

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Margaret Porter Hartsell entitled "Perceptions of African-American Graduates (1975-76) of Selected Secondary Schools in Knoxville, Tennessee, Concerning the Quality of English Instruction Received." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, with a major in Curriculum and Instruction.

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PERCEPTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN GRADUATES (1975-76) OF
SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE,
CONCERNING THE QUALITY OF ENGLISH
INSTRUCTION RECEIVED

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Education
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Margaret Porter Hartsell

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DEDICATION

The writer dedicates this study to the memory
of her father, Cecil Heiskell Porter
and to the memory of her great-aunt,
Sadie Forgie Bradley, who instilled
in her—at an early age—the desire
to seek knowledge, and wisdom,
and understanding.

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Finally, the writer is compelled to acknowledge with deepest appreciation the willingness of her daughter,

Cecelia Maria Hartsell, to assume responsibilities beyond her tender years in order to ensure the attainment of the writer's goal.

ABSTRACT

The problem in this study was to examine perceptions of African-American students concerning the quality of education they received. The purpose of the study was to examine the perceptions of 1975-76 African-American graduates of selected Knoxville city schools concerning the quality and usefulness of the English instruction they received. The study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the opinions of the graduates concerning the quality of English instruction they received in the Knoxville City Schools?
2. What opinions do the graduates hold concerning the usefulness of the English instruction they received in English classes?
3. What positions of employment do the graduates hold?
4. What institutions of higher learning have graduates attended or are presently attending?
5. What levels of academic achievement have the graduates attained?
6. Are modifications in English instruction advisable as a result of this study?

In order to obtain the data in relation to the six questions, the investigator constructed and circulated a

questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 10 items intended to elicit demographic data and 30 items to elicit perceptions of the quality of English instruction. Four open-ended questions were included to elicit opinions concerning the usefulness of the instruction and to elicit opinions concerning the advisability of modifying English instruction.

As a result of the study, the following recommendations were suggested by the investigator:

1. Appropriate authorities in the Knoxville City Schools should consider investigating the degree to which the perceptions of the graduates are valued in terms of the 1982-83 program.

2. If the graduates' perceptions are accurate, the following considerations should be given to modifying the English programs for African-American students in the following ways:

- a. English programs at Austin-East High School should be enriched in terms of the availability of textbooks, supplementary textboosk, field trips, vocational English classes, elective English classes, and extra curricular activities.

- b. Comparison-contrast should be included as a method of teaching English.

3. Appropriate authorities in the Knoxville City Schools should consider the predominant approaches to the

teaching of English to African-American students, i.e., eradicationism, laissez-faire, and bidialectalism. It is further recommended that consideration be given to identifying the precise school of thought to which the English program for African-American students in the Knoxville City Secondary Schools should be prescribed and take measures to align practice with that school of thought.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Socioeconomic status and quality of school resources, as well as the theories concerning the role of standard English in the lives of African-American students, are factors considered to have an effect on the quality of instruction received by them in the public schools.

The socioeconomic status of the families of African-American students is considered to be a major factor in academic achievement. If students are members of a relatively affluent household where emphasis is placed on success in school, where appropriate reading material is available, where successful role models reside, these students will more likely achieve to a greater extent than their counterparts whose home life may not be as supportive of academic success. Research in relation to socioeconomic influence on black students' academic achievement has shown that the students' social environment had a far more significant impact on their development than schooling.¹ White (1975) was impressed by the fact that the informal education provided by their family appeared to have more

¹Donald Light and Suzanne Keller, Sociology (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975), p. 10.

impact on children's development than the formal educational system. If the family does its job well, White contended, the professional can provide effective training. If not, there may be very little the professional can do to save the child from mediocrity.² Dave and Wolfe found a correlation between cultural aspects of home life and I.Q. scores.³

On the other hand, some educators are convinced that the quality of the school that an African-American student attends influences to a great extent the degree of academic achievement he will attain. Ogbu argued that school resources in the inner city (e.g., instructional materials and the quality of the teaching staff) have been crucial in determining quality of instruction. He cited evidence presented in desegregation cases that has underscored the inequality of African-American access to quality school resources.⁴ The second Coleman Report concluded that schools do make a difference and that some provide better

²Edward Kifer, "The Relationship between Home and School in Influencing the Learning of Children," Research in the Teaching of English (Spring, 1977), p. 101.

³Kifer

⁴John U. Ogbu, Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-Cultural Perspective (New York: Academic Press, 1978), p. 21.

educational opportunities than others.⁵ A Los Angeles Court justified its desegregation order on the premise that minority schools were not equal in quality or efficiency to the majority of white schools.⁶ A report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights had previously supported this position:

Negro children suffer serious harm when their education takes place in public schools which are racially segregated. . . . Negro children who do attend predominantly Negro schools do not achieve as well as other children, Negro and White. Their aspirations are more restricted than those of other children and they do not have much confidence that they can influence their own future.⁷

This antisegregation school of thought contends that the African-American student has consistently been excluded from quality schools and that the high correlation between quality of schools, school services, and higher academic achievement has been a major factor in limiting academic achievement for these students.

Two other commonly accepted theories concerning factors that affect the quality of instruction received by African-American students are (a) that competent use of language is

⁵Albert Shanker, "Which Coleman Report Do We Believe?," New York Times, 12 April 1981, p. E9, cols. 5-6.

⁶"A Generation Deprived: Equal Education" (Washington, D.C.: United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1977), pp. 8-9.

⁷"Twenty Years After Brown" (Washington, D.C.: United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1975), p. 59.

a contributing factor in success in other academic areas and (b) that language competency is a particularly significant factor in influencing the degree of social and economic status achieved by African-American graduates.

Many African-American students are frequently unable to achieve because they have not learned to use standard English effectively, a condition which has frequently been equated by some teachers with intellectual inferiority. Although Harber and Bryen acknowledged that the black English of some African-Americans shares many linguistic structures with standard English, they complained there may be enough persistent and systematic differences to interfere with the process of schooling.⁸ Brooks argued that compatibility with reading and writing contributes to achievement in history, science, and other classes.⁹

Several authorities have pointed to the fact that ability to use standard English effectively is an important factor in promoting the upward socioeconomic mobility of African-American graduates. These authorities frequently view competency in this skill as comparable to correct

⁸Jean R. Harber and Diane N. Bryen, "Black English and the Task of Reading," Review of Educational Research, 46 (1976), 388.

⁹Charlotte K. Brooks, They Can Learn English (Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1973), p. 48.

etiquette and proper dress as requirements for being accepted into certain professional and social circles. Ogbu decided that competence in black English does not equip a student to function as an adult in a wider society, where the social and economic roles are not adjusted to accommodate competence in those skills that are uniquely black.¹⁰ Knapp argued that the majority of teachers and the general public have negative attitudes about black English.¹¹ Burling has declared that language differences, poverty, and poor educational attainment are indissolubly linked.¹²

In light of the significant role that language competency plays in enhancing the opportunities for success, a study of the importance African-American students place on the teaching of standard English can be valuable in upgrading the quality of instruction offered these students.

Statement of the Problem

The problem was to examine the perceptions of African-American students who graduated in 1975-76 from

¹⁰Ogbu

¹¹Margaret O. Knapp, "Black Dialect and Reading: What Teachers Need to Know," Journal of Reading (December 1975), p. 231.

¹²Robbins Burling, "What Should We Do About It?," The Florida FL Reporter (Spring/Fall, 1974), 25.

selected Knoxville secondary schools concerning the quality of instruction they received in these institutions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of 1975-76 graduates of selected Knoxville city schools concerning the quality and usefulness of the English instruction they received.

This study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the opinions of the graduates concerning the quality of English instruction they received in the Knoxville city schools?
2. What opinions do the graduates hold concerning the usefulness of the English instruction they received in English classes?
3. What positions of employment do the graduates now hold?
4. What institutions of higher learning have the graduates attended or are presently attending?
5. What levels of academic achievement have the graduates attained?
6. Are modifications in English instruction advisable as a result of the study?

Importance of the Study

This study can be valuable to the Knoxville city school system and to school systems throughout the state and nation by revealing perceptions of African-American graduates in 1975-76 about the quality of instruction they received in the Knoxville public schools. A careful assessment of the results of this study can provide a basis for revising an English curriculum, for accurately assessing the staffing needs of the individual schools, and for individualizing materials allocated to certain schools—thereby aiding and abetting a more relevant and effective approach to English instruction for African-American students.

Limitations of the Study

1. The sample population was 1975-76 African-American graduates from Knoxville secondary schools:
Austin-East, Rule, Holston, and Fulton.
2. Attitudes toward disciplines—other than English—was not a concern of this investigation.

Basic Assumptions

The following assumptions undergirded this study:

1. The instrument designed by the researcher was valid and reliable.

2. Administrators, teachers, and students would benefit from the results of this study.
3. The level of effectiveness of English instruction could be evaluated through the perceptions and accomplishments of former students.
4. Valid relationships could be drawn among such factors as the sex, socioeconomic status of the graduates and parents, the type of secondary school attended, the profession or occupation of the respondent, and the perception of the quality of English instruction received.
5. Graduates would cooperate by giving thoughtful and honest answers to questions contained in this instrument.

Definition of Terms

African-American is an American Negro or Black.

Bidialectalism is a plan to expand a student's language to include facility in a second dialect, while retaining the native dialect.

The Black Caucus is a group of Black linguists and language arts teachers affiliated with the National Council of Teachers of English.

Black English is a social dialect—a variety of English—spoken by some African-Americans, especially those who are disadvantaged.

Desegregation is a process whereby teachers and/or students are no longer separated in school because of color or race.

Eclectic Grammar is a collection of grammatical concepts borrowed from traditional, structural, and transformational theories.

Eradicationism is a proposal to replace nonstandard English with standard English.

Laissez-Faire Movement is a theory that spoken language, even the spoken language of nonstandard speakers, should be left alone.

Language is a systematic way of using words so that people can share information efficiently.

Standard English is the language of the educated English-speaking peoples.

Structural Grammar is a description of phonological, morphological, and syntactical patterns of English as it is actually spoken.

Traditional Grammar is a collection of rules and definitions and adheres to one level of correctness.

Transformational Grammar is the theory that all sentences are kernel sentences or transformation of kernel sentences.

Overview of Procedure

A letter was written to Dr. James A. Newman, Superintendent of Knoxville Public Schools to request permission to conduct this study.

The population was comprised of 1975-76 African-American graduates of Austin-East, Fulton, Holston, and Rule High Schools. The names and last known addresses of these students were obtained from the files of the Knoxville City Schools. Two copies of a questionnaire, accompanied by a letter of explanation, were mailed to each graduate. A self-addressed, stamped envelope for returning the questionnaire was included. Follow-up letters were sent to the graduates who had not responded after a period of ten working days. A coding system was used on each questionnaire to determine who had responded.

The instrument (Appendix A) used was developed by the writer. Part I, which includes nominal data, was used for comparisons of demographic variables with response items on the questionnaire. This information was reflected in frequency distributions, using charts and tables where necessary.

Part II utilized a Likert-type format with responses ranging from "Yes" to "Uncertain." The reliability of Part II of the instrument was determined by the Spearman-Brown formula on items 1 to 34. This procedure compared the responses on

even-numbered items to responses on odd-numbered items to yield two separate scores for each respondent. It is called split-half or odd-even reliability inasmuch as the instrument was administered once to the entire group of respondents, and the two sets of scores were then correlated.¹³ A correlation of .75 or better attested to the reliability of the instrument. These data (Chapter IV) were expressed in tabular form, utilizing percentages in reporting the responses.

Ordinal level measurement was also involved in Part II; and as a result, the Mann Whitney U Test was utilized to determine whether there is a significant difference at the .05 level between the responses of the two samples of graduates. The Mann Whitney U Test is adequate to correlate two samples of unequal numbers.¹⁴

One open-ended question was included in Part II. The responses were compiled and reported descriptively.

A detailed description of instruments, population, and data collection are presented in Chapter III.

¹³David J. Fox, The Research Process in Education (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969), p. 367.

¹⁴Schuyler W. Huck, William H. Cormier and William G. Bounds, Reading Statistics and Research (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 271.

Organization of the Study

The study was written in five chapters.

Chapter I presented a general introduction to the nature of the study.

Chapter II reviewed the related literature and research.

Chapter III depicted the research and methodology used in conducting the study.

Chapter IV examined the results of the findings obtained in the study.

Chapter V presented the summary, conclusions, and recommendations relevant to this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Three basic theories concerning the teaching of English to African-American students are as follows: the laissez-faire approach (noninterference with the language of the student); the bidialectal approach (teaching English as if it were a foreign language, with emphasis upon bilingualism, audiolingual instructional procedures, pattern practices, memorized dialogs, and language laboratory exercises); and the eradicationist approach (teaching standard English, with emphasis upon structural or traditional, or transformational, or eclectic grammar).

