

Theory, Practice, and Effective Teaching of English

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All of us here today have at some time or other brooded about just how much our instructional activities have affected the teaching behavior of those who come to us to learn to teach English or to learn to teach English better. If not, I think this meeting is a most suitable occasion to begin to brood about these matters. During one such introspective interlude which occurred after my having observed a particularly dismal student teaching performance, I remembered the arguments hurled at me during the many verbal encounters with my liberal arts colleagues and with working secondary school English teachers—heated encounters concerning English teacher education.

My liberal arts friends were unanimous in their beliefs that an intelligent teacher who was academically prepared could learn all he had to know about method and practice during the student teaching apprenticeship or from his more experienced colleagues during the first year of professional teaching. When asked where the more experienced colleagues had learned what they knew about method, it was suggested that intelligent people picked these things up from the situation itself. The working English teachers, too, were generally contemptuous of “methods” courses, at least those they had experienced, and felt that the college instructor’s distance from the daily battle scene precluded his seriously contributing to tactics or even to strategies that would sway outcomes.

My answers to these arguments were the ones that most of you would have given. The academically well-prepared English teacher described by the liberal arts professors is, in the first place, a rarity because of the *laissez-faire*, content-is-all, devil-take-the-student approach to teaching used by too many of these same liberal arts professors. And such an academically well-prepared teacher, once found, too frequently fails in the secondary school English classroom because he is too busy playing junior-professor to teach adolescents to do all of those things adolescents must do with language.

If I become involved in a particularly virulent polemic and am sorely pressed, I usually lose diplomatic aplomb (of which I have precious little in the first place) and suggest that too many English professors having something to say about teacher education have little familiarity with the universe of the high school student; that the last time any of them had entered a secondary school was when they themselves had attended; that it probably was some kind of prep school anyway, and besides, they probably were in advanced English groups and didn’t have the vaguest notion of what really went on in typical English classrooms! But, as I say, I only suggest these things when sorely pressed.

My reply to the secondary school English teachers usually makes a defensive reference to my own substantial secondary English teaching experience and to my own first hand knowledge that too many poor teaching styles and approaches can be picked up and incorporated by an undirected neophyte struggling for survival in his classroom. There are too many bad things going on in schools from which new teachers should be protected and experienced teachers rescued.

And so the battle rages, and, of course, few attitudes ever change, and certainly no behaviors change, but undoubtedly, it is good therapy for all participants.

I thought in that introspective moment that if I *were* to be swayed at all, it would be in the direction of the superior English teachers, who, it seemed to me, had something more to contribute to English teacher education and reeducation than they were presently able or encouraged to do. A busy teaching schedule, no doctoral degree, school-university status snobberies all militated against taking advantage of what the superior classroom English teacher could offer to preservice and inservice programs. The NCTE Secondary School Section's incipient revolt (*English Journal*, December 1966) is certainly part of a general mood of frustration among those English teachers who feel they should have more to say about English teaching strategies. The role of the cooperating teacher is important but limited to one student teacher a semester or year, and too frequently too little incentive is provided to encourage regular acceptance of the onerous demands made of the conscientious cooperating teacher.

It seemed to me right then that if any group could change behavior at all, it would be these superior English teachers, because that *is* the role of effective teachers—to change students' language behavior, and they were, by definition, successful at doing just that. We in college had a certain number of years of secondary school teaching experience (too few, generally), had taken many courses, had persevered through some long-forgotten research study, and we certainly knew a lot about English teaching. Some of us, I suppose, knew how to teach, but too many of us were not, by definition, outstanding English teachers or outstanding changers of behavior in matters related to language.

Our view of this nagging problem of our students' unchanged behavior, about which we are brooding today, tends to be ameliorated by the articulate and even enthusiastic responses of our charges' verbalizing attitudes and intentions as they earnestly describe which methods are valid, which materials are appropriate, and which experiences are crucial. We are further lulled by the eloquence of the methods texts, the reassuring logic of *English Journal* articles, NCTE helps and aids, and the voluminous methodological canon generally available to those who teach or who intend to teach English. And we have our articles to write, our speeches to make, our institutes to organize, our conventions to attend, and all have a logic, a structure, a coherence, which seems to confirm that things really are moving, that teachers are teaching, and that students are learning.

