

AN INQUIRY INTO THE IDENTIFICATION OF DISCRIMINATING FACTORS
RELATING TO HIGH AND LOW FUNCTIONAL LITERACY PERFORMANCE IN
ENGLISH IN SELECTED FLORIDA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

By

CHARLES LEE WILSON

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Council
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By

Charles Lee Wilson

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The purposes of this study were to examine how competency-based testing for functional literacy evolved as a part of educational accountability, to determine any theoretical positions which have emerged, and to determine how functional literacy is defined and interpreted in terms of English communication skills in Florida's public high schools. The study proposed to identify discriminating factors in terms of working conditions and facilities, experiential background, teaching practices, and teaching principles of Florida English teachers, grade ten through twelve, for the 1977-78 academic year.

The study employed a causal-comparison design to establish likely causes of differences between comparative groups. The comparison was made between two groups of high schools, one of which performed below the state mean on the communication section of the first Statewide

Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test and one of which performed above the state mean on the same test. Visits of two to three days were made to each school, and data were collected by questionnaires. Several different statistical tests of significance were applied to this information.

In terms of significant differences, the tests revealed that teachers in English programs where grade eleven students performed above the state mean on the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test tended to differ from teachers in English programs where grade eleven students performed below the state mean on the Functional Literacy Test. Compared to the teachers in the low group, the high group teachers:

1. Had more teaching experience, were older, had more teaching time in their present schools, and more of them held only Rank III certification.
2. Had a greater incidence of undergraduate work in private universities or liberal arts colleges.
3. Had a greater likelihood of an undergraduate English major rather than the English education major, and less chance of an undergraduate minor.
4. Had assigned written work in class more often, made critical evaluations less often, emphasized organization and content in their evaluations, and always assigned one to two hours of writing homework a week.

5. Were likely to require that students give formal speeches before the class, have students work in small groups, have students select writing topics, and encouraged maximum student participation.
6. Made very frequent use of the Socratic (questioning) method of instruction, and frequently required individual work of their students.
7. Felt that listening instruction was very important and that other areas of school instruction should support English objectives.
8. Continued to take graduate credit courses in literature, teaching methods, and other education courses since beginning their careers.
9. Took part in English teacher workshops, conferred often with English specialists, and were currently subscribing to professional journals.
10. Spent their summers either teaching or attending school.

In terms of significant differences, the test revealed that working conditions and facilities for English programs where grade eleven students performed above the state mean on the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test tended to differ from working conditions and facilities in English programs where grade eleven students performed below the state mean on the Functional Literacy Test. Compared to the working conditions and facilities available to the low group, the high group:

1. Considered their work week to be longer--
51-60 hours.
2. Used the school or classroom library almost exclusively
to other libraries.
3. Did not feel that workbooks with student drills, teaching
manuals, and clerical service were absolutely essential.
4. Were likely to consider very important the responsiveness
of the administration to their ideas.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Consistent with the United States national policy of universal education is the premise that one of the fundamental objectives of public education is to teach students how to apply themselves to problems they will encounter in everyday life. Therefore, a high school diploma should indicate that the recipient has acquired the minimum skills needed to function and survive in the marketplace of everyday life. In recent years, this has not been the case. Students have been graduated with high school diplomas who were functionally illiterate; enough so that the Florida Legislature instituted a law, the Accountability Act of 1976, which guarantees that the Florida system of public education will provide instructional programs which will require students to meet minimum performance standards. If a student cannot meet these minimum performance standards by grade twelve, then his diploma will indicate completion rather than competency (Department of Education, 1977).

For purposes of compliance with the Accountability Act of 1976, the State of Florida tested eleventh grade students for the first time as part of the 1977-78 Statewide Assessment Program. The eleventh grade assessment was composed of two tests: the Basic Skills Test and the Functional Literacy Test. The Basic Skills Test was composed of several separate minimal performance standards.

whereas the Functional Literacy Test consisted of only two standards covering 24 skills with a total of 117 items. All eleventh graders were expected to pass each of several standards on the Basic Skills Test. If they failed any of them, remediation was to be provided by the local district. Each district was given the responsibility of certifying when the standards had been met after remedial instruction. The district was given the option of requiring the students to retake the grade eleven assessment the following year.

Eleventh graders were also required to pass the Functional Literacy Test. If a student passed the Basic Skills Test and failed the Functional Literacy Test, then he or she would have to retake the Functional Literacy Test as a senior.

The Functional Literacy Test was comprised of items of a practical nature which were applications of the basic skills. The definition of functional literacy as approved by the Department of Education on February 17, 1977, was as follows:

. . . functional literacy is the satisfactory application of basic skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic, to problems and tasks of a practical nature as encountered in everyday life. (Department of Education, 1977, p. 4)

As an instrument to serve the intent of the Accountability Act of 1976, the Functional Literacy Test was designed to help:

- (a) Provide a system of accountability for education in Florida which guarantees that each student is afforded similar opportunities for educational advancement without regard to geographic differences and varying local economic factors.
- (b) Provide information for education decision-makers at the state, district, and school levels

so that resources may be appropriately allocated and the needs of the system of public education met in a timely manner.

(c) Provide information about costs of educational programs and the differential effectiveness of differing instructional programs so that the educational process may be improved continually.

(d) Guarantee to each student in the Florida system of public education that the system provides instructional programs which meet minimum performance standards compatible with the state's plan for education.

(e) Provide a more thorough analysis of program costs and the degree to which the various districts are meeting the minimum performance standards established by the State Board of Education.

(f) Provide information to the public about the performance of the Florida system of public education in meeting established goals and providing effective, meaningful, and relevant educational experiences designed to give students at least the minimum skills necessary to function and survive in today's society. (Department of Education, 1977, p. 16)

Development of the Functional Literacy Test was conducted with the assistance of an outside contractor, Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey (Zicky and Livingston, 1977). The test which was administered in October 1977, was extensively pre-tested in Florida and then revised when necessary. The following skills were selected (Department of Education, 1977, p. 25):

1. Determine the main idea inferred from a selection.
2. Find the who, what, where, which, and how information in a selection.
3. Determine the cause and effect of an action.
4. Distinguish between facts and opinions.

5. Identify an unstated opinion.
6. Identify the appropriate source from which to obtain extensive information on a topic.
7. Use an index to identify the location of information requiring the use of cross-reference.
8. Use highway and city maps.
9. Include the necessary information when writing letters to supply or request information.
10. Complete a check and its stub accurately.
11. Accurately complete forms used to apply for a driver's license, employment, entrance to a school or training program, insurance, and credit.

The impact of the Functional Literacy Test was substantial. Of the 115,964 students who had taken the test, the 40,722 students who failed either section of the test would get two more chances to pass. For the purposes of the 1977-78 Statewide Assessment Program, a standard was considered mastered if the student correctly answered 70 percent of the items measuring that standard along with at least 50 percent of the skills which comprised that standard. Students who did not pass one of the tests would receive a certificate of completion rather than a regular high school diploma (Fisher, 1978).

Ralph Turlington, Commissioner of Education, has stressed that as an accountability index, the results of this test should not pose a threat to teachers in Florida's public high schools, but should be perceived as providing an additional opportunity to correct deficiencies in students before they arise on the job or in college (Webber, 1978). By studying the percentage of students who passed the communications section of the Literacy Test among public high schools throughout the

State of Florida, factors related to effective English programs of a practical nature could be revealed. Furthermore, these factors could make a viable contribution to the state's intention of guaranteeing each student that the system of public education will provide similar instructional programs to meet minimum performance standards regardless of geographic difference and varying local economic factors.

Need for the Study

Daniel L. Kelly's doctoral dissertation dealt with the identification of discriminating factors related to consistent overachievement and underachievement in English in Florida high schools (Kelly, 1966). Using the Florida Statewide Twelfth Grade Testing Program as the criterion for selecting schools to be used in the study, two groups of schools were selected, eight schools in each group, based on seven-year (1959-1966) records of comparison of aptitude and English test scores on the placement tests.

Assuming that the aptitude scores on the placement tests were representative of students' capacities to achieve in English, schools consistently having a majority of their students scoring higher in English than in aptitude were considered to be schools with effective programs producing overachievers in English. Schools consistently having a majority of their students scoring lower in English than in aptitude were considered to be schools with ineffective programs producing underachievers in English. The means by which factors were to be identified were to test the following three hypotheses: Florida high schools where students consistently achieve beyond their expected

potential in English differ from Florida high schools where students consistently fail to achieve up to their expected potential in terms of:

1. Experiential background and teaching practices and principles of English teachers.
2. English department working conditions and facilities.
3. Students' perceptions of English instruction and the subject of English. (Kelly, 1966, p. 5)

There is, ten years after Kelly's dissertation was accepted by the Graduate Council of the University of Florida and the results disseminated to the participating schools and others who were interested, widespread conviction that high school instruction in the discipline of English is still not producing results acceptable to prospective employers, college officials, school administrators, legislators, parents, and students. As a reaction to this general dissatisfaction, a system mandating minimum competency standards for high school diplomas was instituted under the 1976 Accountability Act.

Of the 115, 964 grade eleven students who were tested in October 1977, 9,277 did not pass the communication section of the Functional Literacy Test. As information to the public, these statistics indicated that the Florida system of public education was adequate for a large majority of students, but it had not provided effective, meaningful, and relevant educational experiences designed to give all students at least the minimum communication skills necessary to function and survive in today's society. Since more time is spent on the study of English than upon any other subject and since all students who are not mentally retarded or otherwise handicapped should

be functionally literate after eleven years of public education, there is a need to identify factors that are related to different levels of performance in English in Florida's public high school system, grades ten through twelve.

Purpose of the Study

The fundamental justification of this study was the need to identify discriminating factors currently related to low performance and high performance in English on the communication section of the Functional Literacy Test among public high schools throughout the State of Florida.

To identify factors, the following hypotheses were tested: Florida's public high schools were students' performance on the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test was above the state mean differ from Florida public high schools where students' performance was below the state mean in terms of:

- 1. Experiential background and teaching practices and teaching principles of English teachers.
- 2. English department working conditions and facilities.

Limitations of the Study

The variables that influence test scores are many and varied (Campbell and Stanley, 1966). The factors sought for this study were identified with the following limitations:

- 1. Only those Florida public high schools which had a minimum of 500 students taking the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test in 1977 were included.

2. No analysis was made of cultural background, socio-economic status, or previous formal education of students.

Organization of the Study

Investigation of the hypotheses previously stated was conducted by a process of comparing two groups of Florida high schools, one group designated as low performing and the other as high performing. The communication section of the first Florida Statewide Grade Eleven functional Literacy Test was the criterion for selecting schools to be used in the study.

Data collection. Two groups were selected: one low performers, with a mean of 82.5 on the Functional Literacy Test and one high performers, with a mean of 98.3 on the test. Twelve schools, six in each group, were visited and information was gathered by use of English department chairperson interviews and teacher questionnaires.

