AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECTS ON STUDENT PERFORMANCE

IN WRITING OF THREE TEACHING STRATEGIES: TEACHER-DIRECTED CLASS

DISCUSSION, SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSIONS, AND INDIVIDUAL STUDY

by

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ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation of the effects on student performance
in writing of three teaching strategies: teacher-directed class discussion,
small-group discussions, and individual study. The strategies are designed
to reveal differences in students' written responses to a short story by
either permitting or withholding oral discussion after the reading of the
story and before the writing of the response. The effects on writing are
compared by applying two systems of classification to the written responses.
The two systems of classification are Britton's function categories of writing
and Purves' modes of response to literature. Purves' classification is used
as a cross-check on Britton's classification. In addition, the written
responses are discussed to note differences overlooked by the two classification
systems.

The hypotheses for this study are stated as follows: (a) there will be
differences in the writing of Grade Eleven students in response to a short
story depending on the teaching strategies employed, that is, Teacher-Directed
discussion, Independent Study and Small-Group discussion, and (b) these
differences are measurable according to Britton's function categories and
subcategories and Purves' and Rippere's and Purves' and Beach's categories
and subcategories of response to a literary work.

Three classes were used in the experiment. The sample was composed of
sixty Grade Eleven students in a Kamloops Senior Secondary school. The
experiment was conducted in one seventy-five minute regular English period in
three different classrooms. The same story and the same basic instructions
were given to all three groups of students.

Three coders were used to classify the students' written responses. A
manual outlining the two classification systems and the coding procedures was

prepared and used for the training of the coders. Each coder then worked independently and coded each essay twice. The final verdict on each written response was based on the agreed scores of at least two coders.

Analysis indicated that the treatment situations did affect students' overall responses. The differences suggested that small-group discussions have certain advantages over both teacher-directed and independent study strategies.

DEDICATION

To Paddy Creber and Geoff Fox of Exeter University, England, who opened my
eyes to the new world which is explored in this thesis, my family for
unswerving support, and to Dr. Gloria Sampson for her uncompromising
intellectual rigour.

QUOTATIONS

Words move, music moves
Only in time; but that which is only living
Can only die. Words, after speech, reach
Into the silence. Only by the form, the pattern,
Can words or music reach
Into the silence. Only by the form, the pattern,
Can words or music reach
The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
Moves perpetually in its stillness.
Not the stillness of the violin, while the note lasts,
Not that only, but the co-existence,
Or say that the end precedes the beginning,
And the end and the beginning were always there
Before the beginning and after the end.
And all is always now. Words strain,
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,
Will not stay still. Shrieking voices
Scolding, mocking, or merely chattering,
Always assail them ...

> \- T.S. Eliot
>
> (Four Quartets: Burnt Norton V)

Labour is blossoming or dancing where
The body is not bruised to pleasure soul,
Nor beauty born out of its own despair,
Nor blear-eyed wisdom out of midnight oil.
O, chestnut-tree, great-rooted blossomer,
Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?
O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
How can we know the dancer from the dance?

> \- W.B. Yeats
>
> (Among School Children)

Only connect .....

> \- E.M. Forster
>
> (Howard's End)

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CHAPTER I

THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE STUDY

Introduction and Historical Background

One of the major and persisting dilemmas faced by teachers of English literature is the problem of whether or not literature can indeed be taught at all. The response of the reader is ultimately an individual, subjective and essentially private matter. Indeed, the formal academic teaching of English literature, in England at any rate, is a relatively new phenomenon. It is even more recent in Canada since Canadian universities, unlike the ancient universities of Oxford and Cambridge, were established in the second half of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the teaching of English literature at the university level began in England.

The history of English as a "discipline" at the university level goes back no further than the turn of this century. The first Professor of English literature in England, Sir Walter Raleigh, was appointed to the newly created Merton Chair of English Literature at Oxford University in 1904. His contemporary at Cambridge University, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, was appointed King Edward VII Professor of English Literature in 1912. It is important to recall these events in order to trace very briefly the enormous changes that have taken place since then in the philosophy and practice of English teaching, first at the university level and then at the secondary school level. It is also pertinent to recall that both these eminent scholars and teachers shared a liberal and humanistic approach and taught literature as a humanizing activity, to enlighten and delight.

The most influential teacher of English literature this century,

I. A. Richards, began teaching at Cambridge University in 1922. In 1929
Richards published Practical Criticism, the report of an investigation he
conducted among his undergraduate students. This classic study of their
written responses to poetry has dominated the philosophy and practice of
literature teaching in many universities and schools in almost every part of
the English-speaking world, and even beyond. Frequent reference will be
made to this monumental piece of research elsewhere in this thesis.

For Richards the teaching of poetry - or more correctly, the teaching
of reading - was a crucial matter. He regarded poetry as language at its
best: the best poetry incorporated the most precise and evocative use of
words. Consequently, a sound training in the reading of poetry was the
clearest guarantee of sound thinking. But sound thinking in this sense was
altogether a matter of engaging with and interpreting the actual words of
the text. Systematic training in close reading of the poetic text would
guarantee sound reading of all other kinds of written expression as well
since they would be less difficult than poetry. A literate society
depended to a very large extent on sound readers and thinkers. Therefore,
the systematic teaching of critical reading techniques was of major
importance. By "critical" Richards meant scrupulously careful rather than
merely evaluative in a negative sense.

However, Richards was careful to point out that the immature reader
can and should be taught the techniques of close reading - and no more.
That is, the immature reader should be helped to grow into a mature reader
and so become more self-aware and so gain more control of his or her
responses. In this way the reader would be helped to refine his or her
thinking processes. The skill thus made more efficient would lead the
reader to increasing enlightenment and delight. If the immature reader were

not helped in this way he or she would be set adrift in a world of personal

disorder and chaos. That is, sound reading and sound thinking were very

much a matter of promoting one's mental health. However, Richards made it

clear that the reader or the student could not be taught the meanings and

interpretations of poems or of any other written words. The best a teacher

could do was to help the reader become aware of the strengths and

deficiencies of his or her response to language. The choice of maintaining

and improving his or her state of mental health was entirely a matter for the

reader himself or herself.

Unfortunately, the "New Criticism"[1] of close textual analysis that

followed has deviated from Richards' central aim of the ends justifying the

means. That is, the ends of close reading were the enlightenment and delight

that would accrue to the maturing reader. The focus has shifted, however, to

critical evaluations of authors and their works in order to establish a body

of the "best" literature so as to preserve a rich cultural tradition. Many

university and high school students of literature - if they have been taught

by the techniques of "New Criticism" - have thus been trained in literary

criticism, as critics and evaluators rather than as adequate and sensitive

responders to literature. They have not been helped to engage with

literature as a humanizing activity, to enlighten and delight. Even worse,

"New Criticism" places great emphasis on interpretation, on the ambiguities

and multiple levels of meaning of a literary work, in a way not advocated by

Richards in Practical Criticism. That is, works of literature have come to

be dissected for "hidden meanings". Alternatively, poetry and other serious

literature have become neglected or ignored by way of reaction to the

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[1]See C. B. Cox and A. E. Dyson, Modern Poetry (London, England:
Edward Arnold, 1963), pp. 9-23 for a critique of the methods of "New
Criticism" and David Lodge, ed., 20th Century Literary Criticism (London,
England: Longman, 1972), pp. 227-239 and 291, 333, 592 for lucid accounts.

excesses of "New Criticism". Personal and genuine response to literature has been replaced by either a frantic scramble for the largest number of meanings that the student could wrest from a literary work or to a loss of interest in the reading of serious literature for self-awareness, enlightenment and delight. This state of affairs has been further compounded by the widespread use of examinations in English literature. Personal responses have thus been eroded by the examiner's assumption of "correct" and "incorrect" responses. The teacher of literature has responded to this pressure of examinations by becoming the source of such "correct" responses. The student's function has become a matter of learning and demonstrating these "correct" responses in order to ensure his or her success in the examinations. The crucial question of whether these responses reflect any personal meaning for the student and whether they contribute to his or her growing sense of personal order, to personal mental health, has become irrelevant. English literature has become very much a school subject or "discipline".

In 1929 Richards had reacted strongly to the loose and irrational manner in which literature was being taught. The students' protocols that he collected and scrutinized revealed more about the students' opinions, prejudices, misconceptions, preconceptions and presuppositions - in short, their frequent lack of comprehension - than of their understanding of the poems as objects of meaning or lack of meaning. He attributed their failures not only to lack of training in reading but also to a lack of opportunity for oral discussion - to "a decline in speech".[2]

The abuses of Richards' techniques of close reading of the text set in

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[2]I. A. Richards, Practical Criticism (London, England: Harcourt, 1979), p. 338.

motion a reaction which eventually found expression in the Dartmouth

Seminar. This seminar was held in 1966 at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire

in the U. S. A. It was attended by fifty professors and other teachers of

English literature. Just as Richards' Practical Criticism had marked a

turning point in the philosophy and practice of the teaching of literature

some thirty-seven years earlier, the Dartmouth Seminar marked a second

turning point. On both occasions many traditional assumptions were

scrutinized and challenged.[3] Two of these assumptions are of immediate

relevance to the present study. One concerns the traditional threefold

division of English as a subject or "discipline" into language, literature

and composition and the consequent teaching of English in a fragmentary

rather than a unified manner. Dixon puts the views of the Dartmouth

Seminar this way:

> There is a widespread and self-defeating refusal on
> both sides of the Atlantic to see that literature
> cannot be "taught" by a direct approach, and that
> the teacher who weighs in with talk or lecture is
> more likely to kill a personal response than to
> support and develop it ... Then it is all too
> easy for the immature student, feeling his own
> responses to be unacceptable, to disown them and
> profess instead the opinions of the respected
> critics ...
>
> We must constantly remind ourselves that "the
> principle of organization of a critical statement
> is cognitive; that of a work of literature is,
> in the final analysis, affective.
>
> (pp. 59-60)
>
> There should not be a splitting up of time and
> lessons into composition periods, language periods,
> literature periods ... All the basic English

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[3]Two comprehensive reports of the Dartmouth Seminar are to be found in
John Dixon, Growth Through English (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1967), and
H. J. Muller, The Uses of English (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston,
1967). The report on Response to Literature is to be found in James Squire,
ed. Response to Literature (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1968).

language activities of talking, dramatizing, writing
and reading (public and private) should go on in
each and every lesson.

(pp. 32-33)

Teaching should be the dialogue of tutor and
student (and also of students teaching each other).

(p. 34)

The other traditional assumption concerns the even more fundamental
and critical issue of meaning. Traditionally, the pursuit of meaning
has been a matter of extracting the meaning of a literary work as if
it were all there, intact and waiting to be mined. Consequently,
teaching has been a matter of training students in efficient methods of
extraction or mining, that is, of reading in a unidimensional mode in search
of meanings. The interaction, what little there was, subsisted between
reader and literary work, aided by the teacher's intervention through
traditional question and answer "recitation" and assignment strategies.
The essential features of these strategies have been, however, not educative,
but directive and evaluative. That is, the function of the teacher has
been to direct and control the interaction of the student with the work
toward predetermined "correct" responses. The responses have then been
examined as products to be evaluated according to predetermined standards
of achievement. Thus one assignment has followed another to satisfy this
product-evaluation model of English teaching.

The Dartmouth Seminar also challenged this traditional view. On the
one hand, it shifted the focus and emphasis of the traditional philosophy
and practice of English teaching from evaluation of product to evaluation of
process. On the other hand, it placed the student at the centre of the
process, so displacing the traditional role of the teacher. That is,
Dartmouth brought learning to the centre and moved teaching to the sidelines.

The threefold division of English into language, literature and composition gave way to a unified transactional theory of meaning.[4] This theory is summarized here. According to the theory the pursuit of meaning is not unidimensional but multidimensional: the meaning of a literary work is not simply what inheres in the work but is very much the product of an active interaction between the reader and the work and includes all that the reader as a complex and changing personality brings to the work. This is a view radically opposed to the traditional extractive view that meaning is what the reader takes from the work. Meaning is a complex web of what the reader puts into the work as well as what he takes from it. Meaning is highly subjective. A literary work, too, is complex. It is both objective and subjective in content and structure. It is not merely a fixed and unchanging product but a voice, the voice of the absent author. It is the patterned conversation of the author with the reader. Literature is the most complex kind of such patterned conversation. A literary work is language, literature and composition all meshed into one organic whole.

A literary work, therefore, cannot be comprehended or constructed in a fragmented manner. It is the visible evidence of a series of mental processes or thoughts, feelings, attitudes and values, and as such must be reconstructed again and again by each individual reader. When this reconstruction takes the form of a written response by the reader or student, the student's

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[4] A.C. Purves and R. Beach, Literature and the Reader: Research in Response to Literature, Reading Interests, and the Teaching of Literature (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1973), pp.35, 189; Douglas Barnes, From Communication to Curriculum (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1976), pp. 23-24, and Britton et al., The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18) (London: Schools Council Publications, MacMillan Education, 1975), pp.78-80.

piece of writing itself becomes the visible evidence of a series of mental processes and as such is amenable to further reconstruction through amplification, elaboration, clarification and revision.[5] In this way the teacher can help the student become more aware of the need to make his or her written response more and more explicit to satisfy other absent readers as well as to extend and satisfy his or her maturing skill in articulation and communication. The student thus grows towards increasing enlightenment and delight in the writings of others as well as his or her own. Furthermore, the student's writing becomes a diagnostic instrument, rather than a finished product. It can be used both by the student and the teacher to promote further learning because the need for further learning has become clearly identified in a personal and immediate way. Most important of all, the student is helped to a new awareness that reading and writing are thinking processes connected with the construction and articulation of meaning for as wide an audience as possible. They are not merely skills connected with final products.

It is this approach to the study of literature that underlies the present study.

Britton's Dynamic Theoretical Model of the Development of Writing Abilities

The first large scale investigation into the writing abilities of students was that done by Britton[6] and his research team at the London University

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[5]See also the work of Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1958), pp.61, 71, 103, and Michael Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), pp.16, 18; and Jerome Bruner, "The Process of Education Revisited," Phi Delta Kappan (Sept. 1971), pp.18-21.

[6]Britton et al., The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18).

Institute of Education in England. The team set out to ascertain how and what students actually <u>did</u> write in school situations governed by teachers' expectations, which in turn were largely influenced or even determined by curricular and public examination requirements. The team was not interested in what students <u>could</u> write. The team also wanted to ascertain whether any stages of development in writing abilities could be identified and described in a way that could be useful not only to researchers, curriculum planners and examiners, but also to classroom teachers. To do this the team first collected over 2000 scripts from all subjects in the secondary school curriculum. The scripts were written by students aged eleven to eighteen. The research team then scrutinized these scripts to discover underlying categories of writing. However, the team found it necessary to formulate a theoretical description of the categories of adult writing first and then a developmental model to describe the stages through which children's writing progressed towards these mature categories. This sample of scripts was therefore used to produce the general theoretical model of kinds of writing. The developmental model was then derived from a four-year follow-up study, using the general model as the chief instrument for assessing progress.[7] Three main "function categories" of writing were identified: "expressive", "transactional", and "poetic". These categories are explained below.

<u>Expressive</u> writing is language close to the self. It reveals the writer, verbalizes his consciousness, and displays his close relationship with the reader. It is possibly not highly explicit and is relatively unstructured. It is the written form of "speech for oneself" and is therefore intelligible

[7]Ibid., p.13.

only to the writer and those who are intimately acquainted with him or
her. The expressive mode serves as the undifferentiated matrix from which
the other two modes of writing develop through a process of dissociation
or progressive differentiation. Expressive writing develops in one direction
into transactional writing and in another direction into poetic writing.

Transactional writing is language to get things done. It is concerned
with an end outside itself. It is used to inform, advise, persuade, or
instruct people.

Poetic writing is a verbal construct, a patterned verbalization of the
writer's feelings and ideas. It includes poems, short stories, plays and
shaped autobiographical episodes. It constitutes language that exists for
its own sake and not as a means of achieving something else. It is the
language of art.

Britton's team was thus able to identify two continua: from expressive
to transactional and from expressive to poetic. However, any particular
piece of writing could rarely be placed exactly at any specific point of a
continuum. Almost always a piece of writing would lie somewhere along the
continuum so that it would combine expressive and transactional or expressive
and poetic categories of writing.

Transactional Subcategories. The transactional category of writing is
further subdivided into seven subcategories from the lowest level of
thinking to the highest: record, report, generalized narrative or descrip-
tive information, analogic or low level generalization, analogic, analogic-
tautologic or speculative, and tautologic. (Table 1 gives details of the
categories and subcategories). Thus the transactional subcategories form
a third continuum. Again, a particular piece of transactional writing
almost always combines two or more subcategories.

TABLE 1

Britton's Dynamic Theoretical Model of
the Development of Writing Abilities

(a)　function categories ←
- expressive
- transactional
- poetic

　The continuum of writing ability: expressive————poetic

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　expressive————transactional

(b)　audience categories ←
- self
- teacher
- wider (known/peer) audience
- wider (unknown) audience

　The continuum of sense of audience:　self———— known audience

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　self———— unknown audience

(c)　role categories ←
- spectator
- participant

(d)　transactional subcategories ←
- record
- report
- generalized narrative or descriptive information
- analogic, low level of generalization
- analogic
- analogic-tautologic (speculative)
- tautologic

　The continuum of thinking ability:　record

record——report——gen.narr.——low level——analogic——spec.——tautologic
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　gen.

TABLE 2

BRITTON'S COMPLETE FUNCTION CATEGORIES

ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES(4)

TRANSACTIONAL(1)
Language to get things done, i.e. it is concerned with an end outside itself. It informs, persuades and instructs.

EXPRESSIVE(2)
Language close to the self, revealing the speaker, verbalizing his consciousness, displaying his close relationship with the reader. Possibly not highly explicit. Relatively unstructured.

POETIC(3)
A verbal construct, patterned verbalization of the writer's feelings and ideas. This category is not restricted to poems but would include such writings as a short story, a play, a shaped autobiographical episode.

SPECIAL CATEGORIES(4.2)
Categories created by the special contexts of education.

INFORMATIVE(1.1)

CONATIVE(1.2)
Instruction and persuasion.

IMMATURE CATEGORIES(4.1)
e.g., undissociated categories, practice play, etc.

DUMMY RUN(4.2.3)
Exercise and demonstration of the ability to perform a writing task, which fails to take up the demands of that task.

REGULATIVE(1.2.1)
Language which lays down a course of action to be followed, makes demands, issues instructions where compliance is assumed, and makes recommendations which carry the weight of a threat, or the force of the speaker's wishes.

PERSUASIVE(1.2.2)
Since compliance cannot be assumed, an attempt is made to influence action, behaviour, attitude by reason and argument or other strategy.

PSEUDO-INFORMATIVE(4.2.1)
Writing directed to the teacher via an 'apparent transaction' but failing to take up the demands of the apparent transaction.

PSEUDO-CONATIVE(4.2.2)
Another 'apparent transaction' but a conative one.

RECORD(1.1.1)
Eye-witness account or running commentary.

REPORT(1.1.2)
The writer gives an account of a particular series of events or the appearance of a particular place(i.e. narrative and/or descriptive).

GENERALIZED NARRATIVE OR DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION(1.1.3)
The writer is tied to particular events and places but he is detecting a pattern of repetition in them and he expresses this in generalized form.

ANALOGIC, LOW LEVEL OF GENERALIZATION (1.1.4)
Genuine generalizations but loosely related, i.e. the relationships are not perceived and/or not made explicit.

ANALOGIC(1.1.5)
Generalizations related hierarchically or logically by means of coherently presented classificatory utterances.

ANALOGIC-TAUTOLOGIC (SPECULATIVE) (1.1.6)
Speculation about generalizations: the open-ended consideration of analogic possibilities.

TAUTOLOGIC (1.1.7)
Hypotheses and deductions from them. Theory backed by logical argumentation.