Laissez-Faire

A few educators—those who favor the laissez-faire approach—have argued that spoken language, even the spoken language of nonstandard speakers should be left alone. They have suggested that the dialects of black children be accepted as valid in the classroom. Others have argued that it is more prudent to refrain from interfering with a student's dialect because (a) his language system is too well formulated before he reaches school for too much change to occur and (b) forcing a child to change his language has detrimental effects upon him.

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) has accepted the validity of noninterference with the speech pattern of the African-American students. The concerns of the body were that students from prestigious socioeconomic environments, where standard English is spoken have a built in advantage over other students from less prestigious socioeconomic environments. The NCTE noted that affluent students sit at the head of the class, are accepted at exclusive schools, and are later rewarded with positions in the business and social world; whereas, students who speak a nonstandard dialect are often denied these rewards. Because of these concerns and the belief that English teachers are responsible for the self-image and self-esteem of their students, the NCTE passed a resolution which claimed that students have a right to speak and learn in their own language.¹ The resolution read as follows:

We affirm the students' right to their own language and varieties of language—the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style. Language scholars long ago denied that the myth of a standard dialect has any validity. The claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another. Such a claim leads to false advice for speakers and writers and immoral advice for humans. A nation proud of its diverse heritage and its cultural and racial variety will preserve its heritage of dialects.

¹Committee on CCCC Language Statement, "Students' Right to Their Own Language," College English, February, 1975, p. 710.

We affirm strongly that the teachers must have the training and experience that will enable them to respect diversity and uphold the right of students to their own language.²

After having passed the resolution declaring the right of the African-American student to his own language, the NCTE assumed the task of describing the reasoning for the statement. It was as follows: (a) that practice in using language by sharing experiences, role playing, and other devices is a better route to flexibility and effectiveness than emphasis upon correctness, (b) that grammatical drills seldom teach people to read or write, (c) that students are bombarded with home and neighborhood language for longer periods of time than the language they encounter at school.³

Although English teachers have concerned themselves with the ethical aspects of the right of a student to his own language, Freeman has investigated the legal basis for according the rights to the language of the disadvantaged African-American student. He conceded that narrowly speaking the right to the language of one's nurture does not have explicit protection under the Federal Constitution or statutes. Nevertheless, he argued that the First, Ninth, and Fourteenth Amendment of the Federal Constitution appear to offer

²Committee on CCCC Language Statement, "Students' Right," p. 710.

³Elizabeth McPherson, "Back to the Basics," Arizona English Bulletin (February, 1977), 70-71.

substantial bases for the claimed right and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) in clarifying portions of the Fourteenth Amendment provides yet other bases for the right and policies advocated by the resolution.⁴

Smitherman, too, supported the laissez-faire approach from the point of view of cultural preservation. She declared that distinctive verbal style characterizes black American speech and that speech—she insisted—is one that must be located in the situational context in the Black Cultural Universe. She explained:

I'm talking about the Black Lexicon and about the rhetorical devices and unique patterns of communication found in what Richard Wright called the "Forms of Things Unknown." Such stylistic/language forms are an indigenous part of the Black historical past and are rooted in the Black cultural Sensibility. They achieve a dynamism of meaning that emanates from a shared sense of oppression, and they represent, perhaps, the continuity of our African Sensibility in the New World.⁵

In addition, Smitherman has underscored the fact that modern black writers acknowledge the significance of the patterns from the oral tradition of the African-American. Among those writers cited are Don Lee, Etheridge Knight, John Oliver Killons, and Richard Wright.⁶

⁴Lawrence D. Freeman, "The Students Right to Their Own Language: Its Legal Bases," College Composition and Communication (February, 1975), 25.

⁵Geneva Smitherman, "God Don't Never Change": Black English from a Black Perspective," College English (March, 1973), 832.

⁶Smitherman

Additional support for the noninterference theory was provided by Dillon, Carmichael and Hamilton. Dillon declared:

The language of students is the major means by which they have learned about the world and their own places in it. It contains the history and culture of their speech communities. It is their major means of identification and communication with them closest to them. To deny students their own language would be to cripple them by stripping them of part of their identity and of their major means of making sense of the world.⁷

In Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America, Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton have insisted that the racial and cultural personality of the Black must be preserved and that the community must preserve its cultural integrity. The writers voiced doubts that preserving the cultural personality and the learning of a standard language are compatible.⁸

Some students, according to Morse, have also laid claim to the right to their own language:

Growing numbers of them now believe that the colleges' use of standard English as the only language of instruction is just another white trick to keep them down; they regard the colleges' insistence that they learn to express themselves in standard English as a manifestation of racism. They consider black English as a perfectly satisfactory medium of communication, which

⁷William Proefriedt, "Standard English-Diverse Students," English Journal (December, 1974), 69.

⁸David Dillon, "Does the School Have a Right to Its Own Language?" English Journal (April, 1980), 13.

moreover is intelligible to whites as well as blacks. Why, therefore, is it not accepted as legitimate language for term papers, theses, and dissertations?⁹

Sledd supported those college students who insist upon communicating in black English on a predominantly white campus. He deplored the linguistic policy of these universities as follows:

. . . the linguistic attitudes of many professors and of some teaching assistants can be guaranteed to hurt and anger minority students whose use of English is alien to the educated white community. The university catalog . . . may describe the situation with impersonal detachment and seeming justice: "In all examinations account is taken of the students use of English and of the form of the paper in general, the grade being lowered because of these deficiencies in these matters."..... Translated, however, into the terms of the minority students' direct experience, that calm statement means that although the students' society equips him with one dialect, it demands that he should use another. . . . I know that often the minority student feels himself insulted by what he is told about his language. In universities, he is informed, the language of the universities—white English—must be used.¹⁰

On the other hand, a number of linguists and other professionals have failed to approve the laissez-faire theory of English instruction for African-American students. Among those who have failed to approve is Morse, who reacted negatively to the proposal that black students be permitted

⁹J. Mitchell Morse, "The Shuffling Speech of Black Slavery," College English (March, 1973) 838.

¹⁰James Sledd, "After Bidialectalism, What?" English Journal (May, 1973), 772.

to communicate academically in black English. His argument was that these students must develop some acquaintance with standard English if they are to complete their college training successfully. African-American students, he continued, must not be permitted to refuse to learn standard English because their unfamiliarity with standard grammar will render them incapable of understanding the books they will have to read, or to discuss, to write about, or to understand ideas.¹¹ Highly significant is the fact that the Black Caucus of the National Council of the Teachers of English has failed to condone the neglect of the teaching of language arts to African-American students. In spite of the fact that they agree with the parent body concerning the worth of black English, they have perceived black English as a strength on which teachers must draw in order to develop effective approaches to teaching language arts to black children but have complained that the role of the black English language system as the mediator of learning strategies and black cultural identity has not been assessed.¹²

Among other opponents to the laissez-faire movement are Stewart, Baxter and Cannon. Stewart complained that the position of the NCTE is the act of defining away an important

¹¹Morse, p. 837.

¹²A Statement from Members of the Black Caucus of the National Council of the Teachers of English. Urbana, Illinois, November, 1980.

and pedagogical assumption. Two faulty assumptions he contended, undergird this noninterference position: (a) that the school can function as an agent of generalized linguistic relativism and (b) that the school will be able to instill linguistic tolerance in the marketplace before the products of its policy of instructional linguistic laissez-faire begin to arrive there.¹³ Baxter pointed to three crucial areas which the "Students' Right to Their Own Language" statement neglected. It ignores the distinction between spoken expression and written expression. It ignores the social aspects of social dialects. It ignores the network of speech-related behavior that is an integral part of the communication process.¹⁴ Cannon has cited four problems that will confront teachers if they attempt to implement the resolution on a student's right to his own language. They are as follows: (a) the variety of dialects that may be represented in one classroom, (b) inadequate description of dialects, (c) inadequate teaching materials, (d) inability of many teachers to cope with a classroom situation that condones the laissez-faire approach.¹⁵

¹³William Stewart, "The Laissez-Faire Movement in English, Teaching Advance to the Rear?" The Florida FL Reporter (Spring/Fall, 1974), 81.

¹⁴Milton Baxter, "Educating Teachers about Educating the Oppressed," College English (March, 1976), 678.

¹⁵Garland Cannon, "Multidialects: The Student's Right to His Own Language," College Composition and Communication (December, 1973), 348.

A significant conclusion of the Southern Regional Education Board's inquiry into the practice of several predominantly African-American colleges with reference to the teaching of English to their students underscored their emphasis on teaching standard English. The preference was stated as follows:

Some present-day linguists assume that all language systems or dialects function as communication systems and that all language systems that prove sufficient for the group serve as a means of communication. Yet, since our educational system has adopted a standard around which all of its theory and teachings have been developed, it is necessary for the segments of society to have a working knowledge of this standard.¹⁶

To help their students, the majority of these institutions surveyed would stress all communication skills (listening, reading, writing, and speech) and use all available instructional methods (laboratory programmed exercises, written drills, etc.).¹⁷

Pixton and Nelkin summarized the point of view of those educators who condemn the laissez-faire philosophy with regard to the teaching of standard English to African-American students:

Some may believe that the student has no right more important than the right to his own language. But his most important right, which this resolution

¹⁶Gloria P. Walker, "Afro-American Linguistic Patterns: Impact on Academic Success," Southern Regional Board (Atlanta, Georgia, 1977), p. 45.

¹⁷Walker, p. 46.

might deny, is his right to truth. If students are taught to retain the dialects of their nurture under the delusion that it is as effective as standard English for their attaining higher education and business success, then they are being denied that right. Teachers must not allow their students to remain linguistically different and deficient, thus insuring that their communicative attempts, as well as their comprehension will be inadequate. . . . Thus, the resolution, while attempting to uphold one right, does so by sacrificing the most important right of all.¹⁸

Nelkin's investigative study found that chairpersons of secondary English departments condemned as least desirable of teaching strategies, the practice of permitting African-American students to retain exclusive use of black English.¹⁹

In spite of the fact that some research has supported the urgency of teaching standard English to African-American students, other research results have tended to negate the necessity for teaching standard English to these students. The results of the United States Commission on Civil Rights linguistic investigations have indicated a need to permit students to use their own language when they attempt to express complex ideas.²⁰ In addition, research findings have

¹⁸William H. Pixton, "A Contemporary Dilemma: The Question of Standard English," College Composition and Communication (October, 1974), 252.

¹⁹Bertha Nelkin, "A Study of Variables Relative to Curriculum Decisions Concerning Black English" (Doctoral dissertation, University of New Orleans, 1978), DA, 39 3335A, p. 4228.

²⁰James Cummins, "Linguistic Interdependence and the Educational Development of Bilingual Children," Review of Educational Research (1979), 210.

not always concluded that there is always a negative reaction to African-American speakers of nonstandard English on the part of the listener, including prospective employers.

Trudgill (1975), as quoted in Dillon, cited a study which indicated that those who interviewed prospective employees did not take into account the accent or the dialect of the applicant. A noteworthy finding of this research was that accent or dialect was only one of the several interrelated factors which promote a negative or positive evaluation on the part of the interviewer. Other factors, according to Trudgill may be skin color or the content of the applicant's message (in relation to the knowledge or belief of the listener).²¹

Hall and Turner have not found sufficient evidence to conclude that the black dialect of African-American children causes them unique problems in comprehending.²² In addition, Hall (1980) has found little research that indicated that black English interfered with learning to read standard English.²³ Lass has claimed that speaking black English

²¹Dillon

²²Vernon C. Hall and Ralph R. Turner, "The Validity of the Different Language Explanation for Poor Scholastic Performance by Black Students," Review of Educational Research (Winter, 1974), 79.

²³"Black English: A Response," Educational Leadership (March, 1981), 477.

presents no special problems for learning to read standard English texts.²⁴

Bidialectalism

Those who have objected to efforts to eradicate black English as a medium of communication by African-American students have viewed eradication as psychologically harmful and educationally inefficient and are persuaded there are better alternatives. One suggested alternative is "bidialectalism" or "bidiloquialism." Advocates of bidialectalism have assumed that the black student should be taught standard English; nevertheless, they have argued that the students' black English should be respected and preserved for appropriate surroundings such as home and playground.²⁵

A number of linguists have suggested that black English is different enough from standard English to be considered as a foreign language and have insisted that black students be taught standard English as if it were a foreign language (bidialectalism). Loflin and Stewart are two advocates of the foreign language theory. Loflin found black English

²⁴Bonnie Lass, "The Relationship between the Oral Language of Black English Speakers and Their Reading Achievement" (Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1976. D.A. 37 (1976) 6331.

