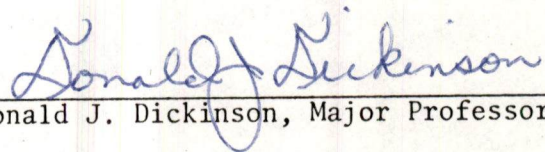


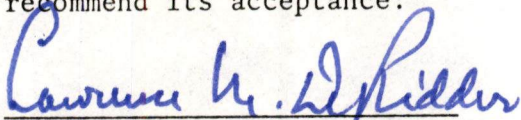
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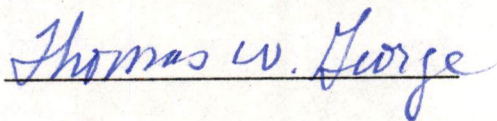
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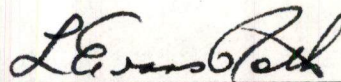
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A STUDY OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' AND ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS'
PERCEPTIONS OF TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS' WRITTEN REPORTS

A Thesis
Presented for the
Specialist in Education
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Debra Skyler Ames

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate elementary principals' and teachers' perceptions of two types of school psychologists' report writing.

Data was collected by questionnaires, sent along with the two reports, to 14 principals and 91 teachers from five Tennessee counties. It had been hypothesized that: (1) principals' and teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of the school psychologists' report would not differ due to the different content of the two reports; (2) principals' and teachers' perceptions of the informativeness of the school psychologists' report would not differ due to the different content of the two reports, (3) principals' and teachers' preference of the school psychologists' report would not differ due to the type of report written, and (4) principals' and teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of the school psychologists' report would not differ due to practical considerations such as parent conferences or seeking solutions to the referral problem.

Data was analyzed using a one-way analysis of variance and a one-sample chi-square test, at the .05 level of significance. Results indicate that no significant differences were found involving the usefulness and informativeness of the two types of reports. However, the teachers clearly preferred the direct assessment, while the principals preferred the traditional assessment. Further research in this area is recommended.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Problem

One of the greatest concerns of school psychologists and educators is the effectiveness of communication in the school psychologists' report writing. Much research has been devoted to improving the role of the school psychologist as an effective communicator through the use of consultation models. However, little research has been compiled concerning how well various types of psychoeducational reports communicate test results to educators and other populations.

Many educators have repeatedly stated that school psychologists' reports contain too much psychological jargon, which they cannot understand. If, however, the educators are able to decipher the psychological jargon utilized by the school psychologist, they sometimes discover that the referral problem was never addressed. The effectiveness of communication of the school psychologist is absent if these complaints are present.

The design of this research was to determine whether the effectiveness of communication of the school psychologists' report writing could be improved as a result of changing the emphasis of the report. Therefore, it was the purpose of this study to have educators rate two types of school psychologists' reports on the same referral problem with the same child. The two types of report writing differed

in that one type was a "traditional" psychological evaluation focusing on normative data and the other type was a "direct assessment" evaluation focusing on precise diagnostic information.

Significance

This research study will offer pertinent data to school psychologists with regard to the effectiveness of communication through report writing. It will encourage school psychologists to assess their report writing and to assess the needs of the population of educators which they are serving.

The most obvious reservations concerning school psychologists' report writing involve the following:

1. The continuation of the practice of lengthy psychological evaluations that only declare eligibility.
2. An insufficient amount of truly "Diagnostic Evaluations" with any kind of prescriptions for teachers.
3. Inadequate interpretation of our psychological jargon into the understandable language of the user.
4. With adequate transfer to diagnostic findings to application, there is also a need for demonstration and implementation. (Ciha, 1976)

This study will offer beneficial data concerning the needs of the educators who utilize the school psychologists' reports. The school psychologist will be able to consider the educators' needs and to revise the reports as is necessary to effectively communicate the test results.

When considering the role of the school psychologist as a tester, it is essential to also consider the other responsibilities of the school psychologist. The role of the school psychologist will vary with each school district, but an overview of the roles include: psychological

tester; remediator; parent trainer; consultant; treatment implementor; intervention specialist; researcher; innovator of new programs for children with exceptional needs; and counselor for children, parents, teachers, and administrators. Practicing school psychologists spend the greatest amount of time in the schools in testing and diagnosing, according to a National Survey of School Psychologists completed by W. H. Farling and K. C. Hoedt (1971). The other duties, however important, do not consume the amount of time that testing and report writing do. Therefore, evaluating the effectiveness of the school psychologists' report writing is, in fact, evaluating a large portion of his/her communication with educators.

One way to ensure effective communication with educators is to assess the needs of the various educators. Through this assessment of needs not only does the school psychologist fulfill the requirement of evaluating students and report findings, but the school psychologist can now report findings that can be utilized by the educators.

After assessing the needs of the school psychologist and the educators concerning report writing, it is also essential to assess the needs of the administration.

Administrative purposes of the psychological report will include the emerging necessities for agencies and institutions to keep written records to show that they have acted competently and ethically, and to have reports as to how they followed "due process" in their functions. (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 16)

The administration's needs will also need to be observed if the school psychologist is to effectively communicate with all personnel in the school system.

Therefore, it is safe to assume that psychological testing and report writing will continue to consume the greatest amount of time for a school psychologist. Thus, the effectiveness of communication through report writing will aid in the success of the school psychologist as a communicator with school personnel.

Definition of Terms

With this study, the following definitions are utilized.

Direct assessment. The term direct assessment refers to the assessment of a child's specific problem and the environment in which the problem occurs (Dickinson, 1978, p. 2). The procedure requires a direct, observed measurement of the problem. It is the behaviors of the child that are considered, and these behaviors are evaluated only in the environmental context.

Informativeness. This term refers to the quantity and quality of information included in the psychological report that is important to the user in comprehending the report.

Referral problem. This term refers to what the teacher or referring agent has specified as the child's problem.

Test interpretation. The term test interpretation refers to the section of a school psychologist's report in which the school psychologist interprets test findings.

Traditional psychological evaluation or report. This report has consistently "stressed matters of intellect and/or dynamics and pathology" (Tallent, 1976, p. 10). The "two major categories are

'Intellectual Aspects' and 'Emotional Aspects'" (Tallent, 1976, p. 86). Thus the reports contained an intelligence quotient score and a statement of the client's states and traits. Trait scores are based on normative data.

Usefulness. This term refers to how the reader of the psychological report can utilize the information contained within the report.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study are stated in such a way as to meet the constructs of the null hypothesis.

1. The usefulness of the school psychologists' report will not differ significantly for different content whether written as a "traditional" evaluation or as a "direct assessment" evaluation.

2. The informativeness of the school psychologists' report will not differ significantly for different content whether written as a "traditional" evaluation or as a "direct assessment" evaluation.

3. The preference as to the type of report will not differ significantly whether written as a "traditional" evaluation or as a "direct assessment" evaluation.

4. The usefulness of the report for practical considerations of the teacher, such as parent conferences or seeking solutions to the referral problem, will not differ significantly whether the report is written as a "traditional" evaluation or as a "direct assessment" evaluation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

For many years, school psychologists have been aware of the difficulties involving report writing. As early as 1954, at the Thayer Conference in West Point, New York, the following issues concerning school psychologists' report writing were revealed:

A written report of progress should be made as soon as possible. This should be free of what the superintendent called gibberish. The psychologist should know from previous contact which technical terms he can use without explanation, which he should explain, and which omit. The teacher should be encouraged to express opinions, make suggestions, and ask questions. (Cutts, 1955, p. 73)

The Thayer Conference also addressed criticisms from school administrators indicating:

1. Failure to understand the practical problems of the classroom. Superintendents felt that "the psychologists do not understand that they are recommending on the basis of the individual child, whereas the teacher has to interpret the recommendations in terms of a group."
2. Failure to communicate, to make the teacher understand what the cause of a difficulty is . . . is a common fault. The remarks vary from "communicated so as not to engender misunderstanding" to "gibberish."
3. Recommendations are often inadequate. "The teachers say the psychologist merely says back in his report what the teacher has already told him about the child." (Cutts, 1955, p. 70)

The Conference was also interested in the classroom teachers' point of view, presented as follows by a classroom teacher at the Conference:

1. I want a person to help me in the classroom in problems where I need help.
2. I want one to help me with a solution to my problem rather than give me a "diagnosis" of my problem.
3. I want one to "help me" solve my problems "within" my classroom rather than take my problem "from" my classroom.
(Cutts, 1955, p. 71)

This Conference reached general consensus on several broad issues such as functions, qualifications, and training of school psychologists. A school psychologist "uses his specialized knowledge of assessment, learning, and interpersonal relationships . . . to enrich the experience and growth of all children and to deal with exceptional children" (Cutts, 1955, p. 174). However, no conclusions were made on how to follow through on enriching the experience of children through assessment reports. The burden of the concept of effective communication through report writing was placed on the training institutions.

