ENGLISH EDUCATION AS SCHOLARLY DISCIPLINE

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I am flattered to be labeled the keynote speaker at this opening session of our conference, but I am a bit awed, too, for one feels the greatest challenge when he speaks before his friends. I hope, actually, that I may not be speaking as much to you as for you when I suggest some propositions that may constitute a raison d’etre for our gathering for the second time on a national basis. I do not have to convince most of you that English education—and that term is used now without quotation marks in the most august sources—is a scholarly discipline. There are signals in the wind. There is, first, the fact of this second national conference on English education. There is the recently published volume, The Education of Teachers of English, to be discussed at another of our general sessions. There is the proposal, revealing, though perhaps impracticable, made by Donald Tuttle last year at the Allerton Park Conference that the preparation of the specialist in English education require a post doctoral degree! There is the statement from that conference which it was my pleasure to quote at our conference last year at Indiana University:

The teaching of English and research in teaching will profit from joint efforts of specialists in English, English education, psychology, and other areas. Faculty members engaged in research in the teaching of English should be considered eligible for any reduction in teaching loads that is available for those engaged in literary or linguistic research, and the results should be evaluated by criteria comparable to those applied in literary or linguistic disciplines.

English education as scholarly discipline has been long in arriving, but it has arrived. Its arrival owes much to the groundwork laid by Dora V. Smith, Lou LaB rant, Helene Hartley, Robert C. Pooley, J. N. Hook, Lennox Grey, John DeBoer, and others. Its arrival owes, too, to the idea that English as general education at the elementary, high school, and early college levels is different in kind, not only in degree, from English as special discipline in upper college years and the graduate school.

For those of us who have been in English education for some time, the road academically has seemed long and tortuous, perhaps, but the broad view may make the progress of English education seem almost dramatic. Think of the transition from the barbershop status of English education only a short time ago. The conception undergirding the barbershop approach was that anyone who managed to survive the hurly-burly of the public school classroom was capable of teaching prospective teachers, just as any competent barber can teach someone else to cut hair. So Sarah Jones who had been teaching in the local schools for ten years without incidence of pregnancy, marriage, or other assaults on celibacy or decency was called on to whip out a methods course.

A few years later, English education meant the appointment of a supervisor of student teachers, who bird-dogged his charges into the hinterlands and was, perhaps, entrusted to the teaching of an undergraduate "methods" course but nothing else. The transition then led to recognition as a second-rate member of an English or education department whose chief duty it was to stand as a buffer between his more respectable and sensitive colleagues and the administrators and other unpleasant realities of the public schools.

Then came the liaison men, often holding appointments, but not much status, in both departments of English and education, whose major duty was to patrol that dismal no-man's-land between the academicians and the educationists, an ambassador without portfolio and usually without promotion. Finally came legitimate joint appointments in English and in education or the status, perhaps, in one or the other. And more recently, even, has come the establishment of departments of English education.

If I speak caustically, it is out of gratitude. And if I exaggerate, it is out of fatuous concern for this as the opening statement.

You recall that several times last year we mentioned that now almost famous question that came from the Basic Issues Conference of 1958, "What the hell is English education?" And we might echo, in words more acceptable to the Southern Baptist conscience, "What is the nature of the discipline? What does the scholar in the field know?"

He is not just someone in education who happens to know something about English, nor is he someone in English who happens to know something about and have some interest in what goes on in the English classrooms of the public schools. The definition of the discipline may be based, first, on what the scholar of English education is generally expected to do or what he will be expected to do when he completes preparation. Last year, Dr. Pooley's excellent opening address at this conference dealt with the professional and scholarly responsibilities of the specialist in English education. The definition is based, secondly, on the nature of the few excellent programs for educating scholars in our field which have existed for some time or which are being developed or proposed in a number of universities. I suggest that the demanding discipline of English education encompasses six facets: (1) English linguistics, (2) rhetoric, (3) literature, (4) research technique, (5) nature of learning, (6) philosophy and sociology of American education. I am not so naive as to suppose that our scholarship in any one of these facets will necessarily equal in depth that of the person who limits his work to that facet, and whose help we may need frequently in our work. But our scholarship in each should go well beyond casual acquaintance and should represent serious, formal study. It is this combination of learning that makes of English education a unique discipline and gives the scholar in the field his competence in dealing with curriculum and methodology in English. No doctoral program can provide the candidate with thorough preparation in all of these fields, but the doctorate should lay foundations in all of them and may lead to true specialization in one or more.