The sample. Teacher information was collected from those teachers who taught at least one English class per day in the participating schools. The English department chairperson was interviewed in each of the schools.

Treatment of the data. Teacher questionnaire data were converted to frequency distribution by the individual schools on a computer. All data were arranged into frequency of response to individual questions or, in the case of open-end questions, classified by types of responses. Tests of significance of differences such as: analysis of variance,

and 2 X C Chi square analysis using contingency tables for values of P (proportion) were performed (Snedecor and Cochran, 1973).

Definition of Terms

Public High School. A three or four year secondary educational institution, containing a twelfth grade, which is supported by and accountable to the public of Florida.

Accountability. Defined and provided for in the Educational Accountability Act of the Florida Legislature, 1976.

Student Progression and Student Assessment. Responsibilities are outlined in the Accountability Act of 1976 - SB 232.245 (1) (2) (3); SB 229.57 (2 (b) (d)).

Literacy. For the purposes of the 1977-78 Statewide Assessment Program, functional literacy is the ability to apply basic skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic to problems and tasks of a practical nature as encountered in everyday life.

Low Performance. Occurred when the majority of the grade eleven students in a high school scored below the state mean on the communication section of the Functional Literacy Test.

High Performance. Occurred when the majority of the grade eleven students in a high school scored above the state mean on the communication section of the Functional Literacy Test.

Causal-Comparison Design. Survey research method used to discriminate factors as likely causes for educational occurrences.*

*This a posteriori examination of teacher responses assumes that differences found in characteristics and practices are necessary and sufficient determinates of the observed literacy test performance that was used for the original definitions of the group (Campbell and Stanley, 1966).

Summary

The Legislature of the State of Florida has committed the state's system of public education to guaranteeing students that the system will be accountable for providing similar opportunities to acquire minimum performance standards. To fulfill this commitment, the Legislature intends that a more thorough analysis of the system of education must be provided. As an on-going part of this process, the goal of this study was to find a solution to the problem of practical English communication among grade eleven students by identifying factors which are related to low performance and high performance on the Functional Literacy Test. The procedure used for identifying the factors was to compare six Florida public high schools with low performance in English and six Florida public high schools with high performance in English on the communication section of the Functional Literacy Test.

CHAPTER 11 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

In order to coordinate a review of the literature with the hypotheses to be tested, this review will treat the following areas: (1) the origins and development of minimum competency testing; (2) the theoretical positions for competency testing; (3) the experiential background, teaching practices, and teaching principles of high school English teachers; and (4) the working conditions and facilities in public high schools. Finally, there is a review of the survey technique for educational research.

Origins and Development

A competency-based approach to curriculum development has been used at some time in virtually every curriculum program:

What teacher has not dreamed of teaching his students to perform as he would have them, with simple formula of training to intervene between objective and learner performance? (Alexander, 1972, p. 5)

A historical perspective of English grammar for this country before 1850 pointed out that Princeton University required that their 1819 entering class be well acquainted with English grammar; however, that English grammar was actually Latin grammar superimposed on English (Braddock, 1969). Princeton University extended this requirement

in 1870 when it required candidates to demonstrate their writing ability. Even more influential for the direction high school English instruction was to take was the 1874 Harvard College requirement that each candidate for admission ". . . write a short English composition, correct in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and expression . . ." (Braddock, 1969, p. 443).

By 1900 most high schools had established some regular course of instruction in English, though, "it tended to be unorganized, and sadly lacking in specific aims and methods" (Braddock, 1969, p. 443). Early in the twentieth century, educators realized that the primary aim of the high school curricula was not to prepare students for college entrance. In 1917, it was suggested, in essence, that social utility of language instruction was of major importance as a competency objective for English instruction (Braddock, 1969).

The earliest published justification of a competency-oriented curriculum for English instruction appeared in the first book on curriculum published in the United States, The Curriculum, by Franklin Bobbitt (1918). His theory is still a common argument for competency testing:

The curriculum theory is simple. Human life, however varied, consists in the performance of specific activities. Education that prepares for life is one that prepares definitely and adequately for these specific activities. However, numerous and diverse they may be for any social class, they can be discovered. They require only that one go out into the world of affairs and discover the particulars of which these affairs consist. These will show the abilities, attitudes, appreciations, and forms of knowledge that men need. These will be the objectives of the curriculum.

They will be numerous, definite, and particularized. The curriculum will then be that series of experiences which children and youth must have by way of obtaining these objectives. (Bobbitt, 1918, p. 42)

Bobbitt emphasized that his analysis procedure could be applied to the improvement of English instruction in such areas as spelling and grammar. Research indicated that more time in the 1930s was devoted to grammar and usage in American high schools than any other phase of instruction. The objectives of English instruction were nevertheless ". . . vague, uncertain, and far from agreed upon" (Braddock, 1969, p. 443). As more emphasis was placed upon objective-defining for high school programs (Popham and Baker, 1970), it became apparent that a standard for American English would be difficult for English instructors and the public to agree upon ". . . the measurement experts, the teachers, the test makers, the politicians, the linguists, the tax paying public . . . do not agree on what is basic" (Baum, 1976, p. 33).

McGuire pointed out that one researcher listed all the aims of English teaching that could be found in print. The aims or goals totaled 1,581 (McGuire, 1964, p. 3).

Forty-one years after the establishment of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), the 1952 Commission on the English Curriculum recommended five basic concepts

1. Language changes constantly.
2. Change is normal . . . not corruption but improvement.
3. Spoken language is the language.
4. Correctness rests upon usage.
5. All usage is relative (NCTE, 1952, p. 24)

Furthermore in 1954, the NCTE intended that English instruction should facilitate ". . . communication in as real situations as possible" (NCTE, 1954, p. 3). The pervasive influence of the structural linguist, coupled with the political activism of the late 1960s and the early 1970s, had led many English educators to take the view that standard English was just a prestige dialect. That philosophy was embodied in the following statement:

Linguistic snobbery was tactitly encouraged by a slavish reliance on rules, and these attitudes had consequences far beyond the realm of language. People were denied social privilege, legal rights, and economic opportunity, and their inability to manipulate the dialect used by the privileged group was used as an excuse for this denial. ("Why Johnny Can't Write," 1975, p. 58)

In attempting to assist teachers in formulating a tenable theory of English usage which would be of practical help in the classroom the following observation was made (NCTE, 1954, p. 3):

In the final analysis, what we call usage is the matter of becoming aware of choices in a large number of specific instances. The English language is full of possible variations. The term 'good usage' implies success in making choices in the variations such that the smallest number of persons are undistracted.

Nevertheless, John Simon would warn against this trend in 1977:

As of 'i be,' 'you be,' 'he be,' et cetera, which should give us all the heebie-jeebies, these may indeed be comprehensible but they go against all accepted classical and modern grammars and are the product not of a language with roots and tradition but of ignorance of how language works. It may be a regrettable ignorance, innocent and touching, one that unjust past social conditions cruelly imposed upon people. But it is ignorance, and bowing down to it, accepting it as correct and perhaps even better than established usage is not going

to help matters. On the contrary, that way lies chaos. The point is that if you allow this or that departure from traditional grammar, everything becomes permissible - as indeed, it has become, which is why we are in the present pickle. (Simon, 1977, p. 69)

A 1977 Gallop Poll indicated that 47 percent of the adults with no children in school and 55 percent with school-attending children believed public education could be improved by devoting more attention to the basic skills (Wise, 1978). The thrust of the competency test movement started as an urban-based questioning of the competencies of high school graduates. As of March 15, 1978, there were 29 states which had legislation or Department of Public Instruction regulations on minimum competency testing. The diversity of actions was great and an attempt to indicate direction would be premature (Kepner, 1978). An intense interest in minimum competency testing suggested that its advocates hoped to solve two profound problems:

A minority of students fail to acquire the basic skills; a minority of teachers fail to teach the basic skills. (Wise, 1978, p. 596)

Theoretical Positions

Arthur E. Wise in examining educational trends which promoted improved instruction, pointed out that scientific rationality had been applied to education for some time. In the past, the implicit focus of research was likely to be the individual, the classroom, or the school. In recent years, as higher levels of government have endeavored to solve some educational problems, research has

focused upon school systems--local, state, and national. It would appear that education faces at least as great a challenge at the macroscopic level as it does at the microscopic level in meeting the conditions of scientific rationality (Wise, 1978). Charles Peirce, an American philosopher, said that there are four general ways of knowing, or as he put it "fixing belief" (Buchler, 1955, p. 18): "The method of tenacity, the method of authority, the method of a priori, and the method of science." In the scientific world itself there are two broad views of science (Conant, 1951). Of the two views, the heuristic view emphasizes theory and interconnected conceptual schemata which are beneficial for further research. The basic aim of science is theory:

A theory explains a phenomenon by so specifying what variables are related to what variables and how they are related, thus enabling the researcher to predict from certain variables to certain other variables (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 9).

The function of science, to improve man's lot, seems to be supported by most laymen and many scientists. The criterion of practicality is preeminent here:

It can be argued that most educational research has been and is now dominated by this view (Kerlinger, 1969, p. 1144).

In terms of improving instruction of a practical nature, Bobbitt (1918) theorized an activity analysis approach to curriculum planning. He perceived that the curriculum should be a "... series of things which children and youths must do and experience by way of developing abilities to do the things well that make up the

affairs of adult life; and to be in all respects what adults should be" (Bobbitt, 1918, p. 42). W. W. Charters (1923) added more detail to the activity of analysis for improving instruction, and later the behavioral objectives movement in this country emphasized not only the statement of instructional objectives but the use of tests as measures of the desired outcomes of instruction (Popham and Baker, 1970).

Many educational policies of the 1960s and 1970s shared a common set of assumptions about schooling (Wise, 1978, p. 598):

1. While many goals of education are imaginable, society must find a limited set upon which agreement is possible. The emerging consensus appears to be that the purpose of schooling is to provide the student with basic and career skills. Establishing limited goals for schools is thought to facilitate goal attainment.
2. The goals must be put in a form that will permit assessment of the extent to which they are attained. Most effort has been given to defining the basic skills of reading and arithmetic. Such definition is thought to facilitate goal attainment.
3. Tests are then devised to assess performance. When the scores are available they can be compared with other scores -- district wide, state wide, or nation wide. Such comparisons are thought to facilitate student, teacher, program, and school evaluation and improvement.

Florida's accountability laws were born in a period when many states developed accountability statutes or policies. In Florida, however, the legislature did not pass a law or two and then forget the issue:

The lawmakers, with help from Florida educators and the Department of Education staff, adjusted

the educational accountability statutes from session to session . . . finally legislating the 1976 Educational Accountability Act (House of Representatives, 1976).

It was decided that the Florida Statewide Assessment Program would become the focal point for accountability by determining student mastery of the basic skills and functional literacy.