TABLE 3

BRITTON'S COMPLETE AUDIENCE CATEGORIES

1	2	3	4	5
SELF	TEACHER	WIDER AUDIENCE (KNOWN)	UNKNOWN AUDIENCE	ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES

Child(or adolescent) to self(1) Writing from one's own point of view without considering the intelligibility to others of that point of view; a written form of 'speech for oneself'.

Expert to known lay men (3.1)

Child(or adolescent) to peer group(3.2)

Group member to working group(known audience which may include teacher)(3.3)

Writer to his readers(or his public)(4) Writer to his readers, marked by a sense of the general value or validity of what he has to say, of a need to supply a context wide enough to bring in readers whose sophistication, interests, experience he can only estimate and by a desire to conform with and contribute to some cultural norm or trend.

Virtual named audience(5.1)

No discernible audience(5.2)

Child(or adolescent) to trusted adult(2.1) In the early stages, transference into writing of the talking relation with the mother-writing that accepts an invitation because it comes from this particular person; later the liberating sense that this particular adult wants to hear anything you have to say.

Pupil to teacher, general (teacher-learner dialogue)(2.2) Writing for a specifically 'educational' adult, but as part of an ongoing interaction; and in expectation of response rather than formal evaluation.

Pupil to teacher, particular relationship (2.3) Writing for a specifically 'educational' adult; a personal relationship but also a professional one, based upon a shared interest and expertise, an accumulating shared context.

Pupil to examiner(2.4) Writing for a specifically educational adult, but as a demonstration of material mastered or as evidence of ability to take up a certain kind of style; a culminating point rather than a stage in a process of interaction and with the expectation of assessment rather than response.

A fourth continuum is also evident: from self to known audience and from self to unknown audience. However, this continuum and its implications are not relevant to the present study and will not be discussed any further.

The formulation of the new set of terms and categories described above was necessitated by the difficulty the team encountered in placing the actual writings of the students in the traditional system of classification of narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative writing (often referred to as NDEA in textbooks and rhetorical treatises). The team found the traditional classification both inadequate and inaccurate because it was, in fact, based on a serious misconception of the way the process of writing is learned. This traditional system has, however, been taught without question or debate and to a large extent continues to be taught to this day. It has been, and still is, the staple of textbooks on language and composition and is based on the assumption, as Britton puts it, of a "naive global sense of the ability to write".[8]

The formulation of a new classification system has more than theoretical value. It is of immense practical value to classroom teachers "particularly since it is probably in school that the global view of writing has its most insidious and powerful effects".[9]

Britton declares that this assumption resulted from a "somewhat mysterious orthodoxy" and traces the tradition underlying this orthodoxy to the modern study of rhetoric, which began as far back as 1776,[10] and even more remotely

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[8]Ibid., p.1.

[9]Ibid., p.3.

[10]Ibid., p.4. In this year classical rhetoric was broadened from persuasive oratory to all forms of written discourse by the Scottish rhetorician Campbell.

to classical antiquity. Britton identifies several shortcomings in the traditional rhetorical categories. They are derived from an examination of the finished products of professional writers without describing how these writers arrived at their mature writing. They are prescriptive of how people should write rather than how they do write. The main weakness, however, is in the focussing on the intended effect of the categories upon an audience. Narrative writing, however, does not have an intention in the same sense as persuasion or exposition have. Furthermore, different kinds of narrative have different intentions.

In addition, the team found that the traditional classification failed to describe actual pieces of writing since "many pieces of writing employ one mode to fulfil the functions of another.[11] This was found to be particularly true of descriptive writing which almost always appears in mature adult writing in conjunction with other kinds of discourse and in fact takes a supporting role. Britton's own assumption is stated thus:

> ... writing is intended to be read for itself - for
> what it says - and not, for instance, as a demon-
> stration of the ability to master technical skills,
> such as calligraphy, spelling and punctuation. This
> is not to deny importance of these skills, but they
> are not our concern at this point. It is fundamental
> to our conception of reading and writing that it
> includes the notion of a functioning human being
> putting himself 'in gear' with another in order to
> co-function over a limited period of time.... Our
> purpose is to declare that the 'indwelling of reader
> in writer', to borrow an expression from Polanyi, is
> a necessary part of the process of writing to enlighten
> rather than to mystify.[12]

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[11]Ibid., p.5.   [12]Ibid., p.21.

Britton hastens to note that the model so far developed is only two-dimensional. The complete model is theoretically multidimensional and awaits further development.

The present study employs Britton's function categories to ascertain what Grade Eleven students in this investigation have actually done. The findings are diagnostic and descriptive, as were those of Britton, and not evaluative.

The Classification System of Purves and Rippere: Modes of Response to Literature[13]

The present study also employs the classification system developed by Purves and Rippere. The reason for this is best stated by Purves, thus:

> Literature teachers often discuss but seldom define response to literature. They know it is important in the literature classroom and is an assumption in every literature curriculum. Aware that it is not quite the same as what psychologists call response to a stimulus, teachers realize that response to literature is mental, emotional, intellectual, sensory, physical. It encompasses the cognitive, affective, perceptual, and psychomotor activities that the reader of a poem, a story, or a novel performs as he reads or after he has read.
>
> Yet most teachers know that, in the classroom, a student's response will be like an iceberg: only a small part will become apparent to the teacher or even to the student himself. Teachers deal with the visible part of the iceberg whenever they lead a discussion or assign an essay topic on a literary work. Even this expressed response has not been so closely examined as it might be.[14]

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[13]A.C. Purves and V. Rippere, Elements of Writing about a Literary Work: A Study of Response to Literature (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1968).

[14]Ibid., p.xiii.

Purves' classification provides a method of content analysis to diagnose
and describe. It is not meant to be used as a model for instruction. The
system offers a set of five categories, subdivided into twenty-four sub-
categories and one hundred and twenty elements. The main categories,
discussed below, are termed "engagement-involvement", "perception",
"interpretation" and "evaluation". The fifth category is "miscellaneous".

Engagement-involvement "defines the various ways by which the writer
indicates his surrender to the literary work, by which he informs his
reader of the ways in which he has experienced the work or its various
aspects".

Perception "encompasses the ways in which a person looks at the work as
an object distinct from himself and, except that it is the product of an
author about whom the writer might have knowledge, separate from the writer's
consideration of the world around the writer. This perception (analogous to
"understanding") is analytic, synthetic, or classificatory and deals with
the work either in isolation or as an historical fact needing to be related
to a context".

Interpretation is "the attempt to find meaning in the work, to generalize
about it, to draw inferences from it, to find analogues to it in the universe
that the writer inhabits... The work is seen not as a literary object, or
not purely as a literary object, but as a heterocosm that can be related
to the world around the writer".

Evaluation "encompasses the statements about why the writer thinks the
work good or bad. His judgment may be derived from either a personal or
an objective criterion".[15]

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[15]Ibid., pp.6-8.

Details of the twenty-four subcategories are given in Table 4.

The elements are neutral and descriptive, not evaluative. They are not arranged in a hierarchical order. The present study does not use the elements but only the main categories and subcategories so the elements will not be discussed any further.

The system has been used successfully by Purves and his team of researchers to classify the written responses to literature of students in four countries: the United States, Great Britain, Germany and Belgium.

The purpose of the classification is to make both the teacher and the student aware of the "literary forces that act on the individual, of his values, and of his own sensibility"[16] so that they can be induced to pay closer attention both to the text of the literary work and the text of the actual response to the literary work. In Purves' words, "the teacher who brings out into the open these bases, implications, and relationships allows his students to become conscious of what they are doing; to become self-conscious and therefore self-reliant".[17] Thus, students are enabled to become self-reliant by developing the habit of examining themselves, their world, and the world of the literary work. They are enabled to develop a sense of order in their responses to life. Purves feels that the four categories of response are "latent in every student, even the elementary school student".[18]

Purves makes it clear that his system of classification is meant to be open and amenable to revision and refinement. He also makes it clear

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[16]Ibid., p.61.   [17]Ibid., p.63.   [18]Ibid., p.64.

TABLE 4

Purves' and Rippere's Subcategories of Response To a Literary Work

100 Engagement-Involvement General

110 Reaction to literature - the writer's statement about his characteristic kind and degree of engagement.

120 Reaction to form - the expression of the writer's reaction to the way a work is written, as opposed to the content of the work.

130 Reaction to content - the expression of the writer's reaction to the world of the work as if that world were not fictional.

200 Perception General

210 Language - the linguistic as opposed to the rhetorical aspects of the work.

220 Literary Devices - metaphor, simile, imagery, allusion, symbols, irony, etc.

230 Content - the people, places, and actions of the literary work.

240 Relation of technique to content - the "rhetoric of the work", i.e., all those statements which relate the verbal, stylistic, or presentational means to the sense or effect of the work.

250 Structure - those statements in which the writer describes the order of the work.

260 Tone - statements that describe the writer's discussion of tone, effect, mood, pace, and point of view (tone: the writer's establishing of the author's emotional attitude towards the material or towards the audience).

270 Literary Classification - the writer is seeing the work either as a part of a larger entity called literature or as the product of an individual who lived, wrote, and thought at a specific time.

280 Contextual classification - the writer is seeing the work in the context of biography or history, i.e. about the production of the work rather than about the work itself.

300 Interpretation General - the writer relates parts of the work to his conception or knowledge of the world, i.e. invests meaning in the work, and then defines the type of meaning he has found.

310 Interpretation of style - the writer ascribes meaning to a stylistic device.

320 Interpretation of content - the writer ascribes meaning to parts or whole.

330 <u>Mimetic interpretation</u> - the writer is seeing the work as a mirror of the world. In effect, the writer says, "This is the way the world is".

340 <u>Typological interpretation</u> - the writer is seeing the work as a presentation of a highly generalized or abstract pattern of the world. The writer says, "This is typical of a certain class of things": metaphoric, symbolic, or allegorical.

350 <u>Hortatory interpretation</u> - the writer is seeing the work as a statement of what should be, i.e. sees the author as critical of what he portrays.

400 <u>Evaluation General</u> - criteria, either for a subjective or objective appraisal of the work.

410 <u>Affective evaluation</u> - emotional appeal.

420 <u>Evaluation of method</u> - the way in which the work is created.

430 <u>Evaluation of author's vision</u> - the sufficiency of what the work is presenting.

500 <u>Miscellaneous</u> - all other statements.

that his overall aim is precision, neutrality, and usefulness - not only

for the scholar and researcher but also for the classroom teacher. The

system must be easy to handle as well as efficient and not time-consuming.

Purves and Beach have since formulated a refined system of classifi-

cation.[19] The original Purves and Rippere categories have been extended

by adding nine subcategories as shown in Table 5. The change in

terminology makes for greater precision and simplicity: the change from

"engagement-involvement" and "perception" to "personal statement" and

"descriptive statement" not only makes for clarity and simplicity, but also

eliminates two difficulties by separating the reader and the work and also

the content from the structure or form of the work. It seems clear that

the new system of classification can easily be comprehended by students

themselves, even at the elementary school level. This revised system has

been used in this study to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the

data.

The present study, then, is an attempt to apply the theories of Richards,

Britton and Purves, outlined in this chapter, to the writing of students to

ascertain whether better methods of teaching can be used to promote personal

learning.

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[19]A.C. Purves and R. Beach, Literature and the Reader.

TABLE 5

Purves' and Beach's New (1973) Categories
for Content Analysis

Personal Statement

1. about the reader, an "autobiographical digression"

2. about the work, expressing personal engagement with it

Descriptive Statement

3. narrational, retelling part of the work

4. descriptive of aspects of the work: language, characters, setting, etc.

Interpretive Statement

5. of parts of the work

6. of the whole work

Evaluative Statement

7. about the evocativeness of the work

8. about the construction of the work

9. about the meaningfulness of the work

Unclassifiable Statement

CHAPTER II

THE HYPOTHESES AND THE PROBLEM

The hypotheses. The hypotheses for this study are stated as follows:

(a) There will be differences in the writing of Grade Eleven students in response to a short story depending on the teaching strategies employed, that is, Teacher-Directed discussion, Independent Study and Small-Group discussion.

(b) These differences are measurable according to Britton's function categories and subcategories and Purves' and Rippere's and Purves' and Beach's categories and subcategories of response to a literary work.

The problem. The purpose of this study was to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relative effect of each of three experimental treatments embodying three different teaching strategies on the mode of discourse and the response to literature of Grade Eleven students?

2. What other differences in the writing of the three groups can be ascertained and attributed to the particular teaching strategy employed?

Discussion of the problem. This study is an attempt to classify and describe the effects of three teaching strategies on the written responses of students to a piece of literature as a verbal construct. A verbal construct is defined as a highly patterned form of writing combining both explicit and implicit, stated and implied, meanings. The three strategies of intervention were:

1. reading a short story, engaging in a class discussion based on the story and directed by the teacher, and writing a "free" response to the story,

2. reading a short story, engaging in small-group discussions based on the story, without teacher intervention, and writing a "free" response to

the story,

3. reading a short story and writing a "free" response without teacher intervention and without opportunity for oral discussion.

"Free" response is defined as writing whose form and content is not prescribed but is left to the discretion of the writer to the greatest extent possible.

The first aspect of the problem, then, was to determine if the three teaching strategies had significantly different effects on the written responses of students. It was expected that the Small-Group discussion strategy would produce writing that was distinctly different to that resulting from the Teacher-Directed discussion and the Independent Study strategy.

The second aspect of the problem was to obtain additional data, if possible, about the experimental study. This was accomplished through a questionnaire (Appendix C) and by brief interviews with selected students.

Coding. Two methods of coding based on the classification systems of Britton (1975) and Purves and Rippere (1968) and Purves and Beach (1973) were used. These methods are described in detail in the Coding and Classification Manual in Appendix B. These methods were chosen after an exhaustive search of the literature as being the best descriptive measures of writing ability in response to literature. Britton's holistic approach needed to be cross-checked and complemented by Purves' segmented approach. The use of the two methods was also necessary because of Britton's cautionary remarks about the holistic approach and his reference to Purves' difficulties in using the holistic approach:

> A single piece of writing ... may be serving many
> purposes. This difficulty ... has been tackled in
> two ways, and we experimented with both of them.
> The first way is to segment the writing (say, to
> take it sentence by sentence) and attempt to
> allocate each segment to a category and so plot
> the functional flow and fluctuation throughout
> the utterance ... We noted also that, faced with
> a similar problem, Purves and Rippere allocated
> each sentence in the writings they were analysing
> (written comments upon a piece of literature) to
> a category of 'style of response', and then
> attempted to allocate the piece as a whole.
> However, they found so much more agreement between
> the judges in carrying out the sentence ratings
> than in rating the piece as a whole that they
> abandoned this latter task.[1]

Britton himself chose the holistic approach using the concept of the "dominant impression". That is, whenever a student's script seemed to fall into more than one category or subcategory the script was allocated to the category or subcategory that predominated in the script.

In the 1968 study Purves and Rippere had, in fact, used both the segmented and holistic approaches by coding each statement in turn and also coding the essay as a whole. These coding methods were later refined by Purves and Beach.

The present study uses the original (1968) Purves and Rippere coding system of four categories, subdivided into twenty-four subcategories for the segments and the whole, as well as the new (1973) coding system of Purves and Beach consisting of four categories and nine subcategories.

Used together these two classification systems were considered likely to be more powerful diagnostic instruments than either of them used alone.

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[1] Britton et al., The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18), pp.76-77.

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

Several assumptions are implicit in this study. One of these assumptions concerns certain uncontrolled factors that could have given one of the experimental treatments either an advantage or a disadvantage. It is assumed that the effects of these factors cancelled each other out in the experiment. For example, it was decided not to assemble all sixty students together and then randomly redistribute them into the three treatment groups. The benefits of randomization were felt to be more than offset by the anxiety, real and potential, that would be caused in students' minds through having to work with "new" students for the first time in the year and in unfamiliar surroundings. Similarly, the distribution of students into small groups was done in such a manner as to ensure that each group had at least one student who was more able and articulate than the others. An attempt was made, too, to balance the distribution of males and females. Use was made of brief descriptive profiles on each student in this group giving information on their reading, writing and speaking abilities. The profiles were provided by the class teacher.

Applicability of the Findings

The conclusions of this study are valid only for the particular story, the particular sample of students, and the particular teaching strategies used in this experiment. It is possible that the conclusions would have been different if different schools had been used. It is also possible, and even probable, that the students in this sample would have responded in slightly different ways on other occasions. However, it is believed that the story was a reasonable selection, especially since it also appears in an anthology of short stories[2] included in the Grade Ten English course. It is

[2]David A. Sohn, ed., Ten Top Stories (New York: Bantam Books, 1964).

also believed that the students in the sample were representative of a
cross-section of Grade Eleven students in the school. Moreover, even
though the findings of this study cannot automatically be generalized
they can be regarded as useful indicators of the ways in which students
at this grade level might be guided towards wider and deeper understanding,
appreciation, and articulation of their responses. It is not the aim of
this study to provide rules of thumb or any other techniques by which
literature can and should be taught. Since all students in the three
classes did submit their written responses, even though they were told it
was for research purposes, it may be safe to conclude that students can
be relied upon to respond freely if the stimulus is suitable and
challenging.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH LITERATURE

In 1973 Dwight Burton reviewed the state of research in the teaching

of English and concluded that it was "a troubled dream".[1] He pointed out

that:

> In the humanistic-oriented English teaching profession
> there has been an abiding uneasiness with quantitative
> methods and perhaps with the empirical approach
> generally. Yet we have great hopes of what research
> can do for us in the teaching of English. Though,
> at the moment, we acknowledge that research has had
> little to do with curriculum structure and teaching
> methods in English, we have the feeling that answers
> are just around the corner if we could but design the
> right studies. (p.160)

Unfortunately, as later sections of this chapter will show, these

great hopes have not yet been fulfilled, despite "a virtual explosion" in

research activity in the 1960s and the founding of a new journal, Research

in the Teaching of English, in 1967 to act as a comprehensive clearinghouse

for all research in this field in the world. As Burton puts it:

> Perhaps we have expected too much of an effort that is
> relatively young and we may have underestimated the
> difficulty of probing, for our particular reasons,
> the mysteries of human behavior, its development and
> change. (p.161)

Burton goes on to suggest that:

> ...case studies might furnish needed information on
> immediate as opposed to deferred responses. (p.179)

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[1] D.L. Burton, "Research in the Teaching of English: The Troubled
Dream," Research in the Teaching of English 7 (Fall 1973), pp.160-189.

However, he also points out the difficulties of this approach: long-term experimentation through longitudinal studies is both costly in time, effort and money, and the results are not generalizable because the studies have so far been based on small samples and conducted over very short periods of a few weeks or months whereas "the significant competencies associated with achievement in English come slowly". (p.166) Another difficulty arises from the problem of control of variables, which in a subject like English, are numerous. It is also extremely difficult to specify clearly the precise part played by a particular treatment on the results achieved in a particular study. Burton also points out that the Dartmouth Seminar of 1966 referred to earlier in this thesis (Chaper I) inaugurated an era of "process-centered" curriculum in English, yet little is known about the major processes that lead to effective learning or performance in English.

In an article entitled "Designing Research on Literary Response"[2] Elizabeth Anne Nicol remarks that descriptive research (like the present study) does not aim at judging or evaluating response. She offers a schema for organizing research methods in the study of literary response. The present study fits her category 3:

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[2]E.A. Nicol, "Designing Research on Literary Response," RTE 9 (Spring 1975), pp.72-79.

TABLE 6

Nicol's Schema for Organizing Research Methods
in the Study of Literary Response (p.74)

Structure of the Task

		HIGH	LOW
Ordinality of the data	HIGH (Data can be scaled)	(1) The task is highly structured and the response is clearly right or wrong, positive or negative	(4) The task is open-ended and the responses are evaluated against criteria. Responses are right or wrong, positive or negative.
	LOW (Data cannot be scaled)	(2) The task is highly structured and the responses are classified but are not ranked according to criteria.	(3) The task is open-ended and the responses are classified or described but are not ranked according to criteria.