For the competent scholar in any discipline, completion of the doctorate is the beginning. What is done to deepen learning in the years immediately fol-
lowing is as vital as the work for the degree itself, and evidence of the deepening should be a major criterion for promotion in academic rank or professional position. In speaking of the doctorate as minimal formal preparation, I realize, at the same time, that not all competent scholars in English education will necessarily have the degree.

English Linguistics

Since I have this opportunity to play Jehovah in defining our discipline, let me be more specific about the directions of learning and the special responsibilities in each of the six areas I have identified. Scholars in English education have been active in linguistic research and in upgrading the quality of English language learning in the schools. Priscilla Tyler, Lou LaBrant, Stanley Kegler, Ruth Strickland, Walter Loban are names that come immediately to mind. Conversely, linguists have concerned themselves with public school programs—Harold Allen, Paul Roberts, Nelson Francis, Thomas Wetmore, James Sledd, Henry Lee Smith, among others. Two college professors of English, Bertrand Evans and James Sledd, arguing on different sides of the many-sided grammar issue a few years ago, referred in different tones to the alliance between linguists (one called them "linguicists") and educationists. There has been such an alliance, to the profit of the profession.

We have heard eloquent statements on the desirability of and need for a "language-centered" curriculum in English. As a group we have worked for a better balance between language and literature in the undergraduate programs for prospective teachers.

It is obvious that the English education scholar should have a thorough knowledge of the three major grammars—traditional, structural, and transformational—though he may not be a proponent of any one system. Knowing the public school classroom, he will play a vital role in interpreting developments in grammar and findings from linguistic research to elementary and high school teachers in this time of transition in teaching about the English language.

Reasonable competence in English linguistics goes further, of course, than knowledge of grammatical theory. There is a heartening increase of interest on the part of teachers at all levels in broadening the scope of language teaching, to include not only grammar, but phonology, history of the language, regional linguistics and dialects, lexicography. Exciting materials for language teaching are being prepared at the Curriculum Study Centers in English at the University of Nebraska and the University of Minnesota.

We are aware, of course, of some tendency to go overboard in the teaching of linguistics. We know of those schools which propose to teach junior and senior high school students more linguistics than the average Ph.D. in English learns—though the average Ph.D. should learn more than he does. And we are aware that linguistic dilettantism in some schools represents sheer frittering away of time. It should be a particular competence of the English education scholar to help teachers select appropriate linguistic materials for various school levels. The exciting and helpful new resource published by the NCTE, Dialects—USA,
for example, needs interpretation to teachers, as Annabel Ashley, one of the authors, does in an article in the April, 1964, *English Journal*.

The relation of linguistic scholarship to the teaching of reading is an active field, sometimes battlefield, at present. To an extent, at least, it may be necessary for the English education scholar to act as mediator, or interpreter again, between linguistics and the teaching of reading. Though I have become convinced, in my own dyspeptic way, that there is more charlatanry per capita among specialists in reading than among most other educational groups, with the exception of people in general curriculum and in guidance and counseling, reading specialists have rightly reminded us both of the potential contributions and limitations of the linguists in approaching the teaching of reading. But a linguist, Raven McDavid, perhaps has covered the situation most succinctly when he says that the role of the linguist in the teaching of reading is threefold: (1) to analyze the language scientifically with particular attention to the simple constituent elements; (2) to analyze in similar fashion the writing system by which the language is represented; (3) to determine the degree of fit between the two systems and to discover patterns of correlation between them that may facilitate the teaching of reading. But McDavid goes on to say that there are some important matters with which the linguist is not competent to deal: (1) the nature of the learning process itself; (2) the mechanical-physical problems of muscular movements and eye spans; (3) the learning load in terms of the number and distinctiveness of discrete symbols to be presented at one time; (4) the sequence in which parts of the graphic system are introduced as representative of the sound system; (5) the problem of reading readiness; (6) the sociological pressures that encourage or discourage reading.