Experiences, Practices, and Principles

Daniel Kelly concluded his review of teachers' experiential backgrounds, teaching practices, and teaching principles through 1966 with the following observations (Kelly, 1966, p. 19):

1. Quantity of writing and degree of teacher evaluation do not mean better writing.
2. Functional instruction in composition is necessary.
3. Some new approaches of teaching English are meeting with apparent success.
4. High school students tend to depend more upon teachers to get them to do good work in school than do students in elementary schools.
5. English is a relatively well-liked subject, especially among girls and college-oriented students of the upper intellectual and socio-economic classes.

Kelly's own research revealed the following discriminating factors relating to overachievement in English in Florida high schools (Kelly, 1966, p. 55):

1. Teachers in overachieving schools tended to be over 40 years of age, married, and to have more than six years of teaching experience.
2. They took additional semester hours in English language, literature, English methods, subjects relating to English, and education after they began full-time teaching.

3. They completed college education courses within the past five years and earned additional degrees after they began full-time teaching.
4. They attended state meetings of English teachers and were members of their local English associations of the Florida Education Association.
5. They were certified in Junior High School English and English, grades 7 through 12.
6. They had traveled extensively in the United States.
7. They regularly read or skimmed The English Journal and read more and different nonprofessional magazines, particularly in the areas of social studies, fine arts, and useful arts.
8. They waited longer to confer with students after compositions were written.
9. They felt more successful in teaching literature and less successful in teaching composition and literature.
10. They employed the small group teaching method and used student presentations more frequently and used audio visual aids less frequently.
11. They used student selection of writing topics and maximum participation of students in classroom activities and gave their students opportunities to speak to small groups.
12. They showed less interest or placed less value in traditional grammar.
13. They considered language textbooks, movie projectors, tape recorders, television, and lay readers to be less important, but considered movable classroom furniture to be more important.
14. They spent more of their time each week in correcting students' papers, and attending faculty, departmental, and other meetings.

Concurrent with Kelly's study, Squire (1966) and Applebee (1966) used 168 high schools, selected on the basis of their high state or

national reputations, to study composition or grammar instruction.

Squire suggested the following:

. . . more should be done to teach writing or better to teach composing, rather than to provide writing activities alone and assume that students will necessarily learn from practice. (Squire, 1966, p. 284)

Accordingly, Applebee advised that ". . . imaginative writing, especially the writing of poetry and fiction, can serve an important role, among other things to help give students . . . a unique understanding of literary forms and styles" (Applebee, 1966, p. 280).

They found that many of the better schools, had abandoned the formal study of English grammar and had little more than ". . . a haphazard offering of sporadic usage drills determined solely by errors in students' speech or writing" (Applebee, 1966, p. 274). The survey also noted an extensive practice ". . . the tendency of many schools to impose strictures on the language program through large scale, system-wide adoption of single textbooks and a tendency, where this is done, of teachers seldom or never to use these language books with their classes" (Applebee, 1966, p. 275). Their study also indicated that administrators and English teachers alike were devoting little attention to students in the lower tracks.

To date only three demographic and background variables have yet appeared in teacher studies: teacher age, sex, and years of experience.

On the one hand, some demographic and formative experiences are likely either to have left a significant impact on teachers or to cause a continuing, differential response to teachers and pupils. Age, sex, race and ethnic background

exemplifies such variables, and we ignore factors such as these at our peril when constructing theories of teaching. (Dunkin and Biddle, 1974, p. 412)

In terms of teacher preparation and educational background, much descriptive literature claims that college teacher preparation is inadequate, and is, therefore, the principal reason for the decline in students' writing ability. "Too few teachers are trained in logic, well read in the philosophies of language, or themselves constant and competent writers of expository and persuasive prose" (Baum, 1976, p. 32). "The teachers who are grossly unprepared to teach language pose a major threat to the entire system . . . and systems preparing teachers that emphasize the reading and criticizing of literature at the exclusion of basic composition courses handicap high school English teachers" (Buckman, 1972, p. 100). Teachers who will eventually teach writing need work in rhetoric and basic composition above the freshman level where it is usually offered (Larson, 1969). "If teachers of English received the sort of training that would enable them to operate as professional people, they could rely upon their judgments" (Larson, 1969, p. 170). In addition, Baum has taken the following position:

Teachers might teach composition much more willingly and effectively if they had come during their training to a better understanding of the art of composition and of the why and how of teaching it. Such an understanding they could obtain in a special course of writing tailored to the distinctive needs of prospective teachers. . . (Baum, 1976, p. 36)

In terms of learning style and teaching style research, Robert Bauman pointed out that it is the complex device known as the

instructor that offers the greatest hope for improvement of teaching, providing we can understand what he is doing well and poorly (Bauman, 1974). In terms of improving high school English, Dubin and Taveggia (1968) revealed that when a teacher's style is didactic, and Baird's (1973) and Broudy's (1972) research support the position that most teachers use didactics as the dominant paradigm of instruction, student learning was usually measured by final examination instruments. If and when the student has passed the final examination, the teacher and those who control the purse strings can demonstrate accountability; certainly, much more so with a test score than in other areas like critical thinking and creativity and attitudes. The point remained that research predicted that teaching styles will not produce ". . . a measurable difference in student learning, as measured by final examinations" (Dubin and Taveggia, 1968, p. 47).

Baird concluded his research with the following observations:

. . . it would be useful if the current research could lead to studies that develop independent measures of the teaching-style and student-rating variables . . . and . . . useful studies would relate styles to such criteria as gains in achievement and other changes among students . . . the interaction between student characteristics and the influence of the styles should be studied. (Baird, 1975, p. 21)

It appears that the difficulty with trying to measure good teaching is that it is ephemeral: it is an event of the moment and the class period, rather than something that gets recorded, and later on studied and analyzed. It is evident from the research that an instrument for evaluating teaching styles based upon student

perceptions is not valid or reliable: "The instructor judged by one student may be rated poor by another student, or at another time, or in another course" (Bauman, 1974, p. 289). Nevertheless, teachers inevitably must deal with skeptics prone to 'tough talk' about accountability. The present state of teaching indicates that teaching styles vary from one situation to another: ". . . that different sequences of teaching acts are more or less appropriate to different kinds of teaching situations and can provide a logical step in research linking process and product variable" (Kerlinger, 1969, p. 1144). To insure the public of the State of Florida that English teachers are prepared to teach practical communication skills, the 1978 legislature recommended to the governor that teacher testing be required in order to test prospective teachers on their grasp of basic skills ("Tallahassee Tally," 1978).

Working Conditions and Facilities

Research related to working conditions and facilities for improving high school English instruction up to 1966 could be summarized as follows (Kelly, 1966, p. 19):

1. Outstanding English departments tended to have certain common attributes.
2. Very little, if any, progress has been made to reduce the size of English classes and teachers' loads.
3. English teachers' working hours are excessively long.

Daniel Kelly's research (1966, p. 57) concluded that working conditions and facilities in Florida public high schools where

students consistently achieved beyond their expected potential in English had the following characteristics:

1. The English faculty taught fewer classes each day.
2. The English faculty was restricted to the teaching of English.
3. The English faculty taught a smaller number of students each day.
4. The English faculty had larger professional libraries available.
5. The English faculty had smaller size classes.
6. The English faculty had several English tracks for students.
7. The English faculty had a larger number of unabridged dictionaries available in English classrooms.

In summarizing the present state of research concerning classroom working conditions, Dunkin and Biddle (1974, pp. 410-411) made the following observations:

As we know, only a few conditions associated with classroom teaching conditions have been featured in research on teaching to date. Most of these have been associated with classrooms, including grade level, subject matter, multigradedness, use of computer-assisted instruction, and experimental curricula. Many 'obvious' classroom variables have not yet received much attention, however, including class size, physical properties of the classroom, other educational media, equipment in the room, or self-directed and 'open' classrooms . . . so far ignored are such variables as the social structure and size of the school, the use of inspectors, the effects of matriculation examinations, and so forth . . . as yet little is known concerning the functions of these variables in theories of teaching

The Florida Legislature (1978) attempted to upgrade the overall situation by budgeting remediation money for students not passing the test: "The Legislature appropriate \$10 million for compensatory education and promised an additional \$26.5 million" (Webber, 1978, p. 2C).

Survey Research

In the majority of educational survey studies, the ones from which most pertinent information was derived appeared to be those using the ex post facto research technique. It means, rather, that the most important social, scientific, and educational research problems do not lend themselves to experimentation, although many of them do lend themselves to controlled inquiry of the ex post facto kind (Campbell and Stanley, 1968). "If a tally of sound an important studies in the behavioral sciences and education were made, it is possible that ex post facto studies would outnumber and out rank experimental studies" (Blalock, 1961, p. 5). A great deal of work, especially in education, has been and is being done on the study and analysis of causal relations in ex post facto research.

Despite its evident potential value in helping to solve theoretical and applied educational problems, scientific survey research has not been used to any great extent by educators. Its distinctive educational usefulness, moreover, seems not to have been realized. Obviously, survey research is a useful tool for

educational fact-finding. An administrator, a board of education, or a staff of teachers can learn a great deal about a school system or a community without contacting every child, every teacher, and every citizen. In short, the sampling methods developed in survey research can be very useful (Fox, 1953, and Kerlinger, 1973).

Summary

Historically, a definite set of universally accepted standards for practical communication skills has not evolved. State systems for secondary public education have been influenced by standardized national tests, by media, and by political and socio-economic pressures; however, much leeway remains within school districts and within individual high schools as to the priority given the teaching of practical communication skills. Public concern for a set of practical communication skills to be taught in every public high school has been reflected in legislative action. It seems important, therefore, that English educators take a more involved and influential role in determining the guidelines for practical communication skills curricula; otherwise, those directives might come from sources with ulterior objectives.

In order for secondary English educators to take a leadership role, it appears imperative that they analyze and synthesize the influences that experiential background, teaching practices, and teaching principles have on the effective teaching of practical communication skills. A historical perspective reveals that even when research of this nature has been done, it has not affected

improvement in English programs to a significant degree. English teachers, therefore, must become more sensitive to the research being done in this area and, thereby, realize that English education is a continuing commitment. Colleges preparing English teachers, likewise, must better prepare teachers for teaching practical communication skills.

Those people directing secondary English education guidelines should also be aware that working conditions and facilities contribute positively or negatively to the atmosphere in which learning can take place. Research supports the thesis that some conditions and facilities are more conducive for teaching communication skills than others. In order to create and maintain the best possible conditions and facilities for effective English programs, states must provide sufficient money for schools to budget for the essentials.

To analyze the essentials for teaching practical communication skills, the Florida system of secondary public education lends itself to experimentation through controlled inquiry (survey research) of the ex post facto kind. Survey research of this nature is one of the best ways to discover factors which discriminate an effective English program from an ineffective English program.