She notes further that "a system for categorization is either imposed on the data, [as was done in the present study] or is derived from the data after they are collected" (p.77) [as was done by Britton, and Purves and Rippere]. The methods employed by I.A. Richards and James Squire were of the second, derivative kind.

Gunnar Hansson[3] describes some of the work he did in Sweden using the so-called protocol methods first used by Richards. Readers were asked to

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[3]Gunnar Hansson, "Some Types of Research on Response to Literature," RTE 7 (Fall 1973), pp.260-284.

describe in writing their interpretations, experiences and evaluations of material presented to them. Richards used thirteen short poems; Hanson also used poems; the present study used a short story. The readers studied the material under similar treatment conditions. The protocols are the written responses and constitute the data for analysis in the research study. Richards used university undergraduates at Cambridge University. In his first investigations Hansson used university students studying literature, university students studying psychology, college students and first year pupils at a "people's high school" or adult continuation school. Like Richards' group most students were about eighteen to nineteen years old. The students were divided into two or three groups studying the same poems but under different conditions. Students were allowed to engage in group discussions or to study different kinds of literary criticism. After a week the students were asked to comment freely in writing on the poem that had been assigned. When the first series of protocols had been collected Hansson either began a group discussion (as Richards had done) or gave the students a written analysis or commentary on the poem to be kept for another week. Students were then asked to write a new protocol and describe any changes that the discussions or written analyses had influenced.

This approach enabled Hansson to examine the students' written responses in several dimensions:

> Thus wide variation in the ability to recreate the poems
> in rich and personally involved experiences could be
> demonstrated among the readers, not only between
> individuals but also, and in some respects especially,
> between different groups and categories [of students]. (p.262)

Hansson found that his attempts to influence changes in the students' responses met with only limited success. He sums up his findings thus:

> the intellectual understanding of a poem could often
> be enriched and diversified, while the emotional
> qualities of the experience remained more or less
> unchanged; shallow and impersonal experiences
> could be influenced if the reader was not wholly
> indifferent to the poem; strongly personal
> experiences were not open to outside influences
> except for details....(p.263)

The reasons for these varying influences were to be found, according to

Hansson, in the varying degrees of education, general maturity, social

background, reading habits, knowledge of literary conventions, critical

procedures and principles of evaluation - that is, in what the individual

personalities that the students brought to their reading of the printed

texts. Hansson then goes on to provide a rationale for the protocol method

as a simple and highly effective research instrument:

> People who claim to work "objectively" with literary
> texts tend to train themselves and others to forget
> about differences in interpretations and responses.
> Even teachers are trained to forget about them. And
> new generations of readers bring new differences to
> the texts. Therefore, there is still an urgent need
> for simple descriptive studies, demonstrating to the
> teachers, and to those who teach the teachers, what
> happens when groups of young people respond to
> literature.....
>
> The protocol method has the immediate advantage of
> giving interesting and easily available information.
> (p.263)

Hansson goes on to point out a major limitation in this approach:

> What we find in the protocols is... an "expressed
> response": it is by no means the response itself but
> an acquired way of describing and communicating some
> aspect of the literary experience that has actually
> been there.

It depends essentially on the students'

> ability to verbalize their experiences and opinions.
> This ability is in turn closely dependent on their
> knowledge of a language and a terminology for
> literary analysis and description which they may or
> may not have acquired at school or in the society
> where they have been brought up.

> The expressed response is certainly a legitimate
> and important target for our research efforts.
> If the "protocol" method is combined with the
> excellent classification system which Alan Purves
> has presented in his Elements of Writing About a
> Literary Work, or with some other similar system
> based on the principles of content analysis, at
> least part of the information in the protocols
> can be handled more systematically. (p.264)

In fact, the present study combines the methods of Purves and Richards as

well as those of Britton.

Applebee,[4] in a very comprehensive review of research using the Purves

and Rippere categories, points out that since the publication of the

categories in 1968 the elements have been used in two large-scale investi-

gations and a host of doctoral studies at institutions across the United

States. Applebee reports that "the approach to literature adopted by the

individual teacher does affect the content of the response from that

teacher's pupils." (p.256) He reports that a study by Weiss (1968) found

increases for the inductively taught pupils in Purves' categories of percep-

tion and interpretation, but no changes for evaluation or engagement.

Applebee regards this as perhaps the single most important finding to emerge

from the studies up to December 1976. Weiss compared the written responses

of four classes of eleventh grade pupils receiving programmed instruction

in the close reading of poetry with those of four similar classes taught

inductively. Applebee also reports that Grimme (1970) found that the

structural approach typical of the New Critics "led to increases in the

proportion of perception and interpretation responses" to poetry. However,

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[4]A.N. Applebee, "The Elements of Response to a Literary Work: What
We Have Learned," RTE 11 (Winter 1977), pp.255-271.

Grimme also found that the experiential-reflective approach seemed most likely to lead to lasting interest in literature. The written responses were obtained from college freshmen who were taught four groups of three poems each by the method of close critical analysis of the text and were also allowed to respond freely, presumably in the manner used in the present study. A third approach was also used: "a limited teaching approach", but no details are given. The experiential-reflective approach "led to interpretation supported with personal references, perceptual identification, and literary judgment". The limited teaching approach "led to a concern with content, engagement-involvement, and miscellaneous categories". (p.256)

The following studies and findings drawn from Applebee's review are also pertinent: Karre (1976) obtained similar results to Grimme's, using short stories with sixth to eighth grade pupils; Lucking (1975, 1976) traced the effects of training the teacher in specific questioning techniques, Sullivan (1974) traced the effects of training the pupils to consider their own writing in terms of the Purves-Rippere categories, Cowgill (1975) traced the effects of using study methods using combinations of film, tape recordings, and class discussion. All these studies confirmed that methods and approaches in teaching do influence the content of students' responses, when content is measured using the Purves-Rippere elements. Applebee notes that "in these studies we can see a movement away from very globally defined "styles" or approaches toward more concrete and perhaps more manipulable aspects of teaching". (p.257)

Applebee also reports various studies on the psychology of response and concludes that the "responses of preadolescent children focus primarily upon the category "perception" and the subcategory "content" shifting

during adolescence toward a higher proportion of interpretation". (p.259)
He also notes that Purves (1975) reports that: "Interpretive responses
increased at older ages [beyond fifth grade], shifting their focus from
character and form to the meaning or theme of the story. Twelfth graders
focussed primarily on interpretation, with a concomitant decrease in
engagement-involvement responses and in evaluation, though responses in
the latter category were infrequent at all ages". (p.259)

Peters and Blues[5] report the results of a study done at the University
of Kentucky, Lexington, on the relation between teacher disposition and
students' written responses to literature as follows:

> The power and delight of intelligent reading apparently
> does not come from supplying a number of frameworks of
> doctrine for understanding but from higher levels of
> questioning and discussion, analysis and synthesis. It
> would appear that such intellectual challenge depends on
> the teacher's ability to establish an attentive and
> open classroom climate with a high level of encourage-
> ment of widespread participation. (p.135)

However, the Hansson studies mentioned earlier seem to cast some doubt on
these findings. Hansson reports the findings of a small study[6]

> where one group of students studied, analyzed and discussed
> a short story in class, while another group were just
> given a few written statements about the author and then
> studied the story individually...What happened was that the
> students who analyzed and discussed the story in class
> acquired a more uniform understanding of the text and
> reached more uniform interpretations. So far the
> teaching could be said to have led them in the "expected"
> direction. But at the same time the attitude of these
> students had grown more negative, and they felt less keen

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[5]W.H. Peters and A.G. Blues, "Teacher Intellectual Disposition as it
Relates to Student Openness in Written Response to Literature," RTE 12
(May 1978), pp.127-136.

[6]Hansson, "Some Types of Research," pp.274-275.

on reading more texts by the same author than did
the students who had not been taught in class.
These two pedagogical effects were produced in the
same teaching situation. A more unified inter-
pretation of a text can be a desired effect: not
in itself, I would say, but if the students'
ability to interpret texts has been forwarded in
a way which the school, the teacher, or the
students themselves later on will find useful.
The negative attitudes are certainly not desired,
and the question is whether we can defend having
them included in the bargain. (pp.274-275)

Hansson also discusses an earlier study the results of which enabled him to

conclude that students

have the basic linguistic ability to give meanings
to the words of the text and to make distinctions
between meaning qualities structured by the text.
What they lack to a certain extent is the ability
to organize these meanings and qualities into a
coherent whole which they can put into words and
communicate as an interpretation or an analysis
of the text. This latter ability needs training.....

Many students also react, sometimes passionately,
against advanced technical analyses of a kind which
especially the new critics have cultivated. (pp.273-274)

Further doubt is cast upon the Peters and Blues conclusion by some of the

findings of an interesting study done in Auckland, New Zealand.[7] The

general objective of the experimental treatment was to elicit from students

(aged 15 to 16 years) a positive response to poetry. Therefore, while a

large number of poems was made available to the whole class and would be

read to and by the whole class, students were never required "to explain

or analyze a poem, but rather to share and complement it. Students would be

required to study no more than four poems per term. The italicized words

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[7]W.H. Lennox, J.J. Small, and B. Keeling, "An Experiment in Teaching
Poetry to High School Boys," RTE 12 (Dec. 1978), pp.307-320.

were defined thus:

reading: This refers to the reading of a poem either orally to a group or silently to oneself. There was to be no discussion, analysis, or attempted explanation of the poem.

study: A poem is studied when the student goes further than merely reading. This could take the form of detailed comprehension involving checking other books, careful extrapolation and evaluation of imagery and other techniques, and any preparation towards sharing or complementing the poem.

share: This is an attempt on the part of a student using any media available to encourage others to respond to the poem as he has. It may involve detailed explanation of some points.

complement: This is a personal response to the poem and may be expressed in any medium or art form, and thus may lead, for example, to a painting or another poem. Complementing therefore reflects the pupil's understanding of and involvement with the poem. (pp.309-310)

The control group was taught in the conventional manner: the teacher chose a variety of poems, directed students in their analyses of the literary techniques contained in them, and taught students how to analyze several modern poems selected by the teacher. Students practised the techniques and gave written answers on task sheets.

The senior researcher (Lennox) reports that the experimental group "seemed to find their program emotionally and intellectually challenging". (p.313) Extremely detailed and complicated statistical procedures were used in forming the two classes and in measuring their performance by means of pretests and posttests on four criteria: attitude to poetry, understanding of poetry, and the quality and the fluency of poetry written by the pupils. The tests included multiple choice and completion types of items. Rating scales were also used.

It is necessary to outline this study in such detail here to give some idea of the difficulties associated with the experimental method when applied to research on response to literature. For Lennox casts some doubt on the

validity of some aspects of the study and on some of the results. The sample size was very small (29 and 25 students); there was a strong friendly relationship between the researcher and the experimental class to which he also taught English; the control group was taught by another teacher who was a colleague of the researcher. Nevertheless, the researcher concludes that, because of the "severity of the criterion of improvement from pretest to posttest, the residual score .... a demanding test of the efficacy of a teaching method which was planned as a challenge to established methods ... on the whole students taught by that method [the experimental] learned poetry better than those taught by a conventional method. Neither approach made an appreciable difference to students' attitudes to poetry, but on the criteria of understanding poetry and of quality and fluency in students' own poems, those in the experimental group improved more than those in the control group". (p.318)

The question of whether teachers can be trained to modify their attitudes so as to bring about needed classroom arrangements and teaching strategies to promote genuine and hypothetical thinking while at the same time encouraging student participation and interest, engagement-involvement, perception and lasting desire to read and write is taken up by Wilsford.[8] He states the problem succinctly:

> How does one measure the effectiveness of talk, the engagement of literature, the quality of expressive writing, the process of Englishing, and the contribution of English to later life? (p.87)

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[8]J.A. Wilsford, "Measuring English Teachers' Changes in Values Toward 'Growth Through English' Variables," RTE 7 (Spring 1973), pp.87-97.

Wilsford developed a "Growth Through English Values Instrument" to measure changes among teachers as a result of inservice training and found that the instrument was effective and that teachers were helped to change their values in the desired manner.

In a very comprehensive review of attempts to measure appreciation of literature, Cooper[9] discusses the method of content analysis of the written response. He points out that:

> A true content analysis eschews a priori categories of
> any kind. A small set of broad, general categories
> may be abstracted from a larger number of content-analysis
> categories, but it is misleading and distorting to begin
> with the broad categories. Before looking at the content
> to be analyzed it is impossible to know what kinds of
> categories are needed or how many of them are needed. (p.21)

This was a criticism of one of the earliest studies of content analysis reported by Hilda Taba in 1955. Cooper draws attention to the diagnostic and formative assessment uses of Purves' categories.

In an article entitled "Describing Responses to Works of Fiction" Odell and Cooper[10] draw attention to an elaboration of the four basic categories in Purves' and Rippere's original (1968) content analysis system. The new outline for analysis suggested by Purves and Beach (1973) is reproduced there and is used in the present study.

In a comprehensive review of studies dealing with the nature of literary response and the teaching of literature Purves and Beach[11] summarized the most significant findings. The studies cover the years 1925

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[9]C.R. Cooper, "Measuring appreciation of literature: A review of attempts," RTE 5 (Spring 1971), pp.5-23.

[10]L. Odell and C.R. Cooper, "Describing Responses to Works of Fiction," RTE 10 (Winter 1976), pp.203-225.

[11]Purves and Beach, Literature and the Reader.

to 1971. Three of these major studies are pertinent to the present
investigation. Louise Rosenblatt found that most of the readers reconstructed
the meaning of a poem in an egocentric manner in that they paid attention to
what the poem evoked in them; at the same time, they were seeking an
organizing principle on a _self_-ordering and _self_-correcting process which
was partly controlled by the text. Squire found that readers responded to
fiction in unique and selected ways. The study implied that students need
assistance in interpreting fiction and that teachers need to use better
techniques both in promoting better responses and in evaluating responses.
Coryell found that the extensive group, which had been taught many works
rapidly, discussed questions of high value and concentrated their discussion
on fewer question types than the intensive group which was taught a few
works which were analyzed in detail. The students also talked more and
preferred the extensive teaching classes.

Since the Purves and Beach survey, very few studies related to the
present investigation have been reported. Casey[12] found that the patterns
of affective response of adolescents to a poem read in three different class-
room situations of reading, that is, teacher-directed class discussion,
self- (student) directed small-group discussion and private reading, were
similar. He also found that the language of class discussion often influenced
the language of response, and that divergent responses were more likely to
occur in self-directed small-group discussion and private reading.

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[12]J.P. Casey, "The Affective Responses of Adolescents to a Poem Read
in Three Different Classroom Situations of Reading," _Dissertation Abstracts
International_ 38 (1978), pp.6491A-6492A.

Culp,[13] using the case study approach with adolescents, verified Rosenblatt's transactional theory of literary response that each reading of a piece of literature is a unique transaction between the reader and the work and that what the reader brings to the work is as important as the work itself.

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[13]M.B. Culp, "Case Studies of the Influence of Literature on the Attitudes, Values, and Behavior of Adolescents," RTE 11 (Winter 1977), pp.245-253.

CHAPTER IV

THE EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES AND RESULTS:
CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS' WRITTEN RESPONSES

This chapter describes the procedures used in the experiment, the gathering of the data, the methods used in coding and classifying the data, and the presentation and analysis of the results in relation to the effects of the three teaching strategies employed in the experiment. The poem "Birches" by Robert Frost was originally chosen as it seemed to be particularly suitable because of its simplicity and directness, on the one hand, and its various levels of meaning from plain narrative to profound insights into human nature, on the other hand. It seemed the ideal stimulus for generating a wide range of student responses. It also seemed very likely to engage and sustain the interest of Grade Eleven students because of its largely narrative content, its homeliness of language and its conversational and highly personal tone. However, the English teachers at the two Kamloops Senior Secondary schools who helped implement this study felt that this approach would not succeed. They themselves had taught little or no poetry because the students were antipathetic to poetry of any kind, were very poor readers and even worse writers. Moreover, the poem "Birches" would prove too baffling in any case, even for the more perceptive and articulate students.

It was essential to the main purposes of this study to use a stimulus that would not only engage the interest and close attention of Grade Eleven students but also evoke written responses in conditions that were as close as possible to actual classroom situations. Since students had little or no

experience in reading or studying poetry, some other piece of literature,
short enough to be read and responded to in one class period, had to be
found. The possibility of using a short film was rejected on the grounds
that a non-print stimulus would not reflect the ways in which student writers
interacted with words on a page to reconstruct meaning. This aspect was an
essential part of the study since the underlying assumption of the study
is based on the transactional theory of meaning.

The short story "Test" was then selected because it seemed to satisfy
all the conditions discussed above. This assessment was checked and
confirmed in a pilot study conducted at one of the Kamloops Senior Secondary
schools. However, it was found that nearly all the written responses were
irrelevant to the story as stimulus. The class period was shorter (50
minutes) than in the main study (75 minutes) and this may have accounted for
the irrelevant answers. However, the class teachers reported that all
students had completed reading the story (and discussing it, where this was
allowed) well within the allocated time. Most students, it seemed, wrote
only because they thought their work would be graded. However, it was vital
to the purposes of this study that the written responses of students should
be as free as possible. That is, every attempt should be made to remove, or
at least reduce, the usual pressures of writing for the teacher as examiner
and to evoke as genuine a response as would be possible in the circumstances
of a regular classroom situation, especially in the closing weeks of the
school year. In view of the teachers' reports it seemed unlikely that the
final study would succeed. Nevertheless, there were two causes for hope.
One was that all students, without exception, had in fact complied with the
request for a written response. The other, and more important, was that the
students had expressed a clear liking for the story. It had engaged their

interest and they thought it was a good story. Several thought it better than the ones they had read and studied during the year.

It was decided, therefore, to make a few small changes to the instructions to students and to proceed with the final study along the same lines as the pilot study. Some support for this decision came from the teachers at the second school where the final study was to be conducted. They reported that all the students who would be participating in this study had had previous experience in small group discussions.

It was important in this study to make it possible for students to respond in writing freely or with the least amount of teacher intervention as possible to ascertain just how students genuinely thought and felt. The use of three contrasting strategies would, it was hoped, reveal the ways in which individual students responded to the influences of the teacher or to their peers in the small groups and the extent to which they thought for themselves and remained uninfluenced by others. The teacher who directed the discussion in the first group was instructed to teach in his usual style. The students in the other groups were not given any instructions about how to go about their discussions. It was felt to be important to this study that the text of the story be the primary source of the discussions and written responses and that the discussions themselves would constitute the secondary sources. The written responses could then be scrutinized for what the students actually had to say rather than for what they should, or could, say. This in turn would allow the students' written responses to be used for diagnostic purposes. Furthermore, this procedure would enable both the students and the teacher to develop self-awareness of needs by identifying strengths and weaknesses as displayed in the actual written responses.

The Sample. The experiment involved three classes of Grade Eleven students in a Kamloops Senior Secondary school, consisting of sixty students in all.

TABLE 7

Distribution of Students into Three Groups

	Teacher-Directed Group	Independent Group	Small Sub-Groups
Total No. of Students	21	19	20
Males	8	6	8
Females	13	10	12
Unidentified by Sex		3	

The Teacher-Directed group was the control group and the other two were the experimental groups.

The Treatments: Classroom Procedures. The experiment was conducted towards the end of the school year in June in one seventy-five minute period. Each of the three classes was scheduled for English at the same time according to the regular timetable. Each class was therefore assigned as a whole to one experimental condition. All three teachers were requested to inform their students at the beginning of the period that the exercise was part of a research study.

The Teacher-Directed group met as usual and the students were handed the printed story "Test" by the teacher. The teacher then proceeded with the lesson according to instructions given in writing by the researcher as

follows: Say to the class:

> You have 20 minutes to read and discuss the story.
>
> Please read the story more than once to get both
>
> the story line and the details so that you have
>
> more to talk and think about. This will be
>
> followed by a writing assignment. At the end of
>
> the 20 minutes hand the printed stories to me.