Of course, nothing under our academic rubrics make it impossible for one to be competent linguist and competent reading specialist at the same time.

Broad knowledge, then, is the key to competence in English linguistics for the scholar in English education. This necessary breadth of view of English language study is well put by Priscilla Tyler as she suggests that we "teach language not only as the mechanistic invention of man but as the conserver and mirror of culture. Language not only represents the meaning which a society or individual discovers in terms of verbal signals but is a memory device by which the meanings men have discovered and accumulated in words are kept as in a storehouse. Names for daily chores and household equipment as well as the images by which men live are all stored in the speech of a region or the writing of a period. Language is the tapestry of culture representing the people who use it and have made it. The substance of language is subject to the same kinds of classification as any other kind of cultural artifact. We can organize

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language by time, place, and nationality in the way we do other kinds of human behavior."  

Rhetoric

Though aspects of linguistics represent legitimate fields of study in themselves at any educational level, the bridging between linguistics and rhetoric is going forward. Professor Verna Newsome demonstrates in the May, 1964, issue of the English Journal, for example, how sentence expansions and transformations relate to improvement of style in writing. Probably few of us in English education have had opportunity for formal study of modern rhetoric; indeed, the lack of a satisfactory modern theory of discourse has been cited frequently.

Plainly more training in rhetoric will be necessary for prospective specialists in English education. For rhetoric is enjoying a renaissance, though some of our colleagues in speech will maintain that there never was a decline. We hear often, though, the term "the new rhetoric" from scholars of both English and speech, and a study by Father Daniel Fogarty, carried out under the direction of Francis Shoemaker, resulted in the brilliant book, Roots for a New Rhetoric.

Drawing on psychology, sociology, and linguistics, the new rhetoric has two basic emphases, Professor Karl Wallace points out: (1) the subject matter of discourse, including practical discourse, the ends of which are understanding and persuasion; (2) the ethical problems and responsibilities of the speaker or writer. Wayne Minnick's book, The Art of Persuasion, presents a succinct discussion of ethical problems in persuasion, useful to teachers of both written and oral composition. An impressively broad unit on persuasion for teaching in high school has been developed in the Curriculum Study Center in English at the University of Minnesota.

It is the emphasis on rhetoric in the full sense that makes a humanistic study of composition, as distinguished from mere study of style, for the roots of rhetoric are in the matters of speaker or writer, idea, audience, tone and attitude toward experience and the symbols that order it. Composition, Albert Kitzhaber says, is "an important way to order experience, to discover ideas and render them more precise, and to give them effective utterance. It is intimately related to thought itself. Considered in this light, composition is a liberal study, lying at the heart of any rounded scheme of education."  

A rhetoric is related naturally to a conception of life. We have the rhetoric of adolescence, with its emphasis on the rhythm of syncopation, its monolithic
concept of audience, its often narrow choice of modifiers, representing an unawareness of choice of alternatives. Professor Walker Gibson cites the rhetoric of the Beats—the characteristic jazz cadence, and the typical modification and qualification of nouns and adjectives, suggesting that words do not express what is quite accurate, what is quite the way things are: "The uptown scene like'" or "The town was like wild, man." The Beats are determinedly antiverbal, Gibson points out.\textsuperscript{11}

In speaking of the new rhetoric, Karl Wallace maintains that "Rhetoric has a subject matter which no other discipline has or wants to claim today. It is the thought, information, and opinion revealed in the great, persisting, and unresolved problems of a civilization and culture."\textsuperscript{12} As specialists in language, we are reminded by Wallace's words of the famous statement by Jean-Paul Sartre, "We are condemned to be free." Walker Gibson's book, The Limits of Language, is subtitled, "The new horizons of science and philosophy and their effect on language and literature." This suggests a concept far different from another current one which holds that all or most of the writing done in English classes be related to the study of imaginative literature.

