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## The status of speech communication in the Clark County high schools

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*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

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Washington-Lindsey, Rheba C., M.A.

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THE STATUS OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION  
IN THE CLARK COUNTY HIGH SCHOOLS

by

Rheba C. Washington-Lindsey

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

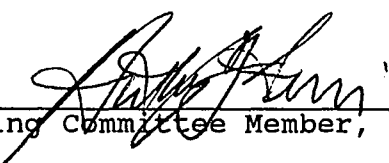
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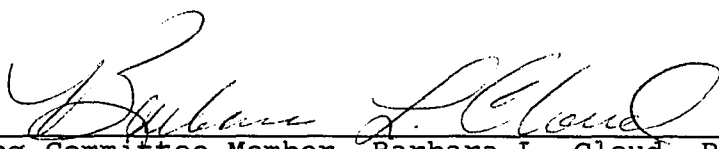
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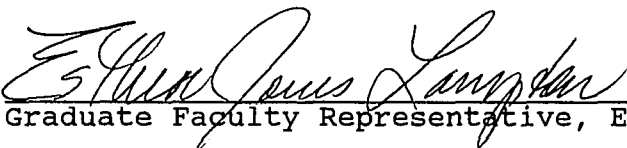
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The thesis of Rheba Washington-Lindsey for the degree of  
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### ABSTRACT

The Clark County School District has implemented the communication strand within the high school English curriculum. Its objectives and activities provide instructional guidelines for teacher use within the classroom situation. This study surveyed high school English teachers and found that the majority of teachers did little or nothing to incorporate speech in their curriculum. The principal reasons given were lack of time, lack of materials, and inadequate university preparation. The study also found newer teachers were more receptive to changes that would allow them to include speech in the curriculum than are veteran teachers.

Most teachers support speech education but as an elective, not a requirement, of the curriculum.

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\* \* \* \* \*

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\* \* \* \* \*

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\* \* \* \* \*

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\* \* \* \* \*

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\* \* \* \* \*

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

During the past several years, there has been one widespread issue that has plagued high school administrators, teachers, the business community, and other school officials: an increasing number of students who are unable to pass a competency test. Today high school students in Clark County, as well as in high schools across the country, must pass a competency test, which measures their reading, math, and writing skills, before they are able to graduate from high school.

Communication skills affect all facets of one's life -- social, family, and business. This is why mandated communication instruction in high schools must be implemented to ensure the communication competence of all students. When students graduate from high school, they should possess the communication skills necessary as adults to function effectively in our increasingly complex society (Speech Communication, 1989).

Most English educators (Allen, Brown, Yatvin, 1986) would argue against implementing a speech program, and insist that students instinctively learn to talk just as they learn to walk, and by the time they have reached high school, formal communication competence has already been reached; therefore,

there is no real need to implement a speech program. Yet, these same critics cannot comprehend why a freshman high school student, one of average intelligence, is unable to explain how to get home, or fails to understand a teacher's two-step directions.

Most schools include speech communication under the umbrella of the English curriculum. It is believed that oral communication is the central agency by which all language functions. Yet, many English Language Arts critics see other elements of English as more important, namely writing and reading (Fountain, 1986). The opponents to communication integration fail to realize the full function of oral communication and the foundation that English rests upon. Oral communication should be an integrated curriculum in which all aspects of language arts are instituted (reading, literature, writing, speaking, listening) and are taught in a coordinated manner. The basic goal is that language will be the basic discipline; students need to understand the concepts in order to use oral communication effectively. Consequently, a comprehensive curriculum must be designed which is relevant to a student's situation, experiences, commonly faced encounters, and preparation for future business communication.

The trend has been for departments of English, Language Arts, and Literature to take responsibility for communication instruction. According to Smith (1954), this occurred for one primary reason, the fact that both

communication and English trace their roots to the study of rhetoric, which has been a vital part of the curriculum since medieval times.

Ellis (1984) defines the nature of English as being the only school discipline that has the goal of improving language. It is the only discipline where teacher and student can become engaged in the learning process through forms of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. A student's oral language is structured by means of words, sentences, paragraphs, essays, poems, and stories. There is room for being original/creative, as in no other discipline (Ellis, 1984).

English is the catalyst for speech communication. It is the most widely used skill, but the least recognized area of knowledge. Communication is central to most human listening and speaking, yet this centrality is not reflected in our educational system (Backlund, 1985). At present, the absence of formal communication instruction is affecting students' ability to speak and communicate effectively. According to current research (Book, Pappas, 1992), the United States lags behind in graduating students who are functional or literate in the basics. Thus, there is a resurgence to restructure not only in the English curriculum but all other educational curricula.

According to Backlund, English courses typically are often under siege to restructure the curriculum because so



many competencies rest upon the shoulders of English and Language Arts teachers. This leaves many teachers disgruntled and resistant to any new programs. Teachers are already pressured to emphasize expository writing and basic grammar. Currently, administrators have labeled thematic literature courses such as drama, creative writing, publications, and conversation as "villains" (p. 185), because they detract from the back-to-basics endeavor.

In light of evidence which clearly places oral communication in the hands of the English curriculum, this descriptive research will assess the status of speech communication, the communication strand, and determine teacher attitudes toward implementing a communication program in the Clark County High School English curriculum as it presently exists.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The purpose of this descriptive study was to investigate the status of speech communication in the Clark County School District, to determine if the speech communication strand, as found within the English Curriculum Guide, was being implemented. Therefore, this research is guided by five questions: 1) What are the professional attributes teachers bring into the classroom? 2) What are teacher attitudes toward implementing speech communication programs in the English curriculum and the deterrents to implementing speech communication programs? 3) What are

teacher attitudes toward speech education? and 4) What are teacher attitudes toward the communication strand as found in the course syllabus?

This study represents a new venture within the state of Nevada. Hopefully, it will serve as a cornerstone for future research, and it is hoped that the State of Nevada will gain insights relative to future planning that will encourage teachers to implement a speech communication program.

The answers to these questions were sought through a descriptive study in which teachers were surveyed on their attitudes about implementing a speech program within the English curriculum. Previous studies revealed a broader view of the status of speech communication. A description of the English curriculum and speech communication objects are included. The method used is provided, along with a sample selection, instrument design, distribution procedure and response rate, and method of analysis. Results of the research study are given in Chapter V, and discussion and inferences in Chapter VI.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this descriptive research was to assess the status of speech communication in the Clark County High School English curriculum, and to determine the classroom teacher's attitude toward implementation of the program. In reviewing the literature, the researcher found that very little had been written on the status of speech communication across the country within the last fifteen years, and this lack of research remains relatively unaltered.

Literature reviewed and termed relevant to the present study was divided into the following categories: 1) functions of language acquisition in communication; 2) communication in the English curriculum; 3) communication variations and systematic instruction; 4) the status of speech communication at the national level; and 5) standards for effective communication.

Expounding that the primary function found in communication is to form language, verbally or nonverbally, Modaff and Hopper (1984) contend that the future of communication in the curriculum could be bleak. It is rarely included in the elementary curricula, seldom included in the junior high curricula, and scantily covered in the high school curricula. The contention of these researchers is that the

basic foundation of communicating is related to human learning, and that speech should be a basic component of the instructional process at all levels: the multi-sensory level, behavior level, higher conceptualization level, and literacy level. Speech is the center of higher learning -- it regulates and guides as it develops students' acoustic oral experiences of speaking, and thus provides a trigger to higher conceptualization (Modaff, Hopper, 1984).

Allen, Brown, and Yatvin (1986), after their exhaustive study on language acquisition, make the following observation: oral communication is the basis for children's cognitive development and language acquisition. Their conclusion is based upon works by Piaget (1978). The cognitivists argue that thought structure, rather than linguistic universals, accounts for the development of oral language or oral communication. As students' cognitive skills become more developed, their communication skills become more sophisticated; hence, students are able to think constructively, verbally express their ideas, deal with multiple viewpoints, write analytically and critically, and express themselves intellectually.

Flood and Lapp posited that oral language competency will only occur with a curriculum that has a sound theoretical base; reading, literature, writing, speaking, and listening should all be taught in an integrated, coordinated way. The basic premise of such a program, according to Flood and Lapp,

revolves around language as the basis of the discipline. Therefore, teachers need to know how language is developed in order to use it effectively.