²⁵Olivia Mellon, "Black English, Why Try to Eradicate It?" The New Republic (Winter, 1970), 16.

characteristics so different from standard English that he insisted that this black grammatical system must be treated as a foreign language.²⁶

Stewart found enough unique characteristics of black English to conclude that the dialect was probably derived from a creolized form of English, which is still spoken by black people in Jamacia and other parts of Cuba.²⁷ Other linguists who have studied the vocabulary and syntax of black English have declared it to be a separate but equally valid language system that has a highly developed structure of its own.²⁸ In direct contrast to Stewart, Loflin, and others are McDavid, Labov, and Morse, who are representative of those linguists that have refuted the foreign language theory. McDavid pointed to the nonstandard dialects in the urban areas as examples of old British dialects, which are recognized in the speech of speakers of all races of people in the United States.²⁹ William Labov, too, rejected the theory by underscoring the similarity of the syntax and semantics of standard English and black English. He concluded that evidence fails to indicate an existence of a foreign language

²⁶James Sledd, "Doublespeak: Dialectology in the Service of Big Brother," College English (December, 1971), 444.

²⁷Sledd

²⁸Mellon, p. 16.

²⁹Sledd

but points to a dialect of English with certain extension and modifications.³⁰ Morse described black English, not as a foreign language but as the language of another social class within the country—the presumably inferior language of a presumably inferior class.³¹

The major disagreement concerning the teaching of standard English as if it were a foreign language is not on linguistic principles, Eskey observed, but on moral convictions.³² Sledd, one of the most vocal opponents of bidialectalism, complained as follows:

The biloquialist . . . makes a great fuss about giving the child of the poor and ignorant, whether black or white, the choice of using or not using standard English. He should be allowed to make that decision as he shapes his decisions in life. But the biloquialist obviously sees himself as the determiner of the decisions which other people may decide, and the choice he deigns to give is really not much choice after all. In the name of social realism, he begins by imposing a false scheme of values of which "upward mobility" is the highest; and he then sets out to make the child "upwardly mobile" by requiring hours of stultifying drill on arbitrary matters of usage.³³

Sledd not only condemned bidialectalism as an effective teaching method because of the deceptive educational aspects of the theory of teaching English but he has also condemned

³⁰ Sledd, p. 445.

³¹ Morse

³² David Eskey, "The Case for the Standard Language," College English (April, 1974), 772.

³³ Eskey

it because of political overtones embedded in the teaching strategy. He argued:

Standard English in the United States is a principal means of preserving the existing power structure, for it builds the system of class distinctions into the most inward reaches of each child's humanity: the language whose mastery makes the child human makes him also a member of a social class. Even rebellion demands a kind of allegiance to the class system, because effective rebellion . . . requires the use of the standard language, and the rebel is not likely to master standard language without absorbing some of the prejudices it embodies. . . . Bilingualism makes capital of this situation.³⁴

O'Neil, another moral opponent of bidialectalism as a method of teaching standard English to African-American students, has made a serious indictment against bidialectalism as an educational practice. Language education, he argued, supports the efforts to maintain the status quo in American society and bidialectalism is part of the social and political machinery to control.³⁵ He described the role in this manner:

. . . the enterprise of making lower-class speakers into middle-class speakers is simply a piece of educational emptiness that helps maintain the present distribution of power in the society. For wasting time there, on a thing that is bound to fail, serves to render the school children skilled enough to be exploited but finally uneducated,

³⁴ Sledd.

³⁵ Wayne O'Neil, "The Politics of Bidialectalism," College English (January, 1972), 437.

used to failure, and alienated enough not to oppose exploitation; thus for them to agree that they had their chances to succeed in a free and open society but that they had failed. No one's fault but their own.³⁶

Sledd and Kochman are convinced that bidialectalism is potentially a failure because the main problem that faces the African-American student is racial prejudice and that learning a standard dialect will not advance the cause of racial and economic justice.³⁷ Sledd stated:

. . . nothing the schools can do about black English either will do much for racial peace and social justice as long as the black and white worlds are separate and hostile . . . regimented bidialectalism is no substitute for sweeping social change.³⁸

From a linguistic point of view several spokesmen for the profession pointed to the inadequacies of the bidialectal method as an effective means of teaching African-American students; Sledd and Kochman are convinced that bidialectalism is potentially a failure because (a) minority members will become less inclined toward conforming to standard English due to growing ethnic pride, (b) available materials are insufficient, and (c) not enough information is available.³⁹

³⁶O'Neil, p. 438.

³⁷Melvin Hoffman, "Bidialectalism Is Not the Linguistics of White Supremacy: Sense versus Sensibilities," The English Record (April, 1971), 97.

³⁸Hoffman

³⁹Hoffman, p. 95.

Shuy complained that materials for teaching English as a foreign language to African-American students have been developed prior to completion of research concerning the effectiveness of the method and that bidialectalism is based on assumptions concerning the nature of language learning that are not necessarily defensible. These assumptions are (a) that a second language can be taught, (b) that learning a second language is the same as learning a different dialect of the same language, (c) that bidialectalism is an achievable goal, and (d) that teachers can teach a second dialect without special training.

Among other educators who have not endorsed bidialectalism are those who have concluded that teaching English as a second language to speakers of black English serves no useful purpose if the goal of that instruction is to improve comprehension of standard English. This conclusion is based on the fact that the African-American student experiences a great deal of contact with standard English on radio and television, and with people outside his family and neighborhood. If these contacts are not adequate, a number of educators believe, then integration without formal education may be the most beneficial access.⁴¹ Others,

⁴⁰ Roger W. Shuy, "Social Dialects: Teaching vs. Learning," The Florida FL Reporter (Spring/Fall, 1971), 30-33.

⁴¹ Harber and Bryen, p. 397.

including Hoffman, have lamented that more specific information about the effects of teacher attitude and linguistic interference and fully developed programs for teaching English as a second language are not available.⁴²

Although almost all of the schools adhere to a bidialectal approach, Dillon admitted, the entire concept, he argued, is not beneficial to advancing the cause of African-American education. He interpreted the report of the National Association of Educational Progress as an indication that bidialectalism, as an instructional goal and approach, is not well supported by data on language use and language learning. In fact, he continued, "the data indicate that changing a student's language probably won't change the basic social and academic problems that bidialectalism claims to be concerned with."⁴³

Donlan has suggested that since there are problems for an individual in learning a foreign language, it would be logical to assume that the area of foreign language teaching could supply some of the solutions to the dilemma of appropriate methodology to the teaching of standard English to African-American students. A number of educators have ascribed to this positive attitude toward bidialectalism,

⁴²Hoffman

⁴³Dillon, p. 15.

including Labov, who promoted the bidialectal method because, he explained, the obstacles to the African-American students' acquisition of standard English are similar to problems encountered by a student who is learning English as a second language. He described those problems as (a) isolation, (b) conflict in value systems, and (c) structural interference.⁴⁴

Additional endorsement for the bidialectal method has come from Brooks and Troike. Brooks has upheld the bidialectal method as follows:

. . . should teachers not exploit the tremendous psychological uplift implicit in . . . saying . . . "I accept you and your language; use it when you need it for communication with your friends. But if you really want to be a successful participant in other areas of American life, why not learn the kind of language accepted and used there."⁴⁵

Troike has recommended that the African-American students' already existing receptive competence in the second dialect be recognized and that the task of the teacher should be one of building on this knowledge to enable students to make use of it in their own endeavors.⁴⁶

⁴⁴Dan Donlan, "What Research Says about Teaching English to the Disadvantaged Student," Peabody Journal of Education (July, 1974), 195.

⁴⁵Hoffman, p. 99.

⁴⁶Angela M. Jaggar and Bernice E. Cullinan, "Teaching Standard English to Achieve Bidialectalism: Problems with Current Practices," The Florida FL Reporter (Spring/Fall, 1974), 64.

In addition, a representative number of the faculties of English departments of predominantly African-American colleges have endorsed the bidialectal approach as being the most effective method of teaching standard English to their students. They have stated their convictions as follows:

The acceptance of the standard, however, should not negate the "choice" of retaining one's cultural identity. As a means of doing this, the concept of "switching" has been introduced. A person may use the "standard" or "formal" mode of communication when in school, business, or formal situations; but the same individual may "switch" or use the behavioral (linguistic system) characteristics of his cultural group when he is relaxing or in a more informal communication setting.⁴⁷

Nelkin's investigative study provided additional support for bidialectal approach by reporting that the majority of secondary school English departmental chairpersons surveyed endorsed bidialectalism as the most desirable approach to the teaching of standard English to the African-American student.⁴⁸

Limited research has been conducted with reference to the effectiveness of teaching standard English as a foreign language and has indicated—though not conclusively—that foreign language methodology holds some solutions to the dilemma of teaching standard English to the African-American

⁴⁷Walker, p. 25.

⁴⁸Nelkin,

student. Investigative studies of the effectiveness of bidialectal methods have revealed that audiolingual methods comparable to the type used in foreign language teaching can prove successful. These are memorized dialogs, pattern practices and language laboratory exercises.⁴⁹ San-su-Lin's study conducted at all-black Clafin College over a period of three years with 141 entering freshmen illustrated the effectiveness of the pattern practice method. As a result of having received instruction by this procedure, the students reduced the number of grammatical errors per hundred words by approximately 33 percent and the number of mechanical errors per hundred words by over 45 percent.⁵⁰ Ruth Golden's study involving Detroit high school students showed that an English language laboratory brought results in teaching standard English to the disadvantaged. At Virginia Union University, performance comparisons were made between those students who were taught by laboratory assisted method and those taught in usual composition classes. The experimental group's performance generally exceeded those of the controlled group.⁵¹

Eskey characterized the bidialectalists as those who regard standard English usage as strategy for success, like wearing the right clothes, or getting to know the right

⁴⁹Donlan, p. 267.

⁵⁰Donlan, p. 268.

⁵¹Donlan

people. Those who oppose bidialectalism as an efficient teaching method for African-Americans are characterized as those who consider it as essentially a weapon to be used to maintain the dominant group's political, social, and economic advantage.⁵²

Eradicationism

A surge of African-American cultural awareness has resulted in criticism being directed at traditional English classes where standard English is taught to African-American students, whose black English is unacceptable for classroom communication. Those who disapproved of eradicationism as a method of teaching standard English to black students claimed that the method harms the students psychologically by degrading their speech and the Black Culture that the speech represents. On the other hand, a representative number of linguists and educators have argued equally as convincingly that failure to teach standard English to the African-American student not only handicaps the student in achieving financial success but excludes him from the opportunity of academic achievement and personal development.

The eradicationist school of thought has many defenders. Among those who defended the teaching of

⁵²Eskey, p. 772.

standard English to African-American students are Clark and Rowan. Kenneth B. Clark, the renowned African-American psychologist and educator, has contended that the only language that should be taught is standard English. He insisted that no attempt should be made to preserve native dialects except as "exotic primitives" and accused those who would preserve black English of consigning blacks to perpetual inferiority by implying that they cannot be educated in the mainstream of American society.⁵³ Another advocate of eradicationism is Carl T. Rowan, an African-American journalist, who has advocated the end to the "malarky" that tells African-American students that they can fail to learn grammar, fail to develop vocabularies, ignore syntax and embrace the "mumbo-jumbo" of ignorance and dismiss it in the name of racial pride.⁵⁴ He continued:

If I had my way . . . that teacher would hammer into the heads of these black youngsters an understanding that "black pride" is enhanced when you know more about what is going on than anybody else, or when you can orate, use the national language the way Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior,⁵⁵ or Whitney Young, or Rev. Jesse Jackson used it.

⁵³Mellan, p. 16.

⁵⁴Carl T. Rowan, "Black English Is Silly," Chicago Sun Times, July 10, 1979, sec. , p. , col.

⁵⁵Rowan

Rowan concluded that African-American citizens on the whole do not use the language of America well enough to make their ideas and aspirations prevail. What we need, he insisted, is a massive allocation of teachers and resources to teach the children of these citizens to speak, read and write the language of their native land.⁵⁶

Additional support for the eradicationist movement has come from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People via "The Crisis," the official publication. The editor stated the basic position of the organization with regard to teaching standard English to African-American students as follows:

What our children need, and other disadvantaged children as well, . . . is training in basic English which today is as near an international language as any in the world. To attempt to lock them into a provincial patois is to limit their opportunities in the world at large. Black children can master Oxonian English as well as any WASP child. But each has to be taught the language. . . . Let our children have the opportunity and be encouraged to learn the language that will best enable them to comprehend modern science and technology, equip them to communicate intelligently with other English-speaking people of all races, and to share in the exercise of national power.⁵⁷

The editor concluded by challenging African-American parents to actively support the eradicationist philosophy:

⁵⁶ Rowan

⁵⁷ George R. Beissel, "Comment on James Sledd," College English (January, 1973), 582.

