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A Correlation Study Of Principals' Beliefs And Actions With Regard To Reading Instruction And Reading Achievement

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A CORRELATION STUDY OF PRINCIPALS' BELIEFS AND ACTIONS
WITH REGARD TO READING INSTRUCTION
AND READING ACHIEVEMENT

A Dissertation

Presented to

The School of Graduate Studies

Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education

Indiana State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Robert Michael Jarrett

May 1997

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APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation of Robert Michael Jarrett, Contribution to the School of Graduate Studies, Indiana State University, Series III, Number 700, under the title *A Correlation Study of Principals' Beliefs and Actions with Regard to Reading Instruction and Reading Achievement* is approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree.

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ABSTRACT

This investigation was conducted in an effort to determine whether principals were consistent in their beliefs and actions with regard to reading instruction within their individual schools. Whether those beliefs had an effect on third grade students' reading comprehension as measured by the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) was also investigated. The sample included 43 elementary principals randomly selected across Indiana during the Spring of 1996.

Data for the study were gathered from three sources. First, DeFord's Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) was used to examine principals' beliefs (phonics, skills, whole language) about the teaching of reading. Secondly, the researcher added a fourth category (eclectic) and developed the Principal Actions Questionnaire (PAQ) to determine if those beliefs were implemented in the classroom. Lastly, third grade students' reading comprehension scores were used as an indicator of the reading achievement in individual principals' schools. Quantitative comparisons were made using the Pearson r statistic, and mean group scores were compared utilizing a one-way ANOVA.

Findings revealed statistically significant correlations

($p < .05$) between the following: (a) TORP and PAQ, (b) TORP and ISTEP, and (c) PAQ and ISTEP. No significant difference was found between consistency scores (TORP and PAQ) and ISTEP scores. Additionally, no significant differences were found on the ANOVA. Results of the study have implications for elementary principals as instructional leaders, especially with regard to reading achievement.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Theoretical Orientation to Reading

In education, there are many theories of how to teach reading, and each theory has its own specifications as to which method of instruction most efficiently accomplishes this goal. These theories of reading instruction can be categorized into four major groups: (1) the phonics approach; (2) the skills approach; (3) the whole language approach; and (4) an eclectic approach. The adoption of one specific theory is known as an individual's theoretical orientation to reading. A theoretical orientation to reading is the belief system an individual adheres to under ideal circumstances as the ultimate philosophy for the teaching of reading.

The Phonics Approach to Reading

Individuals who believe in a phonics approach to reading have three commonalities. These are: (1) keying to letter/sound relationships; (2) word attack; and (3) comprehension skills through listening and vocabulary (Durrell & Murphy, 1982). Phonics proponents advocate that children learn to read by first learning small segments of

the language, usually letter sounds (graphophonemes) and their uses. As students recognize these uses, "word families" which have similar structure are emphasized. Students use knowledge of such things as initial blends to begin reading words. Students' comprehension increases as their vocabulary and listening skills develop.

The objectives of most phonics programs overlap. For example, Botel and Seaver (1986) stated the following:

the children will learn to recognize, blend, and spell consonants, vowels, and high frequency spelling patterns; use context clues to recall words; construct, write, and punctuate sentences (using high frequency words and working with subject-verb agreement); interpret chants and poetry; work collaboratively on learning tasks; consider their purposes for learning about reading and writing; and apply their knowledge of reading and writing to a wide range of activities.

(p. 5)

In a systematic six-step decoding program, Polish (1986) asserted the fundamental skills that children need to know as they learn to decode. Incorporated into her lessons were a wide variety of nursery rhymes, songs, and games designed to hold the students' interest as they learned the basic [phonics] skills. This program covered: (a) auditory, visual, and motor skills; (b) the alphabet; (c) consonant sounds; (d) more consonant sounds; (e) short vowels; and (f) long vowels in a series of books. This program is representative of other phonics programs.

The Skills Approach to Reading

Skills oriented individuals believe in learning with a specific scope and sequencing of lessons. Lessons are placed

in a specific order (sequence) and planned with short-term objectives while keeping overall long-term goals (scope) in mind. Lessons build upon one another developmentally until students master specific skills. To master reading skills, reading lessons usually involve workbooks or worksheets which deal with phonics, grammar, and syntax of sentences (Merrill, 1979).

Persons who advocate skills instruction in reading may often use a basal textbook series. Basal series try to teach isolated skills associated with the reading process. Through repetition and proper sequencing of skills, students are thought to gain meaning and understanding.

Some basal textbook series have added many strategies to their scope and sequencing units which have been part of whole language reading instruction. This, in part, may be to appeal to the philosophical viewpoints of a broader range of reading educators. Consequently, this leads to increased sales and profits for the textbook companies, who are in major competition for state adoptions by local school systems. Regardless of the reasoning, some of the activities promoted by whole language advocates such as journal writing, read alouds, and the use of unabridged children's literature, are included in many basal series (i.e. *World of Language 5*, Silver Burdett & Ginn, Inc., 1995). Student choice is limited as skill development is emphasized in the textbook series. Therefore, it is safe to state that although somewhat different in minor details, most basals are similar in scope and sequence.

The Whole Language Approach to Reading

Whole language oriented individuals focus on meaning. Learners are invited to use language in all its varieties for their own purposes. "Whole language learning builds around whole learners learning whole language in whole situations" (Goodman, 1986, p. 93).

The whole language philosophy is difficult to define. To whole language advocates, literacy is a relative term. It is not just an ability or skill. It is a conglomerate of behaviors, skills, knowledge, processes, and attitudes (Cambourne, 1988). Whole language experts, such as Short, Harste and Burke (1996), expressed a desire for developing readers to have the freedom to explore their beliefs, participate in functional activities, work with peers, be afforded rich texts and contexts, be encouraged to use transmediations (transfer of learning to a variety of different sign systems), learn conventional forms of language through functional experimentation, develop authorship, and allow learners to experience all types of natural communication.

According to the whole language approach, children should be invited to participate in open-ended activities, and should be given the freedom of choice to participate in these activities in a non-threatening manner. Each invitation (open-ended learning center) should leave unanswered questions so that student quest for learning and research is continuous. The opportunity for students to collaborate both with peers and adults is encouraged.

Finally, whole language enthusiasts hope that a valuing of learning occurs and generates new questions for future research (Short, Harste, & Burke, 1996).

The Eclectic Approach to Reading

An eclectic theoretical orientation to reading is often a "default" orientation. Those who have an eclectic orientation are sometimes unsure of their foundation, and undergirding principles, or they are unreflective about decision-making in their classroom practice. They are, therefore, likely to pick and choose reading activities from whatever is at hand--the teacher next door, the new basal series, the inservice workshop. Without a strong belief system about the way reading should be taught, the eclectic individual develops a grab-bag of interesting methods which may change rapidly (Reutzel & Cooter, 1996). Eclectic persons feel that they select good parts of many programs to create a "total" language arts program (Aukerman, 1984).

Although whole language advocates commonly use skills and phonics in their instruction, they contrast with an eclectic orientation to reading in the following ways. Altwerger, Edelsky, and Flores (1987) observed that eclectic individuals believe that people learn to read by using language, not through learning separate parts and assembling those parts to provide meaning. Although this sounds similar to the beliefs of whole language proponents, fundamentally there are differences. Eclectic oriented individuals may not have a unified belief of how children best learn to read. Eclectic individuals may select their instructional

methodology by using varying percentages of each of the three major orientations to reading. Instruction is not dictated by one specific set of beliefs, but by what seemingly works using the best of all theoretical reading combinations (Stoodt, 1989).

Whole language oriented individuals believe that it is vital to learn to read using meaning as a primary focus, then understanding skills and phonic components. The whole language and the eclectic approach may change as instruction can vary in scope and sequence depending upon not only the needs of the reader, but also the individual differences in teachers. Savage (1994) reiterated that eclectic individuals fluctuate between the teaching of both the parts of the language and the whole, according to teacher preference. Teachers who have not reflected on the theoretical foundations for their practice, or who have little experience, may find many influences. Teachers may "move from a skills-based view to language-based view as they gain more confidence with experience" (p. 22). Others may move in the opposite direction as they change their instruction to meet student needs.

Student and teacher needs are key elements regardless of theoretical orientation to reading. As teachers search for a proper balance between their preference and student needs, they must also deal with the guidelines set up by administrators. Are elementary principals instrumental figures in influencing teacher beliefs and practices on ISTEP scores in their schools?

Theoretical Orientation of the Elementary School Principal

Some researchers (e.g. Loven, 1990; Cahill, 1990) have shown that it is possible to examine teachers' theoretical orientation to reading and subsequent implementation in the classroom. Therefore, it is logical to assume that it is possible to examine both principals' theoretical orientations to reading, and their subsequent implementations of that theory in action; and then to ascertain the relationship between the theoretical orientation of the principal and student achievement in the area of reading. When the principal's theoretical orientation and actions with regard to reading are consistent with one another, one can ask whether it is advantageous for students and their reading achievement.

In other words, if a principal's theoretical reading model and actions coincide, is there a higher reading level achievement for students? If a principal's reading theoretical orientation model is in conflict with his/her actual performance within the school, does this mean lower student achievement scores in reading? These are questions which, when answered, may provide additional information on effective instructional leadership with regard to reading in the elementary school.

Principal as Instructional Leader

Both experience and research indicate that the principal is the instructional leader of the school (Mohn, 1991; Hoes, 1992; Hackett, 1993), and this instructional leadership is

perceived by teachers as the principal's primary role (Bauer, 1993). Teachers rely on the principal for instructional leadership in effective schools (Reitzug, 1988); and principal leadership is central to school improvement (Joyner, 1991). Principals feel that their role as instructional leader is instrumental to the process of change (Bloom, 1991), and often the effectiveness of a principal can be evaluated by the leadership shown in the school's curriculum development (Meighan, 1994).

As a result, beliefs about the teaching of reading and their transmission from theory to practice may show either strong, effective leadership or a weaker, ineffective leadership. It is then logical to assume that if there is a consistency between theoretical orientation and implementation by the principal in the area of reading, then the cohesiveness and open communication necessary for continued progress and development of students in reading might be enhanced. It is also probable that if the principal is able to influence the beliefs of both teachers and students through his/her own actions, then the principal's role as instructional leader would be better defined. This would not necessarily mean that the school atmosphere would be more harmonious. It does mean that the principal's beliefs and actions can have a top-to-bottom hierarchal effect upon the reading curriculum (Conway, 1986). The principal, through actions or subtleties, passes his/her beliefs to teachers, and these teachers in turn pass the beliefs to their students. If this hierarchy exists, the principal as an effective leader controls how reading is

taught within the school. The principal's theoretical orientation to reading can either be formally or informally transmitted to faculty and staff within the school.