We all know and decry the literature courses which affect no one's literary behavior, the high school English courses which affect no one's language behavior, the educational psychology courses which affect no one's educational psychology. Has the idol of the market place, the delusions produced by language unrelated

to reality, blinded us to the possibility that we are teaching courses in methods of teaching English which affect no one's English teaching behavior?

In any case, I became convinced during those somber meditations that English teachers must somehow become more substantively involved in changing the behaviors of their mark-timing colleagues and of starry-eyed young English majors. How to do this was the question. Suggesting that such teachers should be responsible for methods courses seemed impractical, in view of university regulations about degrees and the financial loss such a move would entail. More important than these considerations was the fact that removal from their classrooms would isolate them from the wellsprings of their own creativity.

Superior English teachers could, however, contribute to a much needed canon of effective practices, a canon which could complement the already overblown canon of methodological theory. The somehow removed pronouncements of the methods text rarely help prospective teachers and are generally ignored by those already working in the classroom. Why not accumulate the classroom-proven practices of outstanding teachers? Why not find out what really works in classrooms, rather than suggest what *should* work? Such practices could be gathered from a wide representation of teachers, teachers who worked in urban schools and rural schools, as well as those who worked in the more privileged, atypical suburban or university demonstration schools. Teachers who have taught in such privileged, atypical schools are the ones who ultimately become the spokesmen for the profession, who write the texts, make the speeches, and possibly distort the realities of English teaching to the students sitting in their methods classes or reading their methods texts.

Adaptable to various teaching styles and teacher personalities, responsive to the pulses of living classrooms populated with the full range of student ability, and representing those teaching activities which changed student behaviors in language, literature, and composition—this arsenal of practices would surely provide the best ammunition for the preservice or inservice methods course. This, then, would be the first contribution of the superior English teacher—permitting the profession to share his successes in the classroom.

The second contribution would be to provide us with an opportunity to induce a more relevant methodological framework of what constitutes good English teaching. An examination of the common basic assumptions underlying the statements of practice could constitute the most logical foundation of method in its broadest sense. Such a methodological framework would probably not contradict, but would certainly modify what we had been assuming about method. It might tell us that the acknowledged superior teacher's view of what constituted success in the classroom differs substantially from the authorities and the texts.

And so the "Effective Teaching Survey" was born. But before describing the survey and its implications, I must justify in some detail the position that the specific practice should take at least initial priority over more general methodological considerations as a means of affecting teacher behavior.

If we want to change behavior of new and of experienced teachers, we can use either of two approaches. We can stress logical reasons and rationales based

on our experiences and the findings of research and then evolve a broad set of teaching principles—a methodological framework supported by a smattering of practices—and expect the neophyte, armed with the Principles of Good English Teaching, to function effectively in the classroom. Or we can begin with teacher behavior and evolve a canon of appropriate practice based on what is effective in classrooms and buttress this canon by an induced methodology.

The first of these approaches is the one generally used in English teacher education programs. We have our students talk about and read about the goals of a literature program and some general approaches to achieve these goals, the knotty problems of grammar, usage, dialect, unity, coherence, and emphasis in compositions, the impact of the mass media, and so on. And when our students leave us to teach their classes as interns, student teachers, or teachers, the almost universal cry is “Yes, but what do I do to implement all of this?” and the complaints about the impracticality of the methods course in the face of the immediate demands of the classroom are begun by another generation of teachers. All of our principles, our methodology, fly out the window as teachers search for the effective practices, the concrete behaviors that will enable them to survive the initial traumas of teaching and later to receive some minimal gratification from seeing changes in the behavior of their students. This is why we in the colleges lose so many in the student teaching phase as student teachers reject the generalization of the seminar room in favor of the concrete practice of the classroom, although in the long run many of these practices may be inadequate or indeed harmful to the neophyte.

This, too, is why the experienced teachers are generally cynical about the value of graduate methods courses and take them not because they will have any impact on their classroom behavior, but because degree and salary requirements must be accommodated. They know how to play the game well; their papers are articulate, their discussions reasonable—but somehow the universe of the seminar rarely intrudes upon the universe of the classroom. Lesson plans rarely change, established routines remain fixed. Indeed, many teachers prefer the academic courses offered by college English departments as having greater relevance to their professional goals.

