

Changes identified in english in the national curriculum



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I have decided to complete this paper based on the English curriculum. After a comprehensive research to indicate a timeframe for the subject in question, I have identified credible sources that have highlighted the changes in the national curriculum. Due to these changes, the TES (2008) questions, how much freedom should teachers have over what they teach? Should pupils be guaranteed a broad education or should only basics such as literacy and numeracy be compulsory? Arguably, the BBC discusses that educationalist are increase questioning the curriculum because it is hard to differentiate between bright students and the brightest students in preparation for university and age 16 and not equipped for society. In relation to English in the national curriculum, my interest of 'widespread uncertainty' over the grammar requirements of the English gives queries that educational bodies such as Qualification Curriculum Agency (QCA) still has not addressed this uncertainty (Paterson, 2010: 473). This report is based on the major reform in the educational system, which is based during the early 1980s, however, to define a more realistic and give a rational view of the gender gap the evaluation of O-levels play a most important part in the level of attainment between girls and boys for style in the context of poise, acumen and grammar within the English language. It is clear that English in the curriculum has had many changes in primary and secondary schools and those who employed by her majesties service critics the standard of teaching English and conspire to the notion of reviewing teaching grammar across both phases in the education sector, which derives from the Conservative rule in the 1980 (Clark, 2010: 189).

The national curriculum is mastered by those who are in the context of the parliamentary system. They make the decision of what is best for the future of Britain's younger generation in order to be productive in society. The factors that implement in the curriculum are the changes in the governments and the implementation of significant Bills, Acts and Reforms to enforce educational regime. The re-contextualisation of English in the curriculum for grammar, would teach pupils to become critically literate in ways which recognise diversity as well as unity within the culture in which they live (Clark, 2010: 189).

2. 0 An historical glance at the educational system

From the perspective of O-levels, there has been many changes implemented to the English national curriculum with numerous variations have been carried out. The O-level was primarily exam based and was considered to be inflexible for pupils aged by the notions of educationalist. In realisation of the gender gap, the O-level is perceived as advantageous to boys has it were based on the principals of examinations. The final O-levels were taken in 1987.

In 1988, the O-level was replaced by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSEs). The principal of this reform was based on reducing the number of exam and the implementation of coursework. Many educationalists disagreed with this restructuring of the educational system as it become prevalent due to the rapid changes between the gender gap and the attainment level of English in the national curriculum.

In 1998, the Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) was incorporated in the national curriculum. The ideology is based on the amalgamation of reading and writing to implement a SAT result. This concept is implemented at Key Stage 1 (age 7) with the assessment of reading, writing, spelling and handwriting to reap the attainment of level 2; Key Stage 2 (age 11) is assessed on reading, writing and spelling) to reap the attainment of level 4 and key stage 4 (age 14) assessed in English in the context of reading, writing and the study of Shakespeare to reach the attainment of level 5 (The Guardian, 2008). Britain is the only country in the UK that still implements these methods of assessment with Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland opting for a more methodical approach to literacy.

3.0 Changes identified in English in the national curriculum

The national curriculum for English from key stage 1, was enhanced how primary school children should be taught English in a more functional perspective, identified in the 'Cox Order' during the early 1990s, to develop the attainment of literacy.

A change in the formation of the English in the curriculum leaves much controversy and issues that might be faced into today's society. There is constant discussion of the gender gap being much of problems since the changes in the O-Level exam base structure. Boys seem to perform well in all subjects due to the assessment methods. Nevertheless, the gender gap seems to be more apparent with the introduction of the General Certificate of Education (GCSEs) with boys under achieving in all subject areas.

The GCSE has been constantly criticised by educationalist for diminishing down qualifications, which has been evident with the introduction of A* grading. The public and independent educational sector has decided to attain their status by entering their pupils for the IGCSE, which is based for international students. This examination demonstrates a challenge that signifies traits from the O-levels perspectives of in-depth knowledge and acumen for the context of English. Awarding bodies such as Edexcel expressed that there is an increase in the number of students that take this exam as raised demonstrated in figure 3. 1. Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) also agrees with this forte. However, the disadvantage for public schools is these results do not appear on annual league tables and represent to the public eye not a success.

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In the primary school phase, the SATS deepens the gender gap even further when the standard of English represent dismay for the educational system with both genders failing to achieve a level 4 in English, illustrated in figure 3. 2, in preparation for secondary school. It is reported in the education reform that the standard expected for an 11 year old at KS2 is level 4, however, cabinet minister Diana Johnson expresses differently and argues that educationalist should be encouraging potential second year students to progress. Nonetheless, Johnson continues to fight her pledge and quotes that ' level three gives the basic understanding, this should be important to recognise' (Daily Mail, 2008). Conversely, educationalist would argue that <https://assignbuster.com/changes-identified-in-english-in-the-national-curriculum/>

the attainment of a level three pupil is unable to write an in-depth story with deficiencies in sentences structure and the usage of commas. It has been report since the introduction of the SATs that 3 million children are totally unprepared for secondary school.