Black parents throughout this nation should rise up in unanimous condemnation of this insidious conspiracy to cripple their children permanently.⁵⁸

In an attempt to determine the attitudes of African-American parents toward black English, Orlando Taylor interviewed 183 African-Americans in New York City, Washington, D.C., Louisville, Kentucky, and Chattanooga, Tennessee. Most of the informants were not professionals and most had a high school education or less. In analyzing the data, Taylor wrote:

The majority view is traditional and conservative—even fiercely militant in its insistence of standard English as one of the keys to upward mobility. . . . This conservative, traditional view is virtually uncompromising among parents who have only elementary school education and who perform unskilled labor.⁵⁹

Morse, Davis, and Hess are among those educators who have insisted that black students be taught standard English from a traditional and conservative point of view. Morse argued that African-American students cannot be permitted to refuse to learn standard English because black English is not a satisfactory medium for the development of clear ideas. To support his contention, he underscored the fact that literate African-American leaders of the eighteenth and

⁵⁸Beissel

⁵⁹Paul Stoller, ed., "The Case Against Black English in the Schools," in Black American English. Its Background and Its Usage in the Schools and in Literature, (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1975), p. 188.

nineteenth centuries (e.g., Benjamin Banneker, Frederick Douglass and others) spoke and wrote eloquent standard English and in the twentieth century, black English has seldom been the spoken language and never the written language of any black leader (e.g., Ralph Bunche, W. E. B. DuBois, Julian Bond and others).⁶⁰ Vivian I. Davis, spokesperson for the Black Caucus of the National Council of Teachers of English, charged that the language of the African-American child is frequently used as an excuse for ineffective teaching that renders those children incompetent in the language arts—particularly reading and writing.⁶¹

Hess listed six supportive statements concerning the teaching of standard English to African-American students. They are as follows: (a) standard English carries prestige and allows one access to certain social groups, (b) learning standard English need not be psychologically damaging or alienating, (c) standard English is needed for achievement in school, (d) standard English is helpful economically, (e) standard English facilitates communication, and (f) learning standard English is not racist.⁶²

⁶⁰Morse, pp. 837-38.

⁶¹Memorandum to Margaret P. Hartsell from Vivian I. Davis, Chair, Black Caucus. National Council of Teachers of English. Urbana, Illinois, November, 1980.

⁶²Karen Hess, "Is Learning Standard English Important?" The Florida FL Reporter (Spring/Fall, 1972), 42.

A fitting conclusion to the argument for teaching standard English to African-American student is the combination of the attitudes of Strickland and Ramsey toward this instructional method. Strickland viewed the acquisition of standard English as "a strictly utilitarian device to help equalize a student's opportunity for achieving his maximum potential in a society that is oriented toward standard English";⁶³ whereas, Ramsey stated: "Pragmatically, some dialects are better than others; some open doors and create positive impressions. Whether this should be the case is another matter; unfortunately, it is the case."⁶⁴

Among those who rejected the teaching of standard English per se sans the recognition of black English as a legitimate language system was Smitherman, who stated her position as follows:

The school correctness obsession has got to go.
 . . . It sets up psychological rejection of self,
 creates ambivalence about black community identity,
 and is perceived for exactly what it is: a rejection
 of Afro-American language, culture and people.⁶⁵

⁶³Dorothy S. Strickland, "A Program for Linguistically Different Black Children," Research in the Teaching of English (Spring, 1973), 85.

⁶⁴P. A. Ramsey, "Teaching the Teachers to Teach Black Dialect Writers," College English (October, 1979), 200.

⁶⁵Geneva Smitherman, "Toward Educational Linguistics for the First World," College English (October, 1979), 210.

She continued:

Handbook and classroom exercises which contrast Black and White English always teaching toward the latter, do not reinforce the legitimacy of Black English. Teachers and professors who constantly correct black students' speech do not reinforce the legitimacy of Black English and black people. Language assignments such as grammar exercises which emphasize mere structural command of English, do not teach blacks communicative competence. Sentence diagramming . . . does not teach communicative competence.⁶⁶

The National Council of Teachers of English also condemned handbook usage choices, which—they claimed—are presented as single standard etiquette rules rather than as options for effective expression. School grammar, representatives of the organization complained, is presented in handbooks as a series of directives in which choice, syntax, surface features of grammar and manuscript conventions are lumped together in guides of correctness which encourage imitation—not generation of original written statements.⁶⁷

Although Donlan advocated the teaching of standard English to African-American students, he has agreed with Smitherman concerning the inadequacies of the current methods of teaching grammar—which is the dominant method of language teaching in the United States—to meet the linguistic needs of black students. Donlan has evaluated the four theories of

⁶⁶Smitherman.

⁶⁷Committee on CCCC Language Statement, "Students' Right" p. 11.

grammar: Traditional, Transformation, Structural, as well as Eclectic as having failed to meet the needs of these student.⁶⁸ He cited the following inadequacies:

1. The instructional objectives are vaguely stated, if at all.
2. The theories do not consider the entering behavior of a speaker of nonstandard English as being different from that of a speaker of standard English.
3. None of the grammatical theories provide learning structures specified in steps that the teacher can follow and the disadvantaged student can understand.
4. Because instructional objectives are not specifically stated, explicit terminal performance is virtually ignored.⁶⁹

A number of research studies have undergirded the position of those who have supported eradicationism as an effective approach to the teaching of standard English to African-American students. Harber and Bryen reported research results that pointed to a negative correlation between the speakers of black English and SAT scores and with Letters and Sounds subtest scores.⁷⁰ The results of this study were compatible with the results of Baratz's experiment, which indicated that predominantly standard or

⁶⁸Donlan.

⁶⁹Donlan, p. 197.

⁷⁰Harber and Bryen, p. 397.

bidialectal speakers achieved better on the Lyons and Carnahan Developmental tests than those students who spoke black English exclusively.⁷¹ Naremore's factor analytic study of attitudes found that people make stereotyped inferences based on speech and that varieties in speech correspond to variations in social status and variations in listener's attitudes toward the speakers.⁷² A significant finding by Lane underscored certain aspects of black English that hinder accurate perceptions of standard English by African-American students.⁷³ Results of several doctoral studies are in accord with the theory that black English usage is detrimental to the academic achievement of African-American students. Brisard concluded that black English affects a student's ability to comprehend printed material⁷⁴ and Gray's study showed evidence of students' academic progress having been impeded by linguistic problems imposed upon them by black English usage.⁷⁵

⁷¹Harber and Bryen

⁷²Hess, p. 43.

⁷³Hess

⁷⁴Yvonne Brisard, "Reading and Dialect: An Investigation of the Relationship between Reading Comprehension and Black Dialect Density" (Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1979), DA, 40 (1979) 3174.

⁷⁵Mandy Gray, "A Study of Black English and Standard English with Reference to Linguistic Problems of Students in College with a Black Heritage" (Doctoral dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1979), D.A. 40 (1979) 3166.

In spite of the fact that legal claims have supported the right of students to retain their own language for academic communication, the *Martin Luther King, Junior Elementary School children et al. vs. Michigan Board of Education* was filed on behalf of these African-American students to test the legal implications of USC 1703, which states:

No state shall deny equal educational opportunity . . . by failure of an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in a language program.⁷⁶

Judge Joiner—dismissing a number of constitutional and statutory claims—decided in favor of these students on the basis of the Equal Educational Opportunity Act.⁷⁷ As a result of this decision, the judge ordered the Ann Arbor school district to submit a plan outlining the methods of identifying African-American students who speak black English and to describe methods of taking into account their language in teaching them to read.⁷⁸

⁷⁶Smitherman

⁷⁷"Schools Must Help Break Down the Black English Barrier," Phi Delta Kappan (October, 1979), 144.

⁷⁸"Schools Must Help Break Down the Black English Barrier."

Summary of Research

The survey of research related to providing effective instruction for African-American students seemed to have indicated three approaches that are currently being proposed. These proposals have been labeled laissez-faire, bidialectalism, and eradicationism.

1. Advocates of the laissez-faire proposal have not recommended that proficiency in usage of standard English be required of African-American students.

2. Advocates of the bidialectal proposal have recommended that standard English be taught African-American students as if it were a foreign language.

3. Advocates of eradicationism have recommended that standard English per se be taught African-American students.

Chapter III will present the method of research that was used to collect the data for the study.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted for the purpose of examining the perceptions of African-American graduates (1975-76) concerning the quality of English instruction offered in selected Knoxville secondary schools.

Population

African-American graduates of Knoxville secondary schools who had attended racially segregated and selected racially mixed schools in 1975-76 were the subjects for this study. There were 50 graduates of selected racially integrated schools and 260 graduates of the racially segregated school.

The names of the graduates were obtained from the records of the Knoxville public schools. One hundred forty-seven of the graduates failed to return the questionnaires. Seventy-five of these 147 questionnaires were returned with a notation "moved left no forwarding address." The writer made numerous attempts to locate the current addresses for those graduates whose questionnaires had not been returned but every effort failed. The number of graduates that completed and returned the questionnaires was 163, or 52.5 percent.

Description of the Instrument

In order to obtain data for this study, a questionnaire was constructed and administered to 163, 1975-76 graduates of the following Knoxville secondary schools: Austin-East, which is racially segregated; Fulton, Rule, and Holston, which are racially mixed.

The questionnaire (Appendix A) contained items that dealt with demographic information which revealed characteristics of respondents.

A three-item continuum was utilized to determine the respondents' perception concerning the quality of instruction they received as a high school student. The Likert-type scale was captioned "Yes," "No," and "Uncertain." Four open-ended questions were added in order to elicit suggestions for improving the quality of English instruction for African-American students—as well as opinions concerning the components of instruction that were most useful and less useful to post-secondary endeavors of African-American graduates.

Instrument Development and Refinement

Items included in the questionnaire were selected on the basis of the writer's professional experience and the experience of several of her professional colleagues, as well as items that were suggested in the related literature.

The questionnaire was reviewed by doctoral committee members and field tested with the assistance of ten West High School seniors.

Administration of the Instrument

All questionnaires were coded for the purpose of assuring anonymity and providing the writer with a means of determining who had responded as the questionnaires were received. A copy of the questionnaire, the cover letter, and a self-addressed and stamped envelope were mailed to all graduates. Appendix A contains a copy of the letter. At the end of the ten working day period, 75 questionnaires had been received for a 23.25 percent return. A follow-up letter was sent at the end of the ten day period, telephone calls were made, and personal visits to the residences or places of employment of the reluctant respondents were made by the investigator and by several graduates who had responded to the questionnaire. Appendix A contains a copy of the follow-up letter. Those who chose not to answer the letter were not contacted again.

Compilation of Responses

The investigator tallied the data and entered it on data coding sheets. From the sheets, data were punched, prior to processing.

Summary

Chapter III delineated the research methods that were used in this study. The basis for selecting the subjects was explained. An explanation of the procedure followed in the construction of the questionnaire was made. The methods and procedures for administration of the instrument were described. There was 52.5 percent cooperation from the respondents. Three hundred ten questionnaires were mailed to the graduates; 163 completed the questionnaire; and 147 did not respond. This chapter also contained the techniques and statistical methods of treating the data from the respondents.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

This chapter contains a presentation and discussion of data collected to analyze the following six questions:

1. What are the opinions of the graduates concerning the quality of English instruction they received in the Knoxville City Schools?
2. What opinions do the graduates hold concerning the usefulness of the English instruction they received in English classes?
3. What positions of employment do the graduates now hold?
4. What institutions of higher learning have the graduates attended or are attending?
5. What levels of academic achievement have the graduates attained?
6. Are modifications in English instruction advisable as a result of this study?

Selected Characteristics of Graduates of
Racially Segregated and Racially
Mixed Schools

Responses to questionnaire items which elicited demographic information are presented in this manner:

1. Characteristics of graduates of racially mixed schools.
2. An evaluation of the likenesses and differences of the sample population, when appropriate.

Table I indicates that the respondents were graduates of segregated and racially mixed secondary schools. Seventy-five percent were graduates of the racially segregated secondary school; whereas 25 percent were graduates of racially mixed schools.

TABLE I
TYPE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTENDED
BY RESPONDENTS

Type of School	Frequency	Percent
Segregated	123	75.46
Racially Mixed	40	24.54

Questionnaires were sent to 260 graduates of the racially segregated school; only 50 questionnaires were sent to graduates of racially mixed schools. Because a greater

percentage of African-Americans graduated from the racially segregated school, a larger number of questionnaires were returned by graduates of this school.

Table II reports the sexual identity of the population. Forty percent were males; 56 percent were females. Five respondents failed to indicate their sexual identity; therefore, a third category, "unknown" was created.