As we consider how to change this state of affairs, we can perhaps turn to the psychiatrist and learn from him about inducing desirable changes in people. Most of his patients require therapy rather than the painstaking, time-consuming process of “depth analysis” which seeks to change deep-seated assumptions and personality traits. Therapy, on the other hand, deals with *symptoms*, overt behavior patterns, which are to be modified. Therapy is less concerned with underlying, deep-seated drives, and assumes that the successful acting out of alternate behaviors will ameliorate conflicts and anxieties, and will provide the gratifications necessary for a sense of well-being.

I believe that a parallel exists in our training of English teachers. We are trying to do depth analysis, trying to change deeply ingrained attitudes about the process of teaching and the subject matter of English, instead of performing therapy; that is, providing our prospective and working teachers with batteries of feasible and realistic behaviors which when performed would be undistin-

guished from the behaviors resulting from assimilation of the methodological canon. We just do not have the time, the energies, the facilities, and yes, the talents, for the one-to-one-ism needed to alter such profound, such ingrained conceptions of reality—concepts crystallized and hardened through earlier educational experiences in public schools and in college, concepts encouraged by parents, mass media, and college instructors.

In view of all of this, is it realistic to spend our very limited time concerned almost exclusively with a morass of basic, often tentative principles which rarely are translated into behavior, principles which fail to answer the question, "Yes, but what do I *do* in the classroom?" Or in the face of the crisis atmosphere of most English departments, shall we be concerned with what I suggest is our primary function, equipping our teachers with a coherent and interrelated body of working practices, which when acted out reflect a coherent intellectual underpinning? What we attempt to do now is the patently impossible task of providing a new emotional-intellectual framework and hope that it will result in the development of creative practices. Our experience tells us that neither happens: the correct methodological attitudes, because they are superficial rather than ingrained, quickly evaporate in the face of the frustrating classroom experience. Thus the negatively effective practices, those which repress and discourage but permit some kind of coherent activity, become central to teacher behavior. Unfortunately it is on the success or apparent success of these practices that the teacher builds some kind of unified but negative methodological rationale—that telling is indeed teaching, that exposure to a limited number of approved classics is indeed the function of a literature program, that mechanics is indeed the major concern of composition instruction, and so on.

Let me dispel any misunderstanding: I am very much concerned about basic assumptions and underlying methodological principles. Teachers *should* have coherent ideas about the goals of a literature program, about the nature of the literary experience, about the dynamics of language change, about the principles of various grammars, about semantics, about the behavioral characteristics of young people, and so on, but if these principles are really to be internalized and functioning principles substantively contributing to teaching performance, they must surely grow from a massive involvement with concrete behaviors.

Once the prospective teacher leaves us, the possibility of developing effective practices and a methodological rationale fades as the door to his classroom shuts. Too many teachers are reluctant to exchange what are considered to be trade secrets. When exchange does occur, too often it is in general terms. Unlike other professionals—doctors, lawyers, etc.—who must perform their craft before their peers, teachers insist that professionalism calls for the closed door policy, euphemistically called "the sanctity of the classroom." Because of this, intervisitation programs and organized exchange of successful approaches are rarities.

I suppose what I am really saying is that we ought to stop giving lip service to the inductive method and begin to use it in our methods courses, that we should begin with the empirical data of classroom phenomena and induce our principles from such data. That is, if we are concerned with providing the best methodological constructs, we should begin with the best that is being done in classrooms.

Our present strategy is a contradiction of our generally pro-inductive teaching position. It is equivalent to our lecturing for two hours to passive students on the inadequacy of the lecture method and the need for active involvement by learners. This almost exclusive emphasis on broad methodological principles reinforces the proclivities of many English teachers to substitute verbiage for action, to wax eloquent about overall objectives and general strategies while ignoring the tactics of practice.

Ideally we should have an array of typical classrooms as our "textbooks"; demonstration or model classes won't do. If we cannot have such live classes, bringing in working teachers and students via television can be and has been tried. Minimally, however, all of our students should leave us, not only with a methods text, but with a comprehensive, annotated collection of practices appropriate for various grade and ability groups. Such a collection would provide the teacher with an ally in the new classroom and with opportunities for early gratifications. It is the paucity of such early successes which accounts for the high dropout rate among many of those who have the intellectual requisites for teaching but who cannot translate what they know about subject matter, students, and method into classroom behaviors.