Children who are instructed consistently using the same theoretical orientation and methodology may have higher reading achievement. The interpretation of the measurement of that achievement is contingent, however, on whether the evaluative instruments and methods of assessment adhere to the same theoretical orientation model by which students are being taught.

An alternate position is that varying theoretical orientations to reading allowed by the principal within the building could result in students scoring higher in reading achievement. In this scenario, either the principal may be ineffective and not place his or her theoretical orientation to reading into action, or the principal may be effective in allowing teachers the freedom to implement their own reading theoretical orientation models. In this study, effectiveness is measured by the 1995 version of the Indiana State Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) reading comprehension scores.

Regardless of which assumption is correct, it is important to understand the relationship between theoretical orientation to reading and its implementation into action by the principal within the elementary school. Secondly, it is important to see if there is a relationship between each principal's theoretical orientation to reading and student reading achievement in the principal's school.

Another factor which is worth mentioning is that many

principals of elementary schools were elementary teachers before becoming administrators. It is logical to conclude that the theoretical orientation many principals display is rooted in their previous roles as teachers. It is likely that the beliefs which were formulated by the principals in their roles as teachers are inherent in the schema of the principal. As a result, what the research states concerning teachers and their theoretical orientations is useful in examining the theoretical orientation of the principal. Also, principals view experience as the key element in helping them to be strong leaders of school programs, such as reading (Wood, 1981). It is likely that their experiences connect their previous teacher theoretical orientation and their current orientation as principal.

Regardless of the connection between the theoretical orientation principals previously held as teachers and their current beliefs, most administrators have been skills oriented (Conway, 1986). Findings of Conway's study indicated that: (a) on the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile, 95% of the subjects were skills oriented; (b) only 5% were phonics oriented; and, (c) none showed an orientation to whole language. Also, this study found that teachers and administrators had mixed results concerning agreement in theoretical orientation to reading (Conway, 1986). It may well be that recent local initiatives, in the sampling area for this writer's study, either for phonics or whole language methodology, further complicate the principals' efforts at consistent instructional leadership in reading.

As elementary principals search for the "best" reading

curriculum for their student population, it is useful to ascertain their orientation to reading. An instrument, the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile, has been developed to accomplish this objective.

Use of the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile

Theoretical orientation to reading is the particular knowledge and belief system held toward reading. Harste and Burke defined theoretical orientation to reading as " the particular knowledge and belief system held toward reading . . . those deep philosophical principles that guide teachers to establish expectations about student behavior and the host of decisions they must make as they teach reading lessons" (DeFord, 1985, p. 353).

Theoretical orientation has been measured (DeFord 1981, 1985). This was accomplished through an instrument called the Theoretical Orientation of Reading Profile (TORP) (DeFord, 1985). The TORP has been tested for validity and has been used by many researchers to determine theoretical orientation (i.e. Button, 1992; McKinney, 1992; Wham, 1991; Gettys, 1990; Loven, 1990; Ord, 1990; Cahill, 1990; Burk, 1989; Levande, 1988; Vadella, 1988; Aimers, 1986; Vigil, 1986; Conway, 1986; Cavuto, 1992; Martoncik, 1982). In only one of sixteen research studies using the TORP did a question of the validity of the TORP as an appropriate instrument surface (Linek, 1992).

It has been established that teachers teach according to their theoretical orientation (Loven, 1990). Teachers spend a majority of their instructional reading time practicing

their theoretical orientation (Cahill, 1990). However, teachers do not always practice their theoretical orientation to reading in the classroom due to outside influences such as the principal (McKinney, 1992; Levande, 1988). Teachers can change their theoretical orientation (Button, 1992), as many teachers have changed from a skills model approach to a combined phonics and whole language approach (Gettys, 1990). On the basis of the review of literature dealing with the past use of this instrument, the TORP is an appropriate instrument to determine theoretical orientation to reading (See Appendix A). Although this instrument has been used primarily to test teachers' theoretical orientation to reading, it should prove equally adequate in determining the theoretical orientation of the principal. Elementary principals perceived as effective have had the most experience as teachers at the K-6 grade levels (Wood, 1981); therefore, research which examines the teachers' theoretical orientation to reading applies to the principal. Consequently, the TORP should be a viable method to ascertain the principal's theoretical orientation to reading.

In summary, one's theoretical orientation to reading influences instructional goals in reading, the perception toward proper reading behavior, reading methodology, reading materials, reading diagnosis, the reading environment, and reading evaluation to determine reading growth (Harste & Burke, 1977; Andrews, 1976; Barr, 1975; DeLawter, 1975; DeFord, 1981). Therefore, not only is it useful to identify the theoretical orientation to reading of elementary principals, it is possible to see if their beliefs are

implemented within the reading classes of their individual schools. To this end, an instrument, the Principal Actions Questionnaire, which measures these actions was developed.

Principal Actions Questionnaire

A questionnaire developed by the researcher addresses categorization and measurement of the actions displayed by principals with regard to reading in their elementary schools (Appendix B). The questionnaire has been itemized according to the three orientations to reading in DeFord's TORP. Five questions have been developed for each of the three orientations found on the TORP. Similar scoring methods have been adopted for both the questionnaire and the TORP.

Construct Validity

To develop the construct validity of the questionnaire as a viable instrument, experts in the field of reading education from a midwestern university have concurred that the items found in the questionnaire did indeed match the theoretical orientations of phonics, skills, and whole language. The experts, who classified themselves as representative of the three major theoretical orientations, stated that the questionnaire items did fall distinctly into those categories. It was further judged that the items on the questionnaire could be used to denote actions which corresponded to the theoretical orientations of the TORP.

In order to scrutinize the relationship between the instruments previously mentioned and student reading achievement one can examine reading comprehension tests. In

Indiana, the only common measurement is the ISTEP. This device measures a battery of achievement. For this study, however, only reading comprehension scores at the third grade level were examined.

Theoretical Orientation to Reading and Reading Achievement

Justification for adoption of one theoretical orientation to reading over another has been sought by educators. The use of standardized reading tests is one method of assessing which orientation is best. This, however, fuels more debate, as whole language advocates claim that the tests are primarily skills-oriented in their content.

In Indiana, ISTEP was developed to measure achievement of its students. Presently, it is the only instrument that is given to entire grade levels statewide. It also assesses reading as part of its battery of sub-tests. Since ISTEP measures mostly isolated skills and parts of language, it may not measure outcomes such as motivation, interest, and the ability to predict, infer and analyze, perhaps more typical of whole language programs.

Statement of the Problem

After consideration of the literature review, some gaps in knowledge were determined. Further research will be needed to expand the current knowledge base in these areas. More specifically the following questions surfaced. Do Indiana elementary principals' actions with regard to teaching reading in their schools reflect what they actually believe? Additionally, is there a significant relationship

between: (a) reading achievement; (b) consistency among each of three reading orientations (phonics, skills, and whole language); and, (c) principals' actions with regard to reading instruction in their elementary schools?

Purpose of the Study

This study is being done in an effort to add to the knowledge base about theoretical orientation to reading and its relationship to students' reading achievement. It is hoped that knowing how principals view reading instruction and how they implement their beliefs may prove useful in placing children in classrooms where they best can be successful in reading. This concept may be utilized by understanding the consistency or lack of consistency concerning the beliefs and actions of the principal. By assessing the different theoretical orientations to reading and their implementation by the key instructional leader of the school, the principal, one may determine whether consistency is an important issue in this arena. Through this study, the relationships among principals' theoretical orientations, their subsequent actions, and resulting student reading achievement will be clarified.

Importance of the Study

Reading is a vital area of curriculum development in schools, particularly at the elementary level. Reading teachers and principals vary in theoretical orientation to the teaching of reading. These orientations range in action from teaching isolated parts of language to focusing on whole

stories while learning the parts of language within the context of those stories.

If principals implement their reading beliefs at their elementary schools and this consistency makes a difference in the reading achievement of the students within the elementary building served by the principal, then it may be worthwhile for principals to examine their beliefs and actions in light of this study.

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide this study.

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between beliefs and actions of school principals with regard to reading instruction in their schools.

2. There is no statistically significant relationship between principals' beliefs about the teaching of reading and the students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP.

3. There is no statistically significant relationship between principals' actions with regard to reading instruction in their schools and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP.

4. There is no statistically significant relationship between the consistency of principals' beliefs and actions with regard to reading instruction and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP.

5. There is no statistically significant difference in the ISTEP scores that can be attributed to the four principal

theoretical orientations (whole language, skills, phonics, eclectic) with regard to reading instruction.

Assumptions

The assumption has been made that this survey is a reasonably appropriate method for collecting these kinds of data. It is also assumed that the principals will respond honestly to the survey instruments since it is an anonymous survey. Another assumption is that the survey data will provide information accurate enough to determine the relationships between principals' beliefs and actions. A final assumption is that the ISTEP does indeed measure reading comprehension.

Limitations

The following limitations will apply to this particular study. First, the study is limited to the state of Indiana. Secondly, since the study relied on a self-report instrument, the information is dependent upon the accuracy of the information that principals report. Thirdly, the generalizability of the study is limited to the degree to which the sample was representative of the population.

Delimitations

The study only covers the state of Indiana. It also surveys only elementary principals who are licensed by the state of Indiana.

Definition of Terms

For use in this study, these are the definitions for the following terms.

1. Theoretical Orientation to Reading - Harste and Burke defined theoretical orientation to reading as "the particular knowledge and belief system held toward reading . . . those deep philosophical principles that guide teachers to establish expectations about student behavior and the host of decisions they must make as they teach reading lessons" (DeFord, 1985, p. 353).

2. Phonetic Approach to Reading - The phonetic approach to reading for this study is defined as Adams stated, "a system of teaching reading that builds upon the alphabetic principle, [and one in] which a central component is the teaching of correspondences between letters or groups of letters and their pronunciations" (Blair, Turner, & Schaudt, 1992, p. 33).

3. Skills Approach to Reading - The skills approach to reading for this study is an approach which uses a specific scope and sequencing of lessons within a basal series of instruction. "The basal reader is a systematic, coordinated, and sequential anthology of stories and related materials designed to teach reading. [It] attempts to sequentially and explicitly develop word identification, vocabulary comprehension, content-reading skills and strategies" (Blair, Turner, & Schaudt, 1992, p. 33).

4. Whole Language Approach to Reading - Whole language is defined as the philosophy that all literacy and language processes interact and thus can be used to reinforce each

other. This term is meant to convey that instruction is based on all aspects of language - speaking, listening, and writing - and it implies that literacy instruction is holistic; that is, it does not break language learning into isolated skill components (Leu & Kinzer, 1991, p. 136).