TABLE II
SEXUAL IDENTITY OF RESPONDENTS

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	66	40.49
Female	92	56.44
Unknown	5	3.07

Table III lists the educational attainment of fathers of the graduates. Fifty-two percent of fathers of the racially segregated school had not graduated from high school; whereas 40 percent graduated from high school; 5 percent enrolled in vocational school, and 8 percent attended college. Thirty percent of the fathers of graduates of racially mixed schools did not graduate from high school; whereas 70 percent did graduate. Ten percent attended vocational school and 25 percent attended institutions of higher learning.

TABLE III
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF FATHERS OF GRADUATES

Education	Frequency	Percent
Racially Segregated School		
Less than High School	64	52.03
High School	42	47.97
Vocational School	7	5.70
Higher Education	10	8.13
Racially Mixed School		
Less than High School	12	30.00
High School	14	70.00
Vocational School	4	10.00
Higher Education	10	25.00

Table IV describes the educational attainment of mothers of graduates. Thirty-five percent of mothers of graduates of the racially segregated school did not graduate from high school; 65 percent did graduate. Nine percent attended vocational school and 13 percent were accepted at institutions of higher learning. Fifteen percent of mothers of graduates of racially mixed schools were not graduates of high school; 85 percent were. Vocational school was attended by 7 percent and 37 percent enrolled at institutions of higher learning.

Table V outlines the occupations or professions of fathers of graduates of racially segregated schools. Twenty-eight percent of the fathers were employed as

TABLE IV
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF MOTHERS OF GRADUATES

Education	Frequency	Percent
Racially Segregated School		
Less than High School	44	35.79
High School	51	65.00
Vocational School	12	9.75
Higher Education	16	13.00
Racially Mixed Schools		
Less than High School	6	15.00
High School	16	85.00
Vocational School	3	7.50
Higher Education	15	37.50

TABLE V
OCCUPATION OR PROFESSION OF
FATHERS OF GRADUATES

Occupation/Profession	Frequency	Percent
Racially Segregated School		
Unskilled trade	35	28.45
Skilled trade	30	24.39
Service	31	25.20
Professional	4	3.26
Other	23	18.70
Racially Mixed Schools		
Unskilled trade	11	27.50
Skilled trade	7	17.50
Service	14	35.00
Professional	5	12.50
Other	3	7.50

unskilled laborers; 24 percent were employed as skilled laborers. Twenty-five percent held service-oriented jobs and 3 percent were employed as professionals. Fourteen percent were classified as "other." Twenty-seven percent of fathers of racially mixed school graduates were unskilled laborers; 17 percent were skilled laborers. Thirty-five percent held service jobs; 7 percent was placed in the "other" category. Twelve percent held professional positions.

Table VI reveals the occupation or profession of mothers of the graduates. Twenty-three percent of the mothers of racially segregated school graduates were homemakers exclusively; whereas 44 percent were employed in service positions, 12 percent were employed as professionals, and 19 percent as clerical workers. Fifteen percent of mothers of graduates of racially mixed schools were homemakers, exclusively. Thirty-two percent held service related positions; 35 percent held professional related positions. Seventeen percent held clerical positions.

A review of the analysis of the occupation of the fathers of the graduates in relationship to the occupations of the mothers (Tables V and VI) indicates a higher percent of mothers held professional positions. The higher educational achievement of the mothers in comparison with the fathers is a logical explanation for the mothers having been employed in a higher percentage of professional positions than the fathers.

TABLE VI
OCCUPATION OR PROFESSION OF
MOTHERS OF GRADUATES

Occupation/Profession	Frequency	Percent
Racially Segregated School		
Homemaker (Exclusively)	29	23.58
Service	55	44.71
Professional	15	12.19
Clerical	24	19.52
Racially Mixed Schools		
Homemaker (Exclusively)	6	15.00
Service	13	32.50
Professional	14	35.00
Clerical	7	17.50

Institutions of Higher Learning
Attended by Graduates

Table VII reveals institutions of higher learning attended by graduates. Fifty-three percent of the graduates of the racially segregated school indicated having attended a business college or technical school and 17 percent indicated having attended a four-year college. Twelve percent enrolled at a community college; whereas 11 percent enrolled at a vocational school. Four percent attended graduate school. Fifty-seven percent of the graduates of racially mixed schools attended business colleges and technical schools. Fifteen percent enrolled at four-year colleges and 12 percent enrolled at community colleges. Ten percent attended vocational school and 5 percent enrolled in graduate school.

TABLE VII
INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING
ATTENDED BY GRADUATES

Institution	Frequency	Percent
Racially Segregated School		
Vocational School	14	11.38
Community College	15	12.20
Four-year College	22	17.88
Graduate School	6	4.87
Business Colleges and Technical Schools	66	53.67
Racially Mixed Schools		
Vocational School	4	10.00
Community College	5	12.50
Four-year College	6	15.00
Graduate School	2	5.00
Business College and Technical Schools	23	57.50

Present Annual Income of
Graduates

Table VIII indicates the present annual income of graduates. Thirty percent of graduates of the racially segregated school reported incomes less than \$5,000; 39 percent reported incomes between \$5,000-\$10,000. Twenty-two percent reported incomes between \$10,000-\$15,000. Six percent reported incomes above \$15,000. Forty-five percent of graduates of racially mixed schools earned

\$5,000 or less; 27 percent, between \$5,000-\$10,000.

Twenty percent earned between \$10,000-\$15,000. Seven percent earned above \$15,000.

TABLE VIII
PRESENT ANNUAL INCOME OF GRADUATES

Annual Income	Frequency	Percent
Racially Segregated School		
\$5,000 or less	38	30.90
5,000-10,000	49	39.84
10,000-15,000	28	22.76
Above 15,000	8	6.50
Racially Mixed Schools		
\$5,000 or less	18	45.00
5,000-10,000	11	27.50
10,000-15,000	8	20.00
Above 15,000	3	7.50

Table IX reports the present profession or occupation of graduates. Thirty-eight percent of graduates of the racially segregated school reported their occupation to be service related; whereas, 16 percent reported their employment to be professional. Thirteen percent was employed in the clerical area; 8 percent was employed in an unskilled trade and 8 percent was employed in a skilled trade. Eight percent joined the armed forces and 6 percent had chosen to become homemakers, exclusively. Twenty-five percent of the graduates

of racially mixed schools had service-related employment. Seventeen percent was employed in an unskilled trade; 10 percent was employed in a skilled trade. Twelve percent had obtained positions classified as clerical. Seven percent was homemakers exclusively; 10 percent had joined the armed forces.

TABLE IX
OCCUPATION OR PROFESSION OF GRADUATES

Occupation/Profession	Frequency	Percent
Racially Segregated School		
Unskilled trade	11	8.94
Skilled trade	10	8.13
Clerical	17	13.82
Professional	20	16.26
Homemaker (Exclusively)	8	6.50
Service	47	38.22
Military	10	8.13
Racially Mixed Schools		
Unskilled trade	7	17.50
Skilled trade	4	10.00
Clerical	5	12.50
Professional	7	17.50
Homemaker (Exclusively)	3	7.50
Service	10	25.00
Military	4	10.00

An analysis of Table IX reveals that a greater percentage of graduates of the racially mixed high school were employed in professional positions than graduates of

racially segregated high schools; nevertheless, both groups of graduates had been employed in service related positions of employment to a great extent.

Suggestions of Graduates Regarding Improvement
of the Quality of English Instruction
in Secondary Schools

The following is a list of suggestions from graduates of the racially segregated school regarding improving the quality of instruction in secondary schools:

1. Forty-five (36 percent) of the graduates, 40 (32 percent) who attended an academically oriented institution and five (4 percent) who did not attend an academically oriented institution, stated: Educators should design courses that will help students to meet requirements of first-year college courses.

2. Eighty-three (74 percent) of the graduates, 65 (52 percent) who attended an academically oriented institution of higher learning and 18 (14 percent) who did not attend an academically oriented institution of higher learning stated: Education should provide more field trips.

3. Seventy-three (59 percent) of the graduates, 20 (24 percent) who attended academically oriented institutions and 43 (35 percent) who did not attend academically oriented institutions of higher learning stated: Educators should give more attention to grammatical deficiencies of the slow student.

4. Fifty-two (42 percent) of the graduates, 31 (25 percent) who attended academically oriented institutions of higher learning and 21 (17 percent) who did not attend academically oriented institutions of higher learning stated: Educators should teach—to a greater degree—the reserach paper and speech correction.

5. Forty (32 percent) of the graduates, 25 (20 percent) who attended academically oriented institutions of higher learning and 15 (12 percent) of those who did not attend academically oriented institutions of higher learning stated: Administrators should hire qualified teachers.

6. Fifty-three (43 percent) of the graduates, 33 (27 percent) who attended academically oriented institutions of higher learning and 20 (16 percent) who did not attend academically oriented institutions of higher learning stated: Educators should teach African-American literature.

7. Ten graduates (8 percent), four (3 percent) who attended graduate school and six (5 percent) who attended four-year colleges only stated: Educators should emphasize the relative value of standard English and Black English.

8. Thirty-five (28 percent) of the graduates, 20 (16 percent) who attended academically oriented institutions of higher learning and 15 (12 percent) who did not attend academically oriented institutions of higher learning stated: Educators should require more effort from students than mere attendance to pass.

9. Forty graduates (32 percent), 40 who attended academically oriented institutions of higher learning stated: Educators should assign students to English classes that are compatible with their interests and capabilities.

10. Thirty-nine (31 percent) of the graduates, 30 (24 percent) who attended academically oriented institutions of higher learning stated: Educators should develop more sensitivity to African-American culture."

The following is a list of suggestions from graduates of racially mixed schools.

1. Eighteen graduates (45 percent), 10 (25 percent) who attended academically oriented institutions of higher learning and eight (20 percent) who did not attend academically oriented institutions of higher learning stated: Educators should strive to improve the quality of communication between themselves and their African-American students.

2. Seventeen graduates (42 percent), 12 (30 percent) who attended scholastically oriented institutions of higher learning and five (12 percent) who did not attend scholastically oriented institutions of higher learning stated: Educators should provide additional opportunities for participation of African-American students in extra-curricular activities.

3. Twenty graduates (50 Percent), 15 (37 percent) who attended academically oriented institutions of higher learning

and five (12 percent) who did not attend an academically oriented institution of higher learning, stated: Educators should motivate African-American students so that they understand the necessity for teachers demanding that performance standards be met.

4. Twenty-five graduates (62 percent), 12 (30 percent) who attended academically oriented institutions of higher learning and 13 (32 percent) who did not attend academically oriented institutions of higher learning, stated: Educators should provide intensive instruction in formal English in the areas of speech and composition.

5. Twenty-two graduates (55 percent), 15 (37 percent) who attended academically oriented institutions of higher learning and seven (17 percent) who did not attend academically oriented institutions of higher learning, stated: Educators should teach African-American literature.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of 1975-76 graduates of selected Knoxville city schools concerning the quality and usefulness of the English instruction they received. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the opinions of the graduates concerning the quality of English instruction they received in the Knoxville city schools?
2. What opinions do the graduates hold concerning the usefulness of the English instruction they received in English classes?
3. What positions of employment do the graduates now hold?
4. What institutions of higher learning, if any, have graduates attended or are presently attending?
5. What levels of academic achievement have the graduates attained?
6. Are modifications in English instruction advisable as a result of this study?

Findings

As a result of an analysis of the data provided by the questionnaire responses, the investigator lists the following findings:

1. Approximately the same number of graduates who attended racially mixed and racially segregated English classes attended graduate schools (Table VII, page 56).
2. African-American graduates of racially segregated and racially mixed schools have attended technical schools, business colleges and beauty and/or barber colleges to a greater extent than they have attended four-year colleges or graduate schools (Table VII, page 56).
3. A greater number of African-American graduates of racially mixed and racially segregated secondary schools have been employed in service related positions. Few have been employed in professional positions (Table IX, page 58).
4. The nature of the data does not permit an analysis of the degree of success attained by respondents in post-secondary English classes.
5. African-American graduates who attended racially mixed English classes indicated having attended a four-year college to a higher degree than those graduates who attended racially mixed English classes (Table VIII, page 57).
6. African-American graduates of racially mixed schools reported educational achievement of parents that excelled the

educational achievement of parents of the racially segregated school. In addition, mothers of both groups of graduates had received more formal training than the fathers (Tables III and IV, pages 52 and 53).

7. Graduates of racially mixed schools reported annual incomes of \$20,000+ to a greater extent than graduates of the racially segregated school (Table VIII, page 57).

8. Graduates who attended racially segregated English classes reported having had the opportunity to study Black literature more than those who attended racially mixed classes (Table XVIII, Appendix C).

9. Graduates who attended racially segregated and racially mixed English classes reported that textbooks that included African-American literature were not usually available (Table XIX, Appendix C).

Conclusions

1. African-American students in the segregated school perceived that their English program contained fewer enrichment opportunities than did the students in the racially mixed schools (Tables X, XI, XII, XIV, XV, and XVII, Appendix C).