The researcher was not present at any time during the experimental period.
The collection of the printed stories was aimed at ensuring that the
students were not distracted while writing their responses by the temptation
to refer to the printed story.

The students were then given the following instruction in writing on
the chalkboard:

> Now that you have read and talked about the story
>
> please RESPOND to it. Write freely in whatever
>
> way you feel motivated, KEEPING THE STORY IN MIND•

Experience in the pilot study conducted in another Kamloops Senior Secondary
school suggested the block capitalization of key parts of the instruction.
It was also necessary to keep the instruction as simple, clear and direct
as possible so as to minimize the influence the instruction might have on
the mode of response. No discussion or consultation was allowed during the
writing period. The teacher was, however, told by the researcher to conduct
the discussion part of the lesson in his usual style.

The Independent group followed the same procedure as for the Teacher-
Directed group. However, the researcher's instructions to the teacher were
modified slightly to read as follows: Say to the class:

> You have 20 minutes to read the story. Please

read the story more than once to get both the

story line and the details so that you have

more to think about. This will be followed by

a writing assignment. At the end of the 20

minutes hand the printed stories to me.

Similarly, the teacher substituted the word "thought" for "talked" in the

written instruction on the chalkboard. No discussion took place at any

time during the reading and writing period.

In the Small-Group class the teacher first assigned the students to

their respective subgroups according to a prearranged schedule worked out

by the researcher with the use of brief profiles of each student prepared

by the class teacher. An attempt was made by the researcher to balance the

subgroups as far as possible by taking into account the personalities,

interests and abilities of the students. Each group was assigned at least

one above-average and articulate student who could be expected to provoke

and stimulate a discussion. Less able and articulate students were similarly

distributed. In addition, students who were poor readers through lack of

interest or negative attitudes were placed in groups where they might feel

least threatened. That is, care was taken not to place them in groups where

there might be personality conflicts. It became necessary for the researcher

to review the profiles with the class teacher to ensure that the final

distribution of students would be the best possible in the circumstances.

The actual written instructions given to the teacher were as follows:

Please assign students as follows to small groups.

If any are absent try to ensure a reasonable balance

of sexes, abilities and personalities in forming new

groups.

A list of names was appended. As it turned out some of the students were absent. The teacher was able, nevertheless, to retain the key members in their respective subgroups. Only two changes were made to the subgroup compositions to accommodate the absence of five students, one each in three subgroups and two in a fourth subgroup.

Further instructions to the teacher were as follows:

Ensure that groups are reasonably well spaced apart and that members of each group face one another. Tell the students:

You have 20 minutes to read and discuss the story within your small group. Read the story more than once to get both the story line and the details so that you have more to think and talk about. At the end of the 20 minutes your printed stories will be collected. You will then begin the writing assignment.

When all the printed stories have been collected write the following instructions on the board: Now that you have read and talked about the story please RESPOND to it. Write freely in whatever way you feel motivated, KEEPING THE STORY IN MIND.

Please collect ALL the students' writings, including rough drafts at the end of the period. Ensure that there is no discussion or consultation during this writing period.

One small modification was necessary before the writing began: the students were instructed to move the desks back to their original positions from the circles that had been formed to facilitate discussions.

At the end of the period each teacher collected all the written responses of the students. The complete set of sixty responses was then passed on to the researcher by the head of the English department who also taught the first class.

The Data Gathered. Since the chief purpose of this study was to determine whether the experimental treatments, that is, Independent Study and Small-Group strategies, had significantly different effects on the modes of discourse according to Britton's classification and the responses to literature categories of Purves' classification, the most important data gathered were the two sets of code numbers as well as the students' written responses. After the written responses were collected they were typed in two ways. First, each essay was typed exactly as it was written, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph. Second, each essay was again typed but this time the sentences were numbered and typed one below the other. Each of the two sets was then photocopied so that each coder would have a double set of protocols (to use Richards' term) for independent coding.

The Training of the Coders. Two coders, one an experienced and highly qualified secondary teacher of English, and the other, an experienced and well-qualified elementary teacher with a strong interest in learning about new methods of teaching and evaluating, agreed to help the researcher who acted as the third coder. A coding manual was prepared, outlining the procedures, giving definitions of all terms and categories, and including samples for each category taken from Britton. The complete manual is to be found in Appendix B. Each of the other coders was given a manual to take

away with the two sets of photocopied essays. The training session lasted over four hours. Each step was explained and reviewed and the coders were given practice in coding the samples in the manual. Their decisions were discussed and clarified to ensure complete understanding and accuracy. Any difficulties that arose were first resolved before proceeding to the next step. It was found useful to compare and contrast various samples that appeared to fall into more than one category. Once the coders were thoroughly familiar with Britton's concept of the "dominant impression" of a piece of writing any difficulty in deciding which of two possible subcategories was more appropriate was resolved.

The Coding and Classification. Each coder worked independently and coded the sixty essays twice by noting the appropriate code number in the spaces provided on each essay. Where all three coders failed to agree the final verdict was determined by accepting the scores of the two coders who did agree. This procedure was similar to the ones used by Britton and Purves. As it turned out, the coders reached agreement in every case. Details of the two systems of coding and classification are given in Appendix B.

The Results. Each essay was first coded by "dominant impression" as a whole according to Britton's categories of writing.

TABLE 8

Britton's Categories of Writing
Applied to Data Gathered in this Study

Category	No. of Essays					
	Teacher-Directed Group		Independent Group		Small Sub-Groups	
Expressive	7	33.3%	13	61.9%	6	28.6%
Poetic	1	4.8%	0	0%	0	0%
Transactional	13	61.9%	6	28.6%	14	66.7%
Total no. of Essays	21		19		20	

Each essay was coded again by "dominant impression" as a whole according to

Britton's subcategories of writing.

TABLE 9

Britton's Function Subcategories
Applied to Data Gathered in this Study

Subcategory	No. of Essays					
	Teacher-Directed Group		Independent Group		Small Sub-Groups	
111 Record	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
112 Report	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
113 Generalized Information	4	30.77%	1	16.67%	1	7.14%
114 Analogic-Low Level General- ization	5	38.46%	3	50.00%	5	35.71%
115 Analogic	3	23.08%	1	16.67%	4	28.57%
116 Analogic- Tautologic (Speculative)	1	7.69%	1	16.67%	2	14.29%
117 Tautologic	0	0%	0	0%	2	14.29%
Total No. of Essays	13		6		14	

FIGURE 1

BRITTON'S FUNCTION CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES

Applied to the Data Gathered in this Study
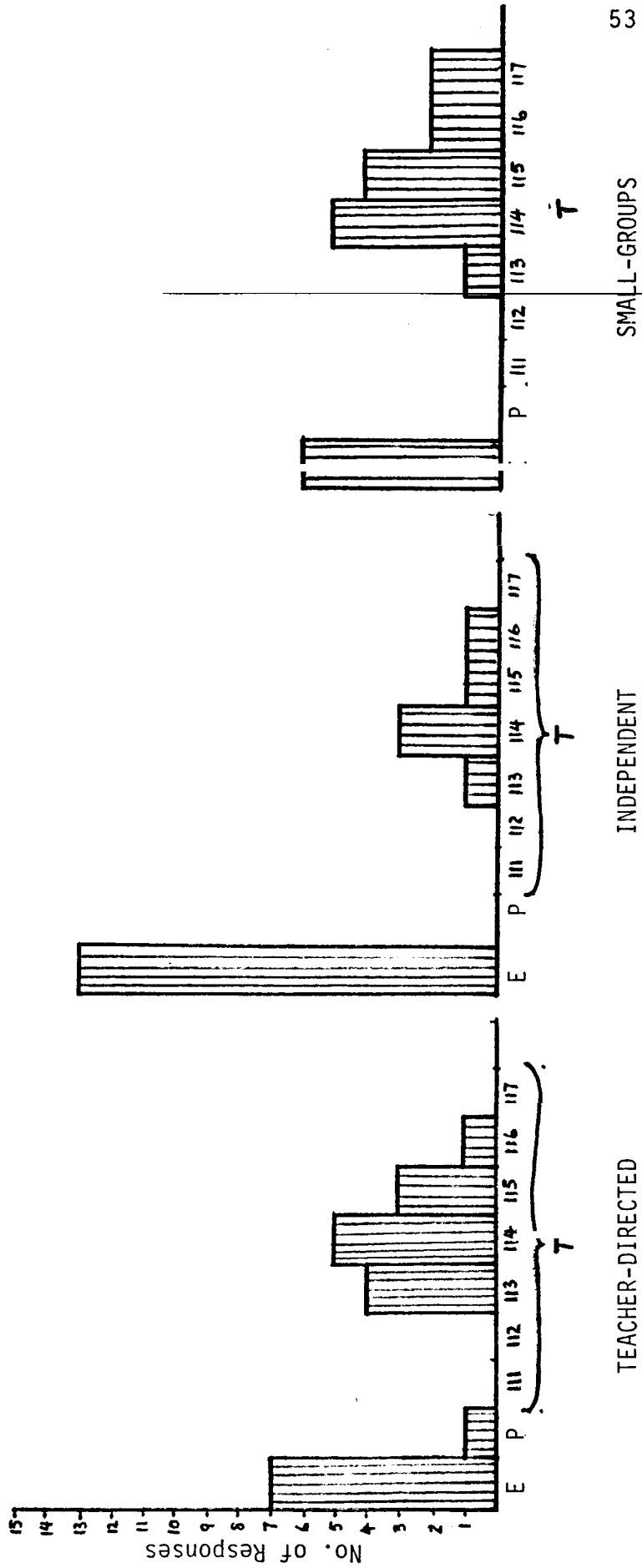
E: expressive
P: poetic
T: transactional (See Tables 8 and 9)

Discussion. The quantitative differences revealed in Tables 8 and 9 tended to be misleading on closer examination. These misleading differences are discussed further in the next chapter. However, the differences that the tables do reveal here are discussed below, category by category.

(a) Expressive writing. A surprisingly large number of students' responses fell into this category (26 out of 60, or 43.3%). Clearly, this was partly due to the large number contributed by the Independent group (equalling the total of the other two groups). Even so, about a third of the responses in the other groups were also in this category. It would seem that the absence of a visible audience in the form of teacher or peers prevented the students in the Independent group from achieving a "sense of audience", to use Britton's term. However, only three responses were without any doubt clear examples of expressive writing. The remaining twenty-three were close combinations of expressive and transactional modes of writing. In every case at least two of the coders judged these responses to be in the expressive mode by "dominant impression". This necessitated the use of Purves' segmented approach to coding and classification as discussed later in this section. Of the three that were clearly expressive, two were in the Small-Group class and one in the Independent class. Thirteen responses from the Independent group were coded expressive by two of the three coders. Seven responses in the Teacher-Directed group were coded expressive by two coders. Four responses in the Small-Group class were coded expressive by two coders. Caution is therefore imperative in interpreting these results. Indeed, Britton himself opens his report with the terse admonition that the present study well exemplifies: "We classify at our peril".[1] It is just as difficult to generalize about the effects of the teaching strategies.

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[1] Britton et al., The Development of Working Abilities (11-18), p. 1.

It does seem reasonable to suppose that these results are idiosyncratic,
that is, that they have more to do with the individual personalities of the
writers than anything else.

(b) Poetic writing. Considering the short time students had for the writing
it was surprising that one student did choose to write a poem.

(c) Transactional writing. The most noticeable feature was, of course, the
very small number of responses in the transactional mode in the Independent
group. The lowest and highest subcategories had either no responses or very
few, whatever the teaching strategy. At this age level (average age: 16 years
7 months) and at this grade level the absence of responses in the lower sub-
categories was to be expected. The paucity of responses in the higher sub-
categories was due, perhaps, to the failure of students to understand the content
and tone of the story and also to the stage of adolescence of the students.

However, even though the Teacher-Directed group appeared to differ
hardly at all from the Small-Group class, a closer look did reveal certain
differences. Reading the figures in Table 9 from the highest subcategory
down towards the lowest it becomes clear that there is a noticeable difference.
The two responses coded "tautologic" were both in the Small-Group class.
Furthermore, eight responses in this class were in the "analogic" and higher
levels compared to four in the Teacher-Directed class. Again, caution is
necessary. The differences may be due to idiosyncratic factors. The dif-
ficulties discussed above led to the use of the Purves system of classification,
the results of which are now presented.

The results. Each of the students' responses in the present study was
coded and classified in two ways: (a) sentence by sentence, using Purves'
and Rippere's original (1968) classification system, and (b) paragraph by
paragraph to óbtain the holistic code number, using Purves' and Beach's new
(1973) classification system.

TABLE 10

Purves' and Rippere's (1968) Classification System
Applied to Data Gathered in this Study

Category	No. of Sentences					
	Teacher-Directed Group		Independent Group		Small Sub-Groups	
Engagement-Involvement	45	15.63%	38	12.71%	29	9.12%
Perception	61	21.18%	61	20.40%	61	19.18%
Interpretation	102	35.42%	97	32.44%	178	55.97%
Evaluation	53	18.40%	59	19.73%	40	12.58%
Miscellaneous	27	9.38%	44	14.72%	10	3.14%
Total no. of Sentences	288		299		318	

TABLE 11

Purves' and Beach's (1973) Classification System
Applied to Data Gathered in this Study

| Category	No. of Essays					
	Teacher-Directed Group		Independent Group		Small Sub-Groups	
Personal Statement	12	57.14%	14	73.68%	9	45.00%
Descriptive Statement	3	14.29%	3	15.79%	0	0%
Interpretive Statement	3	14.29%	2	10.53%	4	20.00%
Evaluative Statement	2	9.52%	0	0%	7	35.00%
Unclassifiable	1	4.76%	0	0%	0	0%
Total no. of Essays	21		19		20	

FIGURE 2

PURVES' AND RIPPERE'S (1968) CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Applied to Data Gathered in this Study

FIGURE 3 58
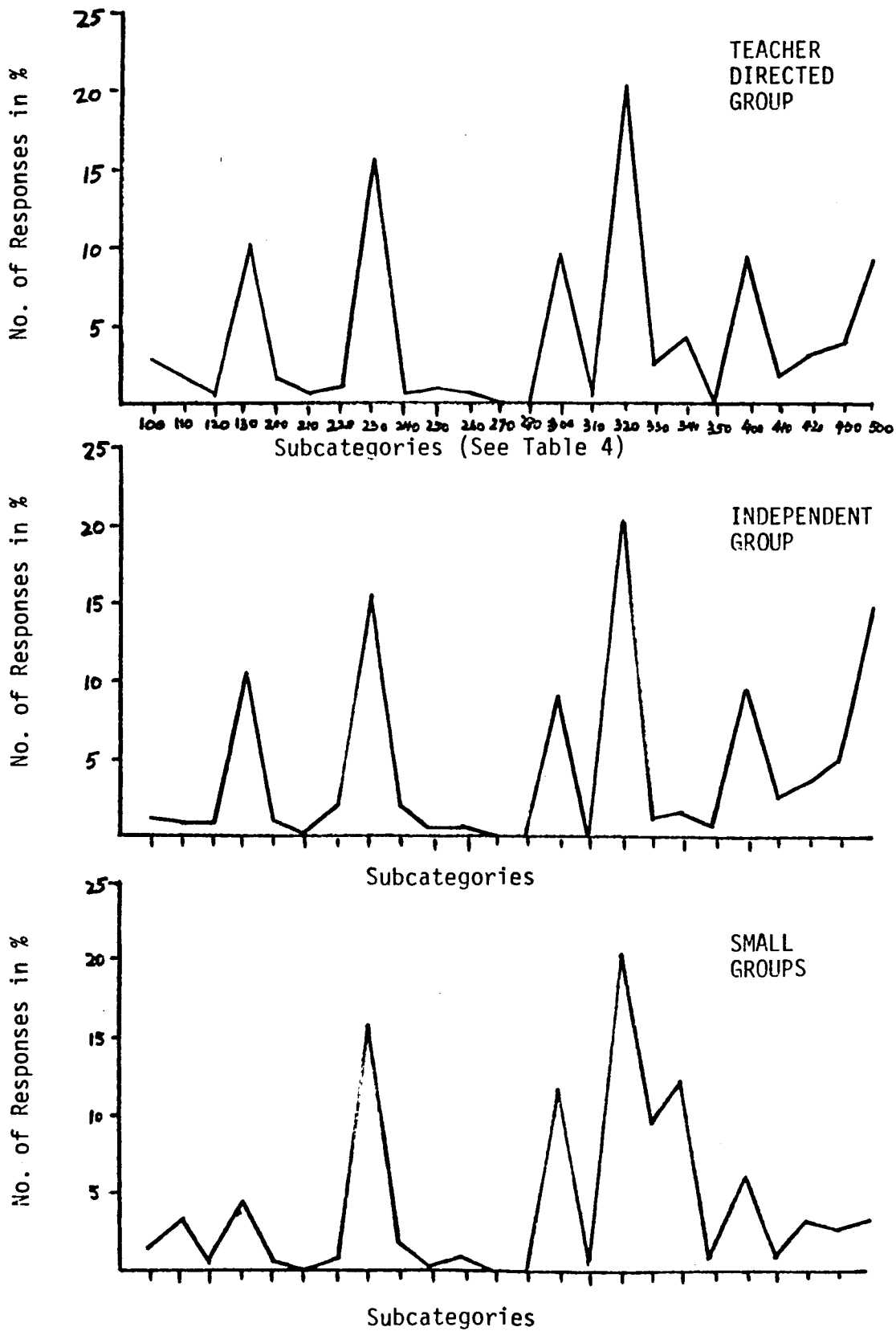
PURVES' AND BEACH'S (1973) CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Applied to Data Gathered in this Study
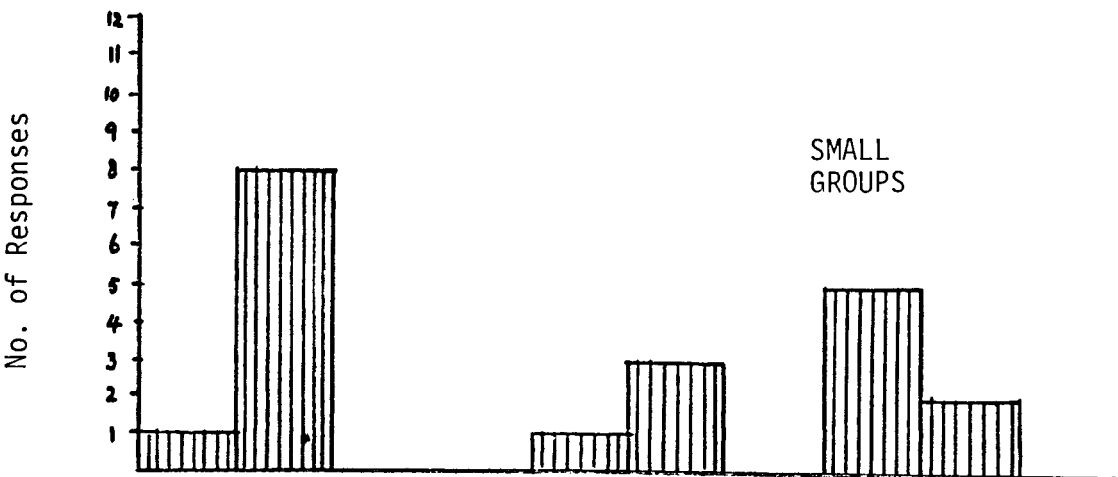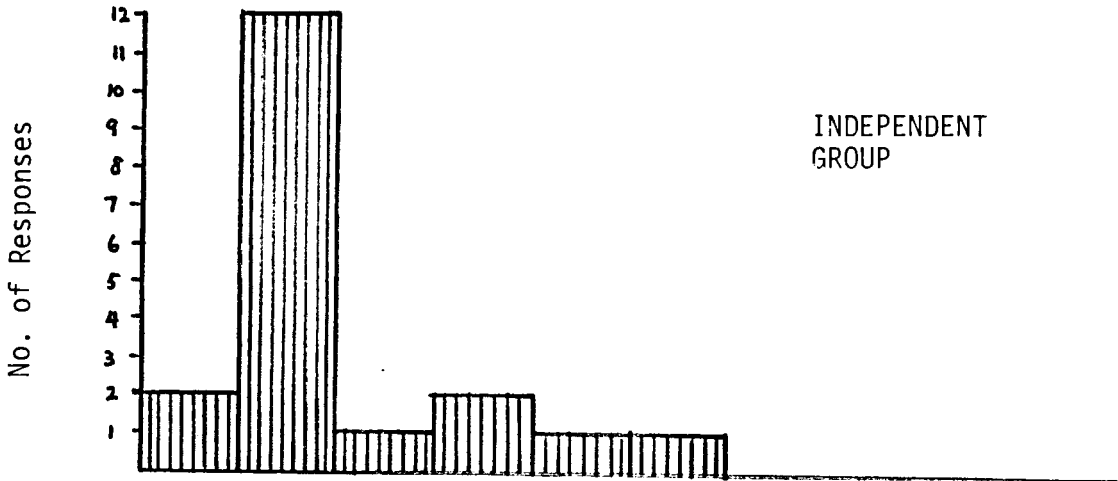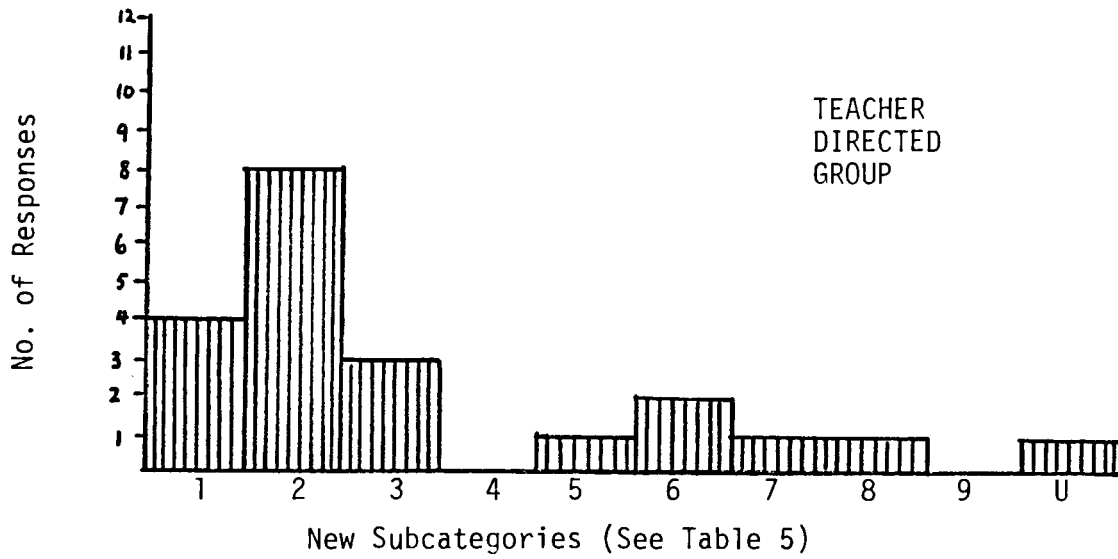
Purves and Rippere