The following is a limited discussion of the purpose behind psychological reports, the complaints, which often accompany them, and the recommendations for changes in the reports to help assure more effective communication.

Purpose of Psychological Reports

Psychological reports were created by the school psychologist with a purpose. Originally, the purpose of the report "was a vehicle to transmit test findings in the form of a narrative" (Tallent, 1976, pp. 10-11). These "reports" were created to communicate pertinent information for many different specific purposes" (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 1). It is the responsibility of the report writer to

"delineate the purpose for each report prepared" (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 1). The report should be prepared with the consideration of the sophistication of the intended uses. The report writer should work within a framework involving pertinent philosophical and theoretical issues. Thus, the report is prepared in consideration of the writer and the user.

The essential purposes of psychological reports primarily concern three different populations: the referent who has requested the evaluation, the clinician who is providing the evaluation, and the client whose whole future may be at issue (Klopfer, 1960, p. 1).

Klopfer (1960) pointed out that there are three different individuals with whom the purpose of the report is essential. Hollis and Donn (1973) also agreed as they stated,

The major purpose of the psychological report is to communicate between or among persons about another individual or individuals. The report is most often written about an individual or individuals, for whom professionals are attempting to render a service. The psychological report in order to serve a useful purpose must always be written as plainly, simply, and clearly as possible, and it must be individually and uniquely written to correspond to the specific purposes for which the report is written. (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 3)

There are certain considerations with which a school psychologist needs to be concerned in order to effectively communicate through reports. "The report writer must first determine specific purposes(s) and potential user(s)" (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 4). Therefore, it is "only after the writer determines the specific purposes, the nature of the questions to be answered in the report, and competency of users

is the writer ready to consider such things as data" (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 4).

Therefore, it was essential to explore the four points of view involving the specific purposes of reports. The four points of view are: the report writer's, the report user's, the report writer's and user's, and the administrator's.

From the writer's point of view, it is essential to examine three aspects of report writing. According to Hollis and Donn (1973), it is essential to:

1. First examine the purpose for preparing the report.
 2. Acknowledge one's own level of sophistication including kind and level of training.
 3. Keep foremost what the report will do for the client.
- (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 5)

These steps aid the writer in organizing and constructing a psychological evaluation, which would be purposeful and helpful to all involved.

Hollis and Donn (1973, p. 9) state that essential prerequisites before writing a report are "determining and understanding the specific purposes of the intended report user." In schools, we are "writing for teachers . . . and must consider a teacher's frame of reference; a teacher is primarily interested in the child as a pupil, not as a patient" (White and Harris, 1961, p. 344). The frame of reference may be attained through conversations with the intended user about background, experience, and teaching philosophy. The writer needs to be concerned with the content of the report and with the language, which should effectively communicate the intent of the report. In order to

effectively communicate, a report writer must be fully aware of the "different levels of professional terminology" (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 10).

According to Hollis and Donn (1973), through preparation and utilization of the psychological report, treatment is facilitated. "The report may be used to institute an action, such as school placement" (White and Harris, 1961, p. 345). In order to facilitate treatment, the report writer and user generally work in conjunction with the client to establish a common goal. The report will need to be understood by both writer and user to ensure the correct summation of the report and to maximize the effectiveness of appropriate treatment. Additionally, "legal purposes for psychological reports are becoming increasingly important" (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 16). For legal purposes, it is necessary for the writer and user to have clear-cut understanding of the common purposes, so that the following question can be readily answered:

To what extent will the report serve the individual and to what extent will it serve society at the same time; or, if it serves society, will it be at the expense of the individual? (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 16)

The specific purposes for report writing from an administrative point of view involve the increasing emphasis during recent years given to civil liberties and affirmative action programs. There are needs now to use the psychological report as a due process document. It is necessary to show that all parties "acted competently and ethically, and to have the reports to demonstrate as to how they followed due process in their function" (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 16). These documents

become essential as sources of funding or in declaring a need for funding, of which administrators will need to keep abreast.

Criteria for an Effectively Communicated Psychological Evaluation

There are some general concerns that need to be considered if a report is to communicate effectively.

1. What's the report about and who wrote it?
2. How does the report contribute to what I already know? Does the report supply additional information about the person or situation? Does the report fill in void areas in the information I now have? Does the report compliment or disagree with information now available?
3. Will the report help me, and if so how? Does it help identify the problem? Does it identify causes? What treatment or diagnostic procedures have been used? (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 19)

This set of brief questions serves as an excellent outline to aid in clarifying the needs of people involved with writing and reading the psychological reports. By using answers to these questions, the report writer should be able to steer away from the common complaints about report writing.

The most common complaint concerning psychological report writing involves the failure to get the material across to the report user. The criticisms were all too common as found by Tallent and Reiss in 1959, where they "surveyed reactions to psychological reports" (Tallent and Reiss, 1959, p. 444). According to their findings, reports "often lacked clear language, were too vague, lacked practicality, contained too much ill-found interpretations, too little raw data, and were too full of jargon" (White and Harris, 1961, p. 343). In a study conducted

by Garfield, Heine, and Leventhal in 1954, psychological reports were "criticized for lack of clarity and focus, as well as poor organization and the lack of behavioral referents" (Klopfer, 1960, p. 7).

The areas that continue to need attention in report writing are language interpretation and practicality. The report writer should "refrain from using jargon that is beyond the level of understanding of the person receiving the report" (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 151). This is the most common complaint. The report writer should continually ask "Is the report written clearly?" (White and Harris, 1961, p. 346). Is it written so that the report user can understand and utilize it correctly? If the report writer can honestly state "yes," then the report writer has succeeded in avoiding a trap to ineffective report communication. The report writer will definitely need to consider the needs of the report user to assure clear communication.

The interpretation of the test findings is essential to the psychological report. White and Harris (1961) state that it is best to report the actual responses first, and then offer interpretations that can be derived from the rest of the material. By reporting the actual responses, the report writer is avoiding labeling or diagnosing the student, which can also be a barrier to communication. Carl Rogers stated this concerning diagnosis:

I should like to propose, as a hypothesis for consideration, that the major barrier to mutual interpersonal communication is our very nature to judge, to evaluate, to approve (or disapprove) the statement of the other person or the other group. (Sigband, 1969, p. 217)

In order to reduce the hazards of diagnosis in the interpretation of the test, the report writer has three alternatives. According to Hollis and Donn (1973), the three alternatives are:

1. Have the reader interpret the report, and if the reader has the expertise, then the reader can diagnose.
2. If the reader has any information that was not available to the writer, the reader could add this information and reevaluate the diagnosis.
3. If the reader feels that more information is needed, then after obtaining the additional information, the diagnosis can be reevaluated.

It is also important that the writer's interpretations are not final. The reader should realize that conditions change that can alter the interpretations and diagnosis. "Thus, communicate the relativeness of the diagnosis in terms of both time and information available" (Hollis and Donn, 1973, p. 158).

The practicality of the report involves the report user and the student. The user is not trying to procure "lengthy diagnostic procedures, which frequently climax in categorizing the child, and merely confirm the school's complaint that the child presents behavior and/or learning problem" (Pope and Haklay, 1974, p. 239). The report user is seeking more than this confirmation. The user needs to translate this report for use in day-by-day dealing with the child. This again relates back to jargon and language. This information could be lost if the user has difficulty translating the report. The

practicality involves both user and student so that effective treatment for the student being derived from the report will be maximized.

Thus, if the psychological report writer is to be an effective communicator, the writer needs to consider the writer, the user, and the administrator while being aware of the hazards that can impede communication—such as avoiding psychological jargon, making clear interpretation, and insuring that the information is practical.

Summary

As pointed out earlier, school psychologists' reports have been of a concern to educators and administrators for some time. The amount of research on this concern, however, is quite limited. The researcher of this study compiled a computer search of material filed with Resources in Education and Psychological Abstracts. The first source yielded sixty references, and the second source yielded fifteen print-outs. However, none of the references dealt specifically with the evaluation of different types of reports and how to communicate effectively through reports.

The review of literature offered a history of school psychologists' report writing, and it revealed some of the same concerns that educators share today. Yet, no one appears to have currently researched these concerns and how to remediate them effectively.

In order to develop a criteria for evaluating the school psychologists' reports, the needs of the people involved will have to be assessed. This will be necessary to assure that the frequent complaints

applied to school psychologists' reports can be avoided. If criteria of information to be included in a report can be agreed upon by the writer, user, and administrator, the school psychologist should be one step closer to effectively communicating through report writing.