5. Eclectic Approach to Reading - An eclectic approach to reading is defined as the selection of good parts of many programs and theoretical orientations to create a "total" language arts program (Aukerman, 1984). Bond and Wagner defined the eclectic theoretical orientation to reading as "any approach to reading that combines desirable aspects of a number of different major approaches. . . a program that uses the skill exercises from a basal reader program along with the selection of books, individualized conferences, and book-sharing aspects of an individualized program" (Olson & Dillner, 1982, p. 215).

6. Reading Comprehension - For this study, reading comprehension is a standard deviation score found on the ISTEP which is represented as above predicted, predicted, or below predicted.

7. TORP - The Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) is an instrument developed by DeFord (1985) which numerically measures theoretical orientation to reading. Each score denotes a phonics, skills, or whole language orientation. Eclectic individuals are not differentiated as a separate group on the TORP, since they are a combination of the other three orientations.

8. ISTEP - The Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress is a achievement test given in Indiana. For this

study, the relevant information will be the 1995 third grade reading comprehension scores. Data from the third grade was chosen because that particular grade level is the first level at which all students are comprehensively tested statewide in Indiana.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Reading is the key to the success of most students in the elementary school. Regardless of the grade level of students, most subjects are or can be integrated using reading in the content areas. Since reading is the vital area of the curriculum which relates so highly to overall student achievement, it is important to see what research has already been done concerning theoretical orientation to reading, the principal's role with regard to reading in the elementary school, and student reading achievement. Research has already been conducted concerning teachers' theoretical orientation to reading (i.e. DeFord, 1985; Harste & Burke, 1977). However principals' theoretical orientation to reading and how it relates to student achievement in the elementary school has yet to be conducted. In addition, researchers have concluded that further investigations need to be conducted that concern theoretical orientation to reading, students' success in reading, and other factors that influence the practice of belief systems in schools (Bawden, Buike, & Duffy, 1979; Kamil, & Pearson, 1979).

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a literature review. Topics of importance to the understanding of this study will be discussed in the following sequence. The four

theoretical orientations to reading (phonics approach, skills approach, whole language approach, and eclectic approach) will be examined as to their distinct beliefs and their relationships with one another. The literature on two aspects of the principal will also be examined: (a) role as instructional leader; and, (b) theoretical orientation to reading. Finally, focus on various reading profiles, specifically the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) (Appendix A), and reading achievement, as measured by the Indiana State Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) will complete this chapter.

Theoretical Orientations to Reading

Phonics Approach. Effective reading programs use phonics in a variety of ways. Some instructors use direct instruction while others tend to integrate phonics into the total reading program (Adams, 1990). Clay (1985), a whole language advocate, insisted that phonics instruction should occur within the reading context, such as in the Reading Recovery program. Other findings also strongly suggest that phonics instruction seems to be less effective when it is taught isolated from the context of a story (Juel & Roper/Schneider, 1985).

According to Durrell and Murphy (1982), individuals who believe in the phonics approach to reading share three characteristics. They all believe in the relationship between letters and sounds should be taught first; they teach word attack skills; and they highlight comprehension as learned through listening and vocabulary. Botel and Seaver

(1986) noted that objectives in phonics programs tend to overlap. Children spell by using sounds, high frequency sounds, blends, and patterns, which are sometimes grouped into word families (Copeland, Winsor, & Osborn, 1994; Sipe, 1994). They usually construct sentences by using high frequency vocabulary. They initially use phonics through repetition of consonant and vowel sounds to make new words, for example, "fat, cat, sat, hat." Then they use words to make sentences and construct meaning, for example, "The fat cat sat on the hat." Finally they apply this meaning to reading and writing experiences in a wide range of activities.

Polish (1986) further defined the fundamental phonics skills that children use to decode words. Learning to read is structured into a very typical scope and sequence of phonics instruction. The phonics teaching strategies vary from the initial use of the alphabet (letter/sound relationships) to the building of words (using vowels and consonants together).

Concerning the phonics theoretical orientation to reading, whole language advocates such as Mills, O'Keefe, & Stephens (1992) found that incorporating phonics instruction in a decontextualized manner is less effective than teaching phonics in an authentic context (i.e., through the experience of writing). The use of phonics in an authentic content is also stressed in the program called Language Arts Phonics (LAP), a program in which sentence-making is accomplished using the unit's phonic elements (Botel & Seaver, 1986). Harp (1989) warned that teachers should not teach phonics as

a set of discrete steps with phonics workbooks, but that good phonics instruction should center around children's own reading and writing.

Good phonics instruction seems to be limited in two important ways: level of application and length of use as a teaching method. Clymer (1963) stated that only 45 percent of the commonly taught phonics rules worked as much as 75 percent of the time. Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson (1985) recommended that phonics instruction be completed by the end of second grade.

Opponents of the phonics approach tend to cite such concerns as the limitations of learning to read by simply sounding out words. This process leads to the possibility of not making meaning from the text (Adams, 1990). Opponents of the commercial program "Hooked on Phonics" have added that phonics must be taught first and that few opportunities for reading and writing are given in the classroom until phonics and the rules are learned. Another concern is that phonics is only a part of the total reading process (Stanovich, West, & Cunningham, 1991).

Ten of the items on the TORP--Theoretical Orientation to Reading (DeFord, 1985) deal with the phonics theoretical orientation to reading. An example reads: "A child needs to be able to verbalize the rules of phonics in order to assure proficiency in processing new words." Individuals who score "strongly agree" on this item tend to reflect the phonics theoretical orientation to reading.

Skills Approach. The skills approach can best be exemplified by the basal approach to reading instruction. An

important aspect of the skills approach is repetition (Nagy, 1988). Many encounters with the same word are important to its recognition. New words, however, are necessary and must be systematically added to positively affect reading comprehension. This is sometimes called "controlled vocabulary" because it limits the frequency of encountering new vocabulary (Ekwall & Shanker, 1985). This leads skills oriented individuals to conclude that in order to have an effective reading program, a specific scope and sequence of skills instruction is necessary. Therefore, one skill builds on the foundation of another skill. In sum, basals are effective because the more practice readers have, the greater their skills development becomes (Stanovich, West, & Cunningham, 1991). Once a skill is mastered it is easier for readers to transfer their knowledge to other developing skills areas (Reitsma, 1983).

Skills and phonics oriented teachers can cite some research evidence that students have better achievement in reading when they are initially involved in activities which accentuate code, rather than activities that emphasize meaning (Ekwall & Shanker, 1985). Proponents of the skills approach use ordered lessons, workbooks, and worksheets incorporating phonics, grammar, and syntax of sentences to teach reading (Merrill, 1979). Basal textbooks are most commonly used in sequencing the necessary skills involved in a total reading program. Basal instructors may utilize a wide range of instruction such as, journal writing, read-alouds, children's literature, and vocabulary builders (i.e. Silver Burdett & Ginn, Inc., 1995); however, this method

attempts to reach as many learners as possible with the textbook as a total reading curriculum. In other words, "basal readers are designed to be comprehensive, developmental, continuous progress programs, providing for the sequential and systematic learning of all reading skills." (Ekwall & Shanker, 1985, p. 26)

The basal reader encourages interaction of children, who are at different instructional levels, to learn skills together. This allows for peer interaction instead of isolated one-on-one skills instruction from the teacher (Olson & Dilner, 1982). The Merrill Linguistic Reading Program (Wilson & Young, 1986) offered a selection and sequence of vocabulary that are based on the three major spelling patterns that characterize most English spellings. Students are thought to be able to apply their knowledge of the major spelling patterns and inflectional endings to read innumerable other words.

The most commonly used reading instruction in the elementary classroom is the basal reader approach, or the skills approach (Barry, 1992). The skills approach follows the same basic pattern for every story. First, the vocabulary words are introduced, usually in sentence form. The basal gives a large vocabulary list. The process continues with establishing background information, developing interest, and predicting. The next step involves guided or independent reading that leads to a discussion to check comprehension and any skills that have been covered through the story. To conclude the lesson, the skills approach uses follow-up or enrichment activities (Heilman,

Blair, & Rupley, 1986).

Opponents of the basal program believe that phonemic awareness is diminished. That is to say that the skills approach to reading does not allow for sufficient activities for the development of phonemic awareness (Copeland, Winsor, & Osborn, 1994). However, if teachers do emphasize phonemic awareness, then comprehension suffers as a result. Another objection to this theoretical approach is that readability may vary greatly among selections within the reading textbooks themselves. Additionally, the rich, natural language of the children's literature included in basals is often watered down because of a need to control the vocabulary (Ekwall & Shanker, 1985).

Holland and Hall (1989) failed to find a significant difference in reading achievement between classes taught with a basal or skills approach or with a whole language approach. Allen and Swearingen (1989) cautioned skills approach educators that the reading textbook series and manuals they use may not be founded on current research about the teaching of reading, and consequently, these educators may be teaching using outdated materials and methods. On the other hand, proponents of the skills approach argue against the use of literature-based instruction because of its lack of emphasis on skills and test scores (Funk & Funk, 1988). So the debate continues.

Ten of the items on the TORP--Theoretical Orientation to Reading deal with the skills theoretical orientation to reading. An example reads: "The use of the glossary or dictionary is necessary in determining the meaning and

pronunciation of new words". Individuals who score "strongly agree" or "agree" on this item tend to reflect the skills theoretical orientation to reading.

Whole Language Approach. As a result of the publication of Becoming a Nation of Readers (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson; 1985) many educators have abandoned ability grouping, worksheets, and basal readers to provide a more constructivist approach to reading instruction (Scott, Hiebert, Anderson, 1988). In response to this publication, Davidson wrote Counterpoint and Beyond (1988), which states that the responsibility for improving the state of American literacy should not rely upon textbooks, but upon teachers and administrators who are trying to improve education on a day-to-day basis.

Whole language is not an instructional approach or method, but rather a philosophy. It is a set of beliefs, a way of thinking about teaching and learning (Goodman, 1992). Proponents of the whole language theoretical orientation view language as more than just the sum of the parts. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are integrated areas and should not be taught in isolation.

Whole language advocates allow initial language activities to center upon the children's natural language that they experience in their daily lives. For example, a child learns that environmental print is readable, thus, the golden arches at McDonald's Restaurant are known as a symbol for the place to get something good to eat. Therefore, a child "reads" the golden arches as "McDonald's". This becomes part of a reading, speaking, listening, and writing

foundation. McDonald's can be spelled by the child as "makdonels" in an attempt to communicate meaning by writing about a trip to buy a hamburger. At this point the child is not focusing on the spelling aspect of the language, but the meaning. Therefore, the acceptance of this transitional spelling (Gentry, 1987) advocates the fluency of meaningful writing and reading experiences regardless of spelling because children find it difficult to focus on the flow of meaning while simultaneously concentrating on the particulars of the language (Graves, 1983).