2. African-American students of the segregated and the mixed schools perceived that the same emphases were placed by the segregated and mixed schools on the social, vocational,

and speaking roles of standard English, with the greater emphasis being placed on speaking standard English for any reason (Tables XXV, XXVI, and XXVII, Appendix C).

3. A much greater proportion of African-American students in the segregated schools perceived of opportunities to study African-American literature than the proportion of students who perceived such opportunities in the racially mixed schools (Table XVIII, Appendix C).

4. African-American students from the segregated and mixed schools perceived that the methods emphasized in teaching English were traditional methods (writing research papers, reading literature, and drilling on grammar) and that comparisons between black and standard English were rare (Tables XX, XXI, XXII, XXXVI, XXVIII, and XXIX, Appendix C).

5. The perceptions of African-American students from segregated and racially mixed schools indicates that eradicationism is the predominant school of thought in the teaching of English in the schools (Tables XXVIII, XXIX, XXX, XXXI, and XXXII, Appendix C).

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the conclusions drawn from the analysis gathered in this study. study:

1. Appropriate authorities in the Knoxville City Schools should consider investigating the degree to which the perceptions of the graduates are valued in terms of the 1982-83 program.

2. If the graduates' perceptions are accurate, the following considerations should be given to modifying the English programs for African-American students in the following ways:

a. The English programs at Austin-East High School should be enriched in terms of the availability of textbooks, supplementary textbooks, field trips, vocational English classes, elective English classes, and extra curricular activities.

b. Comparison-contrast should be included as a method of teaching English.

c. Including translation of Black English into Standard English as a method of teaching English.

3. Appropriate authorities in the Knoxville City Schools should consider the predominant approaches to the teaching of English to African-American students in their schools, i.e., eradicationism, laissez-faire and bidialectalism. It is further recommended that consideration should be given to identifying the precise school of thought to which the English program for African-American students in the Knoxville City Secondary Schools should prescribe and

take measures to align instructional methodology with that school of thought.

Implications

The following implications seem to be appropriate for institutions which train teachers:

1. Institutions which train teachers should require prospective English teachers to take one course in either (a) African-American literature or (b) linguistics, with specific emphasis upon Black English.
2. Institutions which train teachers should require prospective English teachers who want to teach in inner-city schools to take additional credits in African-American studies.

The following implications are relevant to publishers:

1. Publishers should consider publishing texts that include a representative selection of literature by African-American authors, as well as commendable pictures of these writers.
2. Publishers should consider publishing texts that will meet the unique linguistic needs of African-American students.

The following implications apply for departments concerned with Afro-American and Related Studies:

1. Departments concerned with Afro-American and Related Studies can initiate a movement within the National

Council of Teachers of English to repudiate the laissez-faire approach to the teaching of standard English to African-American students. These departments should work to negate the current tendency to proclaim the legal rights of African-American students to the exclusive usage of their own language.

2. Departments concerned with Afro-American and Related Studies can provide appropriate African-American literary materials for instruction, sometimes providing instructional services as community service projects.

3. Departments concerned with Afro-American and Related Studies can provide adequate and appropriate courses that will prepare future teachers of English to meet the literary, linguistic, and cultural needs of African-American students.

The following implications seem appropriate for parents, civic organizations, African-American members of Boards of Education, and Parent-Teacher-Student Associations:

1. Parents, civic organizations, African-American members of Boards of Education, and Parent-Teacher-Student Associations can create school visitation opportunities, and can initiate supportive activities that reflect concern for and interest in effective instructional opportunities for African-American students.

2. Parents, civic organizations, African-American members of Boards of Education, and Parent-Teacher-Student Associations can devise strategies that will prompt textbook committees to adopt literature texts that adequately recognize the literary competence of African-American writers.

3. Parents, civic organizations, African-American members of Boards of Education and Parent-Teacher-Student Associations can devise strategies that will prompt superintendents of instruction and boards of education to select staffing for predominantly African-American teaching situations on the basis of their knowledge and commitment to the linguistic and literary needs of African-American students.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTS USED IN THE STUDY

PERCEPTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN
GRADUATES OF 1975-1976
QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Please check (x) the appropriate responses ____ for each category (1, 2, 3, etc.).

1. School attended
Austin-East _____
Fulton _____
Holston _____
Rule _____
2. Sex
Male _____
Female _____
3. Your parents' education
 - (a) Your father's
Less than high school graduate _____
High school graduate _____
Vocational school graduate _____
Community college graduate _____
(Two years of college)
College graduate _____
 - (b) Your mother's
Less than high school graduate _____
High school graduate _____
Vocational school graduate _____
Community college graduate _____
College graduate _____
4. Your parents' occupation or profession
 - (a) Your father's
Unskilled trade (laborer, truck driver, helper to
brick mason, plumber, carpenter, etc.) _____
Skilled trade (plumber, carpenter, machinist,
cabinet maker, tractor trailer driver,
mechanic, etc.) _____
Service (fireman, policeman, cab driver, delivery
man, barber, etc.) _____
Profession (teacher, minister, dentist, physician,
attorney, etc.) _____
Other (Specify) _____
 - (b) Your mother's
Homemaker (exclusively) _____
Service (policewoman, beautician, maid,
housekeeper, etc.) _____
Profession (teacher, nurse, librarian, dietician, etc.) _____
Other (Specify) _____
5. Your education beyond high school
 - (a) Vocational school graduate _____
 - (b) Community college graduate _____

- (c) College graduate _____
 (d) Graduate school graduate _____
 (e) Other (Specify) _____
6. Your present occupation or profession _____
 (a) Unskilled trade _____
 (b) Skilled trade _____
 (c) Clerical (Secretary, Typist, Receptionist) _____
 (d) Professional _____
 (e) Homemaker (Only) _____
 (f) Other (Specify) _____
 (g) Unemployed _____
7. Your educational goals _____
 (a) Vocational school graduate _____
 (b) Community college graduate _____
 (c) College graduate _____
 (d) Graduate school graduate _____
 (e) Other (Specify) _____
 (f) No future educational goals _____
8. Your professional goals _____
 (a) Educator _____
 (b) Lawyer _____
 (c) Social Service _____
 (d) Minister _____
 (e) Computer scientist _____
 (f) Engineer _____
 (g) Medicine _____
- OR
9. Your occupational goals _____
 (a) Unskilled trade _____
 (b) Skilled trade _____
 (c) Service _____
 (d) Business promoter (Beauty Shop owner, Janitorial Service, Restaurant Owner, Car Repair Service, etc.) _____
 (e) Other (Specify) _____
10. Your present yearly income _____
 (a) \$5,000.00 or less _____
 (b) \$5,000.00-\$10,000 _____
 (c) \$10,000-\$15,000 _____
 (d) \$15,000-\$20,000 _____
 (e) Over \$20,000 _____

General Information

The following questions deal with your feelings about the quality of English instruction. Please respond to each item according to your impressions of the quality of the English instruction that you received as a high school student. Give your opinion (1) what practice the high school you attended practiced and (2) what it should have practiced regarding instruction in English. Check in the appropriate column: Practice and Desired Practice.

EXAMPLE

A 1975 or a 1976 graduate has answered the following question:

Did your teacher assign homework in English on a regular basis?

The person's answer was "yes"; therefore, he/she checked 1 (yes) under "1975-1976 Practice." If the person's answer was "no," he checked 2 (no) under 1975-1976 Practice.

1975-1976 Practice		
Yes	No	Uncertain
1	2	3
X		

1975-1976
Practice

	yes	no	uncertain
	1	2	3
1. Each student had a text.			
2. In addition to the required text, other English texts were available.			
3. Field trips were provided. (Commercial movie houses, Clarence Brown Theatre, libraries, lectures, etc.).			
4. Students were grouped in classes according to their achievement in English.			
5. Vocational English classes were available.			
6. Elective English classes were offered in such subjects as drama, public speaking, and the like.			
7. The research paper was taught.			
8. Extracurricular activities included drama, public speaking contests, essay contests, journalism.			
9. African-American literature was studied.			

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2. In addition to the required text, other English texts were available.
3. Field trips were provided. (Commercial movie houses, Clarence Brown Theatre, libraries, lectures, etc.).
4. Students were grouped in classes according to their achievement in English.
5. Vocational English classes were available.
6. Elective English classes were offered in such subjects as drama, public speaking, and the like.
7. The research paper was taught.
8. Extracurricular activities included drama, public speaking contests, essay contests, journalism.
9. African-American literature was studied.

		1975-1976 Practice		
		1 yes	2 no	3 uncertain
10.	Literature texts included African-American literature.			
11.	Class instruction was a combination of literature, composition and grammar.			
12.	Major emphasis in English classes was on composition.			
13.	Major emphasis in English classes was on literature.			
14.	Major emphasis in English classes was on grammar usage and other language skills.			
15.	English curriculum included classes where major emphasis was on one segment of literature, or composition, or grammatical usage. (Mini classes) For example: Sports Literature, The Short Stories of Poe.			
16.	Teacher respected dialect other than standard English. (Standard English is the English of the textbook, the newspaper, and the news commentator.)			
17.	Teacher expressed a concern for your accomplishing efficiency in the use of standard English.			
18.	Teacher emphasized the need for learning to speak "good" or standard English.			
19.	Teacher emphasized the role of standard English in your being accepted socially.			
20.	Teacher emphasized the role of standard English in your vocational or professional success.			
21.	Standard English was taught by showing the likeness and differences between standard English and black English.			

1975-1976

Practice

	yes 1	no 2	uncertain 3
22. Teacher frequently translated black English into standard English.			
23. Teacher explained that at home or in the community black English might be more appropriate for communicating than standard English.			
24. Teacher explained that standard English and black English are equally correct when expressing certain emotions, ideas, etc.—especially those that relate specifically to African-Americans.			
25. Teacher did not insist that standard English be used in the classroom at any time.			
26. Teacher explained that a student should use the language of his home and community at all times.			
27. Teacher insisted that to speak standard English is to betray Black Culture.			
28. Teacher used intensive grammar drills in order to teach standard English.			
29. Teacher insisted that standard English was the only effective language for expressing ideas.			
30. Teacher was convinced that African-American students should use standard English at all times.			
31. When teaching standard English, teacher did not use the method of translating black English into standard English.			
32. Types of English instruction* that have proved most valuable to me in my occupation or profession include the following:			
33. Types of English instruction* that have proved least valuable to me in the pursuit of my occupation or profession are the following:			

34. Types of English instruction* that proved most valuable in post secondary study were the following: _____
_____.
35. My suggestion or suggestions for improving the quality of high school English instruction include the following: _____
_____.

*Types of English instruction may include the following: journalism, speech instruction, composition, grammatical drill, vocational English, business English, the study of literature, play production, debate.

APPENDIX B

CORRESPONDENCE

2105 Western Avenue
Knoxville, Tennessee
October 20, 1982

Dr. James A. Newman,
Superintendent
Knoxville Public Schools
101 East Fifth Avenue
Knoxville, Tennessee

Dear Dr. Newman:

I plan to conduct a study analyzing the perceptions of African-American graduates of Knoxville Public Schools concerning the quality of English instruction they received, 1975-76. I am requesting your permission to conduct this study.

The research is under the auspices of the College of Education, The University of Tennessee and is being directed by a committee chaired by Dr. Mark Christiansen. Other members of the committee are Dr. William Butefish, Dr. John Ray, and Dr. Kenneth McCullough.

Trusting you will be in position to grant this request I remain

Very truly yours,

Margaret P. Hartsell



National Council of Teachers of English
 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801
 Telephone (217) 328-3870

November 7, 1980

MEMORANDUM TO: Margaret P. Hartsell

FROM: Vivian I. Davis, Chair, Black Caucus

The enclosed statement is in response to the confusion that has developed in educational circles in response to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School et al. v Ann Arbor School District Board decision handed down on July 12, 1979 by U.S. District Judge Charles Joiner. The statement is intended for discussion among educators, parents and the community at large.

The Black Caucus/NCTE hopes that the affirmations in this statement will be used as guidelines toward the development of programs for teachers, administrators, parents, counselors, coordinators and all others involved in the education of Black children. This matter of Black English is extremely significant because the language of Black children is often taken as an excuse for ineffective teaching that renders them incompetent in the language arts skills—particularly reading and writing.

The Caucus urges teacher training institutions as well as those in charge of in-service training programs to study carefully the matter of culture and language as learning media. Very little information is presently available about the functions of language in concept acquisition and development. While some have rushed to define Black English as slang or "street language" somehow less capable of expression than Standard English, too little is known about the different Standard Englishes in America and their functions in the learning process to warrant simplistic definitions or contrasts. Teachers, regardless of subject area, need enough knowledge of linguistics to understand the differences between slang and dialect. All language arts teachers, regardless of level, need a thorough grounding in linguistics including language acquisition and language function as a learning medium.