Flood and Lapp investigated research done by Liberman, Liberman, et. al. (cited in Flood and Lapp, 1985), in the area of cognitive processing in reading and writing. These researchers found that the ability to segment written words into their phonological components -- a metalinguistic ability -- predicts reading performance and develops communication skills. The metalinguistic ability rests on linguistic tasks; producing paraphrase, judging and correcting non-grammatical ambiguity, and is directly responsible for superior reading performance across these presentation modes: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Flood and Lapp outlined an integrated English curriculum that would develop metalinguistic skill and communication competence: 1) students need to practice speaking and listening skills; 2) as speakers, students need to develop an awareness of speaker content; and 3) students must be able to respond appropriately and effectively, both verbally and nonverbally. Flood and Lapp maintain that oral communication is developed through cognitive skills, and strengthened through a diversified language arts program, thus placing oral communication on the shoulders of the language arts curriculum. The language arts curriculum needs to be well researched and integrated in such a way that students are

able to develop their own linguistic skills and eventually become competent language users.

De Nofa (1993) addressed oral communication, or language development, from a social theorist perspective. According to De Nofa: in American society today, there is a focus on an increasingly apparent and growing phenomenon -- the problem of deviant social behavior of students. De Nofa commented on research that confirmed that the public school system had been the primary institution that is relied upon in providing assistance in the overall development of the young. With the breakdown of the traditional institutions that students depended upon for forming social skills, the schools have taken on the roles of parent, pastor, physician, and mentor.

It is estimated that somewhere between 20 to 30 percent of students in elementary and secondary school are at risk. There are approximately 45 million young people at risk in the United States (Facts About, 1989). Surveys confirm that at-risk young all have the following characteristics: 1) are low achievers; 2) show limited task performance; 3) have limited aspirations; 4) do not engage in classroom and school activities; and 5) often exhibit disruptive or delinquent behavior. Research indicates (Rumberger, 1987) that social skills are essential for constructive interpersonal interaction, framed around oral communication, and are lacking for many of our nation's young. Therefore, there is a need

for a communication curriculum that will foster development of adequate and appropriate language, articulation, voice, fluency, and listening skills necessary for success in educational, career and social situations, through regular classroom instruction.

To this end, Fantini (1986) commented that public schools simply cannot be effective unless they adapt to the changing nature of the learner. There is a new generation of learners who perceive the environment in traditional schools as not relevant to their broader orientation and aspirations. It remains an unrealistic expectation that today's students will adapt to traditional schools as these schools presently exist. It is unrealistic for teachers, and schools, to expect students' psychosocial forces that inhibit speech communication to vanish. Schools must modify and change to establish compatibility with this generation. Changes must occur for several reasons: 1) single parent families; 2) parents unavailable to their children; 3) isolation; 4) environments which do not stimulate, or encourage, academic achievement; all of these forces help to contribute to maladjusted children. Television often serves as sole educator, teaching violent and seductive behavior, and encouraging communication filled with bullets of profanity and hostility. Teachers are often the only intellectual stimulation that students will come in contact with.

In summary, researchers have shown that oral communication is a cognitive, social, behavioral, and hemispheric learning modality. It is one of the single most important skills of modern life. If teachers accept the fact that oral communication determines the level at which lives are lived, a movement to enhance students' oral communication must be initiated. It is unfortunate that research verifies that a significant portion of our students are unable to give clear, simple directions to others, lack the necessary skills to communicate their feelings to others or convey basic information (U.S. Department of Education, 1983). For most of our nation's young, elementary and secondary schools represent their only opportunity for formal communication training.

In 1917 the Progressive movement in American education gave the English curriculum new meaning. The National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Education Committee explicitly stated that the reading and language teacher should prepare students for life's situations, giving them the necessary skills to cope with the issues and problems of an ever-increasing complicated world. At the same time they did not make provisions for widening the curriculum. In 1935, the National Council of Teachers of English made recommendations for a socially relevant, contemporary reading and language arts curriculum entitled "An Experience Curriculum." This curriculum emphasized oral communication skills as a vehicle of writing and speaking. In



the 1950s and 1960s, the English curriculum changed yet again, returning to English grammatical composition. The 1970s gave rise to meeting minimum competency testing, and instruction focused on reading and writing (Flood and Lapp, 1985).

Braden (1961) explored the historical nature of speech education and concluded that speech was indeed administered and taught mainly in academic departments of English. It was the study of language, a mode of communication, which performed the functions of establishing a community of knowledge, experience, attitudes and feelings, allowing for inquiry in search of information and understanding; serving as an avenue for giving commands and receiving commands; and designed to elicit creative, covert, and overt behaviors. According to Braden, speech education goes back further than Aristotle and Plato. During this classical period it was synonymous with public address; it came under the name of oratory or rhetoric and was considered the heart of any education program. According to Braden, schools of speech existed in the Greek world as early as the thirteenth century, B.C., referred to as schools of rhetoric, emphasizing spoken discourse. The study of speech was a well-respected academic discipline, included in the secondary curriculum. In fact, it was required subject matter (p. 56). Additionally, many non-literate societies had elevated oral communication to a highly developed art form.

Flood and Lapp (1985) minutely detailed the history of the reading and language arts curriculum. Written composition was introduced in the mid-nineteenth century, and students were required to produce narrative, descriptive, and expository writing. The study of literature became the English curriculum in the late nineteenth century, overshadowing oral communication. In the nineteenth century traditional components of the curriculum are evident: reading, writing, and literature, but not rhetoric.

During the past century, teachers and administrators have attempted to alter the English curriculum, but few changes have had long term effects. Today, there is a widespread popular tenet among teachers of contemporary language arts pedagogy that the language arts ought to be taught in an integrated manner (Tiedt and Tiedt, 1978). Such implementation has yet to be realized. Tiedt and Tiedt observed that "the language arts should be so strongly interrelated that no single skill can be taught in isolation (p.4). Burns and Broman (1979) noted that "the strands of language study are so interwoven that speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities are almost indistinguishable" (p.3). Communication develops literacy and the ability to utilize oral language in order to facilitate competency. Educators across the country agree that literacy is a necessary condition for higher learning. The child who begins to acquire reading and writing skills must build those skills

upon a foundation of oral communication abilities: delivery, organization, content, and proper use of language patterns (Robinson, 1990).

Robinson approaches literacy from the perspective of the English department being the central place where literacy takes place. Robinson (1990, p. 244) expresses the firm belief that educators, more specifically English departments, must begin to bridge the gap between literacy and illiteracy. According to Robinson, one of the most significant ways of doing such is "through careful consideration of what we do in our separate classrooms, and whether what we do meets the needs of our students and the legitimate expectations of society." An excellent example of Robinson's belief is collaborating the teaching of writing, reading, oral communications, hence, restructuring the English curriculum. Teachers trained in literature may not necessarily be the best suited to the idea of teaching students communication skills, and many teachers might be reluctant to implement an oral communication unit. Beginning basic students need writing and communication skills that will prepare them for the kinds of tasks they are likely to face after school. Robinson asserts that there are both powerful and diverse social needs for competencies commonly referred to as literacy: reading, writing, comprehending, and communicating. Robinson concurs with Lovitt (1991) that there is a need for programs that enable all students to acquire these competencies, not just

middle- and upper-class students. The schools need to address the needs of students from various ethnic and social classes, and those at risk of dropping out. Robinson (1990, p. 247) does not see English departments meeting the needs of students unless: "English teachers are willing to change, to challenge inertia, to alter the nature of English studies, to redefine what they think of as centers and peripheries, to reshape the department and alter their priorities."

Equally important to an effective oral communication program are basic teaching and learning standards. According to the Speech Communication Association (1987), an effective oral communication program contains the following standards. First, a program based on current rhetorical and communication theory, research in speech and language development, psycholinguistics, communication disorders, speech science, and related fields of study. Second, an effective oral communication program provides instruction that is a clearly identifiable part of the curriculum, and that is systematically integrated with reading and writing in the content areas. Third, an effective oral communication program contains relevant academic, personal, and social experiences of students as core subject matter for the oral communication program. Fourth, an effective oral communication program provides opportunities for a wide range of speaking and listening experiences, in order to develop articulation, adequate and appropriate language, and fluency. Finally,

these basic teaching and learning standards should include a wide range of speaking situations, purposes, and instruction that provides encouragement for reticent students.