CHAPTER III DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This chapter presents the design of the study, including the scope and limitations of the study, the procedures, and the study's participants.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study concentrated on the identification of discriminating factors in terms of English department working conditions and facilities and in terms of English teachers' experiential background, teaching practices, and teaching principles in Florida public high schools during the 1977-1978 academic year. While it is anticipated that the findings of this study will have present and future implications for programs of high school English education throughout the State of Florida and elsewhere, the data were collected from twelve Florida public high schools with 500 or more grade eleven students, and application to other high school programs should be approached only with qualification.

Procedures

Using a causal-comparison design (Kelly, 1966), the purpose of this study was to establish likely causes of differences between comparative groups. The comparison made was between two groups of

schools, one of which performed below the state mean (92) for English communication on the first Statewide Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test and one of which performed above the state mean (92) in English communication on the first Statewide Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test. The source of data for the selection of the two groups was the computer printout of "Percent Passed Comparison Tables" of the communication section of the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test made available through the Florida Department of Education Office of Student Assessment, Dr. Thomas H. Fisher, Administrator. The mean on the communication section for the 115,964 grade eleven students who took the test was 92. This meant that of all the grade eleven students throughout the 67 public school districts in the State of Florida, 92 percent passed the communication section by answering correctly at least 70 percent of the 117 items on the test along with at least 50 percent of the 24 skills on the test. For the purposes of this study, high school programs with means below the state mean were considered low performers and those with means above the state mean were considered high performers. The selection process for schools to be included in the study was as follows:

1. Florida public high schools, each having a minimum of 500 grade eleven students who took the test in October 1977, formed the initial population for the study.
2. High schools must have been accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for the academic year 1977-1978.

3. Express written permission of the district superintendent of public education and the high school principal must have been given.
4. High schools were grouped on the basis of the data available from the State Department of Education for the percentage of students who passed the communication section of the Literacy Test.
5. Two groups were selected: low performers with a mean of 82.5, and high performers with a mean of 98.3

To effectively gain the complete freedom of scientific inquiry for this study, it was necessary to guarantee many of the districts and the high schools within the districts that they would not be identified. For that reason, none of the eight districts, twelve high schools, twelve chairpersons, 247 English teachers, or the 8,008 eleventh grade students will be identified.

Data Collection

Schools were not included in the selection process unless the district superintendent and the principal approved in writing. In several instances, a study of this nature was not welcomed by some of the high performing and some of the low performing high schools in the state. In many instances the district superintendent asked the author to have the study approved by a staff member. In other instances superintendents allowed the decision to be made by the high school principal. In two cases, the high school principal

allowed the English chairpersons to decide if the school would participate in the study. Appendixes A, C and D are examples of correspondence involved in the school selection process. It was also necessary to insure that inconvenience would be minimal and that disruption would not occur. Once approved, the author made contact with the principal of each school and the chairperson of the English department of each school in order to arrange for data collection. Visits of two to three days were made to each school to collect data relative to the hypotheses to be tested. Objective data were collected by three instruments;

1. Two questionnaires for individual English teachers-- Part I and Part II (Appendixes F and G respectively) were filled out by teachers instructing at least one English class per day in grades ten, eleven, or twelve. The purpose of these questions was to discover experiential background and teaching practices and teaching principles of English teachers in the high schools participating in the study.
2. An interview was held with each English department chairperson and a questionnaire (Appendix H) was filled out. The purpose of this inquiry was to discover working conditions and facilities with which the English faculty worked in each school.

The teacher questionnaire, Part I, was transcribed to punch cards and then tabulated into frequency distributions by school

and groups of schools. Teacher questionnaire, Part II, and the English department chairperson questionnaire were analyzed for significance of differences. Because of the wide variety of questions used to collect information, several different statistical tests of significance were used--analysis of variance and 2 x C chi square analysis using contingency tables (Snedecor and Cochran, 1973).

Summary

A causal-comparison design was used to discover factors related to public high schools performing below or above the state mean for the communication section of the first Statewide Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test. Two groups of schools were selected, six in each group, on the basis of the percentage of grade eleven students who passed the Literacy Test. One was designated as low performing schools; the other was designated as high performing schools. Three questionnaires were used to collect data in each of the twelve participating schools. Electronic data processing equipment was used to tabulate frequency distributions, and tests for significance of differences between the two groups by the appropriate statistical procedures were applied.

CHAPTER IV ANALYSIS OF DATA AND FINDINGS

Introduction

The objective of this study was to identify discriminating factors which were related to high performance and low performance in English on the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test. To identify discriminating factors, quantitative comparisons were made which would reveal statistically significant differences between the two groups of teachers and their working conditions and facilities. The statistical criterion of significance accepted for this study was a P (level of competence) of at least .05.

Analysis of Data and Findings

Responses to Part I of the teacher questionnaire (Appendix F) are displayed in Table 1. Part I of the questionnaire consisted of those questions designed to measure the teachers' perceptions of the administrative environment at the school. When comparing the responses of the teachers from low performance schools with the responses of teachers from high performance schools, all those questions were successful in discriminating between the two groups of schools.

Faculty from high performance schools were much more likely to consider as very important the responsiveness of the administration

TABLE I
 RESPONSES TO TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE (PART I) AND CHI SQUARE LEVELS
 OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHERS FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		X ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
1. Responsiveness of the administration to the ideas of the teachers at the school					
a) great importance.....	13	79			
b) some importance	69	12	88.34	.005	3
c) little importance	4	8			
d) no importance.....	0	0			
2. Classroom observation and counseling of teachers					
a) great importance.....	32	12			
b) some importance	42	13	73.10	.005	3
c) little importance.....	11	74			
d) no importance.....	1	0			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 1 Continued
 RESPONSES TO TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE (PART 1) AND CHI SQUARE LEVELS
 OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHERS FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		X ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
3. Departmental meetings at which theories and methods of teaching are discussed					
a) great importance	16	18			
b) some importance.....	56	38	41.00	.005	3
c) little importance.....	12	34			
d) no importance.....	2	0			

*degrees of freedom.

to the ideas of the teachers at the school. Teachers from low performance schools considered this to be of only some importance ($\chi^2 = 88.34$, $P < .005$ with 3 degrees of freedom). Faculty from low performance schools felt that classroom observation and counseling of teachers was of great or moderate importance; teachers from high performance schools felt such observation or counseling was of little importance ($\chi^2 = 73.10$, $P < .005$ with 3 degrees of freedom). Teachers from low performance schools felt that departmental meetings at which theories and methods of teaching were discussed were of great or moderate importance. Faculty from high performance schools regarded this factor to be of some or little importance ($\chi^2 = 41.00$, $P < .005$ with 3 degrees of freedom).

Teachers from both groups of schools were asked to record their preferences for non-professional reading. The teachers recorded their preferences on a partial list from the Library of Congress Classification System. The summary of their responses is recorded in Table 2. Examination of the table will show that the categories of sports and games, marriage and family, education, fiction, horticulture, hunting, arts and crafts, and domestic science made up for 78 percent of the total number of responses by both groups of schools. A total of 502 responses were recorded for the low performance schools and 539 responses were recorded for the high performance schools.

An analysis of variance was performed to test for any significant difference between the two groups on the total number of responses (502 versus 539) and for any differences between the types of books selected

TABLE 2
 CLASSIFICATION OF NON-PROFESSIONAL BOOKS READ BY RESPONDING TEACHERS
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Classification	Low Performance	High Performance
Philosophy		
Religions, Mythology	4	2
Judaism	1	0
Islam	3	1
Christianity	3	2
History		
Archeology.....	1	0
Genealogy.....	8	12
Biography.....	5	2
British	0	2
African.....	1	2
American	1	3
Geography		
Anthropology	0	1
Sports and Games	12	17

TABLE 2 Continued
 CLASSIFICATION OF NON-PROFESSIONAL BOOKS READ BY RESPONDING TEACHERS
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Classification	Low Performance	High Performance
Social Science		
Statistics.....	0	2
Sociology.....	2	3
Marriage and family	49	43
Societies.....	12	17
Political Science.....	0	2
Law.....	2	4
Education.....	63	80
Musical Instruction.....	4	5
Fine Arts		
Architecture.....	12	11
Sculpture.....	2	6
Painting.....	5	11

TABLE 2 Continued
 CLASSIFICATION OF NON-PROFESSIONAL BOOKS READ BY RESPONDING TEACHERS
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Classification	Low Performance	High Performance
Language		
French, Spanish, Italian.....	7	6
English.....	2	1
German.....	0	1
Literature		
Classical.....	0	4
General.....	8	6
English.....	2	7
American.....	5	4
Fiction.....	151	169
Science		
Astronomy.....	0	1
Geology.....	1	3

TABLE 2 Continued
 CLASSIFICATION OF NON-PROFESSIONAL BOOKS READ BY RESPONDING TEACHERS
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Classification	Low Performance	High Performance
Agriculture		
Horticulture.....	26	20
Fish culture.....	5	3
Hunting.....	17	11
Technology		
Arts and crafts.....	48	31
Domestic science.....	34	40
Navigation.....	5	6
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL....	502	539

by both groups combined. The results are shown in Table 3. There was no statistical difference between the two groups on the total number of responses. However, there was a strong preference in both groups for the eight types of books mentioned in the preceding paragraph. There was no evidence of any interaction between types of books and performance group.

Table 4 shows the teachers' response to the items from the experiential portion of the questionnaire (Part II) that were able to discriminate, as shown by significant values of chi square, between background characteristics of teachers from low performance schools and high performance schools. The raw frequency (number of teachers) is shown for all possible responses of each significant item. The chi square statistic (χ^2), the level of significance (P), and the degrees of freedom (df) are shown for each item.

Teachers from high performance schools were characterized by the following: an older age, more teaching experience, more teaching experience in their present school, Rank III certification, greater incidence of undergraduate work in a private university or liberal arts college, a very high likelihood of an undergraduate English major (liberal arts) rather than English education, less chance of an undergraduate minor, and a total professional work week of 51-60 hours.