The curriculum is commonly arranged using thematic units (Savage, 1994; Goodman, 1986; Short, Harste, and Burke, 1996). Thematic units integrate the curriculum by combining language arts activities around a topic and incorporating subject area content. For example, a fourth grade teacher might choose "baseball" as the theme for the upcoming unit. Children might read stories about famous baseball players, draw logos for future baseball clubs, compute batting averages, write letters to baseball players, sing baseball songs, study baseball song and poetry lyrics, pinpoint on a map where famous baseball teams are located, differentiate between healthy and unhealthy food at a baseball game, discuss common courtesy behaviors at a baseball game and team spirit, and discuss the force exerted upon the baseball and the resulting action of the baseball in flight.

Whereas the primary focus of the phonics approach is on the decoding process, and the skills approach is on the building process of learning to read from simple to complex, the whole language approach looks at both approaches as

having merit only in the context of meaning. Whole language advocates believe that there is no set scope and sequence in learning to read (Goodman, 1986). Cambourne (1988) stated that learning to read is very similar to learning to talk, in that the learner emulates what is modeled in a meaning-based environment. This life experience view of reading involves a holistic interaction of many components.

Some of the important elements of the whole language philosophy include: (a) ownership; (b) opportunity for freedom of choice; (c) authentic reading experiences; and, (d) teacher observation of reading behaviors (Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988; Short, Harste, & Burke, 1996). Ownership implies that students can envision themselves as authors, illustrators, editors, and orators. Opportunity for freedom of choice provides that students celebrate in the fact that they are able to choose (with the help of a facilitating teacher) reading materials and timelines for the reading of each selection. Authentic reading experiences involve the reading of selections which contain real-life reading applications (i.e. friendly letters, student publications, newspapers). Because readers themselves are the best resources for materials, educators are encouraged to review the materials that students recommend. Self-selected books should serve as learning guides for both students and teachers (Kazemek, 1990).

Whole language teachers continuously observe and learn about their pupils' strengths and weaknesses with regard to reading. Teacher observation ("kidwatching," Goodman, 1978) of reading behaviors allows the teacher to assess, either

individually or collaboratively, the transmediations that occur in the reading process. A transmediation, as defined by Harste, Short, and Burke (1988), "occurs when meanings formed in one communication system are moved to an alternate communication system (e.g. reading to art)" (p. 12). Tucker and White (1992) supported the use of interview by stating that in interviews about reading material the teachers can learn students' strategies in reading, self-esteem and its effect on reading. Another form of collecting assessment data is in the form of checklists. Many types of checklists can be used based on the manner of assessment. As Goodman and Goodman (1992) pointed out, checklists are developed in detail and are based on the reading behaviors to be observed.

Eight of the items on the TORP--Theoretical Orientation to Reading (DeFord, 1985) deal with the whole language theoretical orientation to reading. An example reads: "Materials for early reading should be written in natural language without concern for short, simple words and sentences". Individuals who score "strongly agree" or "agree" on this item tend to reflect the whole language theoretical orientation to reading.

Eclectic Approach. Some educators support the notion that no one theoretical approach to reading is superior to any other because no one method can reach the variety of student needs. Therefore, an eclectic, or balanced, viewpoint seems most sensible to these educators. Ekwall and Shanker (1985) stated the view that ". . .given the range of children's abilities and needs, an eclectic, balanced program, adapted as necessary for pupils who exhibit reading

failure, seems most sensible for general classroom use" (p. 24). Stoodt (1989) stated that: "Combining basal reading instruction with whole language, individualized reading, and/or language experience offers students the best of each approach" (p. 283).

Proponents of the eclectic theoretical approach believe that a complete language program consists of a mixture of the best of many reading programs (Aukerman, 1984). Eclectic teachers pick and choose from the other theoretical orientations to reading by deciding to use different percentages and combinations from each to form their own curriculum (Stoodt, 1989). Considering student needs and individual teacher styles, scope and sequence varies (Carbo, 1987; Savage, 1994).

Research (Savage, 1994) has indicated that as teachers gain more experience, some tend to move from skills-based instruction in reading to language-based approach because they gain confidence from their teaching experiences. As they learn more about the different methods, some teachers tend to synthesize the good from all reading programs that they have experienced. They gain insights into what methodologies work best in their classrooms, they produce "...a portfolio of lessons and routines for the most essential teaching tasks" (Blair, Turner, & Schaudt, 1992, p. vi).

Duffy and Roehler (1989) recommended a "combined approach for organizing [the] reading program. Because basals are often mandated (explicitly or implicitly) and because most teachers appreciate their organizational comfort, they are

the foundation for this approach" (p. 76). Some of the variables that teachers consider when deciding upon which methods to include in their eclectic program are: (a) student strengths and weaknesses; (b) grade level; and, (c) intended learning outcome. A critical approach to teaching includes assessing student characteristics, considering grade level and other variables, and reflecting upon the learning objective for each reading activity (Blair, Turner, & Schaudt, 1992). A teacher using the eclectic approach modifies lessons and methodologies according to all of the variables that occur in a learning situation, but rarely on the basis of what they believe or know about different instructional models and philosophies of teaching reading (Burns, Roe, & Ross, 1992; Cheek, Flippo, & Lindsey, 1997).

None of the items on the TORP--Theoretical Orientation to Reading deal with the eclectic theoretical orientation to reading. Beliefs and actions from phonics, skills, and whole language theoretical orientations to reading are combined in different ways to form the eclectic's theoretical orientation to reading.

Regardless of which theoretical orientation to reading instruction is practiced in the school, someone is ultimately responsible for incorporating each separate philosophy (or combination of philosophies) into practice. In most cases, the principal is the leader of the school and a top-down effect towards instruction and curriculum can, and often does, occur (Conway, 1986). In an effort to match the school's philosophy teachers sometimes pattern their beliefs about teaching to the perceived or stated beliefs that their

principal holds. Thus, principals can influence the actual classroom teaching despite what teachers believe. Teachers affect student achievement in a variety of ways. They serve as models for students, and in a school setting where the principal has a strong influence on the curriculum and instruction, it seems evident that examining principals' theoretical orientations to reading would provide much information as to the effects on their schoolwide reading achievement.

Principals' Role as Instructional Leader

Teachers believe that their principal's most important role is that of an instructional leader (Bauer, 1993; Hackett, 1993; Reitzug, 1988). Meighan (1994) studied the potential correlates to effectiveness and their relationships to achievement data in reading and mathematics for economically declining rural populations. The study revealed that student achievement was more closely related to instructional leadership than any other factor. Other research reported that the principal who implements a reading program, that is highly structured around a common theoretical orientation to reading, may result in the improvement of reading achievement scores (Manning, Manning, & Long, 1989; McMahon-Dumas, 1981). Clement (1995) also found a relationship between low-performing schools (with regard to achievement scores) and the lack of principals taking the role of instructional leaders.

In a study by Wood (1981) principals reported that their most helpful strategy for improving the reading achievement

of pupils was to make reading materials available. The most reported impediment to their leadership was a lack of time. The principals in this study added that experience seemed to be the most helpful source in preparing them to be effective instructional leaders. A relationship between principal leadership style and student reading scores was investigated by Stepniewska (1992). In urban schools, the principals' leadership style did not influence the students' scores on reading proficiency tests. On the other hand, in the suburban schools, there was a positive relationship between principals' leadership style and the tested reading ability of the students on their reading proficiency tests.

It has been demonstrated that many variables are related to the effectiveness of instructional leaders (Huesken, 1992). For example, high school principals provide less instructional leadership than either junior high school or elementary school principals. Also, the greatest instructional leadership seems to come from a team of leaders, such as principal, assistant principal, and department chair (i.e. Mohn, 1991). The level of role responsibility has been found to be a more significant measurement of effective principal behavior than the frequency of role performance (Clement, 1995).

Grant (1991) outlined expectations that teachers have of principals' instructional roles in the reading curriculum. Of the many, the two categories that ranked highest were: (a) knowledge of the reading program; and (b) knowledge of recent research in reading. From the perspective of the principals,

Bloom (1991) reported that they considered that their increased knowledge of the reading process and recent reading research played a significant role in the positive process of change. Jacobson (1992) reported that principals were aware of current reading issues but did not have enough confidence in their understanding of these issues to give a rationale for taking a particular side. The subjects in Savidge's (1990) study revealed that they did not do a significant amount of reading in nationally circulated scholarly educational literature. More specifically, middle school principals, for the most part, were not reading the reports.

Bledsoe (1993) investigated the perceptions of school board members' with regard to the role of the principal. The researcher found that board members preferred their principals to assume the role of instructor or curriculum leader and that most principals in their North Carolina district assumed the daily role as general managers or administrators.

The research has made it clear that principals play very important roles in their schools. These roles vary depending on many school factors and individual characteristics. Since many teachers assume that their principals will serve as instructional leaders (Bauer, 1993; Hackett, 1993; Reitzug, 1988), and that student achievement is more closely related to instructional leadership than in other factors (Meighan, 1994), it is logical to examine actual beliefs that principals hold toward the teaching of one of the core subjects in schools--reading.

Principals' Theoretical Orientation to Reading

Most principals take an active role in curriculum development in their schools (Costa, 1984). They translate their theoretical orientation to reading into action in their schools by: (a) coordinating the school reading program with staff members; (b) having high expectations of all involved; (c) observing classes regularly; (d) monitoring student progress; (e) maintaining an orderly building climate; and, (f) supporting parent and community involvement in the schools (Cohen, 1982). Some authors have offered the suggestion that principals should even serve as role models by reading to children and by listening to them read (i.e. Binkley, 1989; Carbo & Cole, 1995)

Research suggests that the instructional leadership behavior of principals is related to both educational change and student achievement (i.e. Binkley, 1989; Budan, 1992; Fishman, 1986). Case studies (Hall, 1991) illuminate individual principals who have employed a "top-down" leadership style in changing reading and mathematics curricula and have positively affected student achievement. Norvell (1984) noted three important leadership variables that affect school improvement: (a) personality (extroversion); (b) ability to communicate; and, (c) control of the reading program.

Hoes (1992) highlighted the importance of principals effectively communicating their theoretical stances for instruction. Harwell (1995) described effective school programs as being those that place great importance on the

components of the programs and evidence of practices that support each component. Interestingly, it was reported that teachers and principals tend to view practices differently as related to theoretical orientation. Furthermore, teachers and principals in the more effective programs tended to align their views on the teaching of subjects.