Allen, Brown and Yatvin (1986) declare that English teachers postulate that the order of development is writing, reading, listening, and maybe speaking. Although this general sequence has some developmental and pedagogical validity, it is over-simplified. Learning is holistic. The spoken word serves as a catalyst to reading and writing, and children in literate societies must develop facility with both written and oral communication. During 1977-78, the Speech Communication Association's Educational Policies Board established a task force which recommended minimal speaking and listening skills for high school students. Recommended criteria for minimum competency were: 1) the student must be able to express ideas clearly and concisely; 2) express and defend with evidence their point of view; 3) organize messages so that others can understand them; 4) ask questions to obtain information; 5) answer questions effectively; and 6) summarize messages. In addition to the basic speech communication skills, students need to become competent in human relations. They should be able to: 1) describe another's viewpoint; 2) describe differences in opinion; 3) express feelings to others; and 4) perform socially acceptable rituals (Speech Communication Association, 1987).

Smith (1991) pointed out the urgency for English teachers to begin implementing speech communication programs in their curriculum, reporting that in English language classes, 90 percent or more of the time is spent in teaching writing and reading. Smith observed that many teachers simply are not professionally trained, or have no background in oral communication. There is a fear attached to this problem -- the fear that untrained teachers will not be able to teach speech adequately. English teachers may claim they are implementing oral communication with other units when, in fact, they are not. For example, Smith asserts that reading aloud, doing a book report, or discussing Romeo and Juliet are not considered teaching oral communication. Teachers may make the assumption that high school students do indeed communicate; but many students are unable to present a fluent, articulate, well-thought-out, and prepared oral presentation. Smith further asserts that teachers are often reluctant to teach oral communication skills because students often fear being intimidated by their peers; lack confidence in their use of the English language; feel inadequate in language expression, and fear failure. It is Smith's contention that many teachers might support a speech curriculum as long as they would not be required to integrate it within the existing English studies programs. They would be far more supportive if it were offered as an elective; the assumption being that the English curriculum is already inundated by numerous other

responsibilities and tasks. Smith still strongly recommends that all English teachers begin to implement oral communication instruction programs in order that our youth become more orally proficient.

Current research (Hutter, 1991) indicates that there is a need for modification of the communication curriculum, and systematic oral instruction is urgently needed. In today's society, youth face more difficulties than previously. It is imperative that the educational community prepare today's youth to become tomorrow's adult leaders, and to possess the communication skills necessary to function effectively in our complex society. To that end, Hutter found that many disciplines aid in the growth process, yet one discipline seems to have been overlooked: speech communication. Glenn and Nelsen (1989, p. 20) stated in Raising Self-Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World, "Today we find far too many American children at the onset of puberty face an incredible smorgasbord of challenges with a deficiency in capabilities. Self-confidence, self-validation, self-discipline, good judgment, and a sense of responsibility are all lacking." For example, students who get the best grades in school generally know how to effectively approach teachers. There are other students who do not know how to effectively approach teachers, who invariably are not as successful. These are the students that are involved in verbal altercations with teachers. This is a frequent

occurrence with at-risk students (Lovitt, 1991). Glenn and Nelsen are convinced that these behaviors could be eliminated through a basic speech communication course that includes intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, and conflict management.

Glenn and Nelsen (1989) list the following interpersonal skills necessary for effective social interaction: listening, communicating, exchanging ideas with others, cooperating, working with others toward common goals; negotiating, resolving conflict, sharing, empathizing, and conveying and understanding the feelings and needs of others. Larry Dumont (1991) reported that teens often find it difficult to articulate their feelings and handle conflicts effectively. Many cannot communicate well enough to express their thoughts, hopes, and ideals. For this reason, today's students need communication variation skills. Communication variation skills are those which inform, persuade, describe, explain, or entertain. These can be used at the interpersonal and intrapersonal level in order to equip students with communication skills that will help them effectively handle frustrations and emotions. Intrapersonal communication helps children identify and handle their inner feelings, thoughts, and emotions in a healthy manner. There are three stages of the intrapersonal communication which lead to a more mature outlook: self-assessment, self-control, and self-discipline. Self-assessment is the ability to recognize and interpret



emotions; self-control the ability to discern appropriate behaviors; and self-discipline is the ability to visualize a desired outcome and choose the appropriate behavior to achieve it. An effective oral communication program must provide for interpersonal and intrapersonal instruction.

Researching the status of speech communication in secondary schools was a high priority in studies conducted during the 1960s. Most of these studies posed questions about the nature of the basic course, course offerings, and the training of teachers (Brooks, 1973) and (Book and Pappas, 1981). Curricular and extra-curricular speech offerings have remained relatively unaltered for the past fifteen years. Book and Pappas compared studies done in 1973 and 1979 which indicated that these states decreased their basic speech courses by ten percent or more: Washington, from 87 to 89.4 percent; Massachusetts, 64 percent to 53.5 percent; Indiana from 99 to 83.6 percent; Michigan from 96 percent to 86.6 percent; both Kansas and New York went from 90.5 percent to 86 percent, but reported no differences in 1979, while Ohio saw a slight increase from 63 percent to 68.3 percent. Four states require speech communication for graduation: Ohio, New York, Michigan, and Indiana. Estimates of the number of students who actually had exposure to any type of speech communication instruction before they graduated was low -- Missouri, 33 percent; Ohio, 20 percent; New York, less than 50 percent. Book and Pappas indicate that of the 76 percent of schools

offering a basic speech course, only 32 percent required the course. Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Nebraska required it in more than half of the schools. According to Brooks, these figures indicate the area in which considerable growth was expected but did not materialize in the 1970s.

In 1979 the basic course most frequently was a semester long. On the average, 49.5 percent of them were a semester long, compared to 26.4 percent a year long, 20.8 percent a quarter long, and 13.6 percent trimesters or mini-courses. Additionally, the basic course was offered once each year in 50.9 percent of the schools, each semester in 32.2 percent of the schools, and each quarter in 12 percent of the schools (Book and Pappas, 1981). Book and Pappas discovered the basic course being offered in grades nine through twelve or ten through twelve. The basic course was offered an average of one section per term. The average instructional time per session was 55 minutes.

Book and Pappas (1981) and Brooks (1969) also detailed components of the basic speech course. Although a combination of topics was offered -- interpersonal communication, discussion, oral interpretation, debate, and drama -- public speaking was taught most frequently. The majority of teachers who taught these courses held degrees in English; in four states, 30 percent of teachers teaching speech courses had B.A. majors in speech, communication or theater, and 12 schools reported less than 60 percent with

speech majors. Book and Pappas summarized their research by emphasizing the need for restructuring the secondary speech communication curricula up to the "Standards for Effective Oral Communication Programs" endorsed by the Speech Communication Association and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

In 1990 researchers Cheseboro and Gaudino prepared a report which sought to identify the status and role of speech communication in elementary and secondary education in the United States. Their report described and classified state education requirements regarding oral communication in elementary, junior high, and senior high schools, in the fifty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Cheseboro and Gaudino classified each system into six broad categories: 1) no statewide requirements of any kind; 2) oral communication not mentioned as part of the communication requirements; 3) oral communication competencies mentioned, but not required as part of language arts programs; 4) state credit given if a student voluntarily selects oral communication; 5) oral communication recommended as part of an integrated arts approach; and 6) oral communication required as part of an integrated language arts approach. Their research indicated the following: Colorado and Wyoming had no statewide requirements; Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Vermont reported oral communication is not mentioned as part of the

communication requirements; Alaska, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania reported oral communication competencies are mentioned but not required as part of language arts programs; Connecticut, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, **Nevada**, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia reported state credit is given if students voluntarily select oral communications; Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin report that oral communication is required as part of an integrated language arts approach; Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, **Nevada**, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Texas, Washington, and West Virginia report oral communication is required as part of an integrated language arts approach; Nebraska and North Dakota require oral communication as a separate course; and the District of Columbia requires oral communication as part of a performance or achievement test.