Conversely, teachers from low performance schools had the following characteristics: a younger age, fewer years of full-time teaching, fewer years of full-time experience at the same high school, often a higher certification rank, a state university education, an English education major rather than an English

TABLE 3
 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE UPON BOOK TYPES REPORTED
 FOR NON-PROFESSIONAL READING BY TEACHERS
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F value
Between schools.....	11.55	1	11.55	<1.0
Between book types.....	61025.15	38	1605.93	92.88*
Residual.....	656.95	38	17.29	
TOTAL.....	61693.65	77		

* $P < .005$

TABLE 4
 RESPONSES TO EXPERIENTIAL PORTION OF TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE
 AND CHI SQUARE LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHERS FROM
 LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		X ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
1. What is your age?					
a) Under 26.....	9	12			
b) 26-30.....	13	12			
c) 31-35.....	29	11	34.75	.005	4
d) 36-40.....	23	13			
e) 41 or older.....	12	51			
4. How many years have you taught full-time prior to this year?					
a) Under 3.....	9	4			
b) 3-6.....	12	18			
c) 7-10.....	38	26	11.93	.025	4
d) 11-14.....	20	37			
e) 15 or more.....	7	14			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 4 Continued
 RESPONSES TO EXPERIENTIAL PORTION OF TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE
 AND CHI SQUARE LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHERS FROM
 LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		X ²	P.	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
5. How many years have you taught full-time in this school prior to this year?					
a) Less than 3.....	29	6			
b) 3-6.....	30	12			
c) 7-10.....	14	38	48.19	.005	4
d) 11-14.....	10	32			
e) 15 or more.....	3	11			
6. What is your certification rank?					
a) Rank I.....	0	0			
b) Rank II.....	39	27			
c) Rank III.....	37	68	13.05	.025	4
d) Rank IV.....	0	0			
e) Not certified.....	10	4			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 4 Continued
 RESPONSES TO EXPERIENTIAL PORTION OF TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE
 AND CHI SQUARE LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHERS FROM
 LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		X ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
9. In what kind of school did you do most of your undergraduate work?					
a) State university.....	36	24			
b) Private university	17	34			
c) State college	20	18	17.72	.005	5
d) Liberal arts college.....	7	20			
e) Teacher's college	4	0			
f) Other.....	0	0			
10. What was your undergraduate major?					
a) English	36	72			
b) Speech	0	4			
c) Speech therapy	1	1			
d) Journalism	4	3	26.62	.005	4
e) English education	43	17			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 4 Continued
 RESPONSES TO EXPERIENTIAL PORTION OF TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE
 AND CHI SQUARE LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHERS FROM
 LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		X ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
11. What was your minor?					
a) English	0	0			
b) Speech	45	16			
c) Speech therapy	0	1	10.49	.005	4
d) Journalism	34	2			
e) English education	0	0			
17. Professional work week (in hours)?					
a) Less than 40	0	0			
b) 41-50	67	37			
c) 51-60	19	54	28.12	.005	4
d) 61-70	0	3			
e) More than 70	0	0			

*degrees of freedom.

major, a minor in speech or journalism, and a 41-50 work week.

The teachers' responses to the significantly discriminating questionnaire items about teaching practices are displayed in Table 5. Seven questionnaire items about teaching practices were found to discriminate between teachers from low performance and high performance schools.

Teachers from low performance schools required written work less often from the students, critically evaluated that work more often, conferred with their students somewhat sooner after submission of written work, tended to emphasize grammar rather than organization of content, tended to assign slightly less written homework, suggested a wider variety of sources of other books, and tended to spend the summer period in relaxation or teaching school.

The faculty from high performance schools assigned written work in class more often, made critical evaluations of the work less often, conferred a day later with students about their written work, emphasized organization and content in the evaluations, always assigned one to two hours of written homework a week, used the school or classroom library almost exclusively, and spent their summers either teaching or attending school.

The only question about additional certification that discriminated between the low and high performance schools was the one dealing with speech certification. Teachers from low performance schools were more likely to have additional certification in speech. These results are shown in Table 6.

TABLE 5
 RESPONSES TO TEACHING PRACTICES PORTION OF QUESTIONNAIRE
 AND CHI SQUARE LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHING
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		X ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
18. How often do you require your English classes to write or compose at least several sentences?					
a) More than twice per week	20	70			
b) Twice per week	38	23			
c) Once per week	18	4	53.55	.005	4
d) Three times per month....	0	0			
e) Twice per month or less..	10	0			
19. How often do you personally make critical evaluations of student writing?					
a) More than twice per week	34	2			
b) Twice per week	30	34			
c) Once per week	14	61	62.46	.005	4
d) Three times per month ...	2	0			
e) Twice per month or less..	3	0			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 5 Continued
 RESPONSES TO TEACHING PRACTICES PORTION OF QUESTIONNAIRE
 AND CHI SQUARE LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHING
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		χ^2	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
20. How soon do you confer?					
a) Immediately.....	2	0			
b) Same day.....	13	0			
c) One day later.....	41	71	28.56	.005	4
d) Several days later.....	21	24			
e) A week or more later.....	6	0			
21. What is emphasized in your critical evaluation?					
a) Grammar.....	48	10			
b) Organization.....	14	45			
c) Content.....	18	40	48.61	.005	3
d) Other.....	0	0			
22. Writing homework?					
a) None.....	23	0			
b) One to two hours.....	60	97			
c) Three to four hours.....	0	0			
d) Five to six hours.....	0	0	12.67	.005	5
e) Seven or more hours.....	0	0			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 5 Continued
 RESPONSES TO TEACHING PRACTICES PORTION OF QUESTIONNAIRE
 AND CHI SQUARE LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHING
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		χ ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
24. Book resources?					
a) School library.....	68	91			
b) Public library.....	8	0			
c) Classroom library.....	7	6			
d) Paperbacks.....	0	0	12.87	.05	5
e) College library.....	2	0			
f) Other.....	0	0			
27. Summer activity?					
a) Other employment.....	7	9			
b) Teaching school.....	22	27			
c) Attending school.....	19	26	16.3	.01	5
d) Travel.....	6	19			
e) Relaxation.....	32	13			
f) Other.....	0	0			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 6

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL (NON-ENGLISH) CERTIFICATION QUESTIONS IN EXPERIENTIAL PORTION OF TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE AND CHI SQUARE LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHERS FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		X ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
31. Are you certified in Speech?					
a) Yes	39	24	9.12	.005	1
b) No	47	75			

*degrees of freedom.

Student participation practices differ greatly between the two groups of teachers. As shown in Table 7, teachers from high performance schools were more likely to require that students give formal speeches before the class, to have students speak in small groups, to allow students to select writing topics, and to encourage maximum student participation.

In contrast, teachers from low performance schools were not as likely to encourage student participation, selection of writing topics, small group speaking activities, or formal speeches before the class.

Teachers from high performance schools had many more academic credits earned after starting to teach. These results are shown in Table 8. A majority of teachers from low performance schools had ten or more credits in literature earned after they had started teaching. Teachers from low performance schools had fewer than 10 hours in literature earned after they started to teach. A greater proportion of the high performance teachers had had ten or more hours earned in teaching methods since their teaching careers began; low performance teachers were very likely to have had nine or fewer hours.

Over half of the high performance teachers had ten or more hours in other education courses earned since starting their careers while fewer of the low performance teachers had earned additional hours in other education courses.

There were marked differences between the two groups regarding the other professional activities of the teachers. As shown in Table 9, high performance teachers as a group, attended more meetings for English teachers, completed college education courses, took part

TABLE 7

RESPONSES TO STUDENTS PARTICIPATION QUESTIONS FROM TEACHING PRACTICES
 PORTION OF TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE AND CHI SQUARE SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS BY TEACHERS
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		χ^2	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
33. Students give formal speeches before groups?					
a) Yes.....	57	87	12.45	.005	1
b) No.....	29	12			
35. Students speak in small groups?					
a) Yes.....	54	91	23.06	.005	1
b) No.....	32	8			
37. Student selection of writing topic?					
a) Yes.....	52	75	5.00	.05	1
b) No.....	34	24			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 7 Continued

RESPONSES TO STUDENT PARTICIPATION QUESTIONS FROM TEACHING PRACTICES
 PORTION OF TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE AND CHI SQUARE SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS BY TEACHERS
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		χ^2	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
38. Maximum student participation					
a) Yes	52	89	72.01	.005	1
b) No	34	10			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 8
 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT EXTRA ACADEMIC WORK TAKEN SINCE
 STARTING TO TEACH AND CHI SQUARE LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE BY TEACHERS FROM LOW
 AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		X ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
39. Hours in literature since began teaching?					
a) Nine or less	37	11	23.39	.005	1
b) Ten or more	19	43			
43. Hours in teaching methods since began teaching?					
a) Nine or less	41	46	5.21	.025	1
b) Ten or more	15	39			
46. Hours in other education courses since began teaching (ten hours are more)?					
a) Yes	0	35	37.50	.005	1
b) No	86	64			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 9
 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND CHI
 SQUARE SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS BY TEACHERS FROM
 LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		χ^2	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
48. Attended a meeting of English teachers?					
a) Yes	63	85	4.57	.05	1
b) No	23	14			
50. Completed a college education course?					
a) Yes	50	85	17.94	.005	1
b) Never	36	14			
51. Taken part in English workshop?					
a) One or two	62	73	6.69	.01	1
b) Never	21	8			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 9 CONTINUED
 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND CHI
 SQUARE SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS BY TEACHERS FROM
 LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		X ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
52. Conferred with English specialist?					
a) Yes	22	66	31.15	.005	1
b) No	64	34			
53. Currently subscribe to professional journal?					
a) Yes	12	37	12.97	.005	1
b) No	74	62			

*degrees of freedom.

in more English teacher workshops, conferred more often with English specialists, and were currently subscribing to professional journals.

Additional questions that were asked about teaching practices are displayed in Table 10. These questions were found to be effective in discriminating between teachers from low and high performance schools.

Teachers from high performance schools made infrequent use of the lecture method of instruction, made very frequent use of the Socratic method of instruction, and frequently required individual silent work of the students.

Teachers from low performance schools, by comparison, made frequent use of the lecture method, infrequently used the Socratic method, and did not use as much individual silent work.

Teachers from high performance schools regarded other areas of school instruction as being instrumental in aiding the overall level of English instruction. As shown by Table 11, high performance instructors felt that spelling instruction and listening instruction were very important; teachers from low performance schools did not view these subjects as being very important in aiding English instruction. Ten of the high performance English teachers felt art instruction was important while two of the low performance teachers viewed art instruction as important.

The last portion of the questionnaire was intended to measure the importance that the two groups of teachers attributed to various supporting resources and materials at the school. High performance teachers felt that a class set of anthologies was important, a class

TABLE 10
 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT TEACHING PRACTICES AND CHI SQUARE
 SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS BY TEACHERS FROM LOW
 AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		χ^2	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
61. Use of lecture method?					
a) Frequently	61	32	27.45	.005	1
b) Infrequently	25	67			
62. Use of Socratic method?					
a) Very frequently....	38	89	44.69	.005	1
b) frequently	48	10			
63. Individual frequent silent work?					
a) Yes	42	74	13.20	.005	1
b) No	44	25			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 11
 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT ADJUNCT (NON-ENGLISH) SCHOOL INSTRUCTION
 AND CHI SQUARE SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS BY TEACHERS
 FROM LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		χ^2	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
71. Art instruction seen as very important?					
a) Yes	2	10			
b) No	84	89	4.59	.05	1
77. Spelling instruction seen as very important?					
a) Yes	62	92			
b) No.....	24	7	18.27	.005	1
78. Listening instruction seen as very important?					
a) Yes	38	58			
b) No	48	41	3.83	.05	1

*degrees of freedom.

set of plays, novels or biographies, a classroom library, a handbook on language reference for study and use, a filmstrip projector, a motion picture projector, a display table of periodicals, and access to a duplicating machine were important (see Table 12).