Discussion

(a) Engagement-involvement. A closer look at the subcategories reveals two interesting features. One is that few students in any of the three groups reacted to the form of the story. The other is that many students reacted to the content of the story. Form and content are subcategories 120 and 130 on the accompanying graphs. The complete list of subcategories is to be found in Table 4. The Britton classification does not reveal this. The decline in the Independent group score is accounted for by the increase in the number of miscellaneous or irrelevant responses, much larger than for the other two groups. Again, it would seem that the absence of an audience of "others" was a disadvantage. The sharper decline in the score of the Small-Group class, however, is accounted for by the very sharp increase in the number of interpretive responses. It would seem, too, that the Teacher-Directed group is less self-reliant than the Small-Group class because the pressure to conform may be greater.

(b) Perception. Again, the Purves classification reveals a feature that the Britton classification does not. The responses in all three groups differed hardly at all. All three groups showed a high proportion of perception of content (Subcategory 230) and were very low on language, literary devices, relation of technique to content, structure and tone (subcategories 210, 220, 240, 250 and 260). A weakness in the Purves classification now shows up and will be discussed later in this section: "many of the elements imply their negation; a writer who mentions the absence of imagery is, for purposes of this study, discussing imagery".[2]

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[2]Purves and Rippere, Elements of Writing about a Literary Work, p.9.

This necessitated a further analysis of the data, using a qualitative

approach based on that of Richards in Practical Criticism.

(c) Interpretation. The sharp rise in interpretive responses in the

Small-Group class may be accounted for in two ways. One is that the

composition of the subgroups themselves influenced the results. This

possibility will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. The

other is that much of the difference is accounted for by the large number

of responses in the mimetic and typological interpretation subcategories

(330 and 340). Again, it would seem that the presence of a peer audience

had the effect of lifting the students out of the narrow bounds of the

classroom situation into the world at large. However, the weakness in

this classification system noted above needs to be repeated. Students in

all groups hastened to interpret what they did not or could not understand.

One further point needs to be made: very often students' responses were

very close combinations of perception and interpretation so that coding

had to rely heavily on dominant impression.

(d) Evaluation. The Small-Group class was clearly less interested in

evaluation than the other two groups; students in this group were more

interested in interpretation. A glance at the subcategories reveals that

all three groups reacted in a personal rather than objective manner; the

reactions tended to be vague and off-handed dismissals rather than reasoned

or substantiated rejections of the story. Almost all students evaluated

what they did not or could not understand.

(e) Miscellaneous. The Independent group, it seems, was at a distinct

disadvantage because of the lack of an audience. It would seem, too, that

the presence of a small, spatially close audience would account for the

very small number of irrelevant responses in the Small-Group class. Such a

small group situation enabled students to focus more strongly on a single issue, it would seem, because of instant "feedback".

Frequent reference has been made in the discussion so far to the effects of audience upon students' written responses. Even though this study did not specifically set out to investigate this question it seems necessary at this point to reexamine the results obtained from the Small-Group class to ascertain if there is, indeed, a connection between the various subgroup audiences and the written responses. The reexamination reveals that one of the clearly expressive responses and three of the responses coded expressive by two coders were in the first subgroup. That is, only one member of this group of five students did not write in the expressive mode. The written responses are strongly evaluative and indicate a lack of understanding of the story. The responses are also strongly emotional. (A brief interview with the key member of this group - identified from the teacher's profile[3] as bright and articulate - confirmed the impression obtained from the written responses. The student indicated that she was irritated and depressed about some experiences she had had in school during the past week and that this had carried over into her response to the story. She was keen to read the story again in a more detached manner. It seems safe to say that the dominant expressive mode of writing in this first subgroup was strongly influenced by this student, especially in its evaluative aspects.)

One of the other clearly expressive written responses was obtained from the second subgroup. Like the first subgroup this had five members. Fader

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[3]Actual comment: "Alive! Great critical acumen!"

suggests that in groups larger than three some students tend to be cut off and become alienated.[4] The written response seems to bear this out: the student reveals her anxiety over a Social Studies test. (This student was not interviewed.)

The remaining expressive response was obtained from the fifth subgroup. There were only three students in this subgroup (regarded as the ideal number by Fader) yet the influence of at least one of the members is evident in the written responses: the comments evaluate the story negatively. "This story makes no sense at all" writes the one student. The other student echoes: "I find the story has no sense at all...". The student writing in the expressive mode therefore seems to pursue her own thoughts: "This story reminded me of something along the lines of a fairy tale or something off into the future". The students in this subgroup were not interviewed.

While caution is imperative in assessing these influences it seems reasonable to suggest that small groups tend to focus students' attention on a single issue whereas large class groups tend to dissipate ideas so that no single clear issue emerges in the discussion. This possibility seems to be borne out to some extent by the responses of the students in the fourth subgroup consisting of three members. All three responses were lengthy (well over 450 words compared to a rough average of about 250 words in the other 57 essays) and extremely detailed. All three students focussed on the single theme: "Life". They interpreted the story as a portrayal of life as a test, the driving episode as a struggle, and Proctor's motives as illusory. One

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[4]Daniel Fader et al., The New Hooked On Books (New York: Berkley Publishing Corp., 1976), p.14.

of these responses was coded "Analogic-Tautologic" (116) and the other two

"Tautologic" (117) in Britton's classification system. One of the students

began two of his paragraphs thus: "I got some real good ideas..." and

"Another idea I have...": the twenty-minute time limit seems to have been

a severe restraining influence. While it is possible that idiosyncratic

factors may have been at work here it seems safe to suggest, all the same,

that the smallness of the group was a very strong influence. This seems to

be borne out by the fact that both the teacher's profile and the researcher's

interview with the key member of this subgroup did not reveal distinctly

superior abilities in this subgroup. Since the students did not form their

groups according to their personal choice and inclination but were assigned

to them by the researcher it seems reasonable to attribute the superior

quality of their responses, in the sense that they were interpretive rather

than evaluative, to the particular teaching strategy. It might be pointed

out, too, that the preponderance of interpretive comments in the rearranged

discussion in Chapter V (77 to 85) is no accident. Most of these responses,

it will be noticed, come from the Small-Group class: five consecutive

entries on pages 79-81 and six consecutive entries on pages 83-85.

To sum up this part of the discussion: It would seem reasonable to

suggest that the students in the Small-Group class, particularly in one of

the five subgroups, displayed a greater understanding of the story than

both the Teacher-Directed and Independent groups, as judged by the proportion

of interpretive responses to evaluative responses. It would seem that small

groups promote this greater understanding through the encouragement of more

intense and focussed discussion as well as closer reading of the text of

the story, especially if the size of the group is kept to as low as three

members. This greater understanding, it would seem, results in more

interpretive responses and few, if any, evaluative responses since the pursuit of meaning becomes more and more engrossing. The efforts of the students in reconstructing the story in terms of the meaning that they have settled on - even if their response turns out to be a misinterpretation - become concentrated rather than dissipated. If, however, students do not understand the story - even if the group is small - the tendency to evaluate negatively becomes strong. Little or no attempt is made to explore and discover and reconstruct. Written responses that were largely evaluative were also among the shortest. There were few ideas and even these were repetitive. The disinclination to explore not only prevented students from interpreting but also impeded the ultimate discovery of meaning. The absence of a closely interacting and stimulating audience effectively reinforced the initial lack of understanding of the story.

The use of the Purves' system, then, proved useful for the additional insights it provided and for the real, even if small, differences that were revealed. At the same time it proved to be inadequate in identifying more precisely the overall weaknesses in the responses of all the students so that a qualitative analysis became necessary. Before that was done, however, an analysis of the data was made using the new (1973) classification system of Purves and Beach.

<u>Purves and Beach</u>

<u>Discussion</u>. A close examination of the results according to the new classification system of Purves and Beach reveals a number of features not made clear by the original Purves and Rippere classification system. The most interesting, perhaps, are the following: none of the responses in the Small-Group class falls into the Descriptive category (the earlier category of Perception). That is, even though many responses were partly

composed of Perception, none of them was predominantly a retelling of the story or a description of the structure or form of the story. The sharp decline in the category of Interpretive Statement in the Small-Group class seems to accord better with a subjective assessment of the written responses. This will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. In all three groups the scores for categories relating to understanding and interpretation are low. The score for Evaluative Statement rises sharply in the Small-Group class and disappears altogether in the Independent group - again confirming the subjective impression. This seems to be accounted for by the definition of the ninth subcategory as "the meaningfulness of the work". Interpretive and evaluative responses were often combined in the responses of many students, but particularly so in the Small-Group class.

A look at the nine subcategories (Table 5) provides further insights. There were more personal statements about the work than about the reader, especially in the Independent group, again perhaps because of the absence of a distracting audience. Scores in the subcategory of descriptive statement relating to form and structure are recorded only in the Independent group. Students in the other two groups seem not to have focussed on this aspect at all. Even so, only two students in the Independent group focussed on this aspect. The subcategories of evaluative statement are also of some interest. Nearly all the students paid no attention to the evocativeness of the story. Several students in the small subgroups focussed on the construction of the story but hardly any of the others did so. Again, only the Small-Group class paid any attention to the meaningfulness of the work.

The new classification system seems to be a more precise instrument than the old. It became abundantly clear at this point in the coding and classification of the data that a combination of methods of analysis would be

necessary to diagnose and describe the students' responses adequately and as precisely as possible. It also seemed clear that for practical classroom purposes a combination of Britton's and Purves' and Beach's classification systems do provide an instrument that is sufficiently accurate and comprehensive and, most important of all, simple and easy to use and understand. Both Britton and Purves emphasize this criterion.

The subjective impressions derived from a careful reading of the students' responses remained to be explained. Richards' approach seemed to have answers to some insistent questions which form the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF STUDENTS' WRITTEN RESPONSES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING

This chapter discusses those features of the students' written responses that were overlooked by Britton's and Purves' classification systems. It attempts to describe similarities and differences in the responses of students in the different treatment groups. It concludes with a discussion of the implications of this study for the teaching of English literature in the secondary school.

The most important feature of the students' responses that could not be identified by the classification systems used was the inability of the students, without exception, to understand the tone of the story, that is, the author's emotional attitude towards the story, the characters and the audience. Consequently, the quantitative results tended to be somewhat misleading. A number of responses were classified as analogic and tautologic (Britton's terms) and as perceptive and interpretive (Purves' terms) when in fact the perceptions and interpretations were seldom more than glimpses or misunderstandings. However, the failure to understand tone is not unique to this particular sample. Richards had something to say about this as long as half a century ago:

> "... all those features which can be judged without
> going into the poem, all details or aspects that can
> be scrutinized by the mind in its practical, every-hour,
> non-poetical capacity, are so many invitations to make
> short work of the task of critical appraisement.
> Instead of trying the poem on, we content ourselves with
> a glance at its lapels or its buttons. For the details
> are more easily perceived than the ensemble, and
> technical points seem more obtrusive than the point of
> the whole". (p.35)

> "The sovereign formula in all reading is that
> we must pass to judgment of details from judgment
> of the whole. It is always rash and usually
> disastrous to reverse the process". (p.40)[1]

With two slight modifications Richards' remarks seem quite apposite: read
"short story" for "poem" and "considered response" for "critical
appraisement".

Before examining students' failure to understand the tone it is
necessary to record the salient points of the story so as to highlight the
author's emotional attitude towards the story, the characters and the
audience. (It may be of interest to note that the story was originally
published in The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction in 1962.)

Robert Proctor had overtuned the engine of his automobile so that it
purred smoothly at high speed and idled roughly. He had done this
over the objections of the mechanic. After two hours of driving on
the turnpike he overtook a speeding great truck and a convertible
that was content to follow, rather than overtake the truck. Just as
Robert Proctor did so the convertible swung out without warning.
That was the beginning of Robert Proctor's troubles - or so it seems.
In fact, his troubles started quite clearly when he defied the mechanic
for he had created the possibility of an accident long before he drove
on to the turnpike by overtuning the engine. Once on the turnpike he
compounded his troubles by overtaking in the most irresponsible way.
And that appears to be the key to the tone of the story: Robert Proctor
is an irresponsible young man. Now to add the "lapels" or "buttons" to
the "ensemble" (to use Richards' words): Robert Proctor - he is always
referred to (sarcastically or ironically?) by his full name - is an

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[1]Richards, Practical Criticism.

over-confident young man (how young, though?). He is relaxed and alert
(but how alert?). He is a good driver (before he goes on to the
turnpike or after, or even more pertinent, after the collision with
the convertible?). How slowly was he driving? The truck was not
merely speeding along but spouting a geyser of smoke, indicating
perhaps the considerable speed at which it was travelling. Without
going into any more detail it becomes clear that the author is using
words ironically. He is not so much presenting the reader with facts
but is indeed inviting the reader to make judgments of Robert Proctor's
character. The reader who is sufficiently detached must judge Robert
Proctor unfavourably. Again, without going into further detail it may
be appropriate to note that one would expect the driver of a "long
blue convertible" to take a risk since he has the power to do so, yet
he exercises unusual caution. The author is not only using words
ironically but also ambiguously: Robert Proctor is alert as a driver
but not so alert as to the consequences of tuning the engine to perform
in a way it was not designed to perform. This provides another aspect
of the author's tone: we are invited to judge the author's presenta-
tion of the facts and go below the surface to the underlying intention
to cast doubt on Robert Proctor's motives. That is, we are invited to
cast doubt on the author's apparent motive in presenting the facts in
Robert Proctor's favour. A further clue is given rather subtly towards
the end of the story when Robert Proctor is made to feel guilty about
the girl's death. To sum up: it does not matter, then, that the accident
turns out to be unreal in the sense that it is part of a driving test.
Mention of a test takes the reader back to the title of the story.
Again, the word turns out to be both ironic and ambiguous. The test is

not merely a driving test but a test of Robert Proctor's character. The crucial question that might face young readers could be whether Robert Proctor represented <u>all</u> young drivers. That is, the author raises an important question about young drivers and provokes a great deal of thought from the reader about responsibility.

The students' failure to understand the points outlined above was projected on to the story or to the author thus: "It is stupid, it's open-ended, it doesn't make sense". / "His choice of words was poor". / "In my opinion, the author could have put more effort into this piece of writing". / "The author I think ended the story that way because he had no other way to end it". / "I mean how does driving down a turnpike in May with your mother relate with being dragged out of a room by the man in white?" / "The ending seemed to be a completely twisted chain of events which obviously were the product of someone's warped imagination". / "The author over-simplifies the story and his style of writing is dull, and "repulsive"". / "The start gives us no real explanation of what the story is all about".

Students tended to identify with the protagonist, Robert Proctor, and with the girl and the mother but almost nobody focussed on the other drivers, except unfavourably: "Robert Proctor was driving along, a very good driver, observant, confident, registered things, when he was hit". / "Robert couldn't move his car but the second car could have moved and avoided the accident". / "Robert Proctor was a good driver. You could automatically tell that he knew what he was doing. For instance, when it stated in the story that he had fixed the engine himself with the objections of a mechanic". / "Another thing that doesn't make much sense is why the guy in the convertible turned out when he did and why the on-coming car did not swerve to miss Robert's car

when it was a big turnpike and he must have had a lot of time to see the car coming his way". And to cap it all: "Blaming it on the young student drivers doesn't solve the problem".

Many students focussed heavily on the test itself. They condemned it as "unfair", "unrealistic", "unreasonable" and "futile".

The complete failure of the students to detect the ironic intention of the author seemed to call for another kind of explanation than that the failure was the typical behaviour of adolescents. Consequently, an examination was made of the structure of the story. It was possible to segment the story into seven sections corresponding to changes in narrative focus. A word count was then made and the proportions of the parts to the whole was calculated. Several interesting features were immediately revealed.

TABLE 12

The Structure of the Story "Test"

1.	Setting	:	85 words	:	5.2%
2.	Robert Proctor's attitudes	:	313 "	:	19.2%
3.	The accident	:	627 "	:	38.5%
4.	Test under hypnosis	:	228 "	:	14.0%
5.	Fee and application	:	61 "	:	3.8%
6.	To the asylum	:	258 "	:	15.9%
7.	"test"?	:	56 "	:	3.4%

Sections 3–6 bracketed: 72.2%

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Only about a fifth of the story deals with Robert Proctor's personality
and gives direct and explicit clues to the real causes of the accident and
the location of responsibility. However, nearly three quarters of the
story deals with the accident in one form or another. In addition, the
three key sections of the story (if the author's underlying intention is
to be comprehended) are placed before and after the very lengthy descrip-
tion of the accident. They could easily be forgotten, more especially
since the accident is so vividly and graphically described. Several students
registered their reaction to this just as graphically: "Throughout the
entire story I was held back against my chair in anticipation". / "The story
came alive for me". / "Also I felt like I was there sitting in the car and
watching the other car coming up the road". / "When it all of a sudden
pulled out and hit my (sic) car it was so unexpected that it seemed real".