Brooks (1969) presented a survey on the status of speech education in high schools, which existed during the 1930s. The study focused on curricular speech and had three purposes: 1) to compare high school curricular speech in the sixties to the school curricular speech ten and twenty years ago; and 2) summarizes the findings of several studies

completed during the past five years. In 1930 there was a small minority of high schools in Oklahoma offering a course in speech communication. During 1937 and 1938 there was little or no attention being paid to speech except in English class in the central and western states. Fifteen percent of the high schools in Pennsylvania offered a speech course in 1939. It was not until the fifties that surveys began to reveal a significant number of high schools offering speech courses for credit. Forty-four percent of Ohio schools offered speech for credit. The late fifties and early sixties showed the following offering speech for credit: Illinois, 47 percent; South Dakota, 51 percent; Michigan, 54 percent; 65 percent in Washington; and 45 percent in Nebraska. Similar percentages were shown in Arizona, Michigan, and Kansas. However, 1967, 1968, and 1969 surveys indicate that 80 to 90 percent of American high schools offered speech for credit: Indiana, 82 percent; Louisiana, 81 percent; Missouri, 83 percent; and Washington, 87 percent. Brooks' research indicates the small high schools could not afford to offer speech for credit.

During the 1960s many colleges and universities required incoming freshmen to have four years of oral communication studies, but this was not entirely supported. Thus, Brooks reports that Indiana, Louisiana, Missouri, South Dakota, Nebraska, California, New York, and Michigan all required speech for graduation. Brooks further cited the many

names given for speech courses: Speech I and II, Advanced Speech, Debate, Drama I and II, Public Speaking, Speech Arts, Radio Speech, Discussion and Debate, Forensics, Discussion, College Prep Speech, Persuasion, Business Speaking, Interpersonal Communication, Parliamentary Procedure, Logic and Reasoning, Salesmanship, Beginning Speech, Principles of Speech, Principles of Oral Communication, Oral Expression, Practical Speech, and Speech Development. All required courses had to be taught by a qualified speech teacher for those states governed by the North Central Accrediting Association. But in many other states teachers were allowed to teach speech without having adequate training. For example, in Missouri, 38 percent had no speech major or minor. Nebraska reported 44.6 percent of speech teachers had 6 hours or less of speech training. In Louisiana, 8 percent of speech teachers had less than a minor in speech, in Indiana 14 percent had 5 hours or less, and in Michigan 25 percent of speech teachers had neither a major or minor in speech. In Washington, 36 percent of their teachers had received no training in speech. According to Brooks, the nature of the basic speech course was "general." Several units were highlighted: informative speaking, persuasive speaking, debate, oratory, and oral interpretation. The objective was to enable students to become effective speakers.

In summarizing the research of the status of speech in America, Brooks (1969) noted improvements had been made

over the past ten, twenty, and thirty years. Specifically, those schools offering a speech course have gone from a very low percentage to a high of 80 or 90 percent. During this time, 15 to 25 percent of the schools required speech courses. Robinson, Book and Pappas speculate that the communication curriculum needs restructuring. Does their scholarly speculation accurately measure whether a teacher uses the course syllabus? According to Allen, Brown, Yatvin, learning is holistic and English is the catalyst for this holistic experience. There still remains a need for improvement in course content. Students do not seem to be acquiring needed speech training. Teacher training needs to be updated and made relevant, as do course objectives.

Teaching speech communication must become a priority in our nation's educational objectives, if our young adults are to become productive members of society. Congress held that "educational agencies" should "improve instruction" so that "all children are able to master the basic skills of reading, mathematics, and effective communication, both written and oral" (Speech Communication Association, 1991).

Cognitive development is the basis for learning to communicate; it is affected by and affects language use. Functional communication emerges in early childhood through social interaction and interaction with environment. As a child's cognitive development becomes more sophisticated, so does the language of communication. Yet there are youths who

do not have strong cognitive skills, and therefore have weak language and communication skills. This accounts for the thousands who are illiterate.

Many students should have learned the skill of communication variation by the time they are in grade school. They must learn specific language skills needed to accomplish specific communication purposes. Those communication variations include informing and expressing feelings. In order for oral language competency to take place, the curriculum must be based upon a sound theoretical base -- reading, literature, writing, listening, and speaking. The curriculum must develop the student's cognitive and metalinguistic abilities. Students need to develop reading and writing skills, and to be able to discern a speaker's purpose. Equally imperative is vocabulary development. Many students have a limited vocabulary, which restricts their oral communication ability. They cannot express either complex thoughts or emotions, because they lack a fundamental vocabulary necessary to express themselves (Allen, Brown, Yatvin, 1986).

As reading and writing are important to a student's education, so too is oral communication. However, too often educators have erroneously concluded that, after children learn to talk, they will continue to develop their communication competence with no need of formal oral communication instruction. Book and Pappas cited a need for



America's educational institutions to bring their speech communication curriculum up to the "Standards for Effective Oral Communication Programs" which are endorsed by the Speech Communication Association and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

## CHAPTER III

### DESCRIPTIONS

This chapter contains detailed descriptions of the course syllabus and the speech communication objectives, as they currently exist in the high school English curriculum. These descriptions will further help in assessing the status of speech communication in the Clark County School District.

#### ENGLISH CURRICULUM

Speech education comes under the English course guidelines, and its scope is found in the English course syllabus. The English course syllabus was developed in September 1976, revised in 1977, 1986, and January 1990. The current course syllabus emphasizes the study of language and composition, critical thinking, listening, writing, literature and speaking. This is a required course which fulfills one of the four English credits required for graduation. There are sixteen course goals -- speech communication is number fourteen -- to improve communication skills in speaking and writing. The speech communication goals encourage student employment of skills in organized verbal exchanges by presenting a variety of written or oral verbal exchanges (reviews, editorials, newspaper articles, talk shows, or plays).

### SPEECH COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

Each English course has a prescribed syllabus which reflects the philosophical position of the program and establishes minimum basic concepts. Each syllabus contains the course scope, performance objectives, suggested approaches and activities, and suggested resources. The following performance objectives are currently constructed in the speech communication strand.

#### English I

##### Communication Skills - Speaking and Listening.

The student will employ skills in organized verbal exchanges, construct relevant questions on specific topics related to classwork, defend responses to questions coherently and concisely. The student will employ appropriate speaking techniques, and employ constructive criticism.

#### English II

##### Communication Skills.

The student will employ appropriate speaking techniques, respond to an oral presentation, logically and concisely justify responses to questions, formulate constructive criticism, practice cooperative learning activities, and follow directions.

## English III

Communication.

The student will research topics of current interest for composition, take pertinent notes from a lecture, apply directions given orally or in written format, evaluate logical and illogical reasoning in spoken material, restate a speaker's or author's premise, present an argument, and argue an issue without personal attack.

## English IV

Communication.

The student will take pertinent notes from a lecture, apply directions given orally or in written format, evaluate logical and illogical reasoning in spoken material, analyze a speaker's intent, evaluate a speaker's verbal and nonverbal techniques used to make an effective presentation, restate a speaker's or author's premise, present an argument, and argue an issue without personal attack.

## QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS

To receive a secondary English certificate in Nevada, a teacher must hold a Bachelor's degree, complete a State Board of Education approved program of preparation for teaching in the secondary grades, have 36 semester hours in a

major, and three semester hours from each of the following areas: composition, descriptive grammar, reading, American Literature, English Literature, general survey of literature, journalism, speech or dramatic or theatrical arts, and linguistics or the history of language. A teacher must also include as a minor: composition, descriptive grammar, reading, American Literature, English Literature, and three semester hours in speech, drama, or journalism.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHOD

This study was conducted in three stages; these stages will be recounted under subheadings in this chapter in the order in which they were performed. They are as follows: sample selection, construction of survey, administration procedure and response rate, and method of analysis.

#### SAMPLE SELECTION

A sample of 233 high school English teachers was drawn from 8,976 licensed high school teachers in the Clark County School District, in order to study the status of speech communication within the English curriculum. The survey had a response rate of 32 percent. These teachers were chosen because they represent an area of study which is the basis for all other academia. According to the Nevada Department of Education, these teachers are experts in the field of English, as a result of meeting the criteria for licensure.