One sign of the rapprochement between methods instruction and classroom teaching is the growing number of teacher education programs which emphasize the clinical experience. Often such experiences provide the touchstones for development of a methodological framework. The limitations of the clinical experience (interning or student teaching) stem from restricted opportunities to see and participate with many skilled teachers in varied grade and ability groups, in urban, suburban, and rural settings. Finding a skilled teacher to train the neophyte is a major problem. It is almost impossible to find a skilled teacher who is sensitive to the freedoms and disciplines which must be operative in the training situation, who himself is open to new ideas, who can suggest and help implement a wide variety of possible solutions to teaching problems. Certainly a canon of good practice would fill a need even in the best of clinical programs.

One last argument to justify preoccupation with proper practice as a means to affect teaching behavior and to achieve a working methodology. One might recall accounts of children with malfunctioning kinetic methodology—central nervous system defects which prevented effective motor performance. These children could not walk or even crawl. One could say analogically, that practice was impossible because the central methodological framework was inadequately developed. Treatment of the central nervous system did not work. What did show evidence of success in changing the motor behavior of these children was something they called "patterning." The children's limbs were firmly grasped and manipulated or patterned repetitively. After forcing the limbs into relevant activity over substantial periods of time, workers were able to report that the heretofore immobilized parts were beginning to function adequately, and that this treatment of symptoms had somehow initiated a healthy development of the previously malfunctioning central nervous system. The implications for practice and method are, I think, obvious.

Early in February of 1966, the following letter was sent to some 438 superior

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English teachers in secondary schools located in 44 states, the Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia.

Members of the staff of the School of Education at the University of Connecticut are conducting a survey of *effective classroom practices* in the field of English and are canvassing some 400 of the 100,000 who teach English in American secondary schools. *You are one of these 400.*

We are asking for brief accounts of effective practices, practices that other teachers could adapt to their particular classroom circumstances. We want to know what you do in class that *works* in specific situations covering single lessons or several related lessons. We want you to tell us about your effective teaching of literature, composition, language, mass media, oral skills—any phase of the English curriculum. Of special interest are practices which were successful with non-academic or low-ability students.

Each practice should be described on one of the enclosed forms. Ordinary composition paper may be used if the number of practices outruns the supply of forms. If composition paper is used, please be sure to include such information as your name, school, grade, type of class, etc. (See the printed forms for the required data.)

All accounts of successful teaching received will be published, if not in their entirety, in part. All contributing teachers will receive acknowledgment in the final text.

We would like to emphasize the limited number of teachers participating in this project and urge you to contribute to the upgrading of English instruction by making your positive classroom experiences available to the profession-at-large.

Certain obvious questions must be answered. Who are these superior teachers? How were they selected? By what criteria are their practices designated "effective"? The names of the teachers canvassed for descriptions of successful teaching experiences were taken from a list of participants in the 1965 NDEA Institutes and were especially recommended by the institute directors as prospective workers for the National Council. Furthermore, many in the select group had been individually evaluated by the director. Typical are the following evaluative comments: "first rate," "exceptional teacher," "realistic in outlook," "solid scholar," "best in institute," "articulate and very competent," "able, experienced," "good work in composition and literature," "dedicated teacher," "first class," "exceptionally talented," "a jewel, a gem," and finally "damned good." Two hundred and twenty of the 438 had some positive recommendation. Many of those without such special recognition had participated in institutes where the director, as a matter of policy, had merely listed the names and grade taught without any evaluative comment.

Here, then, seemed an ideal group, one that could be defended as being superior. Did they not have to meet certain criteria to qualify for the institutes? Did they not have more than the usual professional sense which prompted them to sharpen skills and become attuned to new developments in English instruction? Did they not receive the best training the profession had to offer? Were they not

singled out by institute directors as being prospective contributors to NCTE? And finally, did not the majority of this already élite group receive special commendation from directors for work well done? Surely a torrent of effective practices would gush from such teachers recently returned from NDEA revitalizers. Tired blood, indeed!

I remembered the CEE meeting in Pittsburgh last year, when a speaker regretfully announced that it seemed impossible to make any evaluative statements about the impact of NDEA Institutes on teacher effectiveness. Evaluation techniques seemed inadequate; the past conferences with teachers, their evaluative statements, even the follow-up questionnaires used in Donald J. Gray's *The 1965 Institutes in English* reveal very little, really. Overt statements by teachers about the effect of the institute on teaching proficiency were loaded with too many biases, too much subjectivity, too much eagerness to assuage guilt, a sense of obligation, and heaven knows what else to be considered accurate reflections of changes in teaching behavior.