It is our hope that you and your colleagues are interested in finding out more about this significant area of study. We suggest three experts in the field of linguistics who will be willing to consult with you: Dr. Dolores Straker, Center for the Study of Reading, 51 Gerty Drive, Room 174, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, Illinois 61820; Dr. Geneva Smitherman, Director, African Studies Program, Center for Black Studies, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan 48204; Dr. Jerrie Cobb-Scott, Department of English, The University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32601.

The Black Caucus/NCTE is happy to assist your efforts in any way we can.

2105 Western Avenue
Knoxville, Tennessee
November 28, 1980

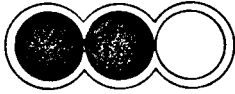
Dr. Vivian I. Davis
1219 Brook Valley Lane
Dallas, Texas

Dear Dr. Davis:

Because I am writing a doctoral dissertation entitled Perceptions of African-American Graduates of 1974 of Selected Public Schools in Knoxville, Tennessee Concerning the Quality of English Instruction Received. I requested a copy of the position statement of the Black Caucus/NCTE concerning the relationship of Black English and the African-American student. At the conclusion of this statement is the suggestion that you can provide additional information with regard to my research. I shall certainly appreciate any assistance you can offer.

Very truly yours,

Margaret P. Hartsell



tri-ethnic committee
to Judge W. M. Taylor Jr. — U.S. District Court for
the Northern District of Texas

December 8, 1980

Margaret P. Hartsell
2105 Western Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37921

Dear Ms Hartsell:

I received your letter of November 26. Your research sounds significant. What students think about the kind of instruction they receive in school certainly has much to do with the amount of effort they put forth and their confidence in their own competence. On the other hand, their perceptions are often little more than impressions or mirror images of what their parents and other teachers think about what they are being taught. I hope you will be able to find out how your students come to their impressions.

But to the information you asked about: I am enclosing a couple of copies of the statement of the Black Caucus. The additional source of information I would suggest is "The Background Statement to the Students' Right to Their Own Language." You can order the statement from the National Council of the Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801.

Good luck with your work, and a happy holiday season.

Warmly,

Vivian I. Davis

2105 Western Avenue
Knoxville, Tennessee
April 6, 1982

Dear

I am conducting a research study into the perceptions of African-American graduates (1974 and 1975) of selected secondary schools in Knoxville, Tennessee, concerning the quality of English instruction they received. This doctoral study has the approval of The University of Tennessee and the Knoxville Public Schools.

The intent of this investigation is to collect information which can provide the basis for structuring curriculums that will ensure additional relevance and effectiveness of English instruction for African-American students.

Responses to the questionnaire will remain anonymous; therefore, you need not be reluctant to answer questions candidly. After you have placed your answers on the questionnaire, return it in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided.

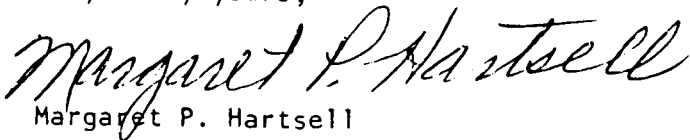
Your return of the questionnaire will indicate your approval for information that you are providing to be included in this study.

If you wish additional information concerning this study or if you wish to withdraw your consent from the study and to discontinue participation, you may do so by writing to me at 2105 Western Avenue or calling at 615/637-9479.

Your prompt cooperation in returning the questionnaire is necessary to the successful completion of this study.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,


Margaret P. Hartsell

FOLLOW-UP LETTER

2105 Western Avenue
Knoxville, Tennessee

Dear _____

I recently mailed to you a questionnaire concerning an appraisal of the quality of the instruction in English as perceived by African-American graduates of the Knoxville Public School System, 1973-1978.

I would appreciate your response since the information that you give will be combined with other responses to complete a study that can be beneficial to present African-American students enrolled in the Knoxville Public Schools and can further enhance the instructional opportunities of African-American students in the immediate future.

I realize that your busy schedule probably does not allow you much time for other things not related to your day-to-day activities. However, I am sure you realize the importance of your contribution.

Very truly yours,

Margaret P. Hartsell

APPENDIX C

TABLES OF GRADUATES' PERCEPTIONS

The following collection of tables describe the perceptions of graduates concerning certain aspects of their secondary English educational experiences.

Tables X and XI report perceptions of graduates concerning the availability of basic and supplementary texts.

Table XII outlines the perceptions of graduates concerning opportunities for participation in field trips.

Table XIII indicates the perceptions of graduates concerning availability of ability grouping class.

Table XIV reveals the perception of graduates concerning availability of vocational English classes.

Table XV reveals the perceptions of graduates concerning availability of elective English classes.

Table XVI indicates perceptions of graduates concerning instruction in research.

Table XVII indicates the perceptions of graduates concerning the opportunities for studying African-American literature.

Table XVIII reports the graduates perceptions of availability of texts that contain African-American literature.

Tables XIX, XX, and XXI reveal the perceptions of graduates concerning major emphasis of English instruction.

Tables XXII-XXVII outline the perceptions of graduates concerning the attitude of their teachers towards standard English in relationship to their African-American students.

Tables XXVIII-XXXIX reports the graduates perceptions of their teachers' English instructional philosophy: Laissez-Faire, Bidialectalism, or Eradicationalism.

TABLE X
PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING
AVAILABILITY OF BASIC TEXTS

Schools	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	82	34	7	66.67	27.64	5.69
Racially Mixed	37	3	0	92.50	7.50	0

TABLE XI
PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING
AVAILABILITY OF SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

Schools	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	38	63	22	30.90	51.22	17.89
Racially Mixed	33	4	3	82.50	10.00	7.50

TABLE XII
PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION
IN FIELD TRIPS*

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	25	77	21	20.32	62.60	17.08
Racially Mixed	20	17	3	50.00	42.50	7.50

*libraries, lectures, etc.

TABLE XIII
PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING
AVAILABILITY OF ABILITY
GROUPING CLASSES

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	35	70	18	56.91	28.45	14.64
Racially Mixed	13	26	1	65.00	32.50	2.50

TABLE XIV
PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING
AVAILABILITY OF VOCATIONAL
ENGLISH CLASSES

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	20	83	20	16.26	67.48	16.26
Racially Mixed	14	16	10	35.00	40.00	25.00

TABLE XV
PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING
AVAILABILITY OF ELECTIVE
ENGLISH CLASSES*

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	26	82	15	21.14	66.66	12.20
Racially Mixed	30	7	3	75.00	17.50	7.50

*drama, public speaking, etc.

TABLE XVI
PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING
INSTRUCTION IN RESEARCH*

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	85	36	2	69.10	29.28	1.62
Racially Mixed	32	7	1	80.00	17.50	2.50

*The Research Paper

TABLE XVII
PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION
IN EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES*

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	37	74	12	30.08	60.16	9.75
Racially Mixed	28	10	2	70.00	25.00	5.00

*Essay contests, play productions, etc.

TABLE XVIII

OPPORTUNITIES OF GRADUATES FOR STUDYING
AFRICAN-AMERICAN LITERATURE

Schools	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	50	73	0	40.65	59.34	0
Racially Mixed	5	35	0	12.50	81.50	0

TABLE XIX

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING AVAILABILITY
OF LITERATURE TEXTS THAT INCLUDED
AFRICAN-AMERICAN LITERATURE

Schools	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	8	104	11	6.52	84.56	8.92
Racially Mixed	2	36	2	5.00	90.00	5.00

TABLE XX

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING LITERATURE
AS MAJOR EMPHASIS OF ENGLISH INSTRUCTION

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	53	65	5	43.09	52.84	4.06
Racially Mixed	23	14	3	57.50	35.00	7.50

TABLE XXI

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING COMBINATION
OF LITERATURE, GRAMMAR, AND COMPOSITION AS
MAJOR EMPHASIS OF ENGLISH INSTRUCTION

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	80	39	4	65.05	31.70	3.25
Racially Mixed	34	6	0	85.00	15.00	0

TABLE XXII

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING GRAMMAR
USAGE AND OTHER LINGUISTIC COMPONENTS AS
MAJOR EMPHASIS OF INSTRUCTION

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	93	22	8	75.61	17.89	6.50
Racially Mixed	25	8	7	62.50	20.00	17.50

TABLE XXIII

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING RESPECT
FOR DIALECT OTHER THAN STANDARD ENGLISH

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	10	99	14	8.13	50.41	7.31
Racially Mixed	2	31	7	5.00	77.50	17.50

TABLE XXIV

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING INTEREST
IN ACCOMPLISHING EFFICIENCY IN USE OF
STANDARD ENGLISH

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	98	15	10	79.67	12.19	8.11
Racially Mixed	25	10	5	62.50	25.00	12.50

TABLE XXV

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING EMPHASIS
ON ROLE OF STANDARD ENGLISH IN ACHIEVING
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	52	62	9	42.28	50.41	7.31
Racially Mixed	17	16	7	42.50	40.00	17.50

TABLE XXVI

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING EMPHASIS ON
ROLE OF STANDARD ENGLISH IN ACHIEVING
VOCATIONAL OR PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS

School	Frequency			Yes	Percent	
	Yes	No	Uncertain		No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	70	37	16	56.92	30.08	13.00
Racially Mixed	23	11	6	57.50	27.50	15.00

TABLE XXVII

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING EMPHASIS
OF NEED FOR LEARNING TO SPEAK
STANDARD ENGLISH

School	Frequency			Yes	Percent	
	Yes	No	Uncertain		No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	102	19	2	82.92	15.44	1.62
Racially Mixed	32	5	3	80.00	12.50	7.50

TABLE XXVIII

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING COMPARISON-
CONTRAST OF STANDARD ENGLISH AND
BLACK ENGLISH (BIDIALECTALISM)

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	20	100	3	16.26	81.31	2.43
Racially Mixed	3	36	1	7.50	90.00	2.50

TABLE XXIX

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING
TRANSLATION OF BLACK ENGLISH INTO
STANDARD ENGLISH (BIDIALECTALISM)

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	17	93	13	13.82	75.61	10.57
Racially Mixed	2	38	0	5.00	95.00	0

TABLE XXX

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING ATTITUDE
OF EQUAL CORRECTNESS OF STANDARD ENGLISH
AND BLACK ENGLISH WHEN EXPRESSING
CERTAIN IDEAS, EMOTIONS
(BIDIALECTALISM)

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	27	85	11	21.95	69.11	8.94
Racially Mixed	2	38	0	5.00	95.00	0

TABLE XXXI

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING
APPROPRIATENESS OF BLACK ENGLISH
IN COMMUNICATING AT HOME AND
IN COMMUNITY (BIDIALECTALISM)

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	20	100	3	16.26	81.30	2.44
Racially Mixed	2	36	2	5.00	90.00	5.00

TABLE XXXII

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING LACK OF
INSISTENCE ON SOLE USAGE OF STANDARD
ENGLISH IN CLASSROOM
(LAISSEZ-FAIRE)

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	10	113	0	8.13	91.87	0
Racially Mixed	2	38	0	5.00	95.00	0

TABLE XXXIII

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING ATTITUDE TOWARD
APPROPRIATENESS OF USING THE LANGUAGE OF HIS HOME
AND COMMUNITY AT ALL TIMES (LAISSEZ-FAIRE)

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	5	111	7	4.06	90.25	5.69
Racially Mixed	2	37	1	5.00	92.50	2.50

TABLE XXXIV

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING ATTITUDE
THAT TO SPEAK STANDARD ENGLISH IS TO
BETRAY BLACK CULTURE (LAISSEZ-FAIRE)

School	Frequency			Yes	Percent	
	Yes	No	Uncertain		No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	4	106	13	3.25	86.18	10.57
Racially Mixed	0	37	3	0	92.50	7.50

TABLE XXXV

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING LACK OF
INSISTENCE THAT STANDARD ENGLISH BE USED
IN CLASSROOM AT ANY TIME (LAISSEZ-FAIRE)

School	Frequency			Yes	Percent	
	Yes	No	Uncertain		No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	10	113	0	8.13	91.87	0
Racially Mixed	2	38	0	5.00	95.00	0

TABLE XXXVI

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING USE OF
GRAMMAR DRILLS TO TEACH STANDARD
ENGLISH (ERADICATIONALISM)

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	85	29	9	69.11	23.58	7.31
Racially Mixed	25	13	2	62.50	32.50	5.00

TABLE XXXVII

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING ATTITUDE THAT
STANDARD ENGLISH IS ONLY EFFECTIVE LANGUAGE
FOR EXPRESSING IDEAS (ERADICATIONALISM)

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	75	25	23	60.98	20.32	18.70
Racially Mixed	30	5	5	75.00	12.50	12.50

TABLE XXXVIII

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING ATTITUDE
THAT AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS SHOULD USE
STANDARD ENGLISH AT ALL TIMES
(ERADICATIONALISM)

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	92	27	4	74.80	21.95	3.25
Racially Mixed	34	3	3	85.00	7.50	7.50

TABLE XXXIX

PERCEPTIONS OF GRADUATES CONCERNING LACK OF
METHOD OF TRANSLATING BLACK ENGLISH
INTO STANDARD ENGLISH
(ERADICATIONALISM)

School	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Yes	No	Uncertain
Racially Segregated	97	23	3	78.86	18.70	2.44
Racially Mixed	33	5	2	82.50	12.50	5.00

APPENDIX D

OBSERVATIONS ON STUDY

As a result of doing the study, the researcher makes the following observations:

1. The researcher has concluded from the study that graduates approved, with some reservations, of the quality of English instruction they received in their respective secondary high schools. Twenty graduates indicated the lack of emphasis upon communication skills, especially in written composition. Twelve would have preferred a more utilitarian approach to the teaching of English, an approach that would adequately prepare them for successful on-the-job performance or post-secondary academic achievement in English.