Father Fogarty, in the study I cited earlier, makes clear that the most important newer influences on rhetoric are probably the work of the General Semanticists, led by Alfred and Irving Lee, Korzybski, Hayakawa, and Wendell Johnson; the work of I. A. Richards and his adherents; and the monumental work of Kenneth Burke. To the General Semanticist, rhetoric serves basically a therapeutic purpose; language is linked intimately and always with state of mind. Richards has been concerned with the significance of rhetoric to listener and reader as well as to speaker and writer. Burke's rhetoric is rooted in sociology and psychology. As Fogarty puts it, for Burke, "the whole range of his [man's] activity, from a man's inner, subconscious conflicts to the highest kind of conscious abstraction, is rhetoric."\textsuperscript{13}

The revival of rhetoric in the classroom will be a boon if we do not fall into an earlier trap of assuming that formal instruction in rhetorical principles will automatically carry over into more effective writing and speaking. Yet we can see clearly that in recent years the teaching of rhetoric has sunk into an unfortunate decline in many schools, a decline epitomized in the use, as textbooks in expression, of handbooks containing a conglomeration of do's and don'ts in alphabetical order. Mere practice in speaking or writing, with attention to the sheerest of practical matters, is not enough. There must be a definite structure in teaching, a subject matter which will demand greater knowledge of the process, the psychology of composition, the practices of effective writers, such as the information coming from the studies of Francis Christensen,\textsuperscript{14} and the role emotional elements play in the formulation of logical propositions. The central aim in the teaching of rhetoric has been put succinctly, I think, by Wayne

\textsuperscript{12} Wallace, op. cit., p. 386.
\textsuperscript{13} Fogarty, op. cit., p. 60.
\textsuperscript{14} See, for example, Francis Christensen, "Notes Toward a New Rhetoric," College English, XXV (October, 1963), 7–18.
Booth: "... development of the rhetorical stance, a stance which depends on discovering and maintaining in any writing situation a proper balance among the three elements that are at work in any communicative effort: the available arguments about the subject itself, the interests and peculiarities of the audience, and the voice, the implied character, of the speaker." 15

Literature

In discussing linguistics and rhetoric as facets of the discipline of English education, I have asked necessarily, it seems to me, for more knowledge and for greater responsibility on the part of the English education scholar. In literature, it is different, I think: we may not need more traditional knowledge so much as greater eclecticism and perhaps some unique responsibilities.

It is the particular charge of the English education scholar, I believe, to promote a broad and human approach to the study of literature. A monolithic approach in the graduate schools of the past few decades, featuring close analysis of the structure of literary selections, may have inadvertently brought some diminishing to the study of literature in the public school classroom. The formal approach has been prevalent and commands the zeal of most leading contemporary critics. Valuable as this approach is, there are others which can contribute to a fullness in experiencing literature. The need for eclecticism was stressed in the report by John Gerber on the summer institutes sponsored by the Commission on English. The literature course, the report says, "should be designed to make the participants more aware of the various approaches to the literary work (e.g., the analytical, the biographical, the sociocultural, the ideological, the generic, the comparative, the mythical, the ethical... ...) ... the emphasis in the course should be on formal analysis." 16

Since I have used Wilbur Scott's term, the "formal approach," I will use his terminology also in suggesting several others—the moral, psychological, sociological, and archetypal—which have especial relevance to the high school and undergraduate classroom. 17

The term "moral approach" may produce some shudders among you, conjuring up memories of teachers who relentlessly pursue "morals" through selections or insist, with whatever twisting that is necessary to the purpose, that selections illuminate red-blooded American ideals. I recall a student teacher years ago who was reduced almost to hysteria through her efforts to match morals with each of the stories of Edgar Allan Poe. Her trouble, of course, was not that she was not successful, but rather that she was!

