers (Dickens, Balzac, Tolstoy)
(Shakespeare, Moliere, Pirandello)
(Ronsard, Keats, Heine)
- c) The historical or critical background to the texts chosen for intensive study.
- d) A folio of critical writing by pupil.