Thirty graduates lamented the lack of sensitivity of some English teachers to the existence of African-American culture and recognition of the need of African-American students to receive formal instruction in this body of knowledge.

Fifteen respondents appeared to have equated the quality of English instruction they received with the degree of the teachers' expression of genuine interest in the academic achievement of the student.

2. Several interesting findings emerged:

A. A finding of the study was the fact that 52 percent of the fathers of the graduates of the racially segregated school had not graduated from high school and that 30 percent of the fathers of the graduates of the racially mixed schools

had not graduated from high school and few had attended an institution of higher learning. No doubt, this lack of educational attainment of the fathers of graduates can be attributed to segregation and discriminatory educational practices of academia in particular and segregation and discriminatory practices of society in general. These men are peers of Eugene Gray, who attempted to change the discriminatory admission policies at The University of Tennessee. These men are peers of students who could not afford tuition at Knoxville College, which is a private institution, lacking state funding.

B. Another finding that was revealed by the statistics of Table IV (page 53) was the indication that mothers of the graduates had achieved a higher level of education than the fathers. This matter may be because of the practice established in African-American families to provide more educational opportunities for their daughters than their sons.

C. The investigator's theory is that the underlying factors that have contributed to these accomplishments of graduates of the racially segregated school having attended four-year colleges (Table VII, page 57) and having attained professional status in favorable comparison to graduates of racially mixed schools may be the higher number of African-American role models present in the racially segregated

school. The sensitivity of African-American teachers and guidance counselors to the special problems African-Americans encounter when they enroll in institutions of higher learning may also be a contributing factor to the success of these students. As a result of this affinity for their students, these educators motivate, cajole, advise and seek educational and vocational opportunities compatible with talents and interests of African-American students.

D. The final finding in this category pointed to a favorable comparison of the graduates of the racially segregated school to that of the graduates of the racially mixed schools in terms of having attended four-year colleges (Table VII, page 57) and having attained professional status.

3. Valuable suggestions—which were reported by a small number of students—for improving the quality of instruction for African-American students are reported:

A. Eleven graduates stated: Educators should not present dramatic skits that purport to be representative of African-American literature.

B. Seven graduates stated: Teachers and/or guidance counselors should assign students to English classes that are compatible with career choices.

C. Three graduates stated: Educators should teach African-American students the value of intelligent use of the language.

D. Four graduates stated: Educators should emphasize the relative value of standard English and Black English in assisting an African-American student to function in two worlds.

E. Four graduates stated: Educators should adjust their language teaching methods and strategies to accommodate and alleviate the language switching dilemma of the African-American student.

F. Five graduates stated: Educators should develop more sensitivity to African-American culture.

4. Finally, the researcher makes the following suggestions:

A. Secondary English textbook committees should select texts that include writings and photographs of African-American authors.

B. African-American literature courses should be included in the curricula of racially segregated and racially mixed schools.

C. Teachers of English should be assigned to racially mixed and racially segregated secondary schools on the basis of their interest and training in the linguistic aspects of Black English and interest and knowledge of African-American literature.

D. Secondary English teachers and college English teachers should enjoy a closer rapport and articulation

with reference to effective teaching of English to African-American students.

E. Eradicationalism and/or bidialectalism should be the basic approach to the teaching of English to African-American students in secondary schools.

F. English curricula offered African-American students should have as their major components of instruction, composition and linguistics.

G. Administrators, teachers, and guidance counselors should initiate and vigorously pursue motivational activities that are designed to raise the level of academic achievement and job procurement.

H. English faculties of racially mixed schools should censor carefully dramatic presentations that purport to be representative of Black literature.

APPENDIX E

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF
ENGLISH TASK FORCE ON RACISM AND BIAS
IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

NONWHITE MINORITIES IN ENGLISH AND
LANGUAGE ARTS MATERIALS

Background

The following statement, "Nonwhite Minorities in English and Language Arts Materials," is a revision of the Criteria for Teaching Materials in Reading and Literature. The original version was first accepted by the Executive Committees of the National Council of Teachers of English and the Conference on College Composition and Communication, and then officially adopted by the NCTE Board of Directors at the annual meeting in Atlanta on November 26, 1970; since 1970, some changes have occurred. In some cases, publishers have included more multiethnic materials in their products. Similarly, teachers, in some cases, have given more attention to multiethnic materials in their classrooms. But problems remain. This revision looks at some of those problems and offers some solution. Both the original and revised statements were prepared by the Task Force on Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English, Ernece Kelly, Director.

Rationale

Minority groups in the United States, especially the nonwhite minorities—Native Americans, Asian Americans,

Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, et al.—suffer crippling discrimination in jobs, housing, civil rights and education. And they continue to face a school curriculum that, for them, is culturally impoverished. Ironically, it is also a curriculum, which in a different fashion, cripples white students and teachers by denying them the opportunity to learn about the history and literature of other Americans who are nonwhites.

During the course of their education, students acquire more than skills and knowledge; they also find and continue to modify images of themselves as they form attitudes toward other persons, races, and cultures. To be sure the school experience is not the sole force that shapes self-images, nor does it totally influence one's attitude toward others. But to the extent that the school does exert influence, it is essential that its materials foster positive student self-images deeply rooted in a sense of personal dignity. School materials should also foster the development of attitudes grounded in respect for and understanding of the diverse cultures of American society.

Classroom teachers are immediately responsible for continuing action to accomplish these ends. However, curriculum planners, textbook selection committees, local, state and national education authorities, as well as designers of learning systems and publishers, are equally responsible and obligated.

Problems

Print (general anthologies, basal readers, language arts kits, etc.) and nonprint materials (slides, study prints, films, filmstrips, videotapes, illustrations in texts, etc.) used in English and language arts instructions are distorted by the following:

misrepresentation of the range of genres within which nonwhites write

misrepresentation caused by inclusion of only popular works by a few "acceptable" nonwhite writers

inclusion of demeaning, insensitive, or inaccurate depictions of nonwhite minorities

biased and out-of-date commentaries resulting from inadequate knowledge of nonwhite minorities

refusal to acknowledge the influence of nonwhite minority persons on the literary, cultural, and historical developments in America

Solutions

Book editors and publishers should make certain that:

- A. Anthologies purporting to represent American literature have more than token representation of works by nonwhite minorities and that they reflect diversity of subject matter, style, and social and cultural views;
- B. Texts represent nonwhite minorities in a fashion which represents their dignity as human beings and accurately mirrors their contributions to American culture, history, and letters, meaning that depictions of minority groups be balanced and realistic;

- C. Illustrations and photographs of nonwhite minorities accurately portray historical and socioeconomic diversity;
- D. Dialect be realistic, consistent and appropriate to the setting and characters;
- E. Editorial and critical commentary include the roles played by nonwhite writers in literary developments.
- F. Texts include criticism of nonwhite critics on the works of white as well as nonwhite writers; and that
- G. Historical commentary and interpretations include the range of minority perspectives on social and political history.

Solutions

Teachers and administrators should ask whether:

- A. Their English and language arts curricula include more than token representation of minority writers and/or critics;
- B. Efforts are consistently made in the classroom to encourage active use of materials which have more than token representation of minority writers/critics;
- C. Illustrations or photographs of nonwhites in the materials are nonstereotyped and unsentimental;
- D. Illustrations or photographs of nonwhites show them in a variety of roles, including positions of authority;
- E. The dialogue of nonwhites is realistic (not exclusively stereotyped);
- F. Discussions of American literary, social and political history mention contributions by nonwhites; and whether
- G. Discussions of American literary, social and political history are also by nonwhites.

If teachers and administrators had to answer No to one or more of these questions, the material being used probably conveys a distorted picture of America and its literature. The NCTE Task Force on Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English urges that such material be balanced by other materials that present positive images of nonwhite minorities. When adopting new instructional materials, teachers are urged to use adoption criteria that will assure that classroom materials accurately reflect the literature of America.

Should teachers and administrators elect to replace their present material, the Task Force strongly urges them to write the publishers informing them of their reasons for doing so.

APPENDIX F

STATEMENT FROM MEMBERS OF THE BLACK CAUCUS OF
THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

A STATEMENT FROM MEMBERS OF THE BLACK CAUCUS/NCTE

RATIONALE:

News media reports regarding the landmark case, Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School et al. v Ann Arbor School District Board and subsequent efforts to comply with the ruling in the case have been incomplete, lacking in clarifying background information and in some cases, purposefully distorted. The public, therefore, deserves a statement reflective of the viewpoints of Black language arts educators. It is appropriate that we, as Black professionals, speak for ourselves. To that end, the Black Caucus/NCTE issues this statement.

The Caucus is composed of Black linguists and language arts teachers from elementary through university levels. To clarify its position in this matter, the Caucus refers to Black English as that distinguishable language system that some Black students use in the performance of academic tasks.

WE BELIEVE THAT:

The Black English language system of itself is not a barrier to learning. The barrier is negative attitudes toward the language system, lack of information about the system, inefficient techniques for teaching language skills, and an unwillingness to adapt teaching styles to student learning needs.

The language Black children bring to school evolves from a highly verbal culture and is a strength on which teachers must draw in order to develop effective approaches to teaching the language arts to Black children.

Teachers, administrators, counselors, supervisors, and curriculum developers must be required to undergo structured experiences that will make them aware of and help them to overcome prevailing stereotypic and negative attitudes which are barriers to Black learners.

While past scholarship has concentrated on a limited number of features which may contribute to the definition of one aspect of the Black English language system, we have yet to assess the role of this language as the mediator of learning strategies and Black cultural identity. Therefore, thorough unbiased research into the characteristics and functions of the Black English language system must continue with the support of adequate funding and appropriate academic safeguards.

(This statement may be reproduced for professional use.)

For further information, write to:

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APPENDIX G

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

"Black English Seems Not to Hurt"

It may have helped and it didn't hurt. That is about what the Ann Arbor, Mich., school board concluded was the result of the first year of its court-ordered program to teach black English to teachers so they could better teach standard English to their students.

In an evaluation made public last week, the school board said the program may have marginally improved student attendance and attitudes toward school, but there were little data to demonstrate that it had improved academic achievement. But neither did the report indicate there was any negative effect from the program and the school board said it would make black English classes available for the next 36 months to teachers from anywhere in the city.

The Ann Arbor program resulted from a ruling in July 1979 by Federal Judge Charles W. Joiner in a suit filed in behalf of 11 students at the Martin Luther King Elementary School. The judge held that black English was a distinct dialect that required recognition and respect from teachers so that black children would not develop "a psychological barrier to learning."

The school board report, which apparently relied heavily on assessments by teachers, said that 32 teachers from the King School took the black English course the first year.

All of them agreed on the need for the training, the report said, but they were less certain about its value, possibly because many had already learned in other ways much of what the course covered.¹

¹"Black English Seems Not to Hurt," The New York Times, December 14, 1980, p. E7.

VITA

Margaret Porter Hartsell, a native of Knoxville, Tennessee, attended Austin High School in Knoxville and received the A.B. degree from Knoxville College, where she majored in English and history. After having graduated from college, she studied further at the University of Chicago, Atlanta University and was awarded the M.A. degree from New York University. She earned the Doctor of Education degree at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Her major teaching experience has been with the Knoxville Public Schools, where she taught secondary English classes, chaired an English department, advised student publications, and taught college preparatory courses in English.

Additional educational experiences have been instructorships at Livingstone College, Salisbury, North Carolina; Elizabeth City State Teachers College, Elizabeth City, North Carolina; assistant and associate professorships and Coordinator of Basic Studies, Knoxville College.

At The University of Tennessee, she has been employed as a coordinator of student teaching, visiting assistant professor, and instructor in Afro-American Studies.