The school psychologists have had a history of being ineffective communicators through report writing. With increasing needs for psychological assessments due to federal regulations, the need to communicate effectively for the sake of everyone involved (student, parents, school psychologist, teacher, and administrator) becomes even more important. Only after agreement has been reached concerning the content of the school psychologists' report, can the school psychologist effectively communicate through reports.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This chapter is devoted to a discussion dealing with the procedures involved in this study. These procedures include subject selection, procedure for instrument construction of the reports and questionnaire, procedures for collecting the data, and a brief overview of the procedures involved in analyzing the data. The data analysis will be presented in depth in Chapter IV.

Subject Selection

Ninety-one teachers and thirteen principals from the state of Tennessee were subjects of this study. The following procedures were used in subject selection.

A letter was sent to the Tennessee Commissioner of Education requesting identification of school systems whose kindergarten through sixth grade population was 12,000 to 15,000 students. The letter contained the purpose of the study, and a self-addressed envelope was enclosed to aid in prompt return (see Appendix A). From the listing received from the Commission of Education, 11 school systems met the requirements. Five school systems were randomly selected and letters were sent to the superintendents of each system requesting permission to conduct the study and requesting a list of names and addresses of elementary schools and their respective principals. The study purpose was explained, and a self-addressed envelope was included with the

letter (see Appendix B). Upon the receipt of the permission and names of the schools and principals, five elementary schools from each of the five school systems were chosen randomly to participate. A letter was then sent to each school principal requesting a list of names of teachers who had contact with a school psychologist within the school years 1975-76, 1976-77, and 1977-78 (see Appendix C). The listing of teacher names included their home and school addresses.

Upon receipt of the list of teachers, six teachers were chosen randomly from each school and a letter requesting their cooperation was written. The letter stated the purpose of the study, an informed consent form, and a self-addressed envelope to insure prompt returns (see Appendices D and E).

The data for this study was collected using the following procedures: A letter was sent to the teachers and principals chosen randomly for this study. Along with the letter were the set of reports and a questionnaire to be completed. Incentives (smiley faces) were included to increase the likelihood of greater participation. It was hoped that 30 teachers from each school system could be utilized for the study. However, due to lack of response on the part of system superintendents and principals, the final mailing list for the teachers and principals was much lower in number, as can be seen in Table 1. If the questionnaire was not received within three days of the final date, a follow-up letter was sent to the teachers and the principals (see Appendix F). If the questionnaire was received, a follow-up letter was sent to the teachers and the principals (see Appendix G).

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS RECEIVING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

School System	Teachers	Principals
Hamilton County	30	5
Knox County	30	5
Memphis City	16	1
Sullivan County	10	1
Sumner County	5	2

Subject Description

An analysis of the demographic data answered in Part IV of the teacher questionnaire revealed that teachers differed with regard to sex, degree held, grade currently teaching, amount of experience, and contact with a school psychologist. A breakdown of that information is presented in Table 2.

The compiled data on teacher characteristics indicates that the overwhelming majority of the sample were females, with an average of approximately eight years teaching experience. Sixty-four percent of the teachers had education beyond the Bachelor's degree level and all grade levels of teaching, including resource, were represented. Sixty-four percent of the teachers experienced contact with a school psychologist from one to six times a year, while 32 percent reported seeing the school psychologist at least seven times yearly.

TABLE 2

CHARACTERISTICS OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS WHO RESPONDED TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Sex	Male				Female			
	1				27			
Present Degree	B.S. 10	B.S. + Hours 7	M.S. 7	M.S. + Hours 4	Ed.S. 0	Ed.S. + Hours 0	Ed.D-Ph.D 0	
Currently Teaching Grades	Kindergarten 4	First 1	Second 5	Third 3	Fourth 4	Sixth 1	Multiple Grades 3	Recourse 4
Number of Years of Teaching Experience	1-3 5	4-6 6	7-9 5	10-12 6	13 or more 5			
Contact with a School Psychologist During the School Year	Very Limited (1-3 times) 9	Fairly Often (4-6 times) 9	Frequently (7-9 times) 3	Regularly (10 or more) 7				

Procedure for Instrument Construction

Two Types of Psychological Reports

Two different types of psychological reports were constructed to determine which report would be rated as more useful and informative by teachers and principals. One report will be referred to as a traditional report and is purported to measure states and traits (Ysseldyke and Salvia, 1974, p. 182). This report measures those intrapsychic causes for behavior and which are presumed to be causes of underlying behavior and learning problems (Mischel, 1970, p. 8). Examples of states and traits are perceptual motor skills, intelligence, and anxieties, to mention a few.

The second report will be referred to as a direct assessment (report) and is designed to measure the necessary skills related to performing a task, sometimes called the task analysis approach (Ysseldyke and Salvia, 1974, p. 181) and the presenting problem in an environmental context (Dickinson, 1978, p. 2). Also included in the direct assessment are a listing of those adaptive skills referred to by the American Association of Mental Deficiencies' Adaptive Behavior Checklist and a behavior self-concept scale (Dickinson, Unpublished).

Both of the reports contained two sections, the first being the Reason for Referral. There were four different referral problems addressed in reading, math, behavior, and a reevaluation of special education placement (see Appendices J through Q). The referral problem was duplicated identically for each pair of reports.

The second section was the Assessment Results. Each result section contained four paragraphs of comparable length. The paragraph length for the traditional assessment was as follows: Paragraph One—three sentences, Paragraph Two—five sentences, Paragraph Three—four to five sentences, and Paragraph Four—six to seven sentences. The direct assessment paragraph length was as follows: Paragraph One—five to six sentences, Paragraph Two—four to five sentences, Paragraph Three—four to six sentences, and Paragraph Four—three to five sentences.

The four paragraphs contained in the traditional assessment comprised the following areas:

1. The first paragraph contained an intelligence quotient score and a statement concerning normative data.
2. The second paragraph contained the grade level placement of the student in three subject areas—reading, mathematics, and spelling.
3. The third paragraph contained a statement concerning the student's perceptual motor development.
4. The fourth paragraph contained an interpretation of the student's personality, involving states and traits.

The tests used in each of the reports were the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children—Revised, the Wide Range Achievement Test, the Bender-Gestalt Test, and the Draw-A-Person Test.

The direct assessment report was constructed similarly except for the content. The four paragraphs contained the following areas:

1. The first paragraph contained the functional level of the student, utilizing classroom materials for the assessment.

2. The second paragraph contained an interpretation of an appropriate Criterion Test of Basic Skills.
3. The third paragraph contained statements concerning the student's adaptive behaviors.
4. The fourth paragraph contained statements on the student's self-concept from an interview concerning the student's perception of him/herself in different environments.

Before the reports were rated by the subjects, the reports were rated by judges as to whether or not they were traditional or direct assessment reports. Upon completing each report, the judges completed a checklist of objectives. The judges were three school psychologists and two University of Tennessee instructors. The judges were in total agreement as to the consistency of the reports. The checklist has been included (see Appendix H).

The reports were then sent to the subjects to be rated on a questionnaire, which will be described in another section. The reports were rotated so that half of the subjects read the traditional reports first and the other half of the subjects read the direct assessment report first. Random numbers were assigned to the subjects so that the Referral Problems of reading, mathematics, behavior, and reevaluation were randomly assigned. The assignment of Referral Problem was as follows: subjects one and two read the reading problem, subjects three and four read the reevaluation problem, subjects five and six read the math problem, and subjects seven and eight read the behavior problem. The pattern then began again for the remaining subjects. The

traditional and direct assessment reports contained an equal number of the same Referral Problem.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was sent to each subject along with one traditional assessment and one direct assessment of the same Referral Problem. The subject was asked to rate the reports individually on the same questions. The questionnaire, which states specific directions to be followed, is included in Appendix I.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first section of the questionnaire contained statements about the report's usefulness (potential utilization of the information contained in the reports). It also contained statements about the report's informativeness (necessary information necessary for understanding and reinterpretation of the findings). The subject was asked to rate each of the reports on a Likert-type scale of one to five with one being strongly agree and five being strongly disagree.

The second section of the questionnaire involved rating the paragraphs of each of the reports. Each paragraph of each report was rated as to informativeness and usefulness. A definition of informativeness and usefulness was included in the directions. A Likert-type scale was again used, with one on the scale being highly informative and five on the scale being not informative.

The third section consisted of three open-ended questions involving additional information for report writing. One of the questions involved preference of the reports, and the subjects were

asked to choose which report effectively communicates for the school psychologist.