#### CONSTRUCTION OF THE SURVEY

The questionnaire used in this study was designed to inquire about four specific areas (found in Appendix, p. 52):

Research Question I. To ascertain the teacher's professional attributes and demographic information: years of teaching, current teaching assignment, subjects certified in, current grades taught, ethnicity, gender, type of degree held,

currently doing graduate study in English or speech communication, and number of college credits in speech communication.

Research Question II. To assess the number of teachers implementing speech communication programs in the English curriculum. The respondents were asked to answer the following questions: 1) have taught speech communication; 2) percent of instructional time devoted to teaching speech communication as a separate unit; 3) percent of instructional time spent integrating speech; 4) had the respondent taught speech before; and 5) amount of time devoted to teaching speech per semester. In addition, this research question sought to identify problems associated with implementation of speech programs.

The following questions were used to address this objective: Question 6 asked respondents what prevented implementation, and question 7 which of the following elements would be most beneficial in implementing a speech program.

Research Question III. Teacher's attitude toward speech education. Questions included: 8) should speech be offered as an elective; 9) should speech be taught by someone who has a degree or certification in speech communication; 10) should speech be offered as a requirement for graduation; 10) should speech be a component of English curriculum; and 11) do all students need speech skills.

Research Question IV. To assess teacher's attitudes pertaining to the communication strand found in the course syllabus. Question 12 asked respondents if they would use activities, ideas, and strategies from their own materials; question 13, if they could use the speech communication section of the district's course syllabus to teach speech this year; question 14, if the course syllabus was beneficial; question 15, are components of the syllabus sufficient; and 17, what topics should a speech communication curriculum contain.

#### ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURE AND RESPONSE RATE

Pilot Survey. Prior to initiating the survey, the questionnaire was piloted for reliability and validity by a group of high school English teachers, the English Curriculum Consultant, and the Clark County School District Testing and Evaluation Committee. Their suggestions were incorporated into the final questionnaire.

Distribution Procedure. The questionnaire was mailed to 233 high school English teachers in the Clark County School District. A follow-up reminder was placed on the district hotline. A total of 74 respondents returned the questionnaires, for a response rate of 32 percent. When the responses were all received, the data was coded and entered into the computer.



#### METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Frequency distributions were used to report the demographic information and analyze the relevant questions to this descriptive study.

## CHAPTER V

### RESULTS

The purpose of this descriptive research study was to investigate the status of speech communication, and the speech communication strand of the Clark County English Course Syllabus as it presently exists in the school district; and to determine teacher attitudes toward implementation of a speech communication program. The results of this study are reported in five parts; first, respondents' professional attributes and demographic information will be reported; second, an assessment of teacher attitudes toward implementing speech communication programs and the deterrents to implementing a speech program will be reported; third, examines responses pertaining to teacher attitudes toward speech education; fourth, assess responses of respondents toward the course syllabus. The final portion of this chapter delineates a final open-ended item, "Other Comments," which was placed at the end of this questionnaire for respondents who desired to add information. Please refer to appendices for tables.

#### Demographic Information

##### Personal Attributes

The majority of teachers (52.8%) who responded have more than 16 years of teaching experience, and 66.2 percent have a M.A. or M.S. Degree. None of the respondents is doing

graduate work in speech communication, and 55.4 percent of the respondents have 1 - 6 college credits in speech communication.

#### Implementing Speech

##### Communication Programs

For the questionnaire items regarding implementing speech communication programs, 33.8 percent of the respondents spend 1 - 3 hours teaching speech communication. Meanwhile, 45.4 percent of teachers spend 11 - 30 percent of their time integrating speech into the English curriculum. A large percentage of respondents, 72.6 percent, have not taught speech as a separate unit, but a resounding 79.7 percent of respondents have taught speech communication in some form.

##### Deterrents to Implementation

##### of Speech Communication

The questions which sought to identify problems which deterred implementation of a speech communication program, 55.4 percent of the teachers lacked time. Yet, 35.1 percent of the respondents listed lack of instructional materials, and 5.4 percent listed lack of professional preparation as deterrents to implementing a speech program. Additionally, respondents saw instructional materials (35.1%), inservices (29.6%), and professional development (12.2%) as being most beneficial in implementing speech communication.

### Teacher Attitude Toward

#### Speech Implementation

In responding to the question of teacher attitude toward speech education, 39.2 percent agreed that speech should be taught by someone who has a degree or certification in speech, while 24.3 percent somewhat agreed; 60.7 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that speech should be offered as an elective. Meanwhile, some respondents (28.4%) strongly disagreed with offering speech as a graduation requirement, with 25.7 percent strongly agreeing; while 39.2 percent strongly agreed that it should be a component of the English curriculum, and 54.1 percent strongly agreed that students need speech education.

### Teacher Attitude Toward

#### Course Syllabus

In response to the communication strand of the course syllabus, a little less than half of the respondents (47.2%) are very familiar with the district's course syllabus. Some respondents, 37.8 percent, use their own materials, while 55.4 percent use the district's course syllabus. Conversely, 48.6 percent indicated the course syllabus as somewhat beneficial. Many of these respondents (50.0%) felt the components of the district's English course syllabus were sufficient, while some of the respondents (41.4%) stated the syllabus was somewhat or not sufficient. Of the respondents, 87.8 percent indicated that interpersonal communication should

be included in a speech communication curriculum, 93.2 percent thought oral presentations should be included, and 82.4 percent stated listening strategies should also be included.

## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION AND INFERENCES

This chapter is divided into three parts: discussion and inferences from results; suggestions for future study; conclusions, limitations of study, and suggestions for future study.

#### DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

##### Professional Attributes and Demographic Information

The teachers who responded to this research study shared similar professional attributes in that they are members of the educational field. For this reason, these teachers do share in a homogeneity. Their professional status and their careers vary from 1 to 36 years of instructional experience. Additionally, none of them is currently doing graduate study in speech communication; 55.4 percent have 1 - 6 college credits in speech communication, and 66.2 percent have a M.A. or M.S. Degree. This sample represents a broad variety in number of teachers and their professional status.

##### Research Question II: Teacher

##### Implementation and Deterrents

An analysis of the findings from the four questions on the questionnaire suggests these teachers, in general, have taught some form of speech communication, either as a separate

unit or integrated within the English curriculum -- some more than others. For example, 72.6 percent of teachers have not taught speech as a separate unit, 45.4 percent spend 11 - 30 percent of teaching time integrating speech, of which 33.8 percent spend at least 1 - 3 hours teaching speech on a whole. In light of these findings, Smith sees the urgency for educational institutions to include speech communication as a worthy academic discipline and English teachers to begin implementing speech communication programs. It appears that teachers are not willing to treat speech education as an equal subject with other areas of English.

Three reasons consistently appear throughout the survey for the low response rate in teacher implementation of speech: lack of materials, lack of time, and lack of professional preparation. Although there is a general agreement on the two most important reasons -- lack of time (55.4%) and lack of materials (35.1%) -- the least important reason given was lack of professional preparation (5.4%). This section will discuss the two most important reasons given for lack of implementation.

The most important reason cited under the survey question, what prevents you from fully implementing speech communication, was lack of time. The allocation of time encompasses the entire teaching and learning process, many teachers approach the time element with uncertainty. Many experienced teachers look on speech communication as time-

consuming, tedious, and perhaps frustrating. It would appear that if teachers were knowledgeable about course planning in speech education, the time element would be superficial.

Traditionally, a speech communication program includes: an analysis of students' communication background which usually consists of a pre- and post-test (oral and written), selection of desired subject matter, teaching specific subject matter, appropriate learning exercises, and student evaluation.

Another important element in planning for time is determining objectives. These course objectives will serve as a guide to determine what s/he hopes to accomplish. In addition, these objectives can be integrated with other disciplines found in the English curriculum. The communication activities can enhance other English concepts.