In summary, the role of the principal, with regard to leadership style and theoretical orientations to reading, is very complex (Sanacore, 1988) and will benefit from further research. The environment that determines the principal's role is in constant change (Gibbs, 1996). Also, principals should (and usually do) assume the role as the reading coordinator when none is available in the school district (Binkley, 1989; Haggard, 1981; Nufrio, 1987). Therefore, the impact that the principal has upon the school's reading curriculum seems varied across school districts. Hillerich (1983), Leu and Kinzer (1991), Boschee, Whitehead, and Boschee (1993), and Hughes and Ubben (1984) have all authored books on the importance of the principals' role in the improvement of the reading program.

The determination of the principals' theoretical orientation to reading can be important to students' achievement scores (i.e. Hall, 1991). An indicator of the theoretical orientation to reading that principals hold may be a first step in analyzing the relationship between principal beliefs and student achievement. Therefore, an examination of reading profiles, specifically the TORP, follows.

Reading Profiles

According to the latest edition of Tests in Print (Murphy, Conoley, & Impara, 1995), there are no tests listed about theoretical orientation to reading or its synonyms (e.g. beliefs). There are, however, numerous tests of reading, reading comprehension, and 74 categories of tests that relate to reading. The Twelfth Mental Measurements Yearbook (Conoley & Impara, 1995) revealed a list of 16 different reading tests, but no test of theoretical orientation to reading.

TORP

The Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) (Appendix A) is an instrument that determines beliefs about the teaching of reading and categorizes them into one of three theoretical orientations: (a) phonics approach; (b) skills approach; or (c) whole language approach. The TORP was developed by DeFord (1985) and is designed to determine teachers' theoretical orientation to the teaching of reading, but is equally appropriate for teacher educators and principals.

Several researchers have used the TORP, in a variety of ways, to determine the theoretical orientations of its examinees. For example, Ord (1990) checked age, training, teaching experience, and grade level to view the change in teacher orientations in a pretest/posttest design. Some researchers have used the instrument to determine influences upon preservice teachers as they formed their theoretical

orientations to reading. Others have used the TORP to examine teachers' theoretical orientation to reading as it relates to classroom teaching. Many researchers have utilized the TORP to examine change in theoretical orientation.

Each of the following researchers used the TORP to determine influences upon preservice teachers as they formed their theoretical orientations to reading. Wham (1991) studied the theoretical orientation of preservice teachers, following them from their undergraduate coursework through student teaching. The researcher failed to find significant changes for half of the subjects' theoretical orientation to reading. Furthermore, reading coursework was found to be more influential than student teaching in determining individual theoretical orientation. Burk (1989) described factors which influence preservice teachers' theoretical orientation development and found them to be: (a) university influence; (b) personal experiences; and (c) experiences with children (student teaching). The researcher concluded that preservice teachers are theorists who move from tacit beliefs to expressed beliefs and from informal to formal in their theoretical orientation development.

Some researchers have used the TORP to analyze classroom teachers' theoretical orientation to reading as it relates to their instruction. Conway (1986) found that 95% of the teachers and administrators in the study were skills oriented. Button (1992) stated that regardless of teacher orientation, teachers become more refined (in their orientation to teaching reading) with coaching, practice and

time. McKinney (1992) utilized the TORP and found that in whole language classrooms teachers still tended to use direct instruction as the common teaching model. Therefore, it could be concluded that teacher orientation is not always what is practiced. Loven (1990) found that teacher practices were consistent with teacher theory; that their classrooms were set up accordingly, and that kindergarten students mirrored their teachers' theories in their perceptions of reading and writing.

Cahill (1990) tested the beliefs about reading instruction in relationship to teacher actions and found that teachers spent a majority of their reading instructional time practicing their theoretical orientation. Teacher conceptual beliefs from the TORP scores were directly related to the actual teaching in the classroom. Cavuto (1992) discovered no relationship between the number of graphophonic prompts that teachers gave their students and type of teacher orientation. Teacher prompts, whether they were graphophonic or semantic, did reflect teacher orientation. Martoncik (1982) examined teacher theoretical orientation and verbal cues in the classroom using the TORP and found that external variables (i.e. principal's theoretical orientation to reading) were more influential than internal variables (teacher's own theoretical orientation to reading) concerning the instruction within the classroom.

Instructional strategies and verbal cues used by teachers in their teaching practices dealt mainly with the type of basal used, principal expectations, class size, and student ability--not theoretical orientation. Levande (1988)

discovered that over half of the teachers in the study did not teach in the classroom according to their theoretical orientation to reading as revealed by the TORP. Through interviews, it was found that many teachers taught to please their administrators, and abandoned their personal beliefs when it came to teaching in the classroom. Therefore, principals' theoretical orientation to reading may have a top-down effect on the entire reading program in their respective schools.

Some researchers made the following observations from their various studies using the TORP. Gettys (1990) found that teachers altered their theoretical orientation from a skills approach to a combined phonics and whole language approach. Vadella (1988) suggested that teacher orientation did not differ because of grade level taught. Also a teacher who was skills oriented usually favored phonics. On the other hand, whole language teachers did not agree with either phonics or skills theoretical orientations. Aimers (1986) found no relationship between students' perceptions of teacher beliefs and the teachers' actual theoretical orientation. Some 83% of the students perceived their teachers to be skills oriented; also, 83% of the teachers thought of themselves as skills oriented. No significant difference was found between sexes or the three different reading ability groups studied as students perceived what their teachers' theoretical orientation was. Vigil (1986) surmised that teachers are significant in the reading growth of their students; and, consequently their beliefs are vital to their instruction. His review of the literature suggests

that teacher orientation is one aspect of the teacher variable which can be instrumental in teaching children to read.

Although most of the research discussed above revealed that the TORP was a valid and reliable indicator for measuring theoretical orientation to reading, Linek (1992) questioned the validity of the TORP because of the inability to specifically define the whole language theoretical orientation to reading.

A gap exists in the research literature concerning principals' theoretical orientation to reading. None of the studies reviewed revealed that the TORP was used to assess the theoretical orientations to reading held by principals. Since principals can have a great influence (as instructional leaders) upon the beliefs and actions of teachers in their schools, the determination of the theoretical orientation to reading held by principals, and the scores on their students' reading achievement tests can collectively provide valid information.

The TORP is easily administered and scored, and is touted to have the flexibility to be used in a variety of ways. Since the TORP provides information about one's theoretical orientation to reading, it gives some evidence as to where and how instruction should begin (Reutzler & Cooter, 1996). Some studies have used the TORP for assessing both preservice teachers (i.e. Wham, 1991) and inservice teachers (i.e. Vadella, 1988; Vigil, 1986).

Reading Achievement

A statewide method of measuring reading achievement in Indiana is the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) (1990). The present study analyzes the relationship between principals' theoretical orientations to reading and their students' reading achievement scores. Therefore, an examination of the literature follows, regarding reading achievement and some variables that affect it.

Reading can be thought of as the art of interpreting print and is one of the basic skills in education. Learning to read and comprehend the written word can be thought of as an exciting experience, but it is not simply acquired. Research shows that one of the major steps in learning to become a good reader is through the process referred to as "reading comprehension." And since the primary goal of educators is to see that their students receive the best possible education, then the teaching of reading comprehension has been a primary concern.

One of the difficulties of teaching reading comprehension is the inability to agree upon a definition of what comprehension really means. In 1917, Thorndike defined comprehension as: ". . .a very complex procedure involving a weighing of each of many elements in a sentence, their organization in the proper relations to one another, the selection of certain of their connotations and the rejection of others, and the cooperation of many forces to produce the final response" (Klein, 1988; p. 8). More recently, Catterson said that the result of reading comprehension is

more important than the definition itself; and Klein stated that reading comprehension is a complex process that involves key concepts such as meaning and understanding (Klein, 1988). It appears evident that there is no universal definition of reading comprehension that will be accepted by all reading educators.

Gambrell (1985) described a reading comprehension tool, called the dialogue journal, where a teacher and student converse in writing. Gambrell concluded that dialogue journals are effective because they help children develop an awareness of the purpose of reading and writing as communication processes. Strickland and Morrow (1990) contended that one of the most effective ways to get children involved in print is through the use of Big Books. The enlarged texts allow groups of children to see and react to the printed page as it is being read aloud.

The use of big books and recorded books excite children about reading. Children are enthusiastic about reading along with the books. The students learn story grammar and begin to understand the use of words in language and the context of the story (Erickson, 1988). Drama is an exciting method to motivate children to read by providing the connection between spoken words and the text. After reading a book, the children can act out the story, allowing them to create dialogue by using the text and their background knowledge (Hoyt, 1992). Reading should be enjoyable and so riddles are excellent ways to introduce vocabulary words (Tyson & Mountain, 1982).

A sniglet is any word that does not appear in the

dictionary but should. Sniglets provide an escape from daily vocabulary drills and help students realize how words are developed and used in our language (Atkinson & Longman, 1985).

An exciting television show, "The Electric Company," is being used in classrooms across America. This show reinforces basic skills taught in many reading classes. A great advantage of television programs of this type is that they are tutorial in nature (Smith, 1985).

In numerous studies, the reader's background knowledge proved to be a better predictor of recall than verbal intelligence, word recognition, overall reading ability, vocabulary knowledge, and other factors (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). The findings of the study by Knight, Waxman, and Padron (1992) suggested that teacher behaviors create conditions that are influential in the determination of student strategy use. Studies also indicate that student perceptions of teacher behaviors significantly predict students' academic achievement (Clark & Gage, 1976).

Research and theories suggest that there are many types of knowledge shared by the reading and writing processes and they are more similar than previously thought (Rubin & Hansen, 1984; Shannahan, 1988). The discussion of the relationship between reading and writing provide several implications for the classroom. Since reading and writing promote each other, they should be taught as related skills (Tierney & Leys, 1984). Topping (1990) defined peer tutoring and paired reading as a more able child helping a less able child in cooperative working pairs. Two approaches of peer

tutoring are one-to-one peer tutoring and reciprocal tutoring. In the one-to-one relationship, a differential of two years in ability is suggested between the students. During reciprocal peer tutoring, the tutor and tutee roles rotate. The value of extra reading practice can be observed in the one-to-one situation for weaker readers.

Hiebert and Colt (1987) supported the notion that children with varied opportunities to read high-quality literature prepare proficient readers. Reutzel and Fawson (1989) found that students who were introduced to reading with predictable books made greater gains on standardized achievement tests than do students who were introduced to reading with basals. Predictable books, with their high predictable structure, can be used effectively to help young children understand a wide variety of predictable patterns used by authors in crafting a text and enhances students' comprehension.

Wicklund (1989) suggested ways to use poetry to motivate remedial readers in a challenging language experience. The language of poetry is descriptive and it can be used to extend vocabularies.