The fourth section involved demographic information. There were five questions the subjects answers: sex, present degree, grade currently teaching, number of years of teaching, and contact with a school psychologist. This information was compiled in Table 2.

Before the final questionnaire was sent to the subjects, a teacher volunteer was given a set of reports and a copy of the questionnaire to complete. This was done to insure that the directions were clear and that the set of reports and questionnaire were understandable.

Procedures for Analyzing Data

In outlining the data analysis, each hypothesis will be discussed separately. An analysis of variance was used to analyze Hypothesis 1, 2, and 4. For Hypothesis 3 a one-sample chi-square test was computed.

A one-way analysis of variance was used to compare the two different reports in terms of mean scores for the four different referral problems of the two types of reports. This statistical technique allowed the researcher to compare the two or more group means and to determine significance or possibly homogeneity of the two groups (Huck, Cormier and Bounds, 1974, p. 58). For Hypothesis 4, after a one-way analysis of variance was completed, a multiple comparison procedure was used if a significant F score was found. For Hypothesis 3, a one-sample chi-square test was used to allow the researcher to see whether a significant difference existed between the observed number and an expected number of responses (Huck, Cormier and Bounds, 1974, p. 216).

Hypothesis 1 (the usefulness of the school psychologist report will not differ significantly for different content whether written as a traditional or direct assessment) was answered by the rating scale on Part II of the questionnaire pertaining to usefulness for the traditional assessment and the direct assessment, as broken down into paragraphs (see Appendix I). A one-way analysis of variance was utilized to compare the means of the raters of the two report styles.

Hypothesis 2 (the informativeness of the school psychologist report will not differ significantly for different content whether written as a traditional or direct assessment) was answered by the rating scale on Part II of the questionnaire pertaining to informativeness for the traditional assessment and the direct assessment, as broken down into paragraphs (see Appendix I). A one-way analysis of variance was used to compare the means of the raters.

Hypothesis 3 (the preference on the part of the subjects will not differ significantly whether written as a traditional or direct assessment) was answered by question 3 of Part III of the questionnaire (see Appendix I). This was computed by using a one-sample chi-square test to compare the difference in preference of the raters.

Hypothesis 4 (the usefulness of the report for practical considerations of the teacher will not differ significantly whether the report is written as a traditional or direct assessment) was answered by questions C, F, and H of Part I on the questionnaire (see Appendix I). A one-way analysis of variance was used to compare the means of the raters of the two types of reports. A test of comparison of means will

then be administered if there is a significant F score. This will be done to identify significant differences among the referral problems on the two types of reports.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter will present the findings of the statistical tests used to determine the statistical significance of this research. The .05 level of confidence will be used to determine significance on all tests. The results of the hypotheses will be presented in order, and a discussion and summary of the statistical findings will follow the presentation of the analyses.

Introduction

The major purpose of this study was to determine teacher and administrator attitudes toward two styles of psychological report writing. Each participant received two different styles of report writing on the same child with the same referral problem. The first report was written as a traditional assessment and the second report was written as a direct assessment. The participants were then asked to rate the reports on the questionnaire supplied.

Return of Questionnaire

Of the 91 questionnaires mailed to teachers, only 30 were returned, resulting in a 33 (32.9) percent return rate. Of the 30 questionnaires returned by the teachers, only 28 were used, because two were returned without responses. Of the 14 questionnaires mailed to school principals, eight were returned, for a 57 (57.1) percent return rate. However,

only seven were used, as one was returned without a response. Table 3 shows the number of questionnaires returned according to the school system. The number of reports sent in the different subject referral areas were as follows: reading, 27; reevaluation, 26; mathematics, 26; and behavior, 26. Table 4 shows a breakdown of the questionnaires received in subject areas.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED ACCORDING TO SCHOOL SYSTEM

School System	Number Returned	
	Teachers	Principals
Hamilton County	10	2
Knox County	10	3
Memphis City	3	1
Sullivan County	5	0
Summer County	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	29	7

TABLE 4

QUESTIONNAIRES RECEIVED IN SUBJECT AREAS

Subject Matter	Number Returned	
	Teachers	Principals
Reading	5	1
Reevaluation	8	2
Mathematics	9	2
Behavioral	7	2

Analysis of Hypotheses

In answering the hypotheses posed by this study, the .05 level of significance will be used as the criterion for statistical significance, however, all levels of significance will be reported if applicable.

Hypothesis 1 (the usefulness of the school psychologist report will not differ significantly for different content whether written as a traditional or direct assessment) was answered by the rating scale on Part II of the questionnaire pertaining to usefulness for the traditional assessment and the direct assessment (see Appendix I). The statistical analysis using an ANOVA failed to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that the subjects are not more likely to find the usefulness of the traditional assessment or the direct assessment not to differ significantly. The F test for the traditional assessment and the direct assessment as pertaining to usefulness is shown in Table 5.

Hypothesis 2 (the informativeness of the school psychologist report will not differ significantly for different content whether written as a traditional or direct assessment) was answered by the rating scale on Part II of the questionnaire pertaining to informativeness for the traditional assessment and the direct assessment (see Appendix I). The statistical analysis using an ANOVA failed to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that the subjects are not more likely to find the informativeness of the traditional assessment and the direct assessment to differ significantly. The F test is shown in Table 6.

Hypothesis 3 (the preference on the part of the subjects will not differ significantly whether written as a traditional assessment or a

TABLE 5
SUMMARY TABLE FOR HYPOTHESIS 1—THE USEFULNESS
OF THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST REPORT

Source	df	ss	ms	F
<u>Traditional Assessment</u>				
Types of Referral Problems	3	2.47	.823	.592 NS
Within Groups	136	189.38	1.39	
Total	139	191.85		
<u>Direct Assessment</u>				
Types of Referral Problems	3	5.36	1.786	2.16 NS
Within Groups	136	112.62	.83	
Total	139	117.98		

$p < .05$

TABLE 6
SUMMARY TABLE FOR HYPOTHESIS 2—THE INFORMATIVENESS
OF THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST REPORT

Source	df	ss	ms	F
<u>Traditional Assessment</u>				
Types of Referral Problems	3	5.44	1.813	1.78 NS
Within Groups	136	138.79	1.0205	
Total	139	144.23		
<u>Direct Assessment</u>				
Types of Referral Problems	3	5.15	1.72	1.85 NS
Within Groups	136	126.85	.93	
Total	139	132		

$p < .05$

direct assessment) was answered by question 3 of Part III of the questionnaire (see Appendix I). The preference was computed by using a one-sample chi-square test to determine whether the preference of one report was significantly different from the other report. Of the 26 subjects that completed this item, 20 subjects preferred the direct assessment to the 6 subjects who preferred the traditional assessment. The obtained $\chi^2 = 7.5$, $df = 1$, was significant at the 0.05 level. The null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that the subjects did prefer the direct assessment to the traditional assessment when given the choice of which one they would prefer to receive. The results are shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7

HYPOTHESIS 3—PREFERENCE OF SUBJECTS TOWARD DIRECT
ASSESSMENT AND TRADITIONAL ASSESSMENT

N	Direct Assessment	Traditional Assessment	Chi- Square
26	20 (13)*	6 (13)	7.5**

*Numbers enclosed in parentheses are expected values.

** $p < .05$.

Hypothesis 4 (the usefulness of the report for practical considerations of the teacher will not differ significantly whether the report is written as a traditional assessment or as a direct assessment) was answered by questions C, F, and H of Part I on the questionnaire

(see Appendix I). The statistical analysis using an ANOVA failed to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that the subjects are not more likely to find differences in the reports pertaining to the usefulness and practical considerations of the subjects. The scores for the questions are included in Tables 8, 9, and 10.

Mean scores were computed for each question on Part I of the questionnaire. The scores are included in Table 11. The mean scores are shown for each question. The scores are broken down into each report and a total mean is also shown. The direct assessment mean scores were consistently lower for the individual report mean scores and the sum total mean scores than the traditional assessment scores, thus indicating the preference for the direct assessment.

Mean scores were also computed for Part II of the questionnaire. The mean scores are included in Table 12. There were four paragraphs for each report that were rated for usefulness and informativeness. Mean scores were computed for each paragraph and for total mean scores. The direct assessment mean scores were again consistently lower than the traditional mean scores for informativeness and usefulness. However, there were greater differences in the mean scores involving usefulness. The informativeness mean scores varied little from the direct assessment to the traditional assessment. The second paragraph of the direct assessment involving an appropriate Criterion Test of Basic Skill was viewed as most useful of all the paragraphs.