Another of the important issues raised was the lack of materials. In this study teachers rated instructional materials as being most beneficial in implementing speech communication. Certainly materials are a primary means of implementing the objectives of a speech communication program. Appropriate materials and activities lead directly to the realization of course objectives. Upon planning for materials, teachers must keep the needs of students in mind. If, for example, students are studying a social phenomenon, such as conflict management in interpersonal relationships, De Nofa would concur that an oral activity would provide practice in speech communication. To integrate within the



English curriculum would be to take a short story, which has conflict as a theme, and have students orally solve the problem presented. In the study of speech, the activities must provide students with a variety of speaking opportunities.

Research Question III: Importance of Speech Education

It was presumed at the onset of the survey that the question of speech as a component in the English curriculum would be strongly supported by teachers. The survey reveals a different conclusion. According to the survey, a minority of the respondents (39.2%) strongly agreed that speech should be a component of the English curriculum; hence, it would appear that speech communication is not highly supported. In light of these results, Fantini would assert that the face of education is changing, and it now reflects the pre-suppositions of American opinion. Yet schools must adopt a diversified communication curriculum that hopes to introduce students to skills that will equip them for self-fulfillment and survival. Ideas gained through speech communication, despite their specifics, are general in nature, and should be integrated into all curricula. With this in mind, respondents indicated oral presentations, interpersonal communication, and listening strategies should be included in the curriculum as part of a speech education program.

Tiedt and Tiedt, Burns and Broman, and Robinson would concur that the English curriculum is the nucleus of all

liberal arts programs. In other words, to omit speech education is to create a serious gap in all curricula.

The teachers indicated (39.2%) that speech should be taught by someone who has a degree or certification in speech. A well-trained teacher brings vitality to an academic area; his or her personality, character, motivation, knowledge, and training will depend upon the success of any speech program. Generally, a speech teacher should have a strong liberal arts background, in addition to being well-read in literature and the study of language. Teachers should be familiar with the fundamental processes of speech, public speaking, argumentation and have a high degree of proficiency in oral communication. According to the research survey, 29.6 percent of these teachers recognized a need for professional inservices, in order for speech communication programs to be most beneficial if implemented.

#### Research Question IV: Teacher Attitude

##### Toward the Communication Strand

##### of the Course Syllabus

A final variable that affects the status of speech communication is teacher attitude toward the district's course syllabus, which constitutes an outline for the study of one area of specialization within a discipline. The survey indicates that 47.2 percent of respondents are very familiar with the district's course outline (syllabus), 55.4 percent indicated they would use the course syllabus, and 48.6 percent

indicated the course syllabus would be beneficial. The course plan or syllabus dictates the curriculum philosophy as a means of implementation. A syllabus takes into account: 1) the course objectives; 2) the needs and abilities of the students; 3) the time allotted for the course; 4) the materials needed; and 5) in most cases suggested activities needed to carry out the lesson. The syllabus should start where the student is and keep them constantly developing toward greater proficiency. A basic speech course should include presentation of principles, opportunities to practice or perform, constructive criticism, and some type of evaluation or testing.

Perhaps, as Smith noted, those most likely to implement speech are more aware of the urgency for English teachers to implement speech communication. On the other hand, those teachers who would not be comfortable teaching speech communication may suffer from lack of training, classroom time, or have not realized the urgency of implementing a speech program.

The open-ended statement yielded limited, but valuable, information on teacher attitudes toward speech communication programs. Based on the fact that two teachers made comments that were objectionable to implementing a speech program based upon time constraints and large classes. Another predominant theme that emerged from the comments were eight respondents who supported the need for speech programs

and the need for professional university training. Several responded favorably to the importance of this research.

#### CONCLUSION

In summary, this study revealed several major findings that offer insight into the status of speech communication in the Clark County High School English curriculum. First, this study indicated that many teachers are divided over the issue of implementing a speech communication program as it currently exists. Many attributed this to lack of time, lack of speech materials, and lack of professional training. This has had a chilling effect on the status of speech communication in the high school English curriculum. Additionally, those with 26 to 36 years of teaching experience are not open to any aspect of implementing speech education. On the other hand, those with 16 to 25 years of teaching experience were most willing to implement speech education, either within the existing English curriculum or as a separate unit, and use the course syllabus. Yet at the same time, there existed a general agreement among teachers (39.2%) on the need for speech education in the curriculum. Respondents agreed (54.1%) that all students need some form of speech communication skills, and those skills should be taught in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12, so that pupils can reach some measure of language proficiency.

Another contributing factor which affected the status of speech communication was the high percentage of

respondents unwilling to teach speech as a separate unit (72.6%). In addition, only 45.4 percent were willing to spend as little as 11 - 30 percent of their time integrating speech within the English curriculum.

A major finding of this study is the respondents' willingness to use the district's course syllabus (55.4%). Fewer than half (48.6%) somewhat agreed that the course syllabus would be beneficial, and 50.0 percent said the components of the English course syllabus are sufficient. Nearly half (47.2%) are very familiar with the district's course syllabus, and 36.1 percent are somewhat or not familiar.

#### Limitations of the Study

Because this study was the first investigation into the status of speech communication in the Clark County High School English curriculum, it has certain limitations. The research was limited to the traditional public high schools in Clark County, and this study only involved teachers of English, excluding other liberal academics.

#### Suggestions for Future Study

Perhaps the next research inquiry into the status of speech communication may indicate heuristic value if the following investigations are conducted: 1) a statewide study; 2) a demographic study of urban, suburban, and rural schools; and 3) a study that includes administrators.

**Appendices**  
**I**  
**Cover Letter to Teachers**

Greenspun School of Communication  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
4505 Maryland Parkway  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89154

To: English Teachers in Clark County School District  
Re: Status of Speech Communication Survey

You have been chosen as a volunteer for this project because you are a high school English instructor in the Clark County School District. This questionnaire will yield vital information on the status of speech communication in the Clark County High Schools. None of the information collected on this survey will be identified with you. Please take the time to fill it in today. Completed forms should be sealed in the enclosed stamped self-addressed envelope and mailed by October 26, 1993.

Should you have any questions please call the principal investigator, Rheba Washington-Lindsey at 452-6463, or the assistant investigator, Dr. G. Chapel at 739-3325.

Sincerely ,

Rheba Washington-Lindsey

**Appendices**  
**II**  
**Teacher Survey**





- 10.** Please indicate which of the following would be most beneficial in implementing speech communication in your curriculum: (CHECK ONLY ONE)

☐ **Professional Development Education**

☐ **University course work**

☐ **Inservices by curriculum and instructional services**

☐ **Instructional materials**

☐ **Community college course work**

☐ **Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_**

- 11.** Generally, about how much time do you spend teaching speech communication each semester? (CHECK ONLY ONE):

☐ **0 hours**

☐ **4-5 hours**

☐ **1-3 hours**

☐ **6 hours or more**

- 12.** Are the speech communication components of the district's English course syllabus sufficient enough to teach a speech communication unit?

**(Sufficient)    1    2    3    4    5    (Not sufficient)**

- 13.** Speech communication should be offered as an elective:

**(Strongly agree)    1    2    3    4    5    (Strongly disagree)**

- 14.** Speech communication should be taught by someone who holds a degree or certification in speech communication:

**(Strongly agree )    1    2    3    4    5    (Strongly disagree)**

- 15.** Speech communication should be offered as a course requirement for graduation:

**(Strongly agree)    1    2    3    4    5    (Strongly disagree)**

- 16.** Speech communication should be a component of the English curriculum:

**(Strongly agree)    1    2    3    4    5    (Strongly disagree)**

- 17.** The course syllabus, as it pertains to speech communication, will benefit me in the classroom this year:

**(Strongly agree)    1    2    3    4    5    (Strongly disagree)**

- 18.** Speech communication, as part of the English curriculum, should contain which of the following? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY).

☐ **Interpersonal communication (communicating with others)**  
☐ **Intrapersonal communication (communicating with oneself)**  
☐ **Communication theory**  
☐ **Listening strategies**  
☐ **Writing the speech**  
☐ **Oral presentations**  
☐ **History of speech communication**

- 19.** All students need training in speech communication skills:

(Strongly agree)    **1    2    3    4    5**    (Strongly disagree)

- 20.** In which grade(s) should speech communication be offered? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY).