According to Davis and McPherson (1989) story maps are tools for promoting reading comprehension. A story map is a graphic representation of all or part of the elements of a story and the relationship between them. Story maps provide a practical means of helping children organize story content into coherent wholes.

According to Durkin (1993), because of dull content, poor organization, excessive details, and difficult material,

students are not enjoying or learning from their textbooks. Most importantly, the information does not relate to the child, and therefore, children are having difficulties reading, understanding, and remembering information from both their reading and content area textbooks. One criticism of a reading program with literature as the main focus has been the lack of minority characters (Hansen, 1985).

Many programs like the Effective Reading in Content Areas (ERICA) have been developed to bridge the gap between writing and reading and to strengthen reading skills. Jones (1988) reported a strong relationship between comprehending text and writing about it. Routman's book, Invitations, (1991) offers examples such as alphabet books as natural invitations for writers to write, thus strengthening the reading comprehension process. Readers can read alphabet books and then write and illustrate them with ease because of the familiar patterning and format. Students in middle or low reading groups are significantly more likely to say that their class is too easy. Weinstein (1985) also indicated that low reading groups offer a less conducive learning environment with more interruptions than middle or high groups. Sorensen and Halliman (1988) concluded in their research on ability grouping in reading that the practice provides fewer opportunities for learning than whole class instruction, but greater utilization of those opportunities and that high-ability groups provide more opportunities for learning than lower-ability groups.

ISTEP

Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) (1990) was formulated to measure achievement of Indiana students to make sure that they are proficient in the instruction that is intended for them. Students have been given a battery of tests since 1987. Currently grades 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, and 11 are given the ISTEP. State achievement standards have been empirically validated. There are four testing components to the ISTEP: (a) Achievement Test; (b) Writing Assessment; (c) Test of Cognitive Skills (TCS); and, (d) Performance Assessment and Innovative Testing Methods. The ISTEP Achievement Tests are the only tests required of children in all public schools across Indiana. Scores on the ISTEP are reported in standard deviations above or below what is predicted for a particular school. These predictions have been adjusted to each elementary school dependent upon such variables as: (a) socioeconomic status; and (b) the expected achievement performance, which is referred to as the Cognitive Skills Index (CSI) Score.

Research indicates that standardized testing is commonplace throughout the United States. Such tests as the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS), the California Achievement Test (CAT), the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS), and the Metropolitan Achievement Tests (MAT) are used. Teachers may teach to these tests; scoring on these tests has been questioned because some examinees score higher than expected. Materials for scoring higher on these tests are available and, consequently, some test-takers have unfair advantages (Mehrens & Kaminski, 1989). With these

considerations and possible consequences in mind, the ISTEP was constructed and validated to use in Indiana public schools.

Summary

Many different approaches, theories, and ideas have developed, succeeded, and failed through the years of reading instruction. Choosing the type of reading instruction an individual teacher decides to implement can depend on the exposure, or lack of exposure, to the variety of methods available. Regardless of which reading instruction is decided upon, the reading instruction must be meaningful, and reinforce and develop what the reader already knows (Heilman, Blair, & Rupley, 1986).

The different theoretical orientations to reading that were discussed in this chapter included: (a) phonics; (b) skills; (c) whole language; and, (d) eclectic. The difference in the orientations center upon which elements of the language to emphasize or to begin with (Reutzel & Cooter, 1996). The phonics approach emphasizes the mastery of letter sounds and letter names before reading can occur. The skills approach concentrates upon controlled language in reading materials and the repetition of skills to aid the reading process. The whole language approach is a philosophy that focuses upon natural, meaningful language and the fact that learning letter sounds and letter names can be accomplished by reading whole books and authentic experiences with writing. The eclectic approach stresses the idea that not one of the theoretical orientations to reading is sufficient;

therefore, these educators pick and choose from the other approaches to customize their own.

Two aspects of the principal were discussed in this chapter: (a) principal as instructional leader; and, (b) principal theoretical orientation to reading. Principal roles were provided with the highlight placed upon the principal as an instructional leader in his or her school. The link between the principals' theoretical orientation to reading as a possible top-down effect on their teachers' instruction in reading, and their students' reading achievement was discussed.

Reading profiles, other than the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP), were not found in the literature search. However, the TORP was highlighted as a valid and reliable indicator of preservice and inservice teachers' theoretical orientations to reading. The literature also highlighted how the TORP can be extended to use with other important individuals such as principals.

Some of the variables that affect reading achievement were provided. The Indiana Statewide Testing of Educational Progress (ISTEP) (1990) was described as an indicator of students' reading achievement. More specifically, this test supplied the only common indicator of student reading achievement among principals' schools who participated in this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This chapter presents a description of the sample population used in this study. The section on data collection includes two instruments on theoretical orientation to reading. These are the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) (DeFord, 1985) and the Principal Actions Questionnaire, developed by the researcher. These instruments, plus the principal survey letter, comprise the sample population packets. The methods of data collection and processing are described in the third section of this chapter. The design for the analysis of the statistical aspects of this study are included and will finalize this chapter.

Sample Population

Sixty principals from Indiana were chosen to participate in the study. The number sixty was chosen by the researcher as a sufficient sample from which to collect data representative of the entire population of Indiana principals. Principals used in the study were randomly selected using the Indiana School Directory 1995 issued by the Indiana Department of Education Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Suellen Reed.

The Indiana School Directory 1995 consists of sixty-two pages listing elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools in Indiana. Additional information found in the Indiana School Directory 1995 lists principals' names, school addresses, and school telephone numbers. Also, the Indiana counties, corporations, and school numbers are coded with numerical digits. Lastly, a grade level range for each individual school designates which grades are taught in each individual school building.

Each page of the Indiana School Directory 1995 is alphabetically ordered by school name. For this study, the researcher, as a matter of preference, arbitrarily decided to randomly select a starting page from the Indiana State Directory 1995. Numbers from one to sixty-two were placed in a hat with one number being drawn to determine which page to begin a sample population selection of elementary school principals to participate in the survey. This first random drawing between one and sixty-two was forty-four. Consequently, the first school selected was the first elementary school found on page forty-four of the Indiana School Directory 1995.

This researcher next replaced the previously drawn number, (forty-four), inside the hat. A second drawing was then administered to determine a count between each elementary school to be used in the study. This drawing resulted in the number sixty being chosen. Counting down sixty school listings, participants for the study were selected. During the selection procedure if a school numerically was chosen that was either secondary or preschool

and did not meet the criteria of the study sample, then the next elementary school in the listing which did meet the criteria was alternately chosen. The researcher continued to count by hand through the Indiana School Directory 1995 until the desired sample of sixty participants was chosen.

Once the sixty elementary schools selected for the study were chosen, the researcher determined who the principal was from each school. This was accomplished by looking at each selected elementary school and data listed for each in the Indiana School Directory 1995. A code to assure anonymity was given to each school principal. Codes were numerically assigned in sequential order starting at 001. Coding digits continued from 002 through 060 until each principal and elementary school could be identified without the use of names. The researcher did this to try to make sure that each elementary school and elementary principal were protected when they later answered the questions of the study. This coding also more easily allowed the researcher to be more oblivious to any prior knowledge about the selected schools or principals, the size of the school, the communities in which the schools were located, and the school districts and their political and instructional beliefs.

Sample Population Packets

After the selection process was completed for the study sample, the researcher devised a packet to be sent to each of the chosen participants. Packets included a letter of explanation of the study and its importance. (see Appendix C).

The researcher determined that it was necessary to learn reading beliefs of the principals and whether those beliefs were incorporated within the instructional framework of the elementary school. To accomplish this task, DeFord's (1985) Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) was included in the packet to gauge the theoretical orientations to reading of the principals (Appendix A). The TORP questionnaire included in the packet had 28 questions which elicited responses to belief statements about reading. The TORP measures responses on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. The response of number 1 stands for strongly agree. The response of number 2 means that the participant was in agreement with the statement. A statement of 3 denotes a neutral position. A response of 4 shows disagreement with the statement. Lastly, a response of 5 corresponds to a strong disagreement with the TORP item.

The third major component found in the packet was the Principal Actions Questionnaire (Appendix B). This device was constructed in a format similar to the TORP. The Principal Actions Questionnaire consists of 15 questions. Questions on this instrument were used to denote whether the theoretical orientation principals hold transfer into the corresponding actions of their schools. Likewise, a Likert scale was constructed for participant response. A number 1 chosen on the questionnaire indicates "often." A number 2 response means "sometimes." A selection of number 3 expresses that the participant "does not know." A response of number 4 states that the action is "seldom done" in their particular elementary school. Picking the number 5

represents that the action is "never done" in their school.

Both the TORP and the Principal Actions Questionnaire have questions which show theoretical orientation to reading in categories of whole language, skills, and phonics. The researcher decided to use the scoring tabulation method devised and validated by DeFord (1985) to determine the theoretical orientation of the principals.

Also included in the packet was the telephone number and address of the researcher. Principals were encouraged to contact the researcher if they had any questions about the study, or wanted any clarification about specific questions on either the TORP or the Principal Actions Questionnaire. It was also explained to each principal that results of the study would be sent to them if they desired.

Each coded packet also included the researcher's self-addressed stamped return envelope. This was provided to assure that the packet could be sent back easily without cost to the principal. Also, the return address on the front of the packet was a precaution taken in case a school address was written incorrectly by the researcher or changed from the Indiana School Directory 1995.

Data Collection and Processing

The main incentive employed by the researcher to have the TORP and Principal Actions Questionnaire returned promptly was to appeal to the instructional leadership of principals, and their desire to learn more about reading in their school compared to other schools. The purpose and importance of the study was defined.

The packet was sent to the principals who were selected for the study. A two-week response time was given for the initial contact. During this time period two packets were returned to the sender. The researcher contacted these two schools by telephone and sent replacement packets with the same codes as the initial mailing to those principals. Approximately, 19 of the 60 school principals responded within the first two weeks.

After the two weeks which had been designated as the return period, the researcher contacted all of the school principals who had not returned their packets. In most instances, a personal contact with the participating principal was not possible. Many schools were finishing the year, and many principals were involved with meetings and other duties. In those circumstances, a message was left with the secretary to make sure that the packets had indeed been received. Each secretary was asked to remind the principal to complete the questions and return the packet. Three principals to whom the researcher did speak to personally stated that they had either misplaced or lost the initial packet. Those principals were sent new coded packets.

The researcher constructed individual files for each principal. These files were coded with the same numerical sequencing as the packets. When a completed packet was returned, the file coding was highlighted to determine who had returned their files and which files were still out. These files were placed in a file box.