A narrow application of the moral approach has been rightly scorned, yet the relation of literature to values is the impactful point of contact for students

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15 Wayne C. Booth, "The Rhetorical Stance," *College Composition and Communication*, XIV (October, 1963), 141.
studying literature at any level. In the remarkable section on "Values" in their book, *Teaching Language and Literature*, Loban, Ryan, and Squire state: "Literature cannot be taught apart from the morality of humanity. . . . To view literature as a formula for moral action is to mistake its nature and miss its rewards. However, because it can enlarge our awareness of values and refine our discrimination among values, literature is a force of tremendous potential for education." No scholar of English education should miss reading, either, Louise Rosenblatt's discussion of the relation of literature and moral attitudes in her book, *Literature as Exploration*.

The psychological approach to literature is still very fruitful, too, though the label may suggest an overconcern with man's libidinous compulsions (though what is more fun to be concerned with!). The application of psychological knowledge to literature can provide at least three kinds of illumination, as Wilbur Scott has pointed out. First, psychology provides some insight into the creative process and the relation between writer and reader. Under this rubric is the work of I. A. Richards, for example, in analyzing the constituents of the aesthetic experience. Another part of this general field includes the application of psycholinguistics to verbal style and the literary process, an area of investigation which undoubtedly will become increasingly important. In his paper included in *Style in Language*, the proceedings of a conference held at Indiana University in 1958, John B. Carroll holds that if "we can study the 'personalities' of people by factor analysis, we should be able to study the 'personalities' of samples of prose," and he demonstrates differences in the prose of Mickey Spillane and F. Scott Fitzgerald through his method. It is not fantastic that we should be able to detect, with fair certainty, what selections of literature will elicit what responses from students with given characteristics. "The right book for the right child at the right time" can then become something besides a slogan.

The study of the lives of authors as a means of understanding their art is obviously a second application of the psychological approach, and the third involves the explanations of actions of fictitious characters. Ernest Jones's famous study of Hamlet from a Freudian viewpoint provides an answer, for example, for some critics to the puzzle of Hamlet's delay in avenging his father.

The sociological approach may suggest Marxism to some and raises the old question of the writer's social responsibility. Yet whatever our reaction or our answer, we may be reminded of Harry Levin's statement: "The relations between literature and society are reciprocal. Literature is not only the effect of social causes; it is also the cause of social effects." The themes of modern

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23 Harry Levin, "'Literature as an Institution,'" *Accent* (Spring, 1940).
fiction, especially, bring the sociological approach into a renewed prominence, after a couple of decades of little emphasis. It is no vagary of literary history that the two predominant forces in contemporary fiction are the southern writers, who often treat Negro-white relationships, and the northern Jewish writers. The Jews have a sense of mythology and a saving conception of irony born of a tradition of suffering. The southerners have their knowledge of the Bible and a sense of history plus a laid-on guilt complex stemming from slavery. Examination of group living, whether in the rural South or urban North, remains, as it must, a major concern of literature.

Despite what I have said about the primacy of the formal approach to literature, archetypal analysis, led by such critics as Northrop Frye, Maud Bodkin, and Leslie Fiedler, may be on the way to becoming a particularly significant approach in our time. Archetypal criticism seeks to find the common bases on which writer and reader can communicate, to ‘decode the secret language in literary works so that it may have for us a more rational meaning.’

Perhaps, again, the nature of modern literature accounts for the acceleration of interest in the archetypal approach. We think of Eliot’s concern with the myth of hero in a ravished land; Camus’ preoccupation, natural perhaps with the existentialist, with the myth of Sisyphus; Wolfe’s vision of the quest; MacLeish’s retelling of the story of Job. Symptomatic, perhaps, is the awarding of the National Book Award for fiction of 1963 to John Updike’s The Centaur, a book I referred to as ‘ridiculous’ in my graduate seminar two days before the awards were announced. (Kind fate had me out of town at the time of the next meeting of the seminar!) Archetypal study is fruitful, too, with children’s literature or literature for adolescents. A doctoral student in our department, Mrs. Helen Rosenblum, is completing a study on Jung’s fusion-of-opposites archetypes in fairy tales. I have found that high school and college students seem fascinated with archetypes and patterns of ritual as they appear in literature. Tracing of the loss of paradise myth from the ancient Greeks through Robinson Crusoe, Wordsworth, and Robert Frost, for example, is of more significance to the student than learning a chronological list of names, movements, and influences.