Gray says, "The general expressions of approval cannot bear a great deal of weight." Nevertheless he bases his judgment that the institutes were successful on the participants' declarations that "... they would put to use what the faculty of the institutes taught and thought were useful. That is exactly what institutes are supposed to do." Somehow such declarations seem to be less than adequate criteria. Somehow evaluators must contend with changes in teachers' performance rather than changes in teachers' verbal behavior.

The Effective Teaching Survey was an opportunity not only to gather a corpus of outstanding teaching practices and induce from it a methodological framework, but also to determine what NDEA trained teachers are doing in their classrooms and how their views of teaching success compare with those of the authorities.

Circumstances seemed ideal for my multipronged research onslaught, for the group of teachers did not know I had obtained their names from NDEA lists. Consequently, they did not suspect I had any interest in their special training. No feelings of guilt, no eagerness to say nice things about their institutes, no inclinations to exaggerate the institutes' impact on teaching would be built into their accounts of what they considered to be successful teaching. But still, overt statements by teachers of their own teaching behaviors must be approached with caution. Because some sort of publication was promised and because in a sense I was observing their classes, it could be expected that accounts of teaching success would be embellished. To avoid such biases I decided that rather than counting and cataloging every reported behavior, I would look for working assumptions and principles. I would focus on the basic condition betrayed by the symptoms.

To put it another way, the practices sent by the teachers would be regarded as metaphor behind which lay some discursive truth, in the manner of Carolyn Spurgeon's treatment of Shakespeare's imagery and metaphor—an attempt to identify recurrent figures as indicators of the inner person, for as Miss Spurgeon says, "... it is chiefly through his images that he [the poet] gives himself away."

The letters accompanied by report forms and return envelopes were sent,

and I awaited results. They were not long in coming. I should have recognized one of the first replies as an omen, but I did not. It read:

Good Grief! Without endless qualification, *NOTHING* I do works! I wish to hell I could say something does. For 16 years I've been trying to succeed a bit here with this student, and I fail a lot there with others. It's all so subjective and tentative. I'm flattered that you asked, however. Thanks.

No descriptions of practices were enclosed.

But other letters and practices did arrive. I had all but forgotten that bitter note when it became apparent that the flow of data had stopped. Seventy-four of the 438 teachers had forwarded descriptions of 168 different practices, some accompanied by photos and sets of compositions. Undaunted, I sent my follow-up letter reiterating the unique nature of the project and enclosing a form to be used if the teacher did not intend to participate in the survey. The form, which did not require a signature, asked the teacher to check one of four reasons for non-participation. These reasons were: (1) I have no time, (2) I have no relevant practices to contribute, (3) I am not interested in participating, (4) I prefer not to divulge original ideas. Additional space was provided for other reasons for non-participation. A convenient return envelope again was enclosed.

Twenty-four more participants sent in 59 more practices. The final total stood at 98 teachers, 22.3 percent of the total canvassed, contributing some 227 specific practices. I received 135 forms explaining why there would be no participation, but from 205 teachers, 46.8 percent of the group—silence.

What it boiled down to was that 77.7 percent of our elite group would not or could not contribute and 22.3 percent did contribute to the Effective Teaching Survey. Scrutiny of both groups will suggest some interesting speculation concerning NDEA Institutes and English teacher training in general.

The group that could not or would not submit practices is composed of 205 teachers who chose to remain silent and 135 teachers who supplied reasons for their abstention. Why were those 205 highly trained professionals, designated as the cream of the 1965 NDEA Institutes, silent? Even if they were too busy and the promise of publication meant nothing, a check in the appropriate box would have taken them "off the hook," conveying the positive image of the overworked but productive English teacher. My surmise is (and it is only a surmise) that the spokesman for this group was my forthright omen, whose letter, you remember said, "Nothing I do works. I wish to hell I could say something does." He, I believe, had the courage to say what the 205 chose not to say. If this is the case, one may ask what *are* these teachers doing in their classrooms? What, one may properly ask, did they take from their institute experiences? Should they not have been bubbling over with promising practices? Should they not have been eager to share their classroom successes with their English teaching colleagues all over the country and bask in the resulting recognition and gratification that come rarely or not at all to most classroom teachers? I tend to believe that if these teachers had something to contribute, they would have done so. All of the incentives were there.