In contrast, teachers from low performance schools felt that workbooks with student drills were essential, central service was absolutely essential, and a teaching manual was absolutely essential.

Summary

Two teacher questionnaires were used to test hypothesis one of this study. Teacher questionnaire (Part I) consisted of eight questions pertaining to the first hypothesis. Teacher questionnaire (Part II) was made up of 108 objective-answer questions, 104 of which related to hypothesis one. A total of 185 teachers responded to the two questionnaires. The analysis of their responses indicates support for the first hypothesis that, "Florida high schools where students performed above the state mean on the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test differ from Florida high schools where students performed below the state mean in terms of experiential background, teaching practices and teaching principles of English teachers."

Hypothesis two was tested by questions on teacher questionnaire (Part II) and on the English chairperson questionnaire. Several of the questions on the teacher questionnaire produced significantly different responses between the two groups of schools. These data indicate support for the second hypothesis that, "Florida high

TABLE 12
 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT MATERIAL RESOURCES AND CHI SQUARE
 SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS BY TEACHERS FROM
 LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		x ²	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
83. Class set of anthologies absolutely essential?					
a) Yes	7	18	3.97	.05	1
b) No	79	81			
84. Class set of plays, novels, biographies absolutely essential?					
a) Yes	6	18	5.12	.025	1
b) No	80	81			
85. Classroom library absolutely essential?					
a) Yes	14	34	7.81	.01	1
b) No	12	65			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 12 Continued
 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT MATERIAL RESOURCES AND CHI SQUARE
 SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS BY TEACHERS FROM
 LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		χ^2	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
89. Workbooks with drills absolutely essential?					
a) Yes.....	41	24	11.08	.005	1
b) No.....	45	75			
91. Handbook on language for reference absolutely essential?					
a) Yes.....	0	6	5.39	.025	1
b) No.....	86	91			
94. Filmstrip projector absolutely essential?					
a) Yes.....	4	13	3.96	.05	1
b) No.....	82	86			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 12 Continued
 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT MATERIAL SOURCES AND CHI SQUARE
 SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS BY TEACHERS FROM
 LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		χ^2	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
95. Motion picture projector absolutely essential?					
a) Yes.....	14	53	27.67	.005	1
b) No.....	72	46			
96. Tape recorder absolutely essential?					
a) Yes.....	0	6	5.39	.025	1
b) No.....	86	93			
99. Display table of periodicals absolutely essential?					
a) Yes.....	2	15	9.06	.005	1
b) No.....	84	84			

*degrees of freedom.

TABLE 12 Continued
 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT MATERIAL RESOURCES FROM CHI SQUARE
 SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS BY TEACHERS FROM
 LOW AND HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Question/Response	Teachers in Schools		χ^2	P	df*
	Low Performance	High Performance			
103. Clerical service absolutely essential?					
a) Yes.....	68	43	25.35	.005	1
b) No.....	18	56			
105. Duplicating machine absolutely essential?					
a) Yes.....	59	99	26.40	.005	1
b) No.....	29	0			
107. Teaching manual absolutely essential?					
a) Yes.....	57	45	8.06	.005	1
b) No.....	29	54			

*degrees of freedom.

schools where students performed above the state mean on the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test differ from Florida high schools where students performed below the state mean in terms of working conditions and facilities."

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Using Dr. Kelly's study (1966) as a frame of reference, this study employed a modified version of three of his instruments (Appendixes F, G and H) to identify discriminating factors relating to high performance and low performance in English in selected public high schools. To identify factors, the following hypotheses were tested in Florida's public high schools where students' performance on the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test was above the state mean differ from Florida public high schools where students' performance was below the state mean in terms of:

1. Experiential background and teaching practices and principles of English teachers.
2. English department working conditions and facilities.

In the course of reviewing trends and patterns for competency-based testing, current concerns expressed by researchers and informed observers provided the foundation for testing this study's hypotheses. A panel of experts representing high school English teachers, community college English teachers, university English teachers, and educators in general, examined and modified three of Kelly's questionnaires for the purpose of this study. A variety of statistical methods was used to test the significance of difference between the two groups

of schools. The level of competence used for accepting significant differences between the groups was five percent.

Conclusions

The statistically significant differences between the groups of high schools warranted the acceptance of this study's hypotheses. The statistical methods employed for this study also generated discriminating factors related to high and low performance on the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test. The specific identified factors were categorized by their relationship to hypothesis one or to hypothesis two.

Hypothesis One

In terms of significant differences, the tests revealed that teachers in English programs where grade eleven students performed above the state mean on the Grade Eleven Functional Literacy Test tended to differ from teachers in English programs where grade eleven students performed below the state mean on the Functional Literacy Test. Compared to the teachers in the low group, the high group teachers:

1. Had more teaching experience, were older, had more teaching time in their present schools, and more of them held only Rank III certification.
2. Had a greater incidence of undergraduate work in private universities or liberal arts colleges.
3. Had a greater likelihood of an undergraduate English major rather than the English education major, and less chance of an undergraduate minor.

This could be a national pattern too

none too

4. Had assigned written work in class more often, made critical evaluations less often, emphasized organization and content in their evaluations, and always assigned one to two hours of writing homework a week.
5. Were likely to require that students give formal speeches before the class, have students work in small groups, have students select writing topics, and encouraged maximum student participation.
6. Made very frequent use of the Socratic (questioning) method of instruction, and frequently required individual work of their students.
7. Felt that listening instruction was very important and that other areas of school instruction should support English objectives.
8. Continued to take graduate credit courses in literature, teaching methods, and other education courses since beginning their careers.
9. Took part in English teacher workshops, conferred often with English specialists, and were currently subscribing to professional journals.
10. Spent their summers either teaching or attending school.

Hypothesis Two

In terms of significant differences, the test revealed that working conditions and facilities for English programs where grade eleven students performed above the state mean on the Grade Eleven

Functional Literacy Test tended to differ from working conditions and facilities in English programs where grade eleven students performed below the state mean on the Functional Literacy Test. Compared to the working conditions and facilities available to the low group, the high group:

1. Considered their work week to be longer--51-60 hours.
2. Used the school or classroom library almost exclusively to other libraries.
3. Did not feel that workbooks with student drills, teaching manuals, and clerical service were absolutely essential.
4. Were likely to consider very important the responsiveness of the administration to their ideas.

Implications

These conclusions have implications for educational policy makers, educational administrators, teacher educators, English teachers, and educators in general. If educational policies are enacted into laws with the intention of guaranteeing students equal opportunity to acquire practical communication skills and with the intention of holding the educational system accountable for students' acquisition of these skills, then the legislature must commit itself to follow-through programs and research, such as this study, for all of the ramifications such a commitment entails. Administrators looking to improve the practical communication skills of their students may look for teachers with qualifications that can be associated with high performance programs. Teachers desiring to improve their ability

to teach practical 'marketplace' communication skills can evaluate their experiential background, their teaching practices, and the teaching principles they embrace in terms of those that this study found to be discriminating for high performing English programs. English teacher educators may use many of the insights rendered in this study to evaluate their own approaches to teacher education programs. Educators in general may further explore and identify communication skills and ways to test for them that are valid and reliable; they may, as well, attempt to understand the most advantageous teaching practices for the various students' learning styles.

In terms of improving practical communication skills, it appears that teachers may improve their ability by taking English teaching methods courses, communication courses, and reading courses. They may also update their methods by attending workshops, using the knowledge of specialists, and reading the professional journals. They should recognize that frequency of writing and an emphasis on grammar do not, in themselves, improve writing skills. The class environment should be such that the teacher relies less on the lecture method of teaching and more on class participation in oral presentations, small group work, and work on assignments in class.

Administrators and curriculum planners need to implement instruments to evaluate the teaching practices of English teachers and, thereby, set up in-service workshops and programs for teachers. Where administrators do not have the time or, more commonly, the expertise, experienced educators should be consulted. In terms of recruiting

and hiring teachers, administrators must become more sensitive to the experiential background and teaching practices of potential teachers; better applicant screening should, therefore, be implemented in terms of demonstrable ability to teach practical skills. An input from English teacher educators will be vital to the successful development and implementation of a valid qualifying test for English teachers.

Some of the general areas concerning working conditions and facilities suggest that English teachers in the low performing schools need more administrative support, especially, in the areas of discipline and more teaching tracks for students. The conditions and facilities which are most conducive for teaching and learning practical communication skills still beg for more research and support from the general public for research of this nature.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
SAMPLE LETTER SENT TO COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

College of Education
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida 32611

Date _____

Superintendent of Public Instruction

County

, Florida

Dear _____:

Mr. Charles L. Wilson, a doctoral student at the University of Florida, and I are undertaking a research project aimed at the improvement of English instruction in Florida public senior high schools. We are conducting the investigation with the belief that a study of the characteristics of English teachers, English department working conditions and facilities in our senior high schools will provide data that will suggest the means by which Florida senior high schools may attain more effective English programs. One of the schools we would like to study is _____ High School.

Before we may include any school in the project, we will meet three conditions:

1. We will attain the express written consent of the county superintendent.
2. The school principal and English faculty must volunteer to participate.
3. We will attain the express written consent of the school principal.

May we have your consent on the enclosed form? Please sign and retain one copy for yourself and return the original one directly to us. We will then contact the principal.

If you and the high school principal agree to take part in the study, you may do so with the assurance that all data collected will be

handled confidentially and that no person, school, or county will be identified in any way. Data will appear in summary form only, and you will be informed of the results of the study.

Sincerely yours,

Vincent McGuire
Professor of English Education

Enclosure

APPENDIX B
AUTHORIZATION FORM TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Date _____

Authorization to Conduct Research in Specified Schools--Under
Specified Conditions

I hereby grant permission to Charles L. Wilson and Dr. Vincent McGuire to conduct a research study in the following schools under the conditions listed below:

Conditions

1. The study will be concerned with ways to improve the senior high school English program. Research will be completed by May 30, 1978.
2. The identity of all schools in the student (twelve throughout the state) will not be revealed in any way to any person.
3. The results will be made available to participants.

Charles L. Wilson
Doctoral Student

Superintendent of Public Instruction

Dr. Vincent McGuire
College of Education
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611

Principal, High School

County School District

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE LETTER SENT TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

College of Education
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida 32611

Date _____

Principal

High School

_____, Florida

Dear _____:

My purpose in writing is to ask your permission to include your school in a research project that will attempt to develop some concrete suggestions for improving English instruction in Florida senior high schools. Your school is very important to our study, and we are exceedingly hopeful that you will agree to participate.

The objective of this research is to come up with some specific answers for improving English education.