That the various approaches will be combined by the competent literary scholar and that close textual analysis may be a method in any one of the approaches is axiomatic, of course. One brilliant example in the combination of formal and moral approaches, for instance, with close analysis as method, is Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren’s ‘The Discovery of Evil: An Analysis of ‘The Killers.’’

Research Technique

We now make the necessary and unique transition from facets of our discipline associated with English to those usually associated with professional

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24 Scott, op. cit., p. 249.
education. The first of these later facets I have labeled earlier as research technique.

At the risk of appearing a barbarian quantifier to self-conscious professional humanists, the scholar of English education must know a good bit about research technique, including statistics and testing. Research in the teaching of English must necessarily remain, to some extent, an interdisciplinary effort in which the English education specialist may be a coordinator. Yet the various conferences on research in the teaching of English so far held under Project English, in three of four of which I have participated, have convinced me that we cannot merely bring together people who know English and people who know research design if results are to be maximal. The English education specialist, though he should be ready to call on the psychometrician and statistician at times, must be something of a psychometrician and statistician in his own right. Knowledge of measures of central tendency and of variation and of such techniques as analysis of variance and covariance and factor analysis is not, after all, so esoteric and so demanding in quantitative procedures that able graduate students cannot master it at elementary levels even if they have little formal training in mathematics.

One of the nostalgic myths that binds together those of us who were graduate students in English education at the University of Minnesota is our trial in the fire and brimstone of the courses in research design and statistical methods of the great Palmer O. Johnson, whose memory lives on at Minnesota and in the scholarly world. Looking back, we realize what we owe to Palmer, but then the present was traumatic! Years after I had left Minnesota, Dora V. Smith reported that Palmer's dog had bitten her, and I believe it was Dora V. herself who suggested that this was retribution for what her graduate students had said about the courses in research and statistics!

The English education specialist must play, of course, a key role in research in the teaching of English, a field about which the profession suddenly seems almost frenetic, though scholars in English education have for some time been advancing knowledge through several kinds of research.

There are first the status studies and surveys, some of which have been highly important. William Dusel's Stanford dissertation, for example, on professional responsibilities of English teachers and conditions of instruction in California schools has been widely cited.26 Thurston Womack's Columbia dissertation in which he reported a survey of teachers' attitudes toward current English usage is another valuable study in this category.27

Historical studies in the teaching of English have been relatively rare. Donald Stahl, however, carried out at Northwestern an interesting study of the

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development of the English curriculum in the Chicago Public Schools from 1856 to 1958.28

Third, there are the studies of relationships of factors, involving correlation and factor analysis. Many of these have been made, for example, on the relationship between knowledge of grammar and ability in written composition.

Analytical studies have been highly useful. These are of two kinds: first, analysis of content. Richard Alm's Minnesota dissertation dealt with assumptions about human experience in novels written for and about adolescents.29 The second kind of analytical study is the cross sectional or longitudinal analysis of data. The well-known studies by Walter Loban30 and Ruth Strickland31 of the language of children are outstanding examples.

Case studies have been used very little in research in the teaching of English but may have a place, for instance, in the study of students' reactions to literature or in the study of the process through which effective writers are developed.

I wish to deal a little more fully with the sixth kind of research, the experimental study. Many of these have been done in the field of English, few of them significant. I think it an important responsibility of English education scholars to devise and supervise experimental studies which avoid common pitfalls of the past. A brief review of a few of these pitfalls may be in order. First, too short a term of experimentation. Such things as perception of form in literature or skill in organizing expository writing develop slowly, and discernible changes do not take place in a few weeks or months. Some potentially significant studies have been doomed at the outset for lack of a long-term test of hypothesis.