A percentage was computed for each question on the questionnaire on Part I to show the percentage of subjects who preferred the

TABLE 8

SUMMARY TABLE FOR HYPOTHESIS 4—THE REPORT WAS USEFUL
IN PARENT CONFERENCES—QUESTION C

Source	df	ss	ms	F
<u>Traditional Assessment</u>				
Types of Referral Problems	3	1.98	.66	.545 NS
Within Groups	32	38.77	1.21	
Total	35	40.75		
<u>Direct Assessment</u>				
Types of Referral Problems	3	.34	.11	.183 NS
Within Groups	32	19.3	.6	
Total	35	19.64		

$p < .05$

TABLE 9

SUMMARY TABLE FOR HYPOTHESIS 4—THE REPORT WAS USEFUL TO ME
IN ORDER TO SEEK SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM—QUESTION F

Source	df	ss	ms	F
<u>Traditional Assessment</u>				
Types of Referral Problems	3	8.14	2.71	1.61 NS
Within Groups	32	42.84	1.34	
Total	35	50.98		
<u>Direct Assessment</u>				
Types of Referral Problems	3	1.2	.4	.333 NS
Within Groups	32	38.4	1.2	
Total	35	39.6		

$p < .05$

TABLE 10

SUMMARY TABLE FOR HYPOTHESIS 4—THE REPORT WAS PREFERABLE
BECAUSE IT WAS USEFUL—QUESTION H

Source	df	ss	ms	F
<u>Traditional Assessment</u>				
Types of Referral Problems	3	3.01	1.003	.625 NS
Within Groups	31	49.73	1.604	
Total	34	52.74		
<u>Direct Assessment</u>				
Types of Referral Problems	3	1.26	.42	.483 NS
Within Groups	31	26.92	.87	
Total	34	28.18		

$p < .05$

TABLE 11

MEAN SCORES FOR PART I OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I	Direct Assessment				Total X	Traditional Assessment				Total X
	B	M	Re	R		B	M	Re	R	
a. was informative in helping me to understand the problem.	1.8	1.7	2.1	1.5	1.8	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.5
b. was useful in classroom planning.	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.3	1.9	2.7	2.7	3.3	3.2	3.0
c. was useful in parent conferences	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.5	1.7	2.4	2.6	3.0	3.0	2.8
d. was written clearly and understandably.	2.0	1.4	1.7	1.6	1.7	2.3	2.9	2.3	2.5	2.5
e. was useful in clarifying the referral problem.	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.3	1.6	2.4	2.7	2.4	3.2	2.7
f. was useful to me in order to seek solutions to the problem.	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.5	1.9	2.2	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.1
g. was able to identify a solution to the problem without the use of recommendations.	2.3	2.9	2.7	2.3	2.6	3.2	3.9	3.7	4.0	3.7
h. was preferable because it was useful.	1.9	1.6	2.0	1.5	1.8	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.7	3.2
i. was preferable because it was informative.	2.3	1.5	2.2	1.5	1.8	2.0	2.8	3.0	3.0	2.7

B = Behavior, M = Mathematics, Re = Reevaluation for Placement, and R = Reading.

TABLE 12
MEAN SCORES FOR PART II OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Part II	Direct Assessment		Traditional Assessment	
	Informativeness	Usefulness	Informativeness	Usefulness
Paragraph One	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.7
Paragraph Two	1.6	1.6	2.0	2.0
Paragraph Three	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.9
Paragraph Four	2.0	2.1	2.4	2.9
Total $\bar{X}$	1.9	Total $\bar{X}$ 2.0	Total $\bar{X}$ 2.2	Total $\bar{X}$ 2.8

traditional assessment and the direct assessment. These percentages are shown in Table 13.

The statistical analysis of the data collected failed to reject Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4, indicating that the subjects are not likely to see differences in the traditional report and the direct assessment as it pertains to usefulness, informativeness, and practical considerations for teachers. Hypothesis 3 was rejected and indicated that the subjects definitely preferred the direct assessment over the traditional assessment. It cannot be stated that this preference was due to usefulness or informativeness; however, it appeared to be due to usefulness of the report. Some of the subjects' informal comments involving preference were: "easily understood by teachers and parents," "related specific needs," "can be used to program to the child's needs," "clearer and easier to understand," "uses materials the child is familiar with," "more practical," "it shows what the teacher is having to deal with," "more insight into the problem," and "it gives a good general overall view of the child." Three of the subjects said that they would have liked the two reports combined.

TABLE 13

PERCENTAGES FOR QUESTIONS FROM PART I OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Question	Preference	
	Direct Assessment	Traditional Assessment
a. was informative in helping me to understand the problem.	33%	67%
b. was useful in classroom planning.	53%	47%
c. was useful in parent conferences.	58%	42%
d. was written clearly and understandably.	37%	63%
e. was useful in clarifying the referral problem.	62%	38%
f. was useful to me in order to seek solutions to the problem.	57%	43%
g. was able to identify a solution to the problem without the use of recommendations.	38%	62%
h. was preferable because it was useful.	76%	24%
i. was preferable because it was informative.	51%	49%

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Summary

The primary purpose of the study was to determine teacher and administrator attitudes toward two types of psychological report writing. Each participant received two different styles of report writing. The two styles were the traditional assessment report and the direct assessment report. The participants were then asked to rate each report as to usefulness and informativeness. Four hypotheses were formulated and investigated.

There was no significant difference found by a one-way analysis of variance at the .05 level of significance for the following hypotheses:

For Hypothesis 1, the subjects did not find the usefulness of the traditional assessment and the direct assessment to differ significantly for different content. However, these scores did differ and approached the .05 level of significance.

For Hypothesis 2, the subjects did not find the informativeness of the traditional assessment and the direct assessment to differ significantly for different content.

For Hypothesis 4, the subjects did not find the usefulness of the report for practical considerations of the teacher for the traditional assessment or the direct assessment to differ significantly, as follows:

1. The subjects did not find that the traditional assessment or the direct assessment was more useful in parent conferences.
2. The subjects did not find that the traditional assessment or the direct assessment was more useful in order to seek solutions to the problem.
3. The subjects did not find that the traditional assessment or the direct assessment was preferable because it was useful.

Although no significant differences were found for these questions when percentages and mean scores were computed on each of the questions the direct assessment was clearly preferred. The mean scores for each type of referral problem for the direct assessment were consistently lower than the mean scores for each referral problem for the traditional assessment. The differences, however, were not great enough for the sample size to reveal significant differences.

For Hypothesis 3, the subjects did clearly prefer the direct assessment to the traditional assessment. Thus the hypothesis was rejected indicating that the subjects did prefer one report to the other report. The direct assessment was preferred by 20 of the 26 people responding to this question. The subjects felt that the direct assessment communicates most effectively for the school psychologist when compared to traditional assessment.

Implications

One of the greatest concerns of school psychologists and educators is the effectiveness of communication in the school psychologists'

report writing. Much research has been devoted to improving the role of the school psychologist as an effective communicator through the use of consultation models. However, little research has been compiled concerning how well various types of psychoeducational reports communicate test results to educators.

When considering the analysis of data in the preceding chapter and summary, which was discussed at the beginning of the chapter, the researcher can state that the results of this study suggest that the subjects evaluating the two types of reports clearly preferred the direct assessment as the type of report that effectively communicates for the school psychologist. This was preferred by the population almost three to one. The teachers clearly preferred the direct assessment as meeting the needs of the classroom teacher and effectively communicating for the school psychologist. The school principals preferred the traditional assessment over the direct assessment by almost three to one. The school principals' needs are different from the teachers' needs, and the principals wrote that the need for normative reports was a necessity for state and federal guidelines, such as justification for a change in placement.

No significant differences were found at the .05 level of significance involving the usefulness and the informativeness of the two types of reports. However, the ratings involving usefulness did approach significance, indicating the need for more research in this area. Possibly different questions involving usefulness of the school psychologists' report using teacher wording would be helpful. The

wording the teachers utilized to describe their preference included "easily understood by parents and teachers," "relates to specific needs," "can be used to program to child's needs," "clearer and easier to understand," "more practical," "more insight into the problem," and "it gives you a good general overview of the child."

The traditional assessment and the direct assessment have their place in the assessment process; however, the needs of the population for whom the report is written must be taken into consideration. Emphasis needs to be placed on how effectively that report communicates the test findings to the people reading it. The premise of this study should be reconsidered and subject to further research to aid the school psychologist and school personnel to better serve its population of students.

Suggestions for Further Research

Interpreting the results of this study and for consideration in case of attempting to replicate this investigation, the reader should be aware of the following limitations and suggestions.