Of the 135 teachers (30.8 percent of the total group) who sent their excuses,

82 teachers (18.7 percent of the total group) pleaded no time; 32 teachers (7.3 percent) indicated they had no relevant practices to contribute; 14 teachers (3.2 percent) said they were not interested; 3 teachers (0.8 percent) did not want to divulge original ideas, and 4 teachers (0.9 percent) were ill or had misplaced the materials. A ludicrous note was the phenomenon of six teachers who had neither practices nor time in which to report them. How are these unfortunate six filling their class hours? They have, in effect, acknowledged that they are very busy behaving ineffectually.

One must, I suppose, accept the excuse of "no time" sent in by eighty-two teachers, although I must admit I do so with considerable skepticism. English teachers who have something positive to report about their teaching activities, if given the opportunity, will find time to do that reporting, especially if such reports are to be publicized. I suspect that for many in this group "no time" was a euphemism for "no practices."

It must have been a difficult admission for the thirty-two who reported they had no relevant practices to report. They were, in effect, admitting professional failure, failure made particularly bitter in view of the special professional training they had recently received in the NDEA Institutes.

Those ninety-eight teachers who did participate in the study represented fifty-one NDEA Institutes. They reported successes in the teaching of literature (eighty-six practices), composition (sixty-nine practices), language (sixty-three practices), and in miscellaneous teaching activities (nine practices). The accounts ranged from succinct statements of single class preparations to clusters of preparations requiring several days to elaborate description of units calling for several weeks of classroom time. From the point of view of the established methodological canon these practices ranged from the grossly prosaic (rote learning of grammatical definitions, reliance on workbook exercises, etc.) to daring gambits into synesthesia, idea-centered units, and student involvement in book selection.

Eight teachers specifically mentioned their NDEA Institutes as the sources of the practices they were describing. Two of the NDEA-attributed practices concerned literature, five dealt with composition, and two with the nature of language. Two of the eight teachers had attended the same institute. One teacher's practice stemmed from a tape of speech variants of twenty people participating in a science institute meeting close to her own English institute. I suppose we may say that, tangentially at least, the English institute made this practice possible.

What follows is a brief resume of 224 practices contributed by 98 teachers. Of the 86 practices related to the teaching of literature, 23 were concerned with independent reading and book reporting, 19 with poetry, 11 with the short story, 11 with drama, 8 with certain standard works, 5 with the novel, and 9 were concerned with miscellaneous literary topics.

Some of the underlying assumptions and implicit concerns suggested by the accounts of successful teaching in the area of book reporting are: (1) the importance of idea-centeredness, (2) emphasis on oral rather than written reporting, (3) the need to use dramatizations, reports patterned on TV formats, group reports, and discussion as devices to bring books to life for the reporters as well as for the audience. A minority group did stress the highly structured, formal

written reports. Success in the related activity—encouraging independent reading—seemed to hinge on (1) classroom libraries which promoted and developed the students' own reading tastes and made books accessible and (2) time in class for students both to read and to discuss books of their choice (several mentioned paperbacks as being especially appropriate for the classroom library). Thus teachers working with students' reading tastes and reports of their reading acknowledged the need for group give-and-take and the need to provide and encourage books that are developmentally appropriate, rather than those that are merely prestigious.

The reports of effective teaching of poetry suggested five major principles: (1) Poetry chosen for study should address itself to the actual or potential concerns and interests of its readers; that is, it should be idea-centered, rather than device- or analysis-centered. (2) The application of poetry to contemporary events and personalities—indeed, the feelings, aspirations, and doubts of the students themselves—is essential to the teaching process. (3) Helping the students create their own poetry about the world they know or imagine they know changes attitudes about the value of poetry. (4) Close analysis is necessary for meaningful response to the multiple possibilities of poetry. (5) A study of musical rhythms and song lyrics (popular and old ballads) is a useful way to approach poetry.

Only five practices dealt with the study of the novel and no common approaches or behaviors were apparent.

The twelve accounts of the treatment of drama in the classroom emphasized (1) opportunities for students to act out the plays they read or to dramatize other forms of literature or to dramatize situations with which they were familiar, (2) recordings and film versions which help bring drama to life, and (3) plays with obvious contemporary applications (*Death of a Salesman*, *The Crucible*, *Our Town*).