Control and analysis of variables is the major problem, of course, in experimental research. Comparisons of teaching approaches, with control and experimental groups, most often conclude on that dismal little refrain, "no significant difference." How to improve research design so as to glean more information from experimental studies is a major challenge. This was a theme sounded throughout the conference on research in English held in San Francisco preceding the NCTE convention last fall. Many of the speakers cited the need for more sophisticated, more imaginative research design. Professor II. Henry Meckel pointed out that the assumption of a simple stimulus-response relationship has vitiated many experimental studies. Between the pretest and post test lies not

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31 Ruth G. Strickland, The Language of Elementary School Children: Its Relationship to the Language of Reading Textbooks and the Quality of Reading of Selected Children (Bloomington: School of Education, Indiana University, July, 1962).
only the "treatment" per se but a body of human beings who are affected at any given time by factors other than the treatment. Especially are there those characteristics in the subject matter itself which may account for differences in outcome regardless of the method being tested. If Northrop Frye is right, for instance, it is easier to develop understanding of literature in the romantic or comic modes than in the tragic or ironic modes, and this factor could be crucial no matter what teaching method might be under test.

Then, too, research in the teaching of English has shared so far a limitation of studies in other areas of humanities and in the social sciences—a lack of follow-up or continuity. Promising studies have not been followed by others which results demand. A unique contribution of universities which have a number of graduate students in English education will be series of closely related studies in important areas. I have been interested in examining recently the research abstracts published by the Cardinal Stritch College in Milwaukee. Offering study only in reading and in education of the mentally handicapped, the graduate program has produced a number of closely related master’s theses which as a whole represent a significant contribution.

Triviality, too, is an important indictment of experimental studies. We may be less suspect here than people in some other disciplines. Recently I read a report of a study in physical education of the problems of putting besetting inexperienced golfers. A conclusion was that a smooth surface presents fewer problems to a neophyte golfer than does an undulating surface!

The most vital quality in experimental research, perhaps, is imagination. Often graduate students drop a potentially significant study for one that is highly manageable and fits neatly into some statistical design. We can make a major contribution, I think, in initiating frontier studies in the more intangible, qualitative aspects of learning, for example the role of imagination in the literary experience.

A major reason for triviality in experimental research is the lack of techniques for measuring progress in some of the aspects of English we think most important. Testing in English has fallen on the sere and yellow. Scores on many commonly used standardized tests are virtually meaningless in really appraising the success of an English program. Clearly, the frontier of measurement in English is one on which activity by English education scholars, working with psychologists and test experts, is imperative. Such action has already begun. Interesting work in testing is going on in some of the Curriculum Study Centers. The Research Foundation of the NCTE is sponsoring a test construction project in literature under the direction of Margaret Early. J. N. Hook is coordinating a large project, just beginning, which enlists the help of teachers from all levels and constituents from all sections of the country.

Psychology of Learning

A staple in the training of most people who have studied education at the graduate level is the psychology of learning and child and adolescent development, and an educational psychology course is usually required of undergraduates preparing to teach. So in discussing briefly this facet of the discipline of English
education, I need not strike an evangelical stance. I'll content myself by striking instead a couple of moderately sour notes regarding the responsibilities in this field of scholars in English education.

It seems necessary, first, to keep a watchful eye out for dilettantism and amateurism. Everyone is an expert these days, if he chooses to so announce, on the learning of children and adolescents. Everyone has an English curriculum in his pocket. The very laudable movement to involve university scholars in elementary and secondary school curriculum planning has the disadvantage of augmenting dangers of amateurism, and our gloomiest vision, perhaps, is of platoons of professors marching off to school systems to mark out an iambic curriculum, five steps up and five steps back, based purely on the supposed logic of the subject, leaving behind a bewildered body of teachers and a sold-out estate of students.

Even within our own ranks, of course, where we assume some sophistication in learning theory, we have the common problem of the scholar in most fields today—keeping somewhere abreast of the expansion of knowledge. Programed learning comes into my mind at the moment. At first, I thought that if I looked the other way for a time, programed learning in English might go away. But it seems here to stay, no doubt to the benefit of the profession. My own solution, then, has been to talk a doctoral student into doing a dissertation on programed learning so that we both could learn something about it!