The population of this study was seven principals and 29 teachers, yielding 36 subjects. The results of this study were limited by the small "n." Although 36 subjects were used, some of the hypotheses were tested on the basis of only nine or less subjects, as there were four different referral problems ($4/36 = 9$). It would be interesting to conduct a similar study with a larger population of administrators and teachers from Tennessee, or perhaps a larger population involving a

sampling across the United States. It would also be preferable to separate the two populations of teachers and administrators as their needs differ due to the different needs of the two populations. The principals were more concerned with normative data due to administrative pressures such as change in placement.

A limitation for consideration if attempting to replicate this study would be the return rate for the questionnaire. It may aid the researcher to mail the questionnaire earlier in the year to increase the return rate. It may also aid the researcher to have personal or telephone contact with the subjects or with the subjects' supervisors to encourage completion of the questionnaire. The possible cause of a low return rate may be due to vacation at the end of the year and the increased paper work at the end of the year for teachers and administrators.

Another consideration if attempting to replicate this study would be to use one term for evaluation on the questionnaire rather than two terms. The use of two similar terms such as informativeness and usefulness may cause confusion for the subjects and contaminate the subjects' responses. One clear term should alleviate confusion or contamination of the subjects' responses.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO TENNESSEE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

The University of Tennessee
Knoxville 37916
College of Education
Psychology and Guidance

December 10, 1977

Dear :

Realizing the number of important issues competing for your time, I would be grateful for your assistance in the collection of data essential to the completion of my thesis. This study is designed to provide school psychologists, teachers, and school administrators with information vital to the improvement of communication through school psychologists' evaluations.

I am currently enrolled at The University of Tennessee in pursuit of an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Psychology and Guidance. Information collected from a random sample of school systems will provide data for the study. The study will be concentrated at the elementary level, but many of the findings will be applicable to all areas of school psychologists' report writing.

In order to collect the needed information, I am requesting your office to provide names and addresses of school districts (kindergarten through sixth grade) population of twelve thousand to fifteen thousand pupils. Also to be included are the names and addresses of superintendents of these districts. A random sample of school districts meeting these requirements will be chosen to participate in this study. Letters will be sent to the superintendents of the two chosen school districts requesting a list of teachers who have been involved with a school psychologist in the past three years. Also, a list of principals who supervise these teachers will be requested. Teachers and principals will be selected randomly. Questionnaires will be mailed to the participants concerning two different styles of school psychologists' report writing. The information will be kept confidential and used for the purposes of this study only.

Upon completion of the study, a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations will be sent to your office.

Respectfully requested,

Debra Skyler Ames

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS OF SCHOOL SYSTEMS

The University of Tennessee
Knoxville 37916
College of Education
Psychology and Guidance

April 11, 1978

Dear :

Realizing the number of important issues competing for your time, I would be grateful for your assistance in the collection of data essential to the completion of my thesis. This study is designed to provide school administrators, teachers, and school psychologists with information vital to the improvement of communication through school psychologists' evaluations.

I am currently enrolled at The University of Tennessee in pursuit of an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Psychology and Guidance. Information collected from a random sample of school systems will provide data for the study. The study will be concentrated at the elementary level, but many of the findings will be applicable to all areas of school psychologists' report writing.

In order to collect the needed information, I am requesting your office to provide names and school addresses of teachers who have been involved with a school psychologist sometime during the school years 1975 to 1976, 1976 to 1977, or 1977 to 1978. Sometime during this involvement, the teachers should have received a school psychologist's report or reports. I would also like to request that the principals be contacted and asked to provide a list of teachers. I am requesting that your office send a list of elementary principals and their school addresses. Teachers and principals will be chosen randomly from the lists to participate in this study. Questionnaires will be mailed to the participants concerning two styles of school psychologists' report writing. The information will be kept confidential and used for the purpose of this study only.

Upon completion of the study, a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations will be sent to your office. I realize this is the

end of the year and many things compete for your time; however, I would appreciate a reply by May 5, 1978.

Respectfully requested,

Debra Skyler Ames

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO SELECTED SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

The University of Tennessee
Knoxville 37916
College of Education
Psychology and Guidance

May 14, 1978

Dear :

Realizing the number of important issues competing for your time, I would be grateful for your assistance in the collection of data essential to the completion of my thesis. This study is designed to provide school administrators, teachers, and school psychologists with information vital to the improvement of communication through school psychologists' evaluations.

I am currently enrolled at the University of Tennessee in pursuit of an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Psychology and Guidance. Information collected from a random sample of school systems will provide data for the study. The study will be concentrated at the elementary level, but many of the findings will be applicable to all areas of school psychologists' report writing.

In order to collect the needed information, I am requesting your office to provide names and school addresses of teachers who have been involved with a school psychologist sometime during the school years 1975 to 1976, 1976 to 1977, or 1977 to 1978. Sometime during this involvement, the teachers should have received a school psychologist's report or reports. Teachers and principals will be chosen randomly from the list to participate in this study. Questionnaires will be mailed to the participants concerning two styles of school psychologists' report writing. The information will be kept confidential and used for the purpose of this study only.

Upon completion of the study, a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations will be sent to your office.

Respectfully requested,

Debra Sklyer Ames

Department of Educational Psychology
College of Education
Psychology and Guidance
University of Tennessee
Claxton Building
Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO SELECTED SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

The University of Tennessee
Knoxville 37916
College of Education
Psychology and Guidance

June 1, 1978

Dear :

Realizing how busy your schedule must be, I would appreciate your assistance in collection of data essential to the completion of my thesis. This study is designed to provide teachers, administrators, and school psychologists with information vital to the improvement of communication through school psychologists' reports.

I am currently enrolled at The University of Tennessee in pursuit of an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Psychology and Guidance. You were selected randomly to participate in this study. The information I will be receiving from you will be extremely important for teachers, administrators, and school psychologists. Your replies will, hopefully, be beneficial for you and your school system. This study is being concentrated on grades kindergarten through sixth.

In order to collect the needed information, I would like to request a half hour of your time. First, I would like for you to read "Report A" and "Report B." Secondly, I would like for you to complete the questionnaire concerning "Report A" and "Report B." This should take only a short time, and you should be able to answer it easily. There is an enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope to aid in mailing the response. All answers and responses will be kept confidential and used for the purpose of this study only.

I would like to request that you return the completed questionnaire as soon as possible and no later than June 20, 1978. This will certainly aid me in being able to analyze the data. The smiling faces are included to show my appreciation and for your use in your everyday work. However, if you do not choose to participate in this study, you are free to do so, and will not be penalized in any way.

Upon completion of the study, a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations can be sent to you if you would like to request it on the questionnaire. I appreciate all of your time and effort.

Respectfully yours,

Debra Skyler Ames

Department of Educational Psychology
College of Education
Psychology and Guidance
University of Tennessee
Claxton Building
Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

APPENDIX E

TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL RELEASE FORM

I, _____, hereby agree to participate in the research study being completed by Ms. Ames. I realize that my questionnaire will be utilized in statistical analysis pertaining to her research. I also realize that my answer will be kept anonymous.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX F

FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO RECIPIENTS OF LATE QUESTIONNAIRES

The University of Tennessee
Knoxville 37916
College of Education
Psychology and Guidance

June 17, 1978

Dear :

Just a reminder that I have not received your completed questionnaire. If the previous questionnaire has been misplaced and you cannot find it, I have enclosed another one. Please take just a few minutes to complete and return the questionnaire on or before June 20, 1978. Due to the population of the study, I need 100 percent participation.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Respectfully,

Debra Skyler Ames

Department of Educational Psychology
College of Education
Psychology and Guidance
University of Tennessee
Claxton Building
Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

APPENDIX G

FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO RECIPIENTS OF QUESTIONNAIRES

The University of Tennessee
Knoxville 37916
College of Education
Psychology and Guidance

June 21, 1978

Dear :

Thank you so much for your cooperation in completing and returning the questionnaire so promptly. This certainly aids me in completing my study, and I appreciate your effort. The summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations will be mailed to you.

Thank you,

Debra Skyler Ames

Department of Educational Psychology
College of Education
Psychology and Guidance
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

APPENDIX H

CHECKLIST TO JUDGE REPORTS

Please check each paragraph as you read if it contains the necessary items.

Traditional Assessment—Each paragraph should contain statements involving states and traits, and normative data.

	Paragraph I Intelligence	Paragraph II Placement	Paragraph III Perceptual	Paragraph IV Personality
Report I: Reading				
Report II: Mathematics				
Report III: Behavior				
Report IV: Reevaluation				

Direct Assessment—Each paragraph should contain statements from observations, classroom materials, criterion test, or interviews.