The eleven accounts of teaching the short story generally assumed the importance of the concept of structure of this literary form. They were much concerned with theme, point-of-view, plot, character, symbolism, etc. In addition, five practices made provision for individual response and interpretation subject to textual corroboration.

Eight accounts described teaching such standards as *The Odyssey*, Greek, Roman, and Norse mythology, *Beowulf*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, etc. Most of the practices imply that individual and group projects, connecting works to current literature and events, and strong emphasis on general human behavior are essential in order to bring the classic to life for students. A small minority stressed close and isolated study of those literary devices germane to the works.

In the study of language, teachers reported most frequent success in the following areas: sentence analysis, ten practices; sentence synthesis, eight practices; vocabulary, fifteen practices; usage, nine practices; dialect study, five practices.

Nine of the ten accounts of sentence analysis reflected applications of the new grammar. Grammatical function was determined by position, affix, word signals, etc., rather than by meaning. Analysis of nonsense sentences underlined

this approach and was mentioned in two instances of sentence analysis. Four accounts called for inductive teaching.

All eight effective techniques having to do with sentence synthesis used the terminology and rationales of traditional grammar. Sentence building was accomplished by the addition of lexical, phrasal, and clausal elements to basic sentence units.

Of the fifteen vocabulary practices, ten stressed word study in some sort of context, seven provided for student exploration of newspapers, magazines, TV, and current reading to establish their own lists. Seven practices required lists to be supplied by teacher or texts. Three suggested vocabulary games; three called for simultaneous spelling-vocabulary consideration, and eight incorporated quizzes or tests into vocabulary instruction.

Violations of accepted usage were treated in nine practices. Three stressed class correction of sentences produced by the students. Three stressed class discovery and correction of violations found in outside sources, the novel *Babbitt*, the recording of *My Fair Lady*, and newspapers and magazines.

Of the five practices concerned with dialect, two emphasized student field work in the community and two stressed study of dialect encountered in literature and in special units on dialect found in certain textbooks.

A small group of practices describing study of propaganda, persuasion, advertising, phonetic transcription, and spelling was also included in the rather loose "language" category.

Sixty-nine practices dealt substantively with composition. Twenty-two of these described composition activities which were related to experiences with literature. The most popular single employment of literary materials was as models to be studied and imitated, such study and imitation directed toward rhetorical patterning. Seventeen practices described procedures concerned with transferring rhetorical characteristics from the model to students' writing. Two practices described changing the point of view from one literary character to another; two practices asked students to write on themes suggested by clusters of readings; another two were concerned with writing sketches of characters encountered in literary works, and two practices stressed writer, audience, and purpose as determiners of word choice, syntax, and tone.

Fourteen practices dealt with the writing of description. Of these, eight emphasized the immediate world of the student (his bedroom, his classroom, his block, his friends). Five stressed awareness of sensations received by one or more senses, and four were concerned with writing single well-constructed sentences which had descriptive impact.

Thirteen practices emphasized the process of building a composition through careful consideration of the role played by each sentence. Of these, eight stressed the act of revision. Of the eight, four suggested that other class members as individuals or in groups participate in the revising of a given student's composition. Two suggested working on class compositions with sentences offered by individuals to be considered, revised, rejected or approved by the class.

Four practices described writing involvement with business-related materials—letters, orders, and forms.

What did all this prove? I do not believe it proved anything conclusively. It did, however, suggest several desirable courses of action:

The first course of action should be a reexamination of the purposes and instructional designs of NDEA Institutes to the end of stressing subsequent teacher behavior in high school classrooms. It is significant that of 490 staff members of 1965 NDEA Institutes questioned by Gray about the value of previous secondary school experience, 69.5 percent felt that such experience would have been "helpful" or "necessary." Some 62 percent of these NDEA staff members had fewer than five years of secondary school experience; 40.6 percent had no secondary school teaching experience.

Just as students in high school do not learn English merely by being told, our teachers do not learn to teach their subject unless the ideas, theories, and principles germane to literature, language, and composition are given what Clive Bell would call "significant form," significant in this case to the very special circumstances of teaching English in all of its ramifications to kaleidoscopic masses of secondary school students.