Seriously, we recognize some responsibility in applying to English recent scholarship in the learning process. Developments in cognitive psychology, in which the name of Jerome Bruner looms largest, have literally entranced the teaching world. The search for structure and spiral sequence in English, going on in the Curriculum Study Centers and elsewhere, is an exciting one, and yet attempts to Brunerize the English curriculum have brought some pangs of disillusionment. This is so partly because of the difficulty of consistently applying any theory to the preparation of specific classroom materials and to formulation of practical techniques. It is partly so, too, because the cognitive processes identified by the psychologists are not the whole thing, of course. There are also the affective responses so important in the humanities. It is necessary, yes, that a student studying a selection of literature be able to recall what he has read, comprehend the language, analyze the selection, evaluate it, and compare it to others. But of what real importance is this if he cannot respond to it emotionally, enter into it imaginatively?

An interesting practical application of the distinction between the cognitive processes and affective responses is made by Nathan Blount in an article on team teaching in the March issue of the English Journal.32 (I really do read other periodicals—True and Mad, for example!) Dr. Blount feels that cognitive objectives, especially those involving the recall or recognition of knowledge or the development of intellectual skills and abilities, can be accomplished in large groups of students. Affective objectives, on the other hand, those which involve

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impact on the student in terms of interest, attitude, or values, are probably best suited to small group work.

We could say in summary that a special challenge to the scholar of English education is to reduce the mystique of learning in language and literature.

Philosophy and Sociology of American Education

A final note on philosophy and sociology of American education as a facet of our discipline. Again, almost anyone who has studied education in the graduate school has taken courses in this field, courses which vary widely in quality from campus to campus and from professor to professor. Here the English education specialist plays the role not only of scholar but of statesman. Provision of effective English programs for all students, not just the gifted or the mentally retarded, must remain. I think, a major objective, though some recent developments seem to distract us from it. There has been overconcern, perhaps, with the college-bound students. The most exciting new programs and new materials are appropriate only for the able students. The best teachers and prospective teachers want to teach "honors" sections.

Not a week has gone by in the nine years that I have edited the English Journal that letters have not come asking help in working with the linguistically untalented or the "reluctant" or "culturally disadvantaged" student. I am sure that many of you have been similarly besieged. One of the most significant conferences in recent years, it seems to me, is that organized by Arno Jewett and Doris Gunderson of the U.S. Office of Education on English for culturally different youth, from which came the excellent publication, Improving English Skills of Culturally Different Youth.\(^{33}\) Important work in gearing English programs to the problems and characteristics of minority groups and lower class groups is going on at the Curriculum Study Center directed by Marjorie Smiley at Hunter College.

Ability grouping in English, now universal again in the high schools, works effectively apparently when students are carefully selected and programs are specifically geared to ability and cultural levels. Yet when we group students by ability in English, we group them at the same time, to a large degree, by social-economic background.

In constantly keeping foremost the objective of effective English programs for all, the English education scholar plays his role as statesman, turning a wary eye on the cold, classical fingers of the Rickovers and a discriminating ear to the siren voices of the oversimplifiers in education. As Allison Davis has said in the publication I mentioned a moment ago, "Our efficiency as a nation and the preservation of our position vis-a-vis the Communist powers depend largely upon our learning how to motivate and teach the lower socioeconomic groups in our schools."\(^{34}\) The fact that we have brought under the roof of the same schoolroom


\(^{34}\) Allison Davis, "Society, the School, and the Culturally Deprived Student," in Improving English Skills of Culturally Different Youth, ibid., p. 10.
the genius and near moron, the patrician daughter and son of the slums, the robust and the broken in body, is, at once, the cultural challenge and the cultural achievement of our time.

To President Johnson's magnificent offensive against material poverty we can ally our offensive against cultural and linguistic poverty. The English language more and more is becoming a weapon of freedom abroad, as it has always been a weapon of freedom at home—freedom from provincialism and pedestrianism and vulgarity.

The hybrid role of the English education scholar is to synthesize from scholarship in English and in education that which is best, not for itself, but for people and for this commonwealth. The objectives of the discipline condemn us to be men of good will who become the sounding board for efforts to bring to realization Thomas Jefferson's dream of a truly literate democratic society.