Our plan is to have our project director, Charles L. Wilson, visit each school for approximately three days. I hope to accompany him in his visits. His schedule would work around your school routine but is intended to follow this pattern:

- First Day - Conduct informal interview with English department chairperson (or the administrator to whom English teachers are responsible if there is no designated chairperson). Distribute individual English teacher questionnaires.
- Second Day - Collect questionnaires, visit the library, the English planning room (if one exists), talk informally with teachers, students, and administrators.

Follow-up Day - Complete any part of the above that has not been taken care of previously.

All of the data collected will be handled confidentially, and teachers will be asked to respond anonymously. No school nor any teacher will be identified in any manner in our project report.

May we have your consent on the enclosed form which your county superintendent has already approved? Please sign and retain one copy for yourself and return the original to us.

If you agree to participate, will you please inform us of any weeks when you would prefer that we did not visit your school? Or, if it would be more suitable for you, perhaps you would like to suggest some specific week or weeks that would be best for visiting your school. We need this information as soon as possible so that a schedule of visits may be arranged for all the schools included in the study.

Sincerely yours,

Vincent McGuire
Professor of English Education
College of Education
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611

Enclosure

APPENDIX D
SAMPLE LETTER SENT TO ENGLISH CHAIRPERSONS

College of Education
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida 32611

Date _____

English Chairperson

High School

_____, Florida

Dear _____:

My purpose in writing is to ask you to help us in a research project that will attempt to develop some concrete suggestions for improving English instruction in Florida senior high schools. Your school is very important to our study.

The objective of this research is to come up with a valid solution for a problem voiced by Florida high school English teachers: "What are the things that happen and the conditions that exist in high schools having effective English programs?" We believe this project can go a long way toward furnishing an answer to that question.

Our plan is to have our project director, Charles L. Wilson, visit each school for approximately three days. I hope to accompany him in his visits. His schedule would work around your school routine but is intended to follow this pattern:

First Day - Conduct informal interview with English department chairperson (or the administrator to whom English teachers are responsible if there is no designated chairperson). Distribute individual English teacher questionnaires.

- Second Day - Collect questionnaires, visit the library, the English planning room (if one exists), talk with teachers, students, and administrators.
- Follow-up Day - Complete any part of the above that has not been taken care of previously.

All of the data collected will be handled confidentially, and teachers will be asked to respond anonymously. No school nor any teacher will be identified in any manner in our project report.

Would you please allow some time on _____
for an informal interview.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Vincent McGuire
Professor of English Education
College of Education
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611

APPENDIX E
SAMPLE LETTER OF APPRECIATION

College of Education
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida 32611

Date _____

_____, Principal

_____, High School

_____, Florida

Dear _____:

We are extremely pleased that you and your faculty have agreed to participate in our English research project. Your school is to be visited during the week of _____.

Sincerely,

Vincent McGuire
Professor of English Education
College of Education
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611

APPENDIX F
QUESTIONNAIRE - (PART I)

Questionnaire for Individual English Teacher - (Part I)

Please answer the following questions with brief statements. If further space is needed for your comments, other pages may be appended. This form is not to be signed.

1. Please list below the titles of any nonprofessional magazines you regularly read.

2. List below the most significant books that you have read during the past year.

3. Approximately how many books (all types) do you have in your person library?

Books _____

4. List in their appropriate order of importance things or conditions that, in your opinion, should be:

4. Eliminated in order to improve your school's English program

1a. _____

2b. _____

3c. _____

4d. _____

5. Changed in order to improve your school's English program

1a. _____

2b. _____

3c. _____

4d. _____

6. Added to improve your school's English program

1a. _____

2b. _____

3c. _____

4d. _____

7. Added to improve your English teaching

1a. _____

2b. _____

3c. _____

4d. _____

8. Changed at the administrative level (school, district, or state) to improve your school's English program

1a. _____

2b. _____

3c. _____

4d. _____

APPENDIX G
QUESTIONNAIRE - (PART II)

Questionnaire for Individual English Teacher - (Part II)

This questionnaire is part of a study of Florida senior high schools that attempts to describe the programs and practices that characterize English teaching in our state. We are happy that your school has agreed to participate in this project, and we want to assure you that we value the contribution you will make to the project in completing this form.

Since this particular form solicits data and judgement from all of the English teachers in each participating school, information obtained by it is important to the entire study. Its purpose is simple and straightforward to record the experiential background and teaching practices and principles that characterize you as a teacher of English.

This questionnaire is not to be signed. Responses will be tabulated at the University of Florida, and data will appear in summary form only.

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 1-27: Select one choice for each question and circle it.

1. What is your age?
 - (1) Under 26
 - (2) 26-30
 - (3) 31-35
 - (4) 36-40
 - (5) 41 or older

2. What is your sex?
 - (1) Male
 - (2) Female

3. What is your marital status?
 - (1) Single
 - (2) Married
 - (3) Divorced
 - (4) Widow
 - (5) Widower

4. How many years have you taught full time prior to this year?
- (1) Less than 3 (4) 11-14
(2) 3-6 (5) 15 or more
(3) 7-10
5. How many years have you taught full time in this school prior to this year?
- (1) Less than 3 (4) 11-14
(2) 3-6 (5) 15 or more
(3) 7-10
6. What is your certification rank?
- (1) Rank I (4) Rank IV
(2) Rank II (5) Not certified
(3) Rank III
7. What is your certification status?
- (1) Not limited (3) Temporary
(2) Provisional (4) Not certified (as indicated in #6)
8. What was your highest level of preparation when you began full-time teaching?
- (1) Less than a bachelor's degree
(2) Bachelor's degree
(3) Master's degree
(4) Specialist's degree
(5) Doctoral degree
9. In what kind of school did you do most of your undergraduate work?
- (1) State university (4) Four year liberal arts college
(2) Private university (5) Teachers college
(3) State college (6) Other (describe) _____
10. What was your undergraduate major in college?
- (1) English (4) Journalism
(2) Speech (5) English-Education
(3) Speech therapy
11. What was your minor?
- (1) English (4) Journalism
(2) Speech (5) English-Education
(3) Speech Therapy

12. What is the highest additional degree you have earned since you began full-time teaching?
- | | |
|------------------|-----------|
| (1) Bachelor's | (4) Ph.D. |
| (2) Master's | (5) Ed.D. |
| (3) Specialist's | (6) None |
13. What degree are you currently (planned program) working on?
- | | |
|------------------|-----------|
| (1) Bachelor's | (4) Ph.D. |
| (2) Master's | (5) Ed.D. |
| (3) Specialist's | (6) None |
14. How many classes do you teach each day? (Do not include homeroom and study hall assignments)
- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| (1) One or two | (4) Five |
| (2) Three | (5) Six or more |
| (3) Four | |
15. How many of your classes are English classes?
- | | |
|-----------|-----------------|
| (1) One | (4) Four |
| (2) Two | (5) Five |
| (3) Three | (6) Six or more |
16. How many students do you currently teach a day? (Do not include homeroom and study hall assignments)
- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| (1) 125 or less | (4) 176-200 |
| (2) 126-150 | (5) 201 or more |
| (3) 151-175 | |
17. Approximately how many hours do you consider your average professional workweek to be, including all school time plus additional time required to meet your school responsibilities?
- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| (1) Less than 40 | (4) 61-70 |
| (2) 41-50 | (5) More than 70 |
| (3) 51-60 | |
18. How often do you require your English classes to write or compose at least several sentences?
- | |
|-------------------------------------|
| (1) More than twice per <u>week</u> |
| (2) Twice per <u>week</u> |
| (3) Once per <u>week</u> |
| (4) Three times per <u>month</u> |
| (5) Twice per <u>month</u> or less |

19. How often do you personally make critical evaluations of student writing? (Individual discussion with students or written comments on papers)
- (1) More than twice per week
 - (2) Twice per week
 - (3) Once per week
 - (4) Three times per month
 - (5) Twice per month or less
20. With regard to question #19, how soon do you usually confer with students after they have written?
- (1) Immediately
 - (2) Same day
 - (3) One day later
 - (4) Several days later
 - (5) A week or more later
21. With regard to your critical evaluations, what do you emphasize?
- (1) grammar
 - (2) organization
 - (3) content
 - (4) Other _____
22. How much homework requiring student writing do you usually assign per week?
- (1) None
 - (2) One to two hours
 - (3) Three to four hours
 - (4) Five to six hours
 - (5) Seven or more hours
23. During the course of a school year, do your English students study the history and derivations of words, e.g., foreign derivative, etymologies from dictionaries, prefixes, suffixes, and roots?
- (1) No
 - (2) Yes, for one or two days
 - (3) Yes, for several days
 - (4) Yes, for a week
 - (5) Yes, for more than a week
 - (6) Other _____
24. In encouraging your students to read books, which one of the following resources do you emphasize most?
- (1) School library
 - (2) Public library
 - (3) Classroom library
 - (4) Paperbacks purchased by students
 - (5) College or University library
 - (6) Other _____

25. With which aspect of teaching English do you feel most successful in your present circumstances?
- (1) Composition (2) Literature (3) Language (4) Other _____
26. With which aspect of teaching English do you feel least successful in your present circumstances?
- (1) Composition (2) Literature (3) Language (4) Other _____
27. What has been your most typical summer activity over the last five years (or since you began teaching)?
- (1) Employment not relating to teaching
 (2) Teaching summer school
 (3) Attending summer school
 (4) Traveling
 (5) Relaxing - personal and/or family recreation
 (6) Other _____

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 28-38: Indicate your response by circling Yes or No.

28-32. Indicate if you are or are not certified in the following areas.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|--------|
| 28. English - junior high school | (1) Yes | (2) No |
| 29. English - grades 7 - 12 | (1) Yes | (2) No |
| 30. Journalism | (1) Yes | (2) No |
| 31. Speech | (1) Yes | (2) No |
| 32. Speech therapy | (1) Yes | (2) No |

33-35. Do your English students have opportunities to speak to groups?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| 33. In formal classroom speeches | (1) Yes | (2) No |
| 34. In informal classroom discussions | (1) Yes | (2) No |
| 35. In small group work | (1) Yes | (2) No |

36-38. Do you use the following in your English classes?

- | | A lot | A little | None |
|---|---------|----------|---------|
| 36. Student-teacher cooperative planning | (1) Yes | (2) Yes | (3) Yes |
| 37. Student selection of writing topics | (1) Yes | (2) Yes | (3) Yes |
| 38. Maximum participation of students in classroom activities | (1) Yes | (2) Yes | (3) Yes |

- 39-45. List to the side of each question the appropriate choice that indicates the number of quarter hours (figure 1.5 times semester hours) you have taken in each area since you began full-time teaching.