The researcher then obtained the Indiana Statewide

Testing for Educational Placement (ISTEP) scores for each of the principals' schools. The scores from 1995 were the latest available and the most current data to use in the study. Since the schools varied in individual grade level setup, the researcher decided to use the third grade level which was a common testing level for all of the schools. Secondly, because the study focused upon principals' theoretical orientations to reading and their subsequent actions, it was logical to use reading comprehension as the choice of focus among the battery of scores indicated. Those reading comprehension scores were indicated in levels of below predicted, near predicted, and above predicted in standard deviations from a predicted mean. This mean was calculated by the Indiana Department of Education using a variety of demographic and socioeconomic factors which have been shown to affect achievement. These reading comprehension scores were highlighted and placed in the file.

At the end of another two weeks the number of returned packets rose to 32. The researcher was not satisfied with this return as a goal of 75% or 45 returned packets from 60 was sought. The researcher made telephone calls to all principals who had not returned their packets. One principal stated she did not have time to complete the mailing. She asked if she could take the questions over the phone. The researcher agreed to this proposal, and administered both the TORP and the Principal Actions Questionnaire to her. Her responses were recorded and coded by the researcher. They were then placed in the file.

After another 10 days the number of packets returned

totaled 43. It became apparent to the researcher that the possibility of return of any more packets after three contacts was minimal at best. For that reason, the researcher decided that 43 returns or 72% would be sufficient to carry on with the study.

At this point, all files were checked to see if they contained the three basic elements for study analysis. These included: (a) the TORP; (b) the Principal Actions Questionnaire; and, (c) the 1995 third grade ISTEP reading comprehension score for each principal's elementary school.

The researcher scored both the TORP and Principal Actions Questionnaire according to the methods devised by DeFord (1985). If scores indicated a skills theoretical orientation to reading, the researcher also evaluated the range of individual responses. If the range was large, a fourth category of theoretical orientation to reading was determined. This category was labeled eclectic. The reason for this was: if an individual principal scored in a scattered fashion (i.e., sometimes choosing responses which indicated a phonics theoretical orientation to reading, sometimes, a whole language theoretical orientation to reading), then his or her scores would indicate a preference to use many of the different methods and, therefore, would categorize him or her as eclectic. However, if only response scores were analyzed, then responses in high and low categories could balance each other, and yield a score that would suggest the principal had a skills theoretical orientation to reading. Consequently, it was necessary to differentiate between individuals who evidenced a true skills

theoretical orientation to reading, and those who evidenced an eclectic theoretical orientation to reading (i.e., those who believed in the utilization of a wide variety of methods). Scores from the three basic elements of the study were placed in a database for statistical analysis.

Using DeFord (1985) and her scoring means and standard deviations for each group (phonics, skills, and whole language) the researcher determined the individual theoretical orientation to reading categories to be as follows: (a) phonics 54-67; (b) skills 68-110; and, (c) whole language 111-139.

In order to determine whether a score on the TORP which was in the skills range (68-110) was truly skills or eclectic, the researcher independently looked at the individual answer sheets returned by the principals. If there were more total responses found at the extremes of the answer sheet (strongly agree or strongly disagree) than middle responses (directly between strongly agree and strongly disagree), then that individual principal was categorized as eclectic on the TORP.

Principal Actions Questionnaire scores could range from 15 to 75. Therefore, in order to categorize principals' scores, it was necessary to scale PAQ score ranges in proportion to the TORP score ranges for the different theoretical orientation to reading categories. Thus, ranges for Principal Actions Questionnaire scores for the categories were: (a) scores from 29 to 35 represented a phonics approach; (b) scores from 36 to 58 represented a skills approach; (c) scores of 59 to 74 represented a whole language

approach.

In order to determine whether a score on the Principal Actions Questionnaire, which was in the skills range (36 to 58), was truly skills or eclectic, the researcher independently looked at the individual answer sheets returned by the principals. If there were more total responses found at the extremes of the answer sheet (often or never) than middle responses (don't know), then that individual principal was categorized as eclectic for this study. Upon reflection, the middle category (don't know) seemed ill-placed as an action category. Therefore, the data was looked at in another way. The extremes (often or never) were compared to those two categories on the outside of the "don't know" category (sometimes or seldom). This was done in order to give a better indication between skills and eclectic categories on the Principal Actions Questionnaire.

To calculate scores to represent the consistency of principals' beliefs and actions, it was necessary to convert both the TORP scores and the Principal Actions Questionnaire scores to sets of z-scores, in an effort to place both scales on a common standard deviation scale. In order to make calculations of a consistency score less cumbersome, the z-scores were transformed to T-scores (having a mean of 50 and standard deviation of 10).

Statistical Analysis

Pearson r correlations were conducted as the first part of the statistical analysis. The first Pearson r depicted

the relationship between the TORP scores and Principal Actions Questionnaire scores. The second Pearson r depicted the relationship between scores of the TORP and those of the ISTEP. Thirdly, a Pearson r was calculated to investigate the relationship between Principal Actions Questionnaire scores and ISTEP scores.

The consistency between beliefs and actions was calculated by subtracting the Principal Actions Questionnaire T-score from the TORP T-score. After this consistency score was calculated, a Pearson r was calculated using the consistency scores and the ISTEP scores. A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed to determine whether significant differences existed among mean ISTEP reading comprehension scores for whole language, skills, eclectic, and phonics groups.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

A total of 43 school principals, from an initial pool of 60, completed all components of the survey packet on their theoretical orientation to reading and their actions related to the teaching of reading. These components included the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) (DeFord, 1985) (See Appendix A); and the Principal Actions Questionnaire (See Appendix B). Results represented here are based on raw scores from analyses from these two instruments, and the 1995 Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) 3rd grade reading comprehension score from each principal's school. The ISTEP score is reported in standard deviation units at, above, or below the school's predicted score. TORP raw scores may range from 28 to 140; Principal Actions Questionnaire raw scores range from 15 to 75. Means, standard deviations, and ranges for these scores are presented below in Table 1.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges

<u>Instrument</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>	<u>Range</u>
TORP	79.6512	11.2247	58 - 104
PAQ	47.6977	4.9306	39 - 58
ISTEP	-00.0837	0.9218	-2.2 - 1.8

TORP scores were used to classify theoretical orientation to reading for each respondent, into one of three orientation groups: (a) 1-phonics; (b) 2-skills; and, (c) 3-whole language. DeFord (1985) found ranges for these theoretical orientation to reading categories to be the following: (a) phonics 54-68; (b) skills 58-83; and, (c) whole language 130-139. In her original study, DeFord tested theoretical orientation to reading with groups which were already classified according to their beliefs. Consequently, this accounts for gaps between the ranges of scores for skills versus whole language believers as well as an overlap between the ranges of scores for phonics versus skills believers.

Therefore, for this study, using approximations of DeFord's observed ranges, the researcher determined a phonics theoretical orientation to reading to be represented by scores between 54 and 67 on the TORP. A skills theoretical orientation to reading is represented by scores between 68 and 110 on the TORP. A whole language theoretical orientation to reading is represented by scores between 111 and 139 on the TORP. Using these classification criteria, 41 of 43 (95%) of the respondents were initially classified as having a skills theoretical orientation to reading, and two (5%) were classified as having a phonics theoretical orientation to reading. None (0%) of the principals' scores indicated a whole language theoretical orientation to reading.

Examination of individual response patterns indicated that some principals scored in a scattered fashion (ranging from phonics to whole language on individual responses) and

were classified as having a skills theoretical orientation to reading. This led the researcher to develop a fourth category classification, derived from a division of the TORP skills group into two distinct groups, skills and eclectic (not included by DeFord).

Using the classification procedures described above with Principal Actions Questionnaire scores, ranges for principals' actions scores were as follows: (a) Principal Actions Questionnaire scores from 29 to 35 represented a phonics approach; (b) scores from 36 to 58 represented a skills approach; and, (c) scores of 59 to 74 represented a whole language approach.

Initially, all 43 (100%) respondents' Principal Actions Questionnaire scores indicated that they favored a skills approach. Again, these scores were examined to reclassify them as favoring a skills approach or eclectic approach.

Results of participant theoretical orientation to reading groupings are listed below. A phonics orientation to reading is categorized by the numeral (1). A skills orientation to reading is categorized by the numeral (2). A whole language orientation to reading is categorized by the numeral (3). If a large range was noted in the skills orientation to reading, a fourth category was created by the researcher, because it reflected the choice of eclectic-oriented individuals to choose among a wide range of the theoretical orientations to reading. In other words, an eclectic person could choose from phonics and whole language theories and thus produce a score in the skills range on the TORP. An eclectic

orientation to reading is categorized by the numeral (4). The final categorization of each principal's theoretical orientation to reading, as determined by the TORP and Principal Actions Questionnaire scores are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2
TORP and PAQ Orientations

Participant	TORP	PAQ
<u>Code #</u>	<u>Orientation</u>	<u>Orientation</u>
1	4	4
2	4	2
4	4	2
5	4	4
6	1	4
7	2	2
8	2	2
10	4	2
11	2	2
12	1	4
14	2	2
15	4	4
16	2	2
17	2	2
18	2	4
19	2	2
21	2	2
22	4	2
23	2	4
24	2	2
29	4	4
30	4	4
31	2	2
32	2	2
33	4	4
36	2	4
38	4	4
39	2	2
40	2	4
41	4	2
43	2	2
44	2	4
46	2	2
47	2	4
48	2	2
49	4	2
50	4	4
52	4	4

53	4	2
54	2	2
55	4	2
56	2	4
60	4	4

Summary results of the final frequency distribution of both the TORP and the Principal Actions Questionnaire are listed below in Table 3.

Table 3
Frequencies and Percentages

<u>Orientation</u>	<u>TORP F/Percent</u>	<u>PAQ F/Percent</u>
Phonics	2 (04.65%)	0 (00.00%)
Skills	23 (53.49%)	24 (55.81%)
Whole Language	0 (00.00%)	0 (00.00%)
<u>Eclectic</u>	<u>18 (41.86%)</u>	<u>19 (44.19%)</u>
Total	43 (100%)	43 (100%)

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide this study. These will be presented individually with the analysis of the results that determined the acceptance or rejection of each. The significance level of .05 was determined as appropriate for all of the hypotheses which were tested in the null form.

The correlation coefficients were calculated using the data submitted by the 43 participants for the TORP, the Principal Actions Questionnaire, and the 1995 third grade ISTEP reading comprehension scores from each individual principal's school. The first four hypotheses were analyzed using the Pearson r statistic. The data for Hypothesis 5

were analyzed using a one-way ANOVA. The data are listed below in Table 4.

Table 4

Scores for Each Variable

(Each line represents a principal's scores and his or her related school score on the ISTEP.)