The "unfairness" of Robert Proctor's treatment at the end of the
story, by arousing the indignation of most students, could have been the
cause of an emotional block: "With the ending I could feel the terror that
I knew Robert Proctor was experiencing". / "It was as if it was me they were
hauling off to an asylum, not just a character in a story". / "I think that
anyone who had anything to do with the crazy scheme of the accident should
be put away with Robert". / "As far as I am concerned these men should be
locked up for giving such a stupid test to anyone".

The author's subtlety of style proved too much of an obstacle to
students who seemed to have barely outgrown their egocentricism. Several
felt just as cheated at the end of the story as Robert Proctor was: "It's
so irritating when one reads a story with an ending like the story, "Test".
I can't handle one of those Grade One level endings". / "The story dropped
me right near the end. I thought the driver and his mother got killed".

Some students commented that the test was "against a citizen's rights" and that it was "not democratic".

A closer look at the students' responses in each group revealed other features that were perhaps related to the teaching strategy. Some caution is necessary since there were several instances of highly idiosyncratic responses, that is, responses related to the individual personality of the student. Some students seemed to reject or simply ignore the strongly expressed opinions of other students in their group.

The Teacher-Directed Group. Many responses pronounced judgment on the unrealistic nature of the story. The engagement and involvement of the students, though quite strong, was almost entirely emotional rather than reflective. Peer influence seemed quite strong and many students tended to echo the opinions of other students. Even so, there were no easily recognizable patterns of response. Many responses focussed strongly on the men in white, with the "establishment" and "the law", for example. This was not so noticeable in the other two groups.

The Independent Group. There was a marked difference between the responses of this group and the Teacher-Directed group. This difference, however, is in marked contrast to the difference revealed by the quantitative analysis described in the previous chapter. Table 9 on page 52 records fewer responses in Britton's function subcategories for this group than for the Teacher-Directed group. It must be noted, though, that this classification was a quantitative measure based on whole discourses rather than on ideas. At the beginning of this chapter the point was made that the quantitative results tended to be somewhat misleading because certain features of the students' written responses were overlooked by the quantitative classification systems. The detailed qualitative analysis employed in this

chapter was able to reveal a larger number of _ideas_ in the whole discourses of the Independent group of students. It is as well to recall Britton's opening warning: "We classify at our peril".[2] The ideas were also more diverse, reflecting a wide range of individual responses that were not influenced by the teacher or other students. There were many more attempts at interpretation and perception of details and fewer evaluative responses and opinions. Furthermore, the responses were generally more detached and objective.

The _Small Groups_. There were five subgroups in this class group. Subgroup one consisted of five students. Surprisingly, all the responses were idiosyncratic. None was influenced to any appreciable degree by the subgroup as a whole or by individual members of the subgroup. The size of the subgroup appeared to be of less importance than its composition, that is, the individual personalities of the members.

In subgroup two, also consisting of five students, the responses were largely idiosyncratic but there were some noticeable differences from subgroup one and the other subgroups. There were some speculative comments and the responses were both more detailed and interpretive than those in the other subgroups. There was greater perception of and interest in the author's intention.

Subgroup three consisted of four students. There was more concern to understand the story and its meaning.

Subgroup four had three students. Whether the smaller size of the subgroup had anything to do with it is difficult to ascertain but the responses were quite clearly very detailed. The responses were highly

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[2]Britton et al., _The Development of Writing Abilities_ (11-18), p.1.

interpretive. While some responses tended to echo the ideas of other members of the subgroup there were also strongly divergent responses.

The fifth subgroup also had three students. There was an almost complete failure to understand the story or its purpose. The result was a preponderance of negative evaluatory responses.

Implications for Classroom Teaching: A Simulation of a Discussion

Since many students displayed glimpses of perception, the teacher could open up many new avenues for exploration and discovery with a little nudging rather than through direct teaching. The formation of small groups of about three students each might enable students to become more involved in their discussions and to engage more closely with the issues under discussion. This is likely to be strengthened by the provision of more time for group interaction and exploration of ideas through close reading of material carefully selected to meet the real interests of students. The teacher will have to ensure that the reading material will challenge the students so that they do arrive at enlightenment and delight.

One such possibility of an involved discussion in which a group of students engages in the story and probes deeper and deeper until it arrives at enlightenment and delight is illustrated below. The statements that follow have been carefully selected from those that actually appeared in the sixty students' essays. The statements were drawn from all three groups to simulate possible stages of development in group discussion. The students in this group cooperate and collaborate without teacher's intervention in

the process of "going into" the story, of "trying the story on", of
reconstructing the story as an "ensemble" of key details - to recall
the words of Richards, already quoted on page 67. The students have
been allowed to speak for themselves.

In the first stage of the simulation the students become engaged and
involved in the story, its oddness and its structure. In the next stage,
the students focus on the author's intention and the irony in the story,
as they begin to move to deeper levels of perception. The teacher should
notice that the students are keen to determine the purpose of the story,
that is, the writer's intention in making the conclusion of the story ironic.
They have moved very quickly through the bulk of the story and have con-
centrated their attention on interpreting the conclusion.

In the third stage, the students become even more deeply involved as
they begin to identify with the protagonist, Robert Proctor, and the theme
of mind control. It may be necessary, perhaps, for the teacher to intervene
at this stage to refocus their attention on the details actually presented
in the story. For example, the teacher could draw their attention to the
remark that Robert "felt no grief for his dead mother" (p.   ). In this
way the teacher could tie together the students' perception of the oddness
and irony by linking these features to the character of Robert Proctor.
This would save them from wandering from the story itself to their own
anxieties (pp.   to   ). They should be encouraged by gentle nudging to
look for details in the story and so avoid making generalizations based
on their opinions of everyday life.

The teacher should notice that the fourth stage begins with a remark that focusses directly on Robert Proctor and that an attempt is immediately made to avoid dealing with the issue. The teacher could intervene here and gently draw the discussion back to the issue of Robert's "one mistake". In the simulated discussion one of the students does intervene in this way.

In stage five an attempt is again made to lapse into generalizations and the teacher's gentle intervention may be necessary. In the simulation a student draws attention back to the story itself and thus ensures that the main line of inquiry will be sustained.

Yet another attempt is made to wander in stage VI. Again, the teacher could gently nudge the students into a consideration of the risks actually taken by Robert Proctor.

In the final stage an attempt is made to return to the main line of inquiry by focussing on the title of the story. The teacher could sharpen the focus, perhaps, by tieing the concluding generalization to the specific issue of Robert Proctor's "self-responsibilities". In this way the teacher could help to make the discussion more enlightening and delighting by nudging the students into recreating and reconstructing the story by focussing closely on the text and also the interpretations of the members of the group. This kind of interaction should enable the students to work towards clearer, more refined and, therefore, more adequate responses. At the same time, students will become increasingly aware of their own pre-conceptions, misconceptions and prejudices and will seek to eliminate them as they grow towards greater understanding. All this could then lead to an interpretation of the author's intention, his style, and his success or otherwise in presenting his main theme. That is, the students can now make an adequate and balanced evaluation.

The statements have been labelled as follows:

      TD : Teacher-Directed class

       I : Independent Study class

      SG : Small-Groups class

A commentary has been added to link the transitions in exploration, discovery and final revelation. In reality this process would not be as ordered and smooth as this carefully reconstructed picture.

The students, having read and thought about the story "Test" are immediately struck by its strangeness:

I   It was, to say the least, an odd story.   (I)

        This wasn't a story but almost stories in stories.   (I)

        I felt that this was a very excellent story because it

        leaves the conclusion up to the reader.   (TD)

In the ensuing pause two questions engage the thoughts of the students: should they take up the challenge, and what could the conclusion possibly be?:

        I suppose, if one probes rather deeply, or perhaps, not so

        deep, the story can be picked apart as being unrealistic,

        for Robert felt no grief for his dead mother, but only

        felt that for the young girl to be dead was a waste.   (TD)

        The first third deals with contentment and makes the

        reader feel relaxed. You can almost feel the smoothness

        of the engine and feel the sunshine. The relaxing nature

        of the situation is so evident that the reader feels

        relaxed. Abruptly, the reader is jolted out of this

        tranquil setting into one of suspense. The second-third

of the story deals with the accident from

beginning to end.　　(I)

All this from the same student. She went on to complain about the Grade One

level ending: it irritated her to the point of insult.

　　After a great deal of rereading, whispered consultations with one

another and solitary brooding:

II　　　The author was probably trying to put a point

across or some kind of a theme.　　(I)

My criticism is that it is almost ironic.　　(TD)

Thomas the writer seems like he is trying to

find too much irony in life. He leads the

writer [that is, the student] on to different

lines throughout the story and then throws a

third one at the end.　　(I)

This prompts a student to return to an earlier comment on the structure of

the story:

I found that this story had two endings, both

ironic and could have also had another ending

with him waking up from a dream as the end of

the story states.　　(I)

I also found it to be a take a chance story to

believe if he was dreaming or not.　　(SG)

This immediately triggers something:

The question is is it in reality or is it a

fantasy?　　(TD)

The story I have just read has many different

meanings, though I can't think of them all.

We did discuss them.   (TD)

This story seems to make the point that most

people are <u>not</u> bothered by seeing and hearing

about people being killed by car accidents,

probably because it is so common place in this

high speed society of ours.   (I)

This observation sets up an ominous tremor:

It is a nervous feeling to think what you

believe to be real may in actuality be an

illusion, somewhat like the end of the story

where Robert Proctor asks, "You can't really

mean this, I'm still dreaming, aren't I?"

The reply that follows brings to my mind the

insufficient distinction between reality and

illusion. "How do any of us know?"   (TD)

The tremor grows:

III   It is frightening that your mind, the only thing

you really have that belongs to you alone, can

maybe be probed into by others.   (TD)

The most dominating thought that comes to mind

when considering this story is the idea that

people can control your mind, make you think and

see what they want you to.   (TD)

The students have something that touches them very deeply for they persist:

The story implies that our society believes

everyone must think and act in the same way. If

you choose to act differently, you are sick, and

shouldn't be allowed to live freely.   (SG)

So when we are considered to be sick we are

taken away and conditioned to fit into society.

I didn't like the ending very much because it

isn't very realistic compared to modern times,

and we can't easily relate to it.   (SG)

Somebody jumps at the invitation to pass judgment and so unwittingly closes

the process of exploration and discovery:

It's the same old story that you always hear

about, someone always telling you what is wrong

with what you do or telling you what to do

altogether. Our whole society is run this way,

you get to choose what you want to do initially

but after this choice you are told what to do

from here on in.   (SG)

Another student gets in a last word:

The author also gives the impression that he

believes we are creatures who can accept death

or the act of dying in the same stride as any

normal, day-to-day activities. It does not

concern us if we have witnessed or been close to

death, as we are only concerned when it happens

to be our lives at stake. In conclusion, I feel

that although the story was a bit out of the

ordinary, the points it expressed act as a

warning for our society.   (SG)

The students now turn to a consideration of the protagonist of the story,

Robert Proctor:

IV In the story, it took only one mistake on the
    part of the boy, and it wasn't even his fault. (SG)

Someone edges away slightly:

    So, assuming the story is taking place in the

    future, in order to decrease the amount of violence

    in society, the members of different companies have

    some test for each person to test his violent

    personality. (TD)

This triggers off another probing session:

    Perhaps Robert Proctor's mind was scrambled and he

    wasn't sure of anything that he wanted. (TD)

    Maybe, in a way, the boy, Robert, was a bit crazy

    because when he regained consciousness he felt that

    if the girl in the other car died it would have been

    a waste, and that it really didn't matter if his

    mother died because she was old. (I)

    The hypnosis proved Robert was confident enough to go

    through with it but it also showed that he was

    irresponsible to not think about it twice. (TD)

The "it" refers to the test, not the tuning of the engine.

    He kept thinking, "Oh I'm a good driver, nothing to

    worry about!" Even while the car in front of him

    pulled out he still felt it was in his power to

    control things because he is a good driver. (I)

This student·realizes that he has discovered something important, gains in

confidence and probes with singleminded determination while his wrapt

audience follows his analysis:

V   This is the attitude of most drivers today

because they are of the opinion that it can

never happen to them, it's always the other

guy who gets killed in car crashes. Also

everyone thinks they are the best drivers in

the world and it's always someone else's fault

that car accidents happen. This was Bob Proctor's

typical view. His values were those many people

have.   (I)

Meanwhile, one student has been subjecting the story to even closer

scrutiny. He suddenly fills the thoughtful silence that follows the last

speaker's penetrating interpretation with an astonishing discovery:

The main character was constantly referred to

as "Robert Proctor" and nothing else... (I)

This illuminates another mind:

He has a very complex personality and yet could

be related to.   (I)

Finally, a student is moved to make a statement that seems to point towards

the germ of the story:

You would think he would be worried about his

mom since she had mothered him all his life. (TD)

This use of the word "mothered" is rather interesting. Unfortunately, neither

he nor any of the other students follows this idea any further and, as so

often in the students' written responses, powerful leads are allowed to go

astray: •

VI   It seems that there is no escape except in

innocence as the young girl asleep in the

car unknowing.   (I)

For the third time since this animated discussion began something said triggers off something that has been building up to the point of sustained utterance:

What makes life exciting? It is the risks one

takes and the successes one achieves. In doing

anything there is a risk, though in some things

the risk is greater. When one achieves great

success the joy is great, but usually the success

is earned through taking risks. I would not enjoy

living in a society where there are no ambitions or

things that bring joy. I am not saying that being

in an accident is fun. Supposing that this (way of

judging people for licenses) was true, it would mean

that nobody would have ambition anymore. Everybody

would be cautious and follow the rules exactly - to

the letter. In order to expand and to invent we

have to have some people willing to take a marginal

chance.   (SG)

Again, somebody sees an opportunity to close this interesting line of thought with a terse judgment:

There is no fun in life other than what you make.   (SG)

After a long pause somebody ventures out in another direction:

The story, I think, portrays life very well. It's

all one big test.   (SG)

Intuitively some of the students get the "message" and a flood of responses

wells up to a resounding conclusion:

VII   His constant struggle with the wheel to keep

           the car going on the right track is exactly the

           way life is. You have to fight to keep on the

           right track, to be in control of yourself, to be

           able to handle unforeseen circumstances, to keep

           your life. In the end it all seems useless. You

           can't win.   (SG)

Another continues the refrain:

           Life is one big struggle (e.g. fighting with the

           wheel). During life you're constantly being

           tested and at death when you don't succeed you

           die like so many others have. Life is a cycle -

           an illusion - when the illusion stops (that's

           death) - then you are corrected and sent back for

           another life on earth. (e.g. not so many skids

           from heels). It happens to everybody.   (SG)

And another:

           Life is no big deal. You keep being confronted

           with tests of strength, brainpower and always having

           to be better than someone else. You must pass a

           certain test to see if you can handle life, if you

           can't you won't be allowed on earth and you will

           become an outcast. We are here to take a test. The

           test is life.   (SG)

And then the •great discovery floods in on the swelling tide:

           I think this story really makes a person think

about self-responsibilities.   (TD)

Now that the students have come so far in reconstructing the meaning of the story for themselves in ways that touch their minds and hearts so deeply, and all of this without the intervention of the teacher the question still remains: Is the teacher then dispensable? The answer is implied in this collection of students' responses. Is there anything the teacher needs to do more than to refocus their attention on the great discovery they have themselves made? Did Robert Proctor think about his "self-responsibilities?"

If nothing else this should set them off into another involved and serious pursuit of the meaning of the story. All the teacher needs to do is redirect their attention to the source of the answer: the story itself.

The elaborate reconstruction of the meaning (or rather some of the meanings) of the short story, using the actual responses of students in an actual classroom situation and within a specified time limit, was offered here as an illustration of Rosenblatt's transactional theory of meaning. That is, the meaning of the short story is a process of reconstruction by the free interaction of reader, work and context. The context of the class-room situation must be seen as one part of the total context. The total context includes the individual and idiosyncratic personalities of the readers, who also bring with them the varying and various contexts of their home and other social, emotional and intellectual backgrounds to bear on the contexts of the author and his story as a verbal construct (to use Britton's term). What Richards had to say fifty years ago about the reading of poetry is as valid today and for the reading of a short story or any piece of writing, literary or otherwise: "With most good poetry more than one look is needed before we can be sure of the intention, and sometines

everything else in the poem must become clear to us before this".

The students' responses quoted in this chapter seem to illustrate this

process. Richards continues: "Indeed, many of the secrets of 'style'

could, I believe, be shown to be matters of tone, of the perfect recog-

nition of the writer's relation to the reader in view of what is being

said and their joint feelings about it".[3] The teacher's role, then,

would be to nudge the students into an examination of the author's style

as a clue to his intention. Since they have recognized the theme of the

story as "self-responsibilities" the further recognition of the ironic

intent of the author should give the students added enlightenment and

delight. The teacher's role, to put it in Britton's terms, must be to

induce students to adopt "participant" roles and not rely only on

"spectator" roles. They are spectators as they reflect on the characters

and events. They become participants as they begin not only to reconstruct

the meanings of the story but even more so as they talk about them. In

doing so they not only share their reconstructions with responsive, demand-

ing and sympathetic peer audiences but they also recognize that they do

have something to contribute and that their contributions are listened to

and valued. Thus their talking and further writing become externally

verbalized and publicly accepted thinking processes and products. In

reconstructing the meanings of the story they learn to "represent" the

meanings to themselves, again to use Britton's terms.[4] It is as well to

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[3]Richards, Practical Criticism, p.206.

[4]Britton et al., The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18), p.78.

conclude this chapter with Britton's thoughts about why teachers should

be interested in this approach:

> Teachers have many reasons for being interested in writing
> processes. Their involvement with all the learning
> processes of their pupils requires that they understand
> how something came to be written, not just what is
> written. (p.21)

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The problem, the procedures, and the findings of the study are summarized in this chapter.

The Problem and Hypotheses. The study was an investigation of the effects of three teaching strategies. The strategies were designed to give students varying degrees of freedom in responding to a short story. The written responses were measured by comparing the modes of discourse used according to Britton's classification and the types of response according to Purves' and Rippere's and Purves' and Beach's classifications. The three teaching strategies were as follows:

1. reading a short story, engaging in a class discussion, and writing an essay in response to the story,

2. reading a short story, engaging in small-group discussions, and writing an essay in response to the story,

3. reading a short story and writing an essay in response to the story without oral discussion.

The main hypotheses of the study were stated as follows: (a) there will be differences in the writing of Grade Eleven students in response to a short story depending on the teaching strategies employed, that is, Teacher-Directed discussion, Independent Study and Small-Group discussion, and (b) these differences are measurable according to Britton's function categories and subcategories and Purves' and Rippere's and Purves' and Beach's categories and subcategories of response to a literary work.

The Experimental Procedures. Three classes were used in the experiment.
All the classes were in the same Kamloops Senior Secondary school, and each
was made up of Grade Eleven students. The sample consisted of sixty
students.

The experiment was conducted in one seventy-five minute period. The
same short story was used in all three classes, although each class was
given slightly different instructions before the writing assignments to
take account of the different treatment situations.

Three coders and two coding systems were used. An intensive training
session using a specially prepared coding manual was used to ensure
accuracy. Working independently each coder coded the essays twice and
the results were compared and tabulated. In every case at least two coders
arrived at the same decision.

Findings and Conclusions. Quantitatively, there were some differences
depending upon the teaching strategy used. More than a third of the
total responses fell into the expressive writing category and most of
these were in the Independent Group strategy. In the final analysis only
three out of 26 responses were distinctly expressive. The others were close
combinations of expressive and transactional, though predominantly expressive
as judged by dominant impression. One response was in the poetic category.
The lowest and highest subcategories of the transactional mode registered no
responses or very few, whatever the teaching strategy. However, there were
slightly more responses in -the higher subcategories in the responses of the
Small-Group strategy class.