☐ **Grade 9**                                      ☐ **Grade 10**  
☐ **Grade 10**                                      ☐ **Grade 12**

### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

**Fill in the blanks:**

- 21.** My current teaching assignment is \_\_\_\_\_,  
 \_\_\_\_\_,

- 22.** Subject(s) you hold certifications in:  
 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

- 23.** Years of teaching: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Circle all that apply**

- 24.** Current teaching grade(s):

**Grade 9    Grade 10    Grade 11    Grade 12**

- 25.** Type of degree held:

**BA    BS    MA    MS    Ph. D.**

26. Gender:

**Male    Female**

27. Ethnicity:

**African American      Asian/Pacific      American Indian**  
**Caucasian      Hispanic**

28. Are you currently doing graduate study in any of the following areas?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY).

**English      Speech communication**

**Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_ .**

29. Number of college credits in speech communication course work:

**0      1-6      7-12      over 12**

30. Other comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Thank you for your help.**

**Appendices  
III  
Tables**

Headings that are used in these tables show responses to questions 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the survey.

Table 1

## 1. Time Spent Teaching Speech Communication

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
0 hours	10	13.5
1 - 3 hours	25	33.8
4 - 5 hours	19	25.7
6 or more hours	<u>20</u>	<u>27.0</u>
	N = 74	100.0

## 2. Percent of Time Devoted to Integrating Speech

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
0 - 10	38	43.5
11 - 30	29	45.4
31 - 60	4	6.3
61 - 90	2	3.2
91 - 100	<u>1</u>	<u>1.6</u>
	N = 74	100.0

## 3. Taught Speech Communication as a Separate Unit

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Yes	20	27.4
No	53	72.6
	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
	N = 74	100.0

## 4. Have Taught Speech Communication

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Yes	59	79.7
No	<u>15</u>	<u>20.3</u>
	N = 74	100.0

Headings used in these tables are found in questions 9, 10, 13 and 14 of the survey.

Table 2

## 5. Prevents From Fully Implementing Speech Communication

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Lack of materials	26	35.1
Lack of time	41	55.4
Lack of familiarity with course syllabus	3	4.1
Lack of professional preparation	4	5.4
	<u>N = 74</u>	<u>100.0</u>

## 6. Most Beneficial in Implementing Speech Communication

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Professional development education	9	12.2
University course work	3	4.1
Inservices	22	29.6
Instructional materials	26	35.1
Community college course work	1	1.4
Other	8	10.8
	<u>5</u>	<u>6.8</u>
	<u>N = 74</u>	<u>100.0</u>

## 7. Should be Offered as an Elective

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Strongly agree	45	60.7
Agree	7	9.5
Agree somewhat	15	20.3
Disagree	2	2.7
Strongly disagree	<u>5</u>	<u>6.8</u>
	<u>N = 74</u>	<u>100.0</u>

8. Taught by Someone Who Holds a Degree  
or Speech Certification

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Strongly agree	29	39.2
Agree	12	16.2
Agree somewhat	18	24.3
Disagree	5	6.8
Strongly disagree	<u>10</u>	<u>13.5</u>
	N = 74	100.0

Headings that are used in these tables show responses to survey questions 1, 15, 16, and 19 of the survey.

Table 3

9. Familiarity With District's Course Outline

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Very familiar	34	47.2
Familiar	12	16.7
Somewhat/Not familiar	<u>28</u>	<u>36.1</u>
	N = 74	100.0

10. Speech a Component of English Curriculum

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Strongly agree	29	39.2
Agree	22	29.7
Agree somewhat	15	20.3
Disagree	4	5.4
Strongly disagree	<u>4</u>	<u>5.4</u>
	N = 74	100.0

11. Students Need Speech Communication

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Strongly agree	40	54.1
Agree	17	23.0
Agree somewhat	15	20.2
Strongly disagree	<u>2</u>	<u>2.7</u>
	N = 74	100.0



## 12. Speech a Graduation Requirement

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Strongly agree	19	25.7
Agree	8	10.8
Agree somewhat	12	16.2
Disagree	14	18.9
Strongly disagree	<u>21</u>	<u>28.4</u>
	N = 74	100.0

Headings that are used in these tables show responses to survey questions 7, 8, 12 and 17.

Table 4

## 13. Use Own Materials

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Frequently	14	18.9
Often	13	17.6
Sometimes	28	37.8
Seldom	14	18.9
Never	<u>5</u>	<u>6.8</u>
	N = 74	100.0

## 14. Will Use District's Course Syllabus

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Yes	41	55.4
No	31	41.9
	<u>2</u>	<u>2.7</u>
	N = 74	100.0

## 15. Components of District's English Course Syllabus Sufficient

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Very sufficient	6	8.6
Sufficient	35	50.0
Somewhat/not sufficient	<u>33</u>	<u>41.4</u>
	N = 74	100.0

16. Course Syllabus Will be Beneficial

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Strongly agree	3	4.1
Agree	9	12.2
Agree somewhat	36	48.6
Disagree	17	23.0
Strongly disagree	8	10.7
	<u>1</u>	<u>1.4</u>
	N = 74	100.0

The heading used in this table indicates responses found in question 16 of the survey.

Table 5

17. Speech Communication Curriculum  
Should Contain

	<u>Frequencies</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Interpersonal		
Yes	65	87.8
No	<u>9</u>	<u>12.2</u>
	N = 74	100.0
Listening strategies		
Yes	61	82.4
No	<u>13</u>	<u>17.6</u>
	N = 74	100.0
Oral presentations		
Yes	69	93.2
No	<u>5</u>	<u>6.8</u>
	N = 74	100.0

**Appendices**  
**IV**  
**Description of Course Syllabus**  
**and Curriculum**

The required high school English curriculum in Clark County consists of: Freshmen Basic English I - Language Lab; Basic English I, English I S.L.P. or English I D.S., sophomore; Basic English II - Language Lab, or English II D.S.; English III, juniors - Language Lab; Basic English III or English III D.S.; Senior Basic English IV, English V, or American Literature. Multicultural Voices in American Literature, English Literature, Modern Literature, Advanced Composition and Creative Writing, World Literature, Journalism I, Journalism II, Publications I, and Publications II are all electives. College Survival and Exam is offered after school, in addition to such courses as American Literature, Multicultural Voices in American Literature, Modern Literature, Advanced Composition and Creative Writing, World Literature, Journalism I, II, and Publications I, II. Currently all students are required to have four years of English, to include English I, English II, English III, and the fourth year, may serve as an elective.

The school district currently has a course syllabus for each required English course and some of the electives. A brief speech communication strand is found in the following English course syllabi: English I, English II, English III, and English IV.

Each course syllabus reflects the philosophical position stated in the Elements of Quality. The purpose of the syllabus is to establish minimum basic concepts for each course. Teachers are to use the syllabus according to their

teaching assignment. Each course contains the course scope and goals, performance objectives, suggested approaches and activities, and suggested resources. The following performance objectives were constructed for the speech communication strand.

### English I

#### 1. COMMUNICATION SKILLS - SPEAKING AND LISTENING

##### 1.1 THE STUDENT WILL EMPLOY SKILLS IN ORGANIZED VERBAL EXCHANGES.

(12,16)

(TL 4)

1.1.1 Suggestion: Present a variety of written or oral verbal exchange material (reviews, editorials, newspaper articles, talk shows, or plays) other than text allowing students to make oral responses in a variety of modes (impromptu, informal discussion, and debate).

1.1.2 Suggestion: Select several topics and place them in a container. Have students draw a topic at random and present a 90-second speech after 45 seconds of preparation.

1.1.3 Suggestion: Discuss and practice speaker courtesy: volume, appropriate rate, eye contact, and preparation. Conversely, discuss listener responsibility.

##### 1.2 THE STUDENT WILL CONSTRUCT RELEVANT QUESTIONS ON SPECIFIC TOPICS RELATED TO CLASSWORK.

(12)

(TL 3)

1.2.1 Suggestion: Following discussion and modeled activity of developing questions, assign points to those students constructing higher-level questions. See Thinking Levels Explanation and Appendix 1.2.1.