Participant Code #	TORP Score	Questionnaire Score	ISTEP Score
1	68	46	0.5
2	72	40	1.1
4	70	50	-0.7
5	85	52	-1.1
6	62	44	1.5
7	89	46	-2.2
8	72	46	-0.4
10	80	52	-0.6
11	72	46	-0.7
12	58	44	0.7
14	78	48	0.3
15	74	48	0.3
16	82	51	0.8
17	82	55	0.1
18	70	42	0.2
19	70	44	-1.0
21	86	48	1.4
22	80	48	-0.2
23	94	52	-0.4
24	74	44	0.1
29	81	56	-0.6
30	84	58	-2.1
31	70	52	0.7
32	95	44	-1.9
33	102	52	-0.5
36	92	40	1.8
38	82	44	0.5
39	70	40	0.1
40	92	40	0.0
41	94	50	0.1
43	96	46	-0.1
44	86	52	0.3
46	78	46	-0.6
47	82	43	0.6
48	70	44	0.4
49	96	48	-1.5
50	104	56	-1.7
52	65	49	0.6
53	70	48	0.5

54	72	52	0.4
55	66	46	-0.6
56	70	39	0.5
60	90	56	-0.2

Hypothesis 1. There is no statistically significant relationship between beliefs and actions of school principals with regard to reading instruction in their schools.

Results. Respondent TORP and Principal Actions Questionnaire scores were used to calculate a Pearson r. The resulting correlation coefficient for this hypothesis was $r = 0.33339$, $p = 0.029$. This result means that the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between school principals' beliefs and actions with regard to reading instruction in their schools. In other words, a positive correlation between principals' beliefs about reading and subsequent actions within their schools are related. The more a principal believes in a particular theoretical orientation to reading, the closer his or her actions match the stated beliefs. (See Table 4 for the scores of each variable.) Chart 1, below, graphically represents the relationship between TORP and Principal Actions Questionnaire scores.

Hypothesis 2. There is no statistically significant relationship between principals' beliefs about the teaching of reading and the students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP.

Results. The individual scores on the TORP and the individual school scores of the predicted reading comprehension of the ISTEP were used to calculate a Pearson r . The resulting correlation coefficient for this hypothesis was -0.3979 , $p = .008$. This statistic means that the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between school principals' beliefs and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP. In other words, a negative correlation indicated that mid-range TORP scores, indicating skills or eclectic theoretical orientation to reading, related more closely to low ISTEP reading comprehension scores. (See Table 4 for the scores for each variable.) Chart 2, below, graphically represents the relationship between TORP and ISTEP scores.

To investigate further the negative relationship between TORP and ISTEP scores, the correlation coefficients were calculated for two subgroups of principals, that is those with a skills theoretical orientation to reading ($n = 23$), and those with an eclectic theoretical orientation to reading ($n = 18$). For the skills-oriented group of principals, the obtained correlation between TORP and ISTEP scores was $-.1278$, $p < .561$. For the eclectic-oriented group of principals, the obtained correlation between TORP and ISTEP scores was $-.5409$, $p < .020$. Charts 3 and 4 below graphically represent these relationships.

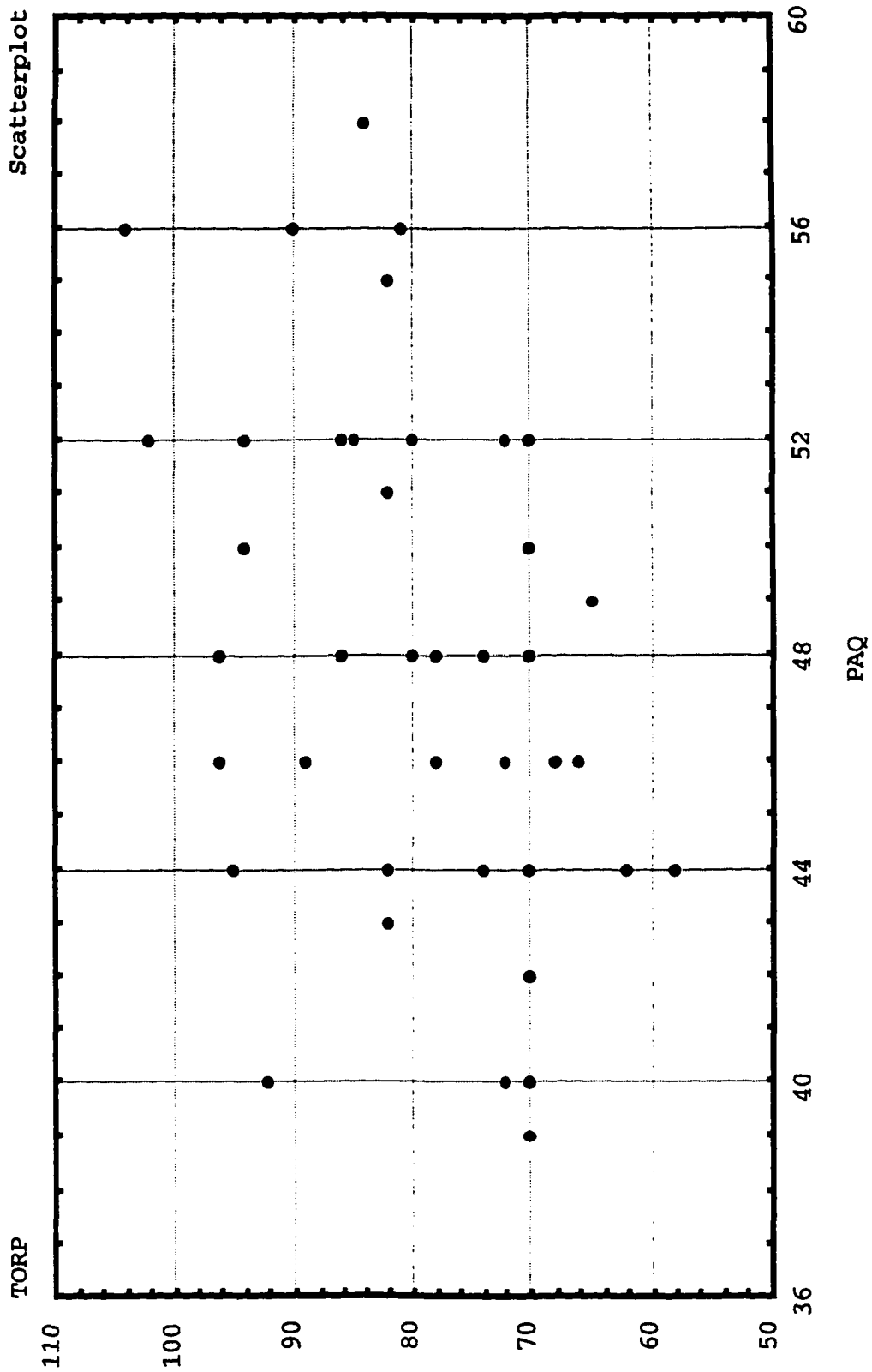


Chart 1: PAQ x TORP Scatterplot

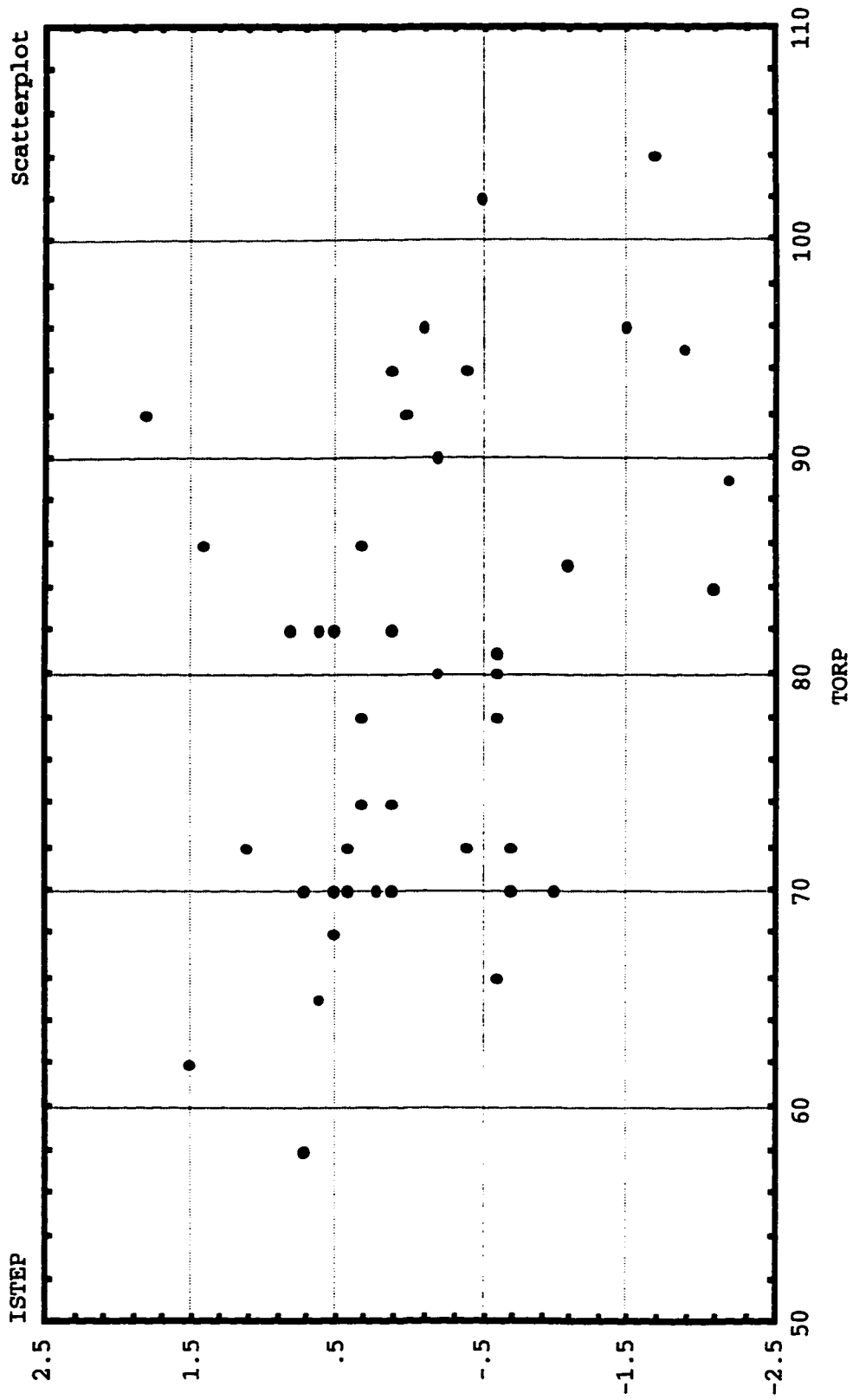


Chart 2: ISTEP x TORP Scatterplot