K E Y L I S T

(1) None	(4) Ten to fifteen
(2) One to three	(5) Fifteen or more
(3) Four to nine	

- ___ 39. Literature
- ___ 40. Literature written after 1930
- ___ 41. English language
- ___ 42. Composition
- ___ 43. Methods of teaching English
- ___ 44. Subjects relating to English (journalism, speech, library, reading)
- ___ 45. Other academic subjects
- ___ 46. Education (other than teaching methods)
- ___ 47. Contemporary problems

- 45-53. List to the side of each question the appropriate choice that indicates how many years it has been since you have taken part in the professional activity stated in each of these items (exclude work completed before you began teaching).

K E Y L I S T

(1) One or less	(4) Six or more
(2) Two	(5) Never
(3) Three to five	

- ___ 46. Completed a college English course
- ___ 47. Attended a state meeting of English teachers
- ___ 48. Attended a local or regional meeting of English teachers
- ___ 49. Attended an annual meeting of NCTE
- ___ 50. Completed a college education course
- ___ 51. Taken part in a voluntary English work shop

- ___ 52. Conferred with a specialist on English or the teaching of English
- ___ 53. Subscribed to a professional journal such as English Journal or Media and Methods.

54-60. List to the side of each question the appropriate choice that indicates how many hours of your professional time are spent during an average week on each of the items. (Include all school time plus additional time beyond the school day required to meet school responsibilities).

KEY LIST

(1) Fewer than 1	(4) 17-24
(2) 1-8	(5) 25 or more
(3) 9-16	

- ___ 54. Teaching classes
- ___ 55. Correcting papers
- ___ 56. Preparing for classes
- ___ 57. Conferring with students
- ___ 58. Attending faculty or department meetings, etc.
- ___ 59. Attending to school routines (include study hall, homeroom, etc.)
- ___ 60. Advising student activities

61-70. List to the side of each question the appropriate choice that indicates the frequency with which you employ the teaching methods in each item when you are teaching a typical English class.

KEY LIST

(1) Very frequently	(3) Infrequently
(2) Frequently	(4) Never

- ___ 61. Lecture
- ___ 62. Socratic method (thought-provoking questions)
- ___ 63. Recitation
- ___ 64. Team teaching

- ____ 65. Small group
- ____ 66. Discussion
- ____ 67. Student presentations
- ____ 68. Individual silent work
- ____ 69. Audio visual aids
- ____ 70. Other (describe) _____

71-82. List to the side of each question the appropriate choice that indicates your opinion of the importance of each of these items to the success of the English program at your school.

K E Y L I S T

(1) <u>Great</u> importance	(3) <u>Little</u> importance
(2) <u>Some</u> importance	(4) <u>No</u> importance

- ____ 71. Instruction in painting, sculpture, architecture, and other art forms excluding literature
- ____ 72. Instruction in reading
- ____ 73. Instruction in composition
- ____ 74. Instruction in speech and oral expression
- ____ 75. Instruction in literature
- ____ 76. Instruction in grammar and structure of the English language
- ____ 77. Instruction in spelling
- ____ 78. Instruction in listening
- ____ 79. Coordination and continuity of the curriculum between grade levels
- ____ 80. Responsiveness of the administration to the ideas of the teachers at the school
- ____ 81. Classroom observation and counseling of teachers
- ____ 82. Departmental meetings at which theories and methods of teaching are discussed

- 83-108. List to the side of each question the appropriate choice that indicates the importance of each of these items in teaching English.

KEY LIST

(1) Absolutely essential	(4) Not very important
(2) Very important	(5) Detrimental
(3) Of some importance	

- ___ 83. Class set of anthologies
- ___ 84. Class set of plays, novels, biographies, etc.
- ___ 85. Classroom library of books
- ___ 86. Sets of titles for reading by student groups
- ___ 87. High interest, limited vocabulary materials for slow readers
- ___ 88. Special shelves of books for "mature" readers
- ___ 89. Workbooks with drills
- ___ 90. Language textbooks
- ___ 91. Handbook on language for student reference
- ___ 92. Record player
- ___ 93. Library of recordings
- ___ 94. Filmstrip projector
- ___ 95. Motion picture projector
- ___ 96. Tape recorder
- ___ 97. Television
- ___ 98. Radio (AM, FM)
- ___ 99. Display table of periodicals
- ___ 100. Class set of dictionaries
- ___ 101. Movable classroom furniture
- ___ 102. Lay readers for student written work
- ___ 103. Clerical service

____ 104. Overhead projector

____ 105. Duplicating machine

____ 106. Opaque projector

____ 107. Teaching manual

____ 108. Other (describe) _____

APPENDIX H
QUESTIONNAIRE -- (PART II)

Questionnaire for Interview with English
Department Chairperson

1. Does your county have a language arts supervisor?
 1. No
 2. Yes, one for all schools
 3. Yes, one for reading and English in secondary
 4. Yes, one for reading and one for English in secondary
 5. Yes, other (specify) _____

2. Does the English department have a chairperson?
 1. No
 2. Yes, receives neither additional pay nor workload relief
 3. Yes, receives additional pay
 4. Yes, receives workload relief
 5. Yes, receives additional pay and workload relief

3. Is a county English curriculum guide available?
 1. Yes, less than 2 years since last revised
 2. Yes, 2-4 years since last revised
 3. Yes, 5-7 years since last revised
 4. Yes, more than 7 years since last revised
 5. No

4. Is a professional library available for English teachers?
Mark all that apply.
 1. No
 2. Yes, includes periodicals germane to English
 3. Yes, includes State Department Bulletin germane to English
 4. Yes, includes other (specify) _____

5. Is there an English department room for working and planning?
 1. No
 2. Yes, but it is inadequate
 3. Yes, is helpful but inadequate
 4. Yes, is adequate

6. Is secretarial or clerical assistance available to English teachers?
 1. No
 2. Yes, business education students

- () 3. Yes, secretarial or clerical pool arrangement that is adequate
- () 4. Yes, secretarial or clerical pool arrangement that is inadequate
- () 5. Yes, English department has full-time secretarial assistance
7. To what extent can English teachers choose materials (literature books, texts, records, etc.) for use in classes?
- () 1. Complete freedom of choice
- () 2. Generally complete freedom with approval from department head
- () 3. Selection from wide-ranging list
- () 4. Selection from "approved" list which is subject to change each year
- () 5. No choices; selections predetermined for each grade
- () 6. Other (describe) _____
8. To what extent does your school or system offer incentive to encourage teachers to take additional course work? Mark all that apply.
- () 1. None
- () 2. Salary increments based on credit hours or degrees
- () 3. Released time in school year
- () 4. Sabbatical leave
- () 5. Arrangements for local extension courses (within last two years)
- () 6. Underwriting partial or complete cost of tuition fees
- () 7. Stipends for summer study
9. What is the average size of English classes?
- () 1. 20 or fewer
- () 2. 21-25
- () 3. 26-30
- () 4. 31-35
- () 5. 36-40
- () 6. 41 or more
10. How many English tracks are there in the school?
- () 1. One
- () 2. Two (specify)
- A. _____
- B. _____
- () 3. Three (specify)
- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- () 4. Four (specify)
- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

11. What percentage of students take some courses or special class work in remedial reading and/or remedial English?
- () 1. 0-4% () 4. 15-19%
 () 2. 5-9% () 5. 20-24%
 () 3. 10-14% () 6. 25% or more
12. What extracurricular activities involve speaking and writing skills? Mark all that apply.
- () 1. Forensic clubs
 () 2. School yearbook
 () 3. School literary magazine
 () 4. School newspaper
 () 5. Other (specify) _____
 () 6. None
13. Where in the school are unabridged dictionaries available to students? Mark all that apply.
- () 1. None
 () 2. In the library
 () 3. In several English classrooms
 () 4. In all English classrooms
14. What is the availability of abridged dictionaries for English classrooms?
- () 1. None
 () 2. One per room
 () 3. Several per room
 () 4. One classroom set (30 copies) available
 () 5. Two or more classroom sets available
15. How many books and periodicals are checked out of the library per month?
- () 1. Less than 1,000 () 6. 5,001-6,000
 (specify) _____ () 7. 6,001-7,000
 () 2. 1,000-2,000 () 8. 7,001-8,000
 () 3. 2,001-3,000 () 9. 8,001-9,000
 () 4. 3,001-4,000 () 10. More than 9,000
 () 5. 4,001-5,000 (specify) _____
16. How many teachers teach at least one class of English grades 10-12? _____
17. How many teachers are male _____, female _____, members of a minority group _____?

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Charles Lee Wilson was born in Birmingham, Alabama, on May 24, 1943, son of Harris and Kathleen Wilson, both educators. He received his middle and secondary education in the public school system of Duval County, Jacksonville, Florida, graduating from Andrew Jackson High School in 1961.

He attended the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, graduating with the B.A.E. in English, Speech, and Journalism in December 1967. He was graduated from Officers Candidate School United States Marine Corps in 1967. During the 1967-1968 academic year, he interned at Miami Beach Senior High School in Speech and accepted a teaching position at Riviera Middle School, Dade County, for grade eight English upon completion of the internship.

He taught grade eleven English at Wolfson Senior High School, Duval County, for the 1968-1969 academic year. He was also thespian sponsor, acted with the Jacksonville Little Theatre, and participated in local YMCA and AAU events.

In March, 1970, he received the M.Ed. degree in Community College English Education from the University of Florida. Having begun as a writing laboratory assistant instructor, he was hired full-time as an English instructor by Santa Fe Community College in the summer of 1970. He received the M.Ed. degree in Educational Administration Grades K-12 from the University of Florida in March, 1971.

He was married to Janis Marie Loftin, an elementary education educator, in 1973. Sharing an interest in social science, they have traveled throughout Europe, Canada, and the United States.

Participating in many community interests, Charles received a Real Estate Broker's license, Emergency Medical Technician's certificate, American Canoeing Association Instructor's certificate, American Red Cross Sailing, Rowing, and Canoeing Instructor's certificates.

On the college level he has taught business writing, physical education, science fiction, sponsored a newspaper, and was the first English instructor in his college to teach a college credit composition course to prison inmates. He has been a featured writer for a local magazine and newspaper, and his activities have been featured in a local newspaper.

Returning to Graduate School in 1976, he received the Ed.S. degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Florida in August 1977. While a doctoral student, he has continued to teach at Santa Fe Community College.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

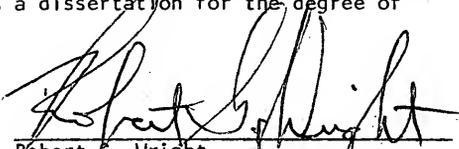
Vincent McGuire, Chairman
Professor of Education

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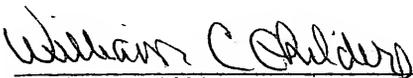
Elroy J. Bolduc
Associate Professor of Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Robert G. Wright
Associate Professor of Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



William C. Childers
Professor of English

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Division of Curriculum and Instruction in the College of Education and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Dean, Graduate School

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