Most of the responses fell into the categories of interpretation and
perception. Many were in the category of interpretation as judged by

dominant impression. In all cases at least two coders arrived at the same decisions. Just over half of the responses in the Small-Group strategy class fell into the category of interpretation.

Qualitative analysis, however, disclosed that most students' perceptions and interpretations were largely glimpses rather than certainties of under-standing. Student responses in the Teacher-Directed Group tended to be more opinionated and evaluative whereas the responses in the other two groups tended to be more interpretive. These patterns of indeterminable response must be interpreted cautiously. They may be due to influences other than the particular teaching strategy used. The only safe generalization that seems possible is that most responses tended to be idiosyncratic and unique. It does seem likely, though, that a combination of all three teaching strategies with a change in the teacher's role and the creation of an atmosphere in which free response is encouraged, points in the direction of a more productive teaching strategy. The change in the teacher's role will entail at least the following: identification of the type of response made by the student in a whole discourse as well as in the parts, diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses as revealed by such identification, facilitation of discourse both during the oral sessions and in the writing sessions (on an individual basis when requested), tact and judgment in monitoring and intervening in oral group discussions, and the creation of a trusting and cooperative and collaborative classroom atmosphere.

This study demonstrates, perhaps, the need to make it possible for students to respond, both orally and in writing, with the least amount of teacher intervention as possible so as to enable them as well as the teacher

to ascertain just how they actually think and feel. That is, the process of learning should be firmly based on the fostering of students' self-awareness: on their becoming increasingly conscious of their individual thought processes. In addition, they should be enabled to observe the thought processes of others, both peers and adults, and to learn from them. The emphasis, then, would be on learning rather than on teaching.

The classification systems of Britton and Purves appear to be easy to learn and apply as diagnostic instruments to promote this self-awareness and as practical guidelines for personal growth to increasing mastery of verbal comprehension and articulation.

The possibility of using the data so obtained to prepare the ground for future work in English lessons makes this effort a practical one. The written responses could then be viewed, properly, as the starting points, the basic assumption being that a higher quality of written response would depend on the student's greater awareness of his or her thought processes and of the need to make these comprehensible to increasingly wider audiences.

Looked at in this way this study makes no claim beyond the simple one of exploring a new approach away from traditional classroom strategies in the teaching of English.

APPENDIX A

TEST

By Theodore L. Thomas

(in D.A. Sohn, ed. Ten Top Stories (New York: Bantam Books, 1974), pp.133-137)

Robert Proctor was a good driver for so young a man. The Turnpike
curved gently ahead of him, lightly travelled on this cool morning in May.
He felt relaxed and alert. Two hours of driving had not yet produced the
twinges of fatigue that appeared first in the muscles in the base of the neck.
The sun was bright, but not glaring, and the air smelled fresh and clean.
He breathed it deeply, and blew it out noisily. It was a good day for
driving.

He glanced quickly at the slim, grey-haired woman sitting in the front
seat with him. Her mouth was curved in a quiet smile. She watched the
trees and the fields slip by on her side of the pike. Robert Proctor immed-
iately looked back at the road. He said, "Enjoying it, Mom?"

"Yes, Robert." Her voice was as cool as the morning. "It is very
pleasant to sit here. I was thinking of the driving I did for you when you
were little. I wonder if you enjoyed it as much as I enjoy this."

He smiled, embarrassed. "Sure I did."

She reached over and patted him gently on the arm, and then turned
back to the scenery.

He listened to the smooth purr of the engine. Up ahead he saw a great
truck, spouting a geyser of smoke as it sped along the Turnpike. Behind it,
not passing it, was a long blue convertible, content to drive in the wake
of the truck. Robert Proctor noted the arrangement and filed it in the back
of his mind. He was slowly overtaking them, but he would not reach them for
another minute or two.

He listened to the purr of the engine, and he was pleased with the sound.
He had tuned that engine himself over the objections of the mechanic. The
engine idled tough now, but it ran smoothly at high speed. You needed a
special feel to do good work on engines, and Robert Proctor knew he had it.
No one in the world had a feel like his for the tune of an engine.

It was a good morning for driving, and his mind was filled with good

thoughts. He pulled nearly abreast of the blue convertible and began to pass it. His speed was a few miles per hour above the Turnpike limit, but his car was under perfect control. The blue convertible suddenly swung out from behind the truck. It swung out without warning and struck his car near the right front fender, knocking his car to the shoulder on the left side of the Turnpike lane.

Robert Proctor was a good driver, too wise to slam on the brakes. He fought the steering wheel to hold the car on a straight path. The left wheels sank into the soft left shoulder, and the car tugged to pull to the left and cross the island and enter the lanes carrying the cars heading in the opposite direction. He held it, then the wheel struck a rock buried in the soft dirt, and the left front tire blew out. The car slowed, and it was then that his mother began to scream.

The car turned sideways and skidded part of the way out into the other lanes. Robert Proctor fought against the steering wheel to straighten the car, but the drag of the blown tire was too much. The scream rang steadily in his ears, and even as he strained at the wheel one part of his mind wondered coolly how a scream could so long be sustained without a breath. An oncoming car struck his radiator from the side and spun him viciously, full into the left-hand lanes.

He was flung into his mother's lap, and she was thrown against the right door. It held. With his left hand he reached for the steering wheel and pulled himself erect against the force of the spin. He turned the wheel to the left, and tried to stop the spin and careen out of the lanes of oncoming traffic. His mother was unable to right herself, she lay against the door, her cry rising and falling with the eccentric spin of the car.

The car lost some of its momentum. During one of the spins he twisted the wheel straight, and the car wobblingly stopped spinning and headed down the lane. Before Robert Proctor could turn it off the pike to safety a car loomed ahead of him, bearing down on him. There was a man at the wheel of that other car, sitting rigid, unable to move, eyes wide and staring and filled with fright. Alongside the man was a girl, her head against the back of the seat, soft curls framing a lovely face, her eyes closed in easy sleep. It was not the fear in the man that reached into Robert Proctor, it was the trusting helplessness in the face of the sleeping girl. The two

cars sped closer to each other, and Robert Proctor could not change the direction of his car. The driver of the other car remained frozen at the wheel. At the last moment Robert Proctor sat motionless staring into the face of the onrushing, sleeping girl, his mother's cry still sounding in his ears. He heard no crash when the two cars collided head-on at a high rate of speed. He felt something push into his stomach, and the world began to go grey. Just before he lost consciousness he heard the scream stop, and he knew then that he had been hearing a single, short-lived scream that had only seemed to drag on and on. There came a painless wrench, and then darkness.

Robert Proctor seemed to be at the bottom of a deep black well. There was a spot of faint light in the far distance, and he could hear the rumble of a distant voice. He tried to pull himself toward the light and the sound, but the effort was too great. He lay still and gathered himself and tried again. The light grew brighter and the voice louder. He tried harder, again, and he drew closer. Then he opened his eyes full and looked at the man sitting in front of him.

"You all right, Son?" asked the man. He wore a blue uniform, and his round, beefy face was familiar.

Robert Proctor tentatively moved his head, and discovered he was seated in a reclining chair, unharmed, and able to move his arms and legs with no trouble. He looked around the room, and he remembered.

The man in the uniform saw the growing intelligence in his eyes and he said, "No harm done, Son. You just took the last part of your driver's test."

Robert Proctor focused his eyes on the man. Though he saw the man clearly, he seemed to see the faint face of the sleeping girl in front of him.

The uniformed man continued to speak. "We put you through an accident under hypnosis - do it to everybody these days before they can get their driver's licenses. Makes better drivers of them, more careful drivers the rest of their lives. Remember it now? Coming in here and all?"

Robert Proctor nodded, thinking of the sleeping girl. She never would have awakened; she would have passed right from a sweet, temporary sleep into the dark heavy sleep of death, nothing in between. His mother would have been bad enough; after all, she was pretty old. The sleeping girl

was downright waste.

The uniformed man was still speaking. "So you're all set now. You pay me the ten dollar fee, and sign this application, and we'll have your license in the mail in a day or two." He did not look up.

Robert Proctor placed a ten dollar bill on the table in front of him, glanced over the application and signed it. He looked up to find two white-uniformed men, standing one on each side of him, and he frowned in annoyance. He started to speak, but the uniformed man spoke first. "Sorry, Son. You failed. You're sick; you need treatment."

The two men lifted Robert Proctor to his feet, and he said, "Take your hands off me. What is this?"

The uniformed man said, "Nobody should want to drive a car after going through what you just went through. It should take months before you can even think of driving again, but you're ready right now. Killing people doesn't both you. We don't let your kind run around loose in society any more. But don't you worry now, Son. They'll take good care of you, and they'll fix you up." He nodded to the two men, and they began to march Robert Proctor out.

At the door he spoke, and his voice was so urgent the two men paused. Robert Proctor said, "You can't really mean this. I'm still dreaming, aren't I? This is still part of the test, isn't it?"

The uniformed man said, "How do any of us know?" And they dragged Robert Proctor out the door, knees stiff, feet dragging, his rubber heels sliding along the two grooves worn into the floor.

APPENDIX B

The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18)

Britton et al.

Definitions and Samples of:

Expressive

Transactional

Poetic

Writing

Elements of Writing about a Literary Work: A Study of

Response to Literature

Purves and Rippere

Definitions and Samples of:

Engagement-Involvement

Perception

Interpretation

Evaluation

and Code List

Instructions to Coders

A. Please check that the envelope contains these items:

1.
    60 { student essays as whole units.

2.   { student essays segmented into separate statements.

3. Coding manual.

B. Two methods of coding and classification are to be applied to the data:

1. Britton et al.'s 'function categories', numbered 2, 3, and 1.1.1. to 1.1.7;

2. Purves' 'response to literature' subcategories, numbered 100 to 500.

C. Please note very carefully that you are to code exactly what appears on

the essays. If any difficulty arises you are to consult the manual and

note the student's own wording of his thoughts and feelings. This is

important since this is an exercise in coding and <u>not</u> in evaluating the

data.

Any discussion or comments you may wish to make should be postponed

until the coding is completed.

D. To ensure greater accuracy in coding the following procedure is

recommended.

1. Make a preliminary classification of <u>expressive</u>, <u>transactional</u> and <u>poetic</u> writing. / <u>Engagement-involvement</u>, <u>Perception</u>, <u>Interpretation</u>, <u>Evaluation</u>, <u>Miscellaneous</u>.

2. Scrutinize each essay very carefully to detect the <u>dominant mode</u>. Since several essays are poorly organized there are constant shifts of mode so that it sometimes becomes difficult to fix on a <u>single</u> dominant mode. Consult the definitions of the modes again. One of the definitions of a particular mode often helps to identify the 'correct' classification.

3. Write the code number on the top left hand corner of each essay <u>in pencil</u> and reclassify if necessary.

4. To arrive at the final classification do the same as above but look for fine differences between <u>two</u> competing dominant modes. Write the final verdict in red.

It is vitally important not to intrude your own judgments on the writing. Sometimes the writer may couch a statement in negative terms. To decide on the proper code it is useful to render this in positive terms. For example, the writer may say: "I don't understand ...". This can mean: "I do understand but I can't say what it is." This technique is particularly useful when using Purves' classification.

The major purpose of both classification systems is to <u>focus directly and closely on what the writer is actually saying</u> rather than interpolate the reader's interpretation of what he or she thinks the writer is saying. The difficulty arises because ultimately this still involves interpretation since the coding is subjective. The solution lies in reducing the margin of error to the barest minimum. This is why more than one classification becomes necessary to arrive at the final verdict.

<u>Definitions of the Function Categories</u>

2. <u>EXPRESSIVE WRITING</u>

(a) The kind of writing that might be called 'thinking aloud on paper'. Intended for the writer's own use, it might be interpreted by a reader who had shared much of the earlier thinking, but it could not be understood by one who was not 'in the context'.

(b) The kind of diary entry that attempts to record and explore the writer's feelings, mood, opinions, preoccupations of the moment.

(c) Personal letters written to friends or relations for the purpose of maintaining contact with them (as a substitute, so to speak, for being with them).

(d) Writing addressed to a limited public audience assumed to share much of the writer's context and many of his values and opinions and interests.

(e) Writing, intended to be read by a public audience, in which the writer chooses to approach his reader as though he were a personal friend, hence revealing much about himself by implication in the course of dealing with his topic.

Expressive writing is close to the self, revealing the writer, verbalizing his consciousness, displaying his close relation with a reader, not explicit, and relatively unstructured.

3. <u>POETIC WRITING</u> uses language as an art medium - a verbal construct or 'object' made out of language. The words themselves, and all they refer to, are selected to make an arrangement, a formal pattern. Its function is to be an object that pleases or satisfies the writer: and the reader's response is to share that satisfaction. Poetic writing constitutes language that exists <u>for its own sake</u> and not as a means of achieving something else.

1. <u>TRANSACTIONAL WRITING</u> aims at getting things done and is concerned with an end outside itself.

    1.1   <u>Informative</u> writing is used to make information available.

    1.1.1   <u>Record</u>: The writer is saying what his world is like <u>at that moment</u>; eye-witness account or running commentary.

    1.1.2   <u>Report</u>: The writer is reporting <u>past observations</u> and not recording what is being observed. He deals with <u>particular observable events and scenes</u> and does not cover generalizations drawn from scattered observations or from observations over a period of time.

    1.1.3   <u>Generalized narrative or descriptive information</u>: The writer is reporting past observations as particular recurring events and scenes but makes <u>no use of abstraction</u> from the pattern detected.

    1.1.4   <u>Analogic, low level of generalization</u>: The writer makes genuine, but very loosely organized, generalizations at a low level. The relationships are not perceived so that <u>one generalization follows another</u>. The writing is not explicit and the whole is not coherently organized.

    1.1.5   <u>Analogic</u>: The writer relates the generalizations <u>hierarchically or logically</u> by making coherently presented classificatory utterances.

    1.1.6   <u>Analogic-tautologic (speculative)</u>: The writer begins to inspect his generalizations and to make them the very subject of his discourse - that is, he begins to <u>speculate</u> about the generalizations in an open-ended and <u>theoretical</u> manner without pushing towards a conclusion.

    1.1.7   <u>Tautologic</u>: The writer <u>theorizes in a</u> highly ordered, consistent and conventional or <u>disciplined manner</u>. He makes propositions about propositions or propositions about the relationships between propositions to produce hypotheses and make deductions from them. Generalizations are transformed into other generalizations to make new assertions possible.

SAMPLES

E1

THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS

After reading the book 'The Day of the Triffids' I found the film different
in many ways. The flash back in the book which told the story of how Bill
had been stung by a Triffid, when he was a boy and how he then went on to
work with Triffids might have taken some time if it had been contained in
the film. However I think this part of the story is very important as it
shows why Bill did not die from the Triffid sting and in later years how
he became practically immune to it.

Bill in the film was a sailor, after removing his bandages he left the
hospital, no mention of Coker was made at this point. But Susan the girl
which appears near the end of the book makes an entrance at this point.
The two of them now travel to the dockyard and take a boat over to France.
Here they meet up with an organization which is helping the blind people
and the appearance of a Miss Durant makes up for the absence of Josilla...

E2

HOW THE CHURCH COULD ATTRACT MORE YOUNG PEOPLE

I feel that the Church does not need to be 'swinging' as so many people seem
to think. Pop groups singing hymns does not seem to me personally to be
such a good thing. I think many young people laugh at the Church trying to
be modern. However there is much which can be said in favour of livening
up Church music, i.e. the hymns and getting rid of the boring chanting of
the psalms.

I think that young people could be attracted to the church by youth clubs
and so on, where they can meet Christians. These Christians should show by
their example what Christian life really is like.

The Church should be more of a family willing to welcome new members, rather
than the 'holier than thou' attitude which seems to prevail in some churches....

<u>T1</u>

<u>DESCRIPTION OF THE COTTAGES</u>

In the foreground is a old building, with attached roof and only one level.
In the background are some more modern houses with tiled roofs and two
levels.

The picture may have been meant to show the contrast between the old and
the new.

Also in the picture is a rough road. On either side of the road is a
rough wall with no signs of reinforcement.

There is no road lighting.

<u>T2</u>

<u>JOSEPH'S JOURNEY</u>

One night I had a dream. I dreamt that there were eleven sheaves in a
circle and in the middle was a stronger one and the other seemed to bow
down to it. The next day I told my brothers and they seemed cross. The
next night I had another dream. I dreamt there were eleven stars in a
circle, there was one bright star in the middle and there was the sun and
the moon and they all bowed down to the one in the middle. The next day I
was walking through some fields and I met my brothers. They asked me if I
had had any dreams lately and I told them. They asked me if I would go
with them. I said yes. They took me to a pit and through me down it and
they sold me to be a slave in Egypt. I had to walk all the way there.
When I got there they gave all the slaves a big dinner to build them up,
and they gave some new clothes. The next day they took us to the slave
market. I felt awful, then I had to be looked at. They kept on poking me,
then I was sold to a captain. I got friendly with the captain and then I
became the chief slave.

<u>T3</u>

If I went into the amphitheatre at Rome for a day's entertainment I would expect to see a lot of blood.

The day would start with a parade of gladiators filing into the arena. They would be dressed ready for battle and at the signal of the emperor they would file out again and await death or glory underneath the stands in the small cages provided.

Perhaps, to start the bloodshed, a few Christians would be hered into the sand ring and hungry lions would be let loose upon them. This would cause great delight among the crowd, they would be standing on their seats listening to every crunch of bone and ripping of sinews. After the lions were back in their cages the flies would swarm in and settle on the piled up bodies and feast on the blood.

Then a few gladiators would enter the ring, fighting in pairs. If one gladiator had his man on the ground the emperor would give the signal as to whether the man would die or not.

The gladiators would be armed with either a long tripointed spear and a net or a short sword and shield.

There would be a short break after this while wild animals entered the ring and while the remains of bodies were thrown to the dogs. Soon people would get bored with this and there would be a cry for more blood.

In some great theatres a sea battle could be staged by filling the arena with water. These battles were few and far between but they were very popular.

In answer to the cry for blood slaves would be pushed into the ring and stalked by bears, lions, and wolves. This would be a source of great amusement as the slaves were always very weak.

In the afternoon there would be more gladiators, more christians, and more blood and then everyone would leave in the evening thoroughly satisfied.

T4

THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF METALS

Thermostats is one thing that is useful for expansion of metals. Thermostats are lights on ovens that are lit by a metal expanding. This keeps the oven at a set temperature. Some people have automatic fire alarms which are set off by the heat of the fire. Mercury is a liquid metal, which is put in thermometers. This is to find the heat of the body, and stops when it gets to the right temperature. A disadvantage of this is railway lines. A gap has to be left between rails for expansion, when trains pass over.

T5

TO DISCUSS THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF EACH PRIMARY
SOURCE OF POWER IN GREAT BRITAIN

In Great Britain today, there are several sources of electricity, which is our main power. Hydro-electric, coal, and Neuclar energy. There is also gas and oil, but neither of these are very important, as a lot of people prefer electricity to gas and oil.

When coal is taken from the ground there is always an element of danger and it costs a lot of money. It takes up a lot of room, is dirty, and is difficult to transport, therefore taking up even more money. When it arrives at the power station it needs a lot of coal to keep the furnaces going at the required temperature, therefore costing even more money. But even now there are still many thermal-electricity power stations which are cheap to build but costly to run. One better way to produce electricity is by using water.

In Canada, from one river it makes as much electricity with a few Hydro-power stations as Britain's whole output is, and theres is only one sixth of our

population. There are two different ways to produce Hydro-electricity, the Dam method and the diversion system. Both need carefull positioning and building and cost a large amount of money to build but the water to run them is free, and the system soon pays for itself. As in France, it would be a good idea to build a large dam across the wash which worked off the tides.

It has been stated that in about another fifty years the oil and coal resorces of the world will run out so another method of producing large amounts of electricity for areas of intensive industry such as Sheffield and Newcastle which use tremendous amounts of electricity is wanted. This is neuclar energy. I think that this will be the power of the future, as it has been made safe, from radio-activity.