The concept of ' basic' mentioned by Johnson (2008) relates to the terms of ' fundamentals or foundations ' to learning, however, spending the essence of six years in primary school, is this acceptable? Beside the KS2 indicates a national benchmark of at least attaining a level 4. Why is this acceptable to Johnson? De-waal (2008) also disagrees with Johnson's notion and mentions when the standard of English at level 4 has dropped in order to progress to the secondary phase, there is still a gender gap represented in the SATs results, illustrated in figure 3. 3 (Daily Mail, 2008). Ward (2004) also agrees that there is a greater gap against gender and achievement, for level 4, girls outperform boys. However, in the context of English in the national curriculum, girls still out perform in all aspects at KS2. This continues to reward girls a seventeen percent chance of achieving level 5 and fifteen percent chance of attaining level 6 (Ward, 2004, in Döbert, Klieme, and, Sroka W, 2004).

126 Gender and achievement) . Conversely, Davis and Bremer (2001) discusses another poly to educational statistics and raises the hope for boys and argues that even though boys are academically under achieving there is still a large gap between pay levels even to this present day.

According to Apple (1979), English in the national curriculum emphasis more on the aspects of reading English, than the writing of it. The ' Cox Order'

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(1991) implemented in the 1990 with the phrase of primary school children speaking a good standard of English instead of written context, which includes expression of grammar and spelling and the three ATs, which constitutes for reading, writing and spelling (Reynolds, 1989: 16). This concept is more based on the functional aspect of the English than the structural notion of it, which is applied in teaching English as a foreign language. Pupils are reliant on reading 'real books' through the 'Cox Order' instead of following any reading schemes, placing a child's development of English non equipped for English in the curriculum changing the context of grammar and based on the principals of how children talk (Sealey, 1998: 69). Yate (1995) argues that this system is complacent and the approach to English in the national curriculum was an order of survival (Yates, 1995: in Coulby and Ward,) This is due to the number of pupils that are not from the UK and English is not their first language. This quote was written thirty years ago and has not changed much in the educational system. Those with an English heritage will tend to suffer of not reaping from the royalties of the English language, which was the Conservative strategy in the 1980s. Brarbara (1996 in Döbert et al, 2004: 142) contest that for the last 15 years, the educational system is primarily based on those with disadvantage background from ethnic minorities, which has seen a success between 1992-2000. This would work alongside the 'Cox Order' and has been criticised that the declination of reading in the early 1990s was conversational and the context of English is argued not an heritage, but relates to moral or cultural notions (Claire et al., 2008: 293). Bring a discourse to the English national curriculum, not just in a primary phase, but in secondary with the raise of academies and new government continues to <https://assignbuster.com/changes-identified-in-english-in-the-national-curriculum/>

reform, English to be embedded in vocational curriculum and shifting English as an Additional Language (EAL) together to support young people while they simultaneously study the national curriculum and learn English (Creese, 2010: 99).

The gender gap is not the only primary issue here, but also that 50, 000 children have failed in reading and have no literacy skills. Is there a hidden agenda between the social classes? This could be the case, in the early 1980s, and the 1990s, there was a change in the family structure with many men being unemployed and many woman with children under 5 were employed (Gibson, 1996), leaving a reverse in stereotype culture sociology with the working classes. However, it was previously discussed that GCSE was not appropriate for the independent or public school system. Is this example of segregation? The gender gap is very significant in England as Dober et al (2004) discusses, especially in the subject of English where the national benchmark is failing to meet. This is particularly present in boys who have low attainment in written English. Could this be derived by the 'Cox Order' with the resources for English being neglected to make way for other needs in other subjects? (Yates, 1995)

The educational system today is fulfilled by the introduction of academies which are opportunities for failing schools to improve the attainment of pupils in the National Literacy Strategy (NLS). The ploy of the academies is to raise standards of schools that are under special measures voted by the new labour government in 1996. However, many critics reveal that the Bill does not constitute for previous reform based in the early 1990s. The philosophy

of the academies is for teachers to improve on their method of feedback and assessment (Barbra, 1999: 136)

4. 0 Conclusion

The UK education system has seen many changes that have been determined for the good. However, through the succession of some reforms, there are many issues that are still faced today in the context of English in the national curriculum. The gender gap has not been resolved from the diminishment of O-levels attainment. It has been evident that there are flaws in 'Cox Order', which constitutes in the national curriculum aspects of poor teaching are to blame for the standards in the UK, starting off with reports that five percent of UK children cannot read in the early 1990s. There are many variables that relates to poor attainment which is influenced in social changes and this is ever increasing in society. In the millennium, there are additional factors to consider such as producing polices in the context of behavioural and special needs aspects bearing no great emphasis for English in the national curriculum. However, it seems that during the secondary school, especially in academies, there are more in the contextualised reform of vocational qualification, with the rule is to embedding of English in most topics and schemes of work. However, for pupil's this is not the most effective development of learning English in the national curriculum? In the 1990s it was more defined that English in the curriculum had to be rectified from the damage that has been done in the early 1980s (Williams, 1999). The General Teaching Council for England also argues that SATS should be has proposed scrapping because again, the lack of attainment in literacy. The ideology of the educational system was to let the examination system

be expected to shape and reform the nature of the school curriculum rather than curriculum determines the examination system (Reynolds, 1989: 137). The government and policy makers need to adhere to those at the forefront of pupils who know best of how to attain the future of UK children to be productive in society.