To reply by saying that the primary purpose of the 1965 Institutes was to teach the disciplines of English is as naive as attempting to separate the content from the form of a sonnet. I submit that Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*, used in some institutes, is an admirable text for prospective critics and doctoral candidates but is totally inappropriate as a text for secondary school teachers who must somehow initiate students into what Louise Rosenblatt has called "the performing art of literature." Too often this kind of erudition, if ever achieved by the institute participant, is used to produce literary snobs who prefer to talk *about* literature rather than read and be moved by it. Over emphasis on close reading, on symbol and archetype safaris, too often produces pedants rather than responsive readers.

Gray reports that "the workshops were planned to connect the courses of the institutes to one another and to translate the ideas and information set out in the institutes' classrooms into ideas and information useful in the participants' own classrooms." And these workshops, Gray asserts, "were the least successful part of the curriculum." Some institutes ignored this vital phase of instruction by ignoring the workshop entirely. It seems obvious that the institutes' task was to improve English instruction by affecting what teachers do in classrooms. Our students do not learn literature by filling notebooks with other people's erudition, and teachers do not really learn the disciplines of English, vis-à-vis teaching in secondary schools, by accumulating academic insights divorced from the significant forms dictated by the reality of adolescents who have not elected English but who, by law, must take it. What teachers do get from this kind of instruction is similar to what high school students get from it—a glibness about language and literature. What these teachers need is help in developing strategies which will change both their own and their students' literary and linguistic behaviors.

Protests that in time these insights will take hold, that knowledge about language and literature will ultimately be translated into behavior are just not supported by what every successful teacher knows—that immediate application is crucial to crystallize learning. Without it, the idea or principle or fact remains

just that, something to be talked about, having no functional referent, and if not employed, soon forgotten.

The second course of action suggested by the survey entails "before and after" studies using control and experimental groups which should be part of any institute's evaluative machinery. Appropriate indices of good teaching could be used as the criteria, so that a pack of compositions, a class's supplementary reading record, the titles of books read in class, a record of the kinds of writing experiences assigned, the teacher's planbook, could be submitted by each teacher or a sample of teachers in the institute and by a control group before and after the institute to help determine significant change in teaching behavior, which after all is the sole justification of any teacher education program.

Gray suggests that future institutes be evaluated by a series of questionnaires and observations by various combinations of specialists. The failings of the questionnaire have already been indicated and are acknowledged by Gray. The observers, I fear, will see what they are predisposed to see. Somehow future evaluations must contend with the before and after teaching behavior of institute participants. I believe the Effective Teaching Survey suggests appropriate means for such future evaluations.

The third implication of the survey is that teachers do have something to contribute to English teaching training. Many imaginative, indeed brilliant strategies were submitted to the survey. Although this study did not find nearly enough really superior teachers through NDEA, and we are still far from achieving a canon of practices, such teachers and such practices do exist. Certainly greater efforts must be made to harvest these scattered efforts and make them available beyond the confines of single classrooms.

The final implication of the Survey is that not enough teachers have something they are willing to point to as evidence of their professional success. The teacher's view of his success cannot be measured with the courses and the degrees he has accumulated, nor with the number of years he has been teaching, nor with his fluency about English teaching, but with the classroom behaviors which in his estimation have affected students. We must somehow provide him with a repertoire of the best possible behaviors so that more and more students will be affected and more teachers will begin experiencing the gratifications essential to their own well-being as well as to the well-being of their profession.

And now, finally, the unkindest cut of all. Many of you are surely aware of a certain basic contradiction in my efforts to affect your behavior relative to English teacher training through the exhortation to consider working practices (another case of lecturing on the inadequacy of the lecture method). Consistent with my faith in the shared concrete practice as the most effective way to change behavior, I am going to ask you to describe on forms which will be distributed a practice *you* find rewarding as you work with prospective teachers. I will duplicate these and send copies to all who write their names and addresses in the appropriate blanks. What should be my assumptions if you fail to participate? Am I to assume you are too busy, are not interested, or have nothing to contribute? Really, I promise not to make the results the subject of another talk.

Such a compilation will provide something potentially much more productive

of change in you than this speech. What we will have are the practices deemed successful by experienced instructors, practices which when you receive them, may be perused, considered, rejected, selected, or modified according to your own talents, proclivities, dispositions, and so on. If some are adopted and become part of your successful teaching repertoire, undoubtedly their performance in your classrooms will enrich the broad framework of conviction each one of you has about what is entailed in the making of an English teacher.