	Paragraph I Functional Level	Paragraph II Criterion Test	Paragraph III Observation	Paragraph IV Self-Concept
Report I: Reading				
Report II: Mathematics				
Report III: Behavior				
Report IV: Reevaluation				

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Directions: Please read Report A first and then read Report B. After reading the reports, you will be able to answer the following questions. Feel free to refer back to the reports while answering the questions. The questions contain a rating scale for each report. Be sure to rate both reports. The rating scale is as follows: 1—strongly agree, 2—agree, 3—neutral, 4—disagree, 5—strongly disagree. Be sure to circle the one you agree with for both reports.

Part I

1. The general context of the Assessment Results section:

a. was informative in helping me to understand the problem.

	strongly agree			strongly disagree	
Report A	1	2	3	4	5
Report B	1	2	3	4	5

b. was useful in classroom planning.

Report A	1	2	3	4	5
Report B	1	2	3	4	5

c. was useful in parent conferences.

Report A	1	2	3	4	5
Report B	1	2	3	4	5

d. was written clearly and understandably.

Report A	1	2	3	4	5
Report B	1	2	3	4	5

e. was useful in clarifying the referral problem.

Report A	1	2	3	4	5
Report B	1	2	3	4	5

f. was useful to me in order to seek solutions to the problem.

Report A	1	2	3	4	5
Report B	1	2	3	4	5

- g. was able to identify a solution to the problem without the use of recommendations.

Report A	1	2	3	4	5
Report B	1	2	3	4	5

- h. was preferable because it was useful.

Report A	1	2	3	4	5
Report B	1	2	3	4	5

- i. was preferable because it was informative.

Report A	1	2	3	4	5
Report B	1	2	3	4	5

Part II

Please indicate the degree to which each paragraph was useful and informative in each report by circling the appropriate number. The usefulness involves how you can best utilize the information in the report. The informative rating involves how much it tells about the student that you find important. The rating scales are as follows: 1—highly informative, 2—informative, 3—neutral, 4—slightly informative, 5—not informative; 1—highly useful, 2—useful, 3—neutral, 4—slightly useful, 5—not useful.

	Informative					Useful				
1. Report A										
a. Paragraph 1	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
b. Paragraph 2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
c. Paragraph 3	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
d. Paragraph 4	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2. Report B										
a. Paragraph 1	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
b. Paragraph 2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
c. Paragraph 3	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
d. Paragraph 4	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Part III

Please comment briefly:

1. The three most important aspects of Assessment Results section are:
2. What I look for the most from a psychological report as a teacher or administrator is:
3. If given the chance, I would choose report _____ as the type of report which effectively communicates for the school psychologist because:
4. I am a teacher _____ ; an administrator _____.
5. I would like a copy of the results from this study. Yes _____ No _____

Part IV

1. Please check the appropriate blanks:
 - a. Sex: male _____ female _____
 - b. Present degree: B.S. _____ B.S. + hours _____ M.S. _____
M.S. + hours _____ Ed.S. _____ Ed.S. + hours _____
Ed.D. _____
 - c. I am currently teaching: Kindergarten _____ 1 _____ 2 _____
3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____
 - d. Number of years of teaching experience: 1-3 _____ 4-6 _____
7-9 _____ 10-12 _____ 13 or more _____

- e. My contact with a school psychologist (in approximately a year span) has been: very limited (1-3 times) _____
- fairly often (4-6 times) _____
- frequently (7-9 times) _____
- regularly (10 or more) _____

Please be sure to mail the questionnaire and the informed consent form in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. Thank you.

APPENDIX J

TRADITIONAL ASSESSMENT—READING SKILLS

Report ____

Referral Problem:

John was referred by his classroom teacher, Ms. Smith, because of deficient reading skills. She elaborated that he is using a second grade reader, and seems to have difficulty reading the third grade social studies and science texts used by the class. Ms. Smith also added that John seems to have difficulty with phonetics and syllabication.

Assessment Results:

1. On the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised, John had a Verbal IQ of 118, and a Performance IQ of 109, with a Full Scale IQ of 116. These scores fall within the high average range of intelligence. The subject's subtest scores did not deviate significantly below the mean.

2. The Wide Range Achievement Test yielded the following results. The reading test indicated that John is reading at the 3.1 grade level, which is approximately at his present grade placement. The spelling test revealed that John is functioning at the 2.6 grade level. The arithmetic test revealed that the student is functioning at the 3.2 grade level. This indicates that John is functioning about at grade level in the areas of arithmetic and reading, but that he has deficits in the area of spelling.

3. On the Bender-Gestalt, John received three errors: one on integration, one on perseveration of design, and one on the distortion of design. Several of the figures were qualitatively deficient. This places him at the 8-5 age grouping according to the Koppitz scoring method. This score indicates that he has good visual-motor dexterity.

4. The Draw-A-Person yielded a simple, one inch tall person, which rested on the center bottom edge of the paper. The small size and placement of the picture suggest feelings of inadequacy and insecurity with a strong need for support. The figure is standing erect with arms extended horizontally. There is a vertical line of buttons centered on the front of the torso. Emphasis is placed on the mouth. These characteristics suggest regression and dependence. The Goodenough method of scoring was used and a mental age of 7-2 was computed. This again points to the immaturity of the child's ideation as he is actually 8 years and 3 months old.

APPENDIX K

DIRECT ASSESSMENT—READING SKILLS

Report ____

Reason for Referral:

John was referred by his classroom teacher, Ms. Smith, because of deficient reading skills. She elaborated that he is using a second grade reader and seems to have difficulty reading the third grade social studies and science tests used by the class. Ms. Smith also added that John seems to have difficulty with phonetics and syllabication.

Assessment Results:

1. Using John's classroom reading material, Blue Frogs, the examiner listened to the student read orally. When reading orally, he read eighty-nine words per minute with three errors on familiar material. On an unfamiliar passage he read seventy-three words per minute with three errors. John tended to miscall words while reading, but he would later repeat the sentence correctly. He would use the contextual cues to decode words rather than phonic skills. The sentence repetition greatly slowed his reading rate of unfamiliar passages.

2. A phonics test was also administered. The student knew all the consonant, and long and short vowel sounds. He had difficulty with the two-letter vowels, prefixes, suffixes, and phonograms. Although he had difficulty with the sounds in isolation, he tended to pronounce the sounds correctly when seen in familiar words. This analysis of oral reading and phonetic skills indicates that John is functioning at the 2.5 grade level, which is a year behind his grade placement.

3. During the assessment, John was taught seven new sight words by the examiner, which he retained when checked on these ten minutes later. His verbal skills are more than adequate to express his needs. He has fluent and spontaneous speech. His social skills within and outside the classroom are good; he can share, cooperatively work with others, and respond appropriately in social situations. He has all the basic self-care skills.

4. John's attitude toward reading is that he views himself as being "a little worse" in reading compared to others in his class, but he also stated that he is "the best" in his small reading group. He feels worse about his performance in all academic areas when compared to his class overall. However, he does feel that he is one of the best in his class in sports and would like to spend all his time playing baseball.

APPENDIX L

TRADITIONAL ASSESSMENT—MATH SKILLS

Report ____

Reason for Referral:

John was referred by his sixth grade classroom teacher, Ms. Smith, because of his deficient math skills. She elaborated that John appears to forget learned math processes in the course of an evening or a few days. He appears to be having difficulty with fractions and decimals.

Assessment Results:

1. On the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised, John had a Verbal IQ of 107, and a Performance IQ of 95, with a Full Scale IQ of 100. These scores fall within the average range of intelligence. The subjects subtest scores did not vary significantly below the mean.

2. The Wide Range Achievement Test yielded the following results. The reading test indicates that John is reading at the 5.7 grade level, which is slightly below his present grade level. The spelling test revealed that John is functioning at the 5.2 grade level. The arithmetic test revealed that the student is functioning at the 4.3 grade level. This indicates that John is functioning nearly two years behind his present grade level in arithmetic.

3. On the Bender-Gestalt, John received numerous errors in the areas of distortions and rotations. The reproductions were of poor quality. The Koppitz scoring method places this child at the level of a seven year old. This score indicates deficiencies in perceptual motor development.

4. The Draw-A-Person yielded a very crude drawing. First the child drew a girl and then decided to draw a boy. Both drawings were crude and neither had distinct sexual characteristics. The heads of both drawings were much larger than the body. Due to the change in drawings from female to male and the size of the head, there appears to be an identity crisis with this youngster. This is probably complicated by feelings of insecurity and inadequacy, coupled with a strong need for support.

APPENDIX M

DIRECT ASSESSMENT—MATH SKILLS

Report

Reason for Referral:

John was referred by his sixth grade teacher, Ms. Smith, because of his deficient math skills. She elaborated that John appears to forget learned math processes in the course of an evening or a few days. He appears to be having difficulty with fractions and decimals.