##### 1.3 THE STUDENT WILL DEFEND RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS COHERENTLY AND CONCISELY.

(12,16)

(TL 7)

- 1.3.1 Suggestion: Pose questions and have students answer coherently and concisely, defending answers with relevant support material.
- 1.3.2 Suggestion: Have students draw a question from a container and answer it. It may be posed to the whole class using "think pads" at desks with teacher overlooking answers for comprehension.
- 1.3.3 Suggestion: Discuss with the class the need for respect of each other's ideas and the need to create a mutually respectful environment in order to produce honest and sincere writing.

1.4 THE STUDENT WILL EMPLOY APPROPRIATE SPEAKING TECHNIQUES.

(12)

(TL 4)

- 1.4.1 Suggestion: As the year progresses, add topics to lists generated by students. Have students prepare various domains of address (informative, oral interpretative, persuasive) to be given orally.
- 1.4.2 Suggestion: Have students select a topic for a process and give a three-minute presentation. Have them use visual aids, demonstrating awareness for audience's line of vision and ability to communicate clearly a process.
- 1.4.3 Suggestion: Have students select and research a topic for a persuasive speech three minutes in length. After the presentation, require the student to answer pertinent questions from the audience. Use a talk show format.

1.5 THE STUDENT WILL EMPLOY CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM.

(12,16)

(TL 4)

- 1.5.1 Suggestion: Provide students with an evaluation checklist for speeches. Have them rate speech and speaker techniques.

NOTE: All criticism must be positive and constructive.

- 1.5.2      Suggestion: Have audience evaluate student speech - makers for appropriate listening behavior as demonstrated by notetaking, questions, or follow-up quiz.

## English II

### 1. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

#### 1.1 THE STUDENT WILL EMPLOY APPROPRIATE SPEAKING TECHNIQUES.

(1) (TL 3)

- 1.1.1      Suggestion: Have students introduce themselves by giving a brief biographical sketch or introduce each other following an interview. See Appendix 1.1.1.

- 1.1.2      Suggestion: Have students construct a collage illustrating aspects of their personalities that will be orally interpreted to the class or small group.

#### 1.2 THE STUDENT WILL RESPOND TO AN ORAL PRESENTATION.

(1) (TL 4)

- 1.2.1      Suggestion: Have students listen to a tape, record, or excerpt read by the teacher and respond by answering or generating questions.

#### 1.3 THE STUDENT WILL JUSTIFY RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS LOGICALLY AND CONCISELY.

(1,4) (TL 7)

- 1.3.1      Suggestion: Have students read the school or local newspaper and write in response to letters to the editor. Check that responses are to-the-point, concise, and effective.

#### 1.4 THE STUDENT WILL FORMULATE CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM.

(1) (TL 3)

- 1.4.1      Suggestion: Have students fill out a teacher or student-constructed form in response to class presentations.

#### 1.5 THE STUDENT WILL PRACTICE COOPERATIVE LEARNING ACTIVITIES.

(1,3) (TL 3)

1. THE STUDENT WILL RESEARCH TOPICS OF CURRENT INTEREST FOR  
COMPOSITION  
(6,10) (TL 5)

- 1.1.1.1 Suggestion: Have students brainstorm examples of contemporary problems.
- Examples:
- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| a. Abortion    | d. Gangs     |
| b. Environment | e. Drugs     |
| c. War         | f. Economics |
- 1.1.1.2 Suggestion: Have students select a topic and research articles from newspapers/magazines.
- 1.1.1.3 Suggestion: Have groups of students organize material into pro/con (point/counterpoint) format. It might be valuable for students to review some of the political and social discussions available on television.
- 1.1.1.4 Suggestion: Have groups of students prepare debates.
- 1.1.1.5 Suggestion: Allow for practice time of oral presentation. Remind students of the need for eye contact, appropriate volume, and effective use of visual aids.



## 2. COMMUNICATION

- 2.1 THE STUDENT WILL TAKE PERTINENT NOTES FROM A LECTURE.  
(13) (TL 4)
- 2.2 THE STUDENT WILL APPLY DIRECTIONS GIVEN ORALLY OR IN WRITTEN FORMAT.  
(13) (TL 4)
- 2.2.1 Suggestion: From the beginning of the school year, give simple instructions orally. Insist that you will repeat only once. Do so.
- 2.3 THE STUDENT WILL EVALUATE LOGICAL AND ILLOGICAL REASONING IN SPOKEN MATERIAL.  
(5,6,7,13) (TL 7)
- 2.3.1 Suggestion: Read letters to the editors from local papers for students to analyze.
- 2.4 THE STUDENT WILL ANALYZE A SPEAKER'S INTENT.  
(5,13) (TL 5)
- 2.4.1 Suggestion: Give students texts of speeches to analyze for speaker intent, fact from opinion, and type of organization.
- 2.5 THE STUDENT WILL EVALUATE A SPEAKER'S VERBAL AND NONVERBAL TECHNIQUES USED TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION.  
(5,13,14) (TL 7)
- 2.5.1 Suggestion: Model how constructive and positive evaluation may result in a more effective product.
- 2.6 THE STUDENT WILL RESTATE A SPEAKER'S OR AUTHOR'S PREMISE.  
(5,13) (TL 2)
- 2.7 THE STUDENT WILL PRESENT AN ARGUMENT.  
(5,13) (TL 6)
- 2.7.1 Suggestion: Have students write argument papers and then present the argument orally utilizing notecards.

- 2.8 THE STUDENT WILL ARGUE AN ISSUE WITHOUT PERSONAL ATTACK.  
(5,13,14) (TL 5)

2.8.1 Suggestion: Have students prepare a panel presentation of a persuasive topic to explore both sides of an issue. Discuss the importance and strength of facts and how personal attachment may deflate the strongest of cases.

#### English IV

### 1. COMMUNICATION

- 1.1 THE STUDENT WILL TAKE PERTINENT NOTES FROM A LECTURE.  
(13) (TL 4)

- 1.2 THE STUDENT WILL APPLY DIRECTIONS GIVEN ORALLY OR IN WRITTEN FORMAT.  
(13) (TL 4)

1.2.1 Suggestion: From the beginning of the school year, give simple instructions orally. Insist that you will repeat only once. Do so.

- 1.3 THE STUDENT WILL EVALUATE LOGICAL AND ILLOGICAL REASONING IN SPOKEN MATERIAL.  
(5,6,7,13) (TL 7)

1.3.1 Suggestion: Read letters to the editors from local papers for student to analyze.

- 1.4 THE STUDENT WILL ANALYZE A SPEAKER'S INTENT.  
(5,13) (TL 5)

1.4.1 Suggestion: Give students texts of speeches to analyze for speaker intent, fact from opinion, and type of organization.

- 1.5 THE STUDENT WILL EVALUATE A SPEAKER'S VERBAL AND NONVERBAL TECHNIQUES USED TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION.  
(5,13,14) (TL 7)

1.5.1 Suggestion: Model how constructive and positive evaluation may result in a more effective product.

- 1.6 THE STUDENT WILL RESTATE A SPEAKER'S OR AUTHOR'S  
PREMISE.  
(5,13) (TL 2)
- 1.7 THE STUDENT WILL PRESENT AN ARGUMENT.  
(5,13) (TL 6)
  - 1.7.1 Suggestion: Have students write argument  
papers and then present the argument  
orally utilizing notecards.
- 1.8 THE STUDENT WILL ARGUE AN ISSUE WITHOUT PERSONAL  
ATTACK.  
(5,13,14) (TL 5)
  - 1.8.1 Suggestion: Have students prepare a panel  
presentation of a persuasive topic to  
explore both sides of an issue. Discuss  
the importance and strength of facts and  
how personal attachment may deflate the  
strongest of cases.

To receive a secondary English license, a person must hold a bachelor's degree and have completed a State Board of Education approved program of preparation for teaching in the secondary grades, 36 semester hours for a major, and three semester hours must be in each of the following areas: courses in composition, descriptive grammar, reading, American literature, English literature, general survey of literature, journalism, speech or dramatic or theatrical art, and linguistics or the history of language; as a minor: composition, descriptive grammar, reading, American literature, English literature and three semester hours in speech, dramatic arts or journalism.

**Appendices  
v  
Follow-up Letter**

**ATTENTION HS ENGLISH TEACHERS** - Please return surveys regarding the study being done on the status of speech communication to UNLV, Dr. Gage Chapel. 895-3325.

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