In Great Britain the power is evenly distributed, such as coal in the Midlands and Wales, thermal electricity around London and Newcastle and some Hydro in Scotland.

In industry such as iron and steel, there would be nothing without electricity, most of all, and oil and gas, for what whould there be to drive their tools? Even in everyday life most things would stop. With all the power stations in Great Britain, there are still power cuts in winter so surely there is a need to explore in new ways to produce electricity, more cheaply, quickly and in greater amounts?

T6
—

WHAT ARE THE LIMITS OF
TOLERATION, IF ANY?.

There should not be, ideally, any limits of toleration. Remember the Lord said 'seventy times seven' when a certain man asked him how many times he should forgive his brother, meaning he should 'alway' tolerate him. However, were the Holy Bible translated into practical English, instead of merely 'New English,' the answer, I'm sure, would be 'till you can forgive him no more,' that is, until you reach the limits of your toleration. However, this is one of the major problems of today - when to stop tolerating

and to start acting.

So, practically, tolerance and its limits vary in great deal in different people, according to how they answer the above question. It is most interesting to find out in someone this particular aspect of his character, mostly this is done subconsciously. How many times have you thought: 'I wonder how much more I can tease this chap before he turns nasty', or, 'How much more can I get out of him before he stops giving?' These are both illustrations of testing tolerance; and some of the sets of circumstances to which they can be applied are rather eye-opening. Now, lots of people will stop 'giving' as soon as they know they are being 'sucked', and others will never turn nasty; here where the expected pattern shows traits of irregularity, like the cracks in the M.I., the system, breaks down; the situation presents problems; these problems get worse, as more remedies are applied to them.

The colour problem is a matter of tolerance, or, more accurately its non-existence in some quarters. What most people do not realise is that an equal amount of tolerance is required on both sides. As the situation is at the moment the greater amount of tolerance is shown by the coloureds, themselves; another fact few people realise. This produces the impression given to the whites that they can get away with it; the others never 'turn nasty' so the whites go on 'teasing' them; the whole situation is linked up.

So here is the answer to the question: there are always limits of tolerance, but - and this is the whole point - they must be adjusted to fit the circumstances, (obviously you cannot observe the same tolerance with a coloured immigrant as with your son or daughter.) Above is an example of when tolerance should be equal, but even that must not be fixed at equality, (it usually comes round to that in the end); that equality must be adjusted to accord with the relationship, whether it is judge to convicted, or plumber to plumber's mate. So, we must not fix our tolerance at a certain rung, there must be many rungs, and movement up and down the ladder must be easy.

This brings one more resultant realisation, which is important; and it
is that tolerance is a part of our daily, even hourly, life, and its
maltreatment or the ignorance involved in deciding how much to have, is
the cause of so many minor and major problems. When this is realised, it
is, at least, the beginning.

Compromise is the essence of cohabitation.

T7

EXPLANATION

By using an analogy of rope waves which are transverse, the phenomenen may
be explained. Suppose a rope is threaded through a type of grid, and a
second grid through which it is threaded, is placed further along the rope.
If both slits are parallel, the wave will pass all the way along the
rope and emerge at the other side of the second slit. If however the
second slit is placed perpendicular to the first, the wave is blocked or
cut off.

In the rope wave before it reaches the first grid, transverse
vibrations of the rope particles occur in every plane, but the vibrations
are restricted to those moving up and down in a plane parallel to the grid,
when the rope wave has passed through the first grid or slit. Hence if a
second slit is placed parallel to the first, the wave due to these transverse
vibrations in one plane will pass through. In the second case, where the
next slit is placed perpendicular to the first the transverse vibrations
cannot occur due to the position of the slit which cuts them off.

If the analogy is applied to light waves, which must now be assumed to be
transverse, the polarisation phenomenen can be explained. The crystals
must have the power of restricting light to one plane. Hence polarised
light is obtained when the light is passed through the first crystal which
is called the polariser and continues polarised through the second crystal -
the analyser - if placed with axis parallel to the first. If placed so that
it is perpendicular to the first, the polarised light is cut off & darkness

is seen. This experiment shows how polarised light differs from ordinary light.

P1

The wiring parties had returned and dawn was approaching. The dawn of another day - a day the same as yesterday, the same as the day before, and the same as tomorrow. Probably a day bringing rain into the already flooded trenches, in which we lived like rats in a hole, hemmed in by enemy fire, and only the escape that Death offers presents itself to us. While sitting in those trenches I often wonder why we are fighting. It was the politicians' war. Why couldn't they do something about it themselves insteading of sending us out here and telling us to blow the enemy off the face of the earth. They don't know what it is like to live here and fight and die. Have they no humanity as they sit back in their armchairs by their fires sticking flags into maps. If only they could understand. If only the Almighty could understand, and do something about this futility. I am sure that He must see that it is getting nobody anywhere.

I have seen people shoot themselves, taking one way out of the war. These soldiers are only too happy when they are wounded in the leg or arm, so that they can get out this slaughter.

The Germans have now started firing. I wonder if they know why they are fighting. I expect they too have been told the lies about it being brave and noble and a great thing to die for one's country.

Every now and then there was a 'crump' as the shells exploded. There was a yellow butterfly perched on the grey hand of a corpse. I had almost forgotten about butterflies, and the fact that Nature was all around us. I wonder if the insects know what is happening. They seem to live perfectly happily without any wars, but I suppose they do not have politicians to bundle the affairs of the country onto every single individual.

A man, shot through the face, falls back on to some cans, creating a new

noise in the din of the battle-field. The butterfly has now flown away
and the morning is bringing light to the land through a thick cloud
cover. It begins to drizzle. The war goes on....Will man ever recover
his senses?.....

TABLE 2

BRITTON'S COMPLETE FUNCTION CATEGORIES

TRANSACTIONAL(1)
Language to get things done, i.e. it is concerned with an end outside itself. It informs, persuades and instructs.

EXPRESSIVE(2)
Language close to the self, revealing the speaker, verbalizino his consciousness, displaying his close relationship with the reader. Possibly not highly explicit. Relatively unstructured.

POETIC(3)
A verbal construct, patterned verbalization of the writer's feelings and ideas. This cateory is not restricted to poems but would include such writinos as a short story, a play, a shaped autobiographical enisode.

ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES(4)

SPECIAL CATEGORIES(4.2)
Categories created by the special contexts of education.

IMMATURE CATEGORIES(4.1)
e.g., undissociated categories, practice play, etc.

DUMMY RUN(4.2.3)
Exercise and demonstration of the ability to perform a writing task, which fails to take up the demands of that task.

PSEUDO-CONATIVE (4.2.2)
Another 'apparent transaction' but a conative one.

PSEUDO-INFORMATIVE (4.2.1)
Writing directed to the teacher via an 'apparent trans-action' but failing to take up the demands of the apparent transaction.

TAUTOLOGIC (1.1.7)
Hypotheses and deductions from them. Theory backed by logical argumentation.

ANALOGIC-TAUTOLOGIC (SPECULATIVE) (1.1.6)
Speculation about generalizations; the open-ended consideration of analogic possibilities.

ANALOGIC(1.1.5)
Generalizations related hierarchically or logically by means of coherently presented classificatory utterances.

ANALOGIC, LOW LEVEL OF GENERALIZATION (1.1.4)
Genuine general-izations but loosely related, i.e. the relationships are not perceived and/or not made explicit.

INFORMATIVE(1.1)

CONATIVE(1.2)
Instruction and persuasion.

PERSUASIVE(1.2.2)
Since compliance cannot be assumed, an attempt is made to influence action, behaviour, attitude by reason and argument or other strategy.

REGULATIVE(1.2.1)
Language which lays down a course of action to be followed, makes demands, issues instructions where compliance is assumed, and makes recommendations which carry the weight of a threat, or the force of the speaker's wishes.

GENERALIZED NARRATIVE OR DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION(1.1.3)
The writer is tied to particular events and places but he is detecting a pattern of repetition in them, and he expresses this in generalized form.

REPORT(1.1.2)
The writer gives an account of a particular series of events or the appearance of a particular place(i.e. narrative and/or descriptive).

RECORD(1.1.1)
Eye-witness account or running commentary.

Reporting by 24 Subcategories

100	Engagement General
110	Reaction to Literature
120	Reaction to Form
130	Reaction to Content
200	Perception General
210	Language
220	Literary Devices
230	Content
240	Relation of Technique to Content
250	Structure
260	Tone
270	Literary Classification
280	Contextual Classification
300	Interpretation General
310	Interpretation of Style
320	Interpretation of Content
330	Mimetic Interpretation
340	Typological Interpretation
350	Hortatory Interpretation
400	Evaluation General
410	Affective Evaluation
420	Evaluation of Method
430	Evaluation of Author's Vision
500	Miscellaneous

I. The Elements of Engagement-Involvement

Code no.

100 <u>Engagement General/Engagement-involvement</u>: the various ways by which the writer indicates his surrender to the literary work, by which he informs his reader of the ways in which he has experienced the work or its various aspects.

110 <u>Reaction to literature</u> is the writer's statement about his characteristic kind and degree of engagement. It is a statement about general stance and often introduces statements described by specific elements of engagement-involvement or perception.

    A. In reading, I tend to look for something more interesting than whatever I could be watching on TV at the time.

    B. Generally speaking, I don't like to read poems, especially not nature poems.

120 <u>Reaction to form</u> is the expression of the writer's reaction to the way a work is written, as opposed to the content of the work. In critical terminology, this often appears as "impressionistic criticism," the attempt to transmute the received work of art into another work of art.

    A. Slowly the poem filters into our consciousness, its images dissolving into our delight, its phrases being absorbed into the texture of our existence.

    B. This poem is so flowery that it sometimes makes the reader want to sneeze.

130 <u>Reaction to content</u> is the expression of the writer's reaction to the world of the work as if that world were not fictional.

    A. I really enjoyed the battle scenes.

    B. When Beth died, I thought my heart would break.

II. The Elements of Perception

Code no.

200 Perception General: the ways in which a person looks at the

work as an object distinct from himself and separate from the

writer's consideration of the world around the writer. It is

analogous to 'understanding' and is analytic, synthetic, or

classificatory.

210 Language: linguistic aspects such as syntax and diction.

220 Literary Devices: pointed out and explained but not interpreted.

230 Content: the people, places, and actions or events mentioned

but not interpreted.

240 Relation of Technique to Content: "rhetoric of the work",

mentioned.

250 Structure: the order of the work, parts, details, etc.

260 Tone: the writer's establishing of the author's emotional

attitude towards the material or towards the audience. The writer

seeks to define an emotional state objectively. Included are

discussions of the author's sincerity.

270 Literary Classification: by genre or type, convention, school or

tradition.

280 Contextual Classification: in relation to the author's other works.

III. The Elements of Interpretation

300 Interpretation General: the writer attempts to find meaning in

the work, to generalize about it, to draw inferences from it, to

find analogues to it in the universe that the writer inhabits.

310 Interpretation of Style: the writer ascribes meaning to a

stylistic device.

320   <u>Interpretation of Content</u>:

330   <u>Mimetic Interpretation</u>: the writer sees the work as a mirror of

the world: "This is the way the world is."

340   <u>Typological Interpretation</u>: the writer sees the work not merely

as a mirror but a presentation of a highly generalized or abstract

pattern of the world: "This is typical of a certain class of

things." The work becomes metaphoric, symbolic, or allegorical

in presenting a particular pattern of existence.

350   <u>Hortatory Interpretation</u>: the writer sees the work as a statement

or what should be and sees the author as overtly or covertly

hortatory. It includes interpretations that see the author as

critical of what he portrays.

IV. <u>The Elements of Evaluation</u>

400   <u>Evaluation General</u>: statements about why the writer thinks the

work good or bad. His judgment may be derived from either a

personal or an objective criterion.

410   <u>Affective Evaluation</u>: uses the criterion of emotional appeal.

420   <u>Evaluation of Method</u>:

430   <u>Evaluation of Author's Vision</u>: judgment of the sufficiency of

what the work is presenting, credibility or plausibility.

500   <u>Miscellaneous</u>: <u>divergent responses</u> - the essay attacks the

question or does not deal directly with the work;

•   <u>rhetorical filler</u> - statements about what the

writer will do or has done;

<u>reference to other writers on literature</u>: state-
ments about critics and other secondary sources;

<u>comparison with other works</u>;

<u>digression</u>;

<u>unclassifiable</u> - statement that makes no sense.

APPENDIX C

A week ago you very kindly cooperated in part of
a research study by responding in writing to a
short story "Test". Your cooperation is again
requested. Please complete this questionnaire
fully and honestly. All material is STRICTLY
CONFIDENTIAL·

Strike out all the parts below that do not apply.

1. Age: yrs.   mths.   Male / Female

2. My response to the story was / exactly what I felt / partly what I felt /
   not really what I felt / what I thought I was expected to feel.

3. I would like to read the story again so I can think a little more about
   it and write a more complete and personally satisfying response. Yes / No.

4. My response was intended to satisfy / me alone / the teacher / the
   researcher / anybody who wished to read it / nobody in particular.

5. The story made me feel / defensive / aggressive / irritated / angry /
   neutral / thoughtful / critical / condemnatory.

6. The directions given for the written response: "Now that you have read
   and thought (or talked) about the story please RESPOND to it. Write
   freely in whatever way you feel motivated, KEEPING THE STORY IN MIND"
   confused me / gave me freedom to think for myself / restricted me/ made
   me anxious.

7. The time allowed for reading and discussion was / too short / just
   enough / too long.

8. The time allowed for writing was / too short / just enough / too long.

9. I usually / plan in note or point form / write a first or rough draft /

read again and revise / write only the final draft.

10. I usually / make notes while reading / underline or circle or mark the keywords while reading / only read / before writing an assignment.

11. I am / usually satisfied by the first impression a story makes on me / only satisfied when I have had a chance to review and revise my first impression / only satisfied when I have deepened and broadened my first impression.

12. I think out each sentence before I write it / I do not think it out first / I think about what I have already written before I continue to write / I write sentence after sentence without consciously thinking about each / I do all of these.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

1.   N = 37   Av. Age: 16.7 years

2.

exactly what I felt	partly what I felt	not really what I felt	what I thought I was expected to feel	spoilt
15	13	6	2	1

3. Yes - 14   No. - 23   spoilt - 0

4.

satisfy me alone	satisfy teacher	satisfy researcher	satisfy any reader	nobody in particular	spoilt
17	2	6	3	6	3

5.

defensive	aggressive	irritated	angry	neutral	thoughtful	critical
4	1	7	0	4	10	3

condemnatory	spoilt
1	7

6.

directions confused me	gave me freedom	restricted me	made me anxious	spoilt
6	21	3	3	0

7.

too short	just enough	too long	spoilt
10	18	8	1

8.

too short	just enough	too long	spoilt
11	22	4	0

9.

plan in note or point form	write first or rough draft	read again and revise	write only final draft	spoilt
2	17	4	8	6

10.

make notes while reading	underline, circle or mark key words	only read	spoilt
2	5	21	4

11.

satisfied by impression	review and revise	deepened and broadened	spoilt
21	7	8	1

12.

think out first	do not think out first	think about sentence already written	write sentences unconsciously
8	3	9	1

all	spoilt
2	14

APPENDIX D

Samples of Student Essays

Sample 1

In the article Test, a story came to mind, something that happened to me. One night when I was in a real deep sleep, I began to dream. This dream wasn't like the ordinary dream. This one was something different. I began to vision myself going to write an exam. I could see that I wasn't going to pass it, at the rate I was going. I could feel that I was seeing this dream for some reason but I couldn't quite comprehend. I was one of these people who could tell if they were dreaming, while they're dreaming. If only I could get close enough to see what kind of test I was writing and some questions. Finally I saw some questions. It was a social studies test.

When I woke up in the morning, I tried to refresh my memory of the last night's dream.

What I had done was worked myself up so much about a test, I dreamed about it, and some of the questions I saw in the dream were on my real test. (Coded: E   112   E)

Sample 2

This story, I think, portrays life very well. It's all one big test. It seems no matter what you do you are always going to fail in the end, even if you think you passed. In the story, it only took one mistake on the part of the boy, and it wasn't even his fault. His life was ended because he just happened to be in the right place at the wrong time. The whole while, when the boy was trying to keep the car under control, it was one big struggle. He was fighting all the way. His constant struggle with

the wheel to keep the car going on the right track is exactly the way life is. You have to fight to keep on the right track, to be in control of yourself, to be able to handle unforeseen circumstances, to keep your life.

In the end it all seems useless. You can't win. Robert Proctor could not have gotten his licence no matter what he did. If he refused to sign and pay for his licence he would have had to come back in a few months to do it all over again. Because he did sign he was considered to need help and was taken away for treatment. Just like in life you cannot escape death. No matter what you do it will get you in the end. You can hold it off for awhile, but not forever. Its something you cannot escape.

Many have already experienced the same (death) and many more will in the future. From the heel marks dug in the floor it showed that there had been many before him.

In life you are under judgment or one big test. Others are always judging you and they decide whether you life or die. You are under judgment all the time. You always have to watch yourself, what you do or say. Robert Proctor, after having looked death in the face, still wanted to drive. He was probably in such a shock because of what he went through that he didn't even think about what he was signing or doing, but because of it he was taken away.

In just about everything we do, we take other people's lives into our hands. Robert had other people's lives in his hands. It wasn't him that caused the accident but at the same time he would be responsible for others deaths.

Life is all made up of dreams. No one knows when they start or when they

end but they are there, and they rule a great part of your life even if you don't notice it.

(Coded: 115   117   117)

Sample 3

Code no.

110   1.   I think the story was well written, and an interesting look into the future.

230   2.   To think that we might have to go through the same ordeal as the main character just to receive a driver's licence gives people a lot to think about.

130   3.   It is one way to see who is really ready for their lisence.

230   4.   From the last sentence of the story, where his heels dragged on marks already made shows just how many people didn't get their lisence.

130   5.   I don't think that the method of determining who was to receive a license was too accurate.

230   6.   They, the uniformed men, said the boy didn't deserve his lisence because he didn't care whether he killed someone or not.

320   7.   In a way he was concerned even after he had been awakened about the girl.

320
230   8.   More concerned about her than his mother, / 9. he thought she was so trustful.

130   10.   The story was written with a lot of detail and until the surprise ending it seemed very real.

130 11. I think the ending made the story all the more interesting.

110 12. The story was one of those written so you could picture

everything clearly.

230 13. The boy even after awaking thought in the back of his mind

that he had been in an accident.

320 14. Then because he showed no emotions, the uniformed men called

him sick, and he wouldn't be well enough to drive for months.

Sample 4

Code no.   2

2   It was, to say the least, an odd story. The first third

deals with contentment and makes the reader feel relaxed. You

can almost feel the smoothness of the engine and feel the sun-

shine. The relaxing nature of the situation is so evident that

the reader feels relaxed.

4   Abruptly, the reader is jolted out of this tranquil

setting into one of suspense. The second third of the story

deals with the accident from beginning to end. Because the

story is told through R. Proctor's mind, the accident seems

lengthy. Actually it is quite short because the scream he hears

throughout the accident is a single scream. The detail and length

add to the suspense; one begins to wonder if the accident will

end and how.

2   Until this point in the story the reader has the feeling

it is a story set in the present day time segment. When, in the

•third third of the story, he is awakened after his death in the

accident one begins to think maybe of life after death or a

so-called heaven. When one realizes that R. Proctor has been

only taking a test, science fiction seems to take over. Our

democracy seems to have have been overpowered or so the

reader thinks as they drag Robert out. The worn grooves on

the floor gave one a feeling of dictatorship, as if they have

great power.

2   Each small incident has such great significance; the

writer has written a story which speaks to your mind, not ears.

Each detail seems to send a hidden feeling to your mind. The

grooves in the floor represent a completely changed society,

but they are only simple grooves.

5   This wasn't a story but almost stories in stories. You begin

reading a peaceful story and end with a science-fiction.

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