Assessment Results:

1. Using John's math book, the examiner chose to review assignments from the previous week. John worked very slowly. The computation rate may have been depressed by John's very methodical recording of each problem. He completed 1.6 problems per minute with a .75 error rate per minute. The error rate may have been increased because the student failed to follow the written instructions for the group of problems.

2. John could not (a) add fractions with common denominators, (b) add or subtract with mixed fractions, and (c) add or subtract with decimals (except for money problems). In adding fractions with common denominators, the student would sum the denominators like this: $\frac{2}{3} + \frac{1}{3} = \frac{3}{6}$. In adding and subtracting mixed fractions, John could not correctly compute the common denominator even though he employed various techniques. In adding and subtracting with decimals, John followed the rules for multiplication by summing the numbers to the right of the decimal and then moving the decimal to the left, for example: $2.3 + 1.4 = .37$.

3. His verbal skills are more than adequate to express his needs, to reason and to guide his behavior. He is fluent and spontaneous in speech. His social skills within and without the classroom are good; he can share, cooperately work with others and respond to social situations appropriately. He has all of the basic self care skills.

4. John's self-concept appears to be adequate. He perceives himself as having a number of skills which are as good or better than most children his age. He is also not unduly critical of himself. He feels best about himself when engaged in athletic activities, such as football and basketball.

APPENDIX N

TRADITIONAL ASSESSMENT—BEHAVIOR

Report ____

Reason for Referral:

John was referred by his classroom teacher, Ms. Smith, due to his disruptive behavior. The teacher stated that she had difficulty controlling the child in her classroom. She felt that he could perform the fourth grade work but chose to work only when he wanted.

Assessment Results:

1. On the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised, John had a Verbal IQ of 97, and a Performance IQ of 101, with a Full Scale IQ of 98. These scores fall with the average range of intelligence. The subject's subtest scores did not deviate significantly below the mean.

2. The Wide Range Achievement Test yielded the following results. The reading test indicates that John is reading at the 3.8 grade level. The spelling test revealed that John is functioning at the 4.3 grade level. The arithmetic test revealed that the student is functioning at the 4.5 grade level. This indicates that John is functioning at grade level in spelling and arithmetic, but he has some deficits in the reading area.

3. On the Bender-Gestalt, John received four errors. The errors were in the following areas: one on integration, one on distortion of design, and two on the rotation of the design. Several of the figures were qualitatively deficient. This places him at the 8-5 age grouping, according to the Koppitz scoring method. This score also indicates a slight deficiency in visual-motor dexterity.

4. The Draw-A-Person yielded a simple drawing. The drawing was placed at the bottom right corner of the paper. The drawing was proportional in size; however, it was small in size and contained little detail. The small size and the placement of the picture suggests feelings of inadequacy and insecurity with a strong need for support. The lack of detail and lightness of line indicate characteristics of regression and dependence. The Goodenough method of scoring was used, and a mental age of 8-9 was computed. This again indicates the immaturity of the child involved, as he is actually 10 years 10 months old.

APPENDIX O

DIRECT ASSESSMENT—BEHAVIOR

Report ____

Reason for Referral:

John was referred by his classroom teacher, Ms. Smith, due to his disruptive behavior. The teacher stated that she had difficulty controlling the child in her classroom. She felt that he could perform the fourth grade work but chose to work only when he wanted.

Assessment Results:

1. John was observed in a variety of settings. The first setting was a small group reading session. John was on-task 87 percent of the time. He interacted appropriately by raising his hand to answer the questions. He did not volunteer to read aloud and when called on to read aloud, he would ask if he had to do so. When reading aloud, he read very slowly. He appeared to enjoy the small group and the individualized attention he received from the teacher for answering the questions.

2. The second setting observed was independent seat work that the class was given while the teacher worked with another reading group. John was on-task only 13 percent of the time. He rushed through his first assignment and then began asking the teacher questions about other assignments. He interrupted her class seven times before being told to read a book. At this point, he began talking to other class members and disrupting their work. Soon, five of the children were involved in a game of tag, which John instigated. The teacher had to disband the reading group to regain control of the classroom.

3. His verbal skills are more than adequate to express his needs. He is fluent and spontaneous in his speech. The student's social skills in and out of the classroom are limited. When unsupervised he tended to "boss" or tease the other children. He appears to want to be the center of attention in class. While playing with others he has difficulty sharing and taking turns.

4. John's self-concept scale appeared inflated. He feels he is better at all skills when compared to his classmates. He prefers to talk with adults rather than students. His favorite hobbies are all sports. He sees no weaknesses and was very defensive when the category was mentioned.

APPENDIX P

TRADITIONAL ASSESSMENT—REEVALUATION

Report ____

Reason for Referral:

John Doe was referred for a reevaluation of his placement in the resource program. Areas of difficulty identified through earlier assessment were: (1) reading, (2) low self-concept, and (3) hurriedness resulting in careless errors.

Assessment Results:

1. On the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised, John has a Verbal IQ of 91, and a Performance IQ of 101, with a Full Scale IQ of 95. These scores fall within the average range of intelligence. The subject's subtest scores did not deviate significantly below the mean.

2. The Wide Range Achievement Test yielded the following results. The reading test indicates that John is reading at the 2.7 grade level, which is approximately two years below his present grade placement. The spelling test revealed that John is functioning at the 3.0 grade level. The arithmetic test revealed that the student is functioning at the 3.9 grade level. This indicates that John is functioning at grade level in the area of arithmetic, but that he has deficits in the areas of reading and spelling.

3. On the Bender-Gestalt, John received three errors: one on integration, one on perseveration of design, and one on the distortion of design. Several of the figures were qualitatively deficient. This places him at the 8-5 age grouping, according to the Koppitz scoring method. This score also indicates a slight deficiency in visual-motor dexterity.

4. The Draw-A-Person yielded a simple two-dimensional drawing of a musical rock group star. The drawing was proportional in size; however, it contained very little detail. The drawing was situated at the center of the bottom of the paper. The small size and the placement of the picture suggest feelings of inadequacy and insecurity with a strong need for support. The lack of detail and lightness of line indicate characteristics of regression and dependence. The Goodenough method of scoring was used, and a mental age of 8-9 was computed. This again indicates the immaturity of the child involved, as he is actually 10 years and 10 months old.

APPENDIX Q

DIRECT ASSESSMENT—REEVALUATION

Report ____

Reason for Referral:

John Doe was referred for a reevaluation of his placement in the resource program. Areas of difficulty identified through earlier assessment were: (1) reading, (2) low self-concept, and (3) hurriedness resulting in careless errors.

Assessment Results:

1. John was asked to read from his text, Shining Bridges. When John was asked to read orally over familiar passages, he read 63 words per minute with five errors. On an unfamiliar passage he read 55 words per minute with five errors. When the reading material became more difficult, John tended to lose his place. This resulted in slower reading as John had to use his finger to point to each word. His fluency was choppy and he tended to miscall words causing him to repeat sentences.

2. An informal phonics test was also administered. The student had difficulty with the blends in which the second letter in the blend was r. He tended to add a medial vowel sound so that the blend sounded like ber instead of br. John also had difficulty with two-letter vowel sounds and phonograms. This analysis of oral reading and phonetic skills indicate that John is functioning at the 2.5 grade level, while being in the fourth grade.

3. His verbal skills are more than adequate to express his needs. He has fluent and spontaneous speech. His social skills appeared limited within and outside his classroom, although he can share and work cooperatively when being supervised by an adult. He has all the basic self-care skills.

4. A self-concept scale was also administered. The results indicated that John presently does not feel good about himself. He stated that many children would not let him play with them because of his weight. He feels that he performs worse than his classmates in academic areas and that he is generally "bad" in these areas. John did state that he liked sports, sewing, and putting models together.

VITA

Debra Skyler Ames was born in Phillipsburg, New Jersey, on March 8, 1951. Her elementary through high school years were spent in Washington, New Jersey. She attended The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where in March of 1974 she received a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Special Education of Emotionally Disturbed; the Master of Science in December of 1977 in Educational Psychology with a major in School Psychology; and the Specialist in Education in August of 1979 in Educational Psychology with a major in School Psychology.

During the years of 1974 through 1978, she was employed with Children and Youth Services of Lakeshore Mental Health Institute as an Educational Diagnostician and a Teacher/Counselor for Autistic Children. For the 1978-1979 school year she was employed as a teacher at the secondary level in the Knox County Intervention Unit. Following graduation, she will be employed by the Knox County School System as a school psychologist. Ms. Ames is a member of Pi Lambda Theta, the Council for Exceptional Children, and the National Society for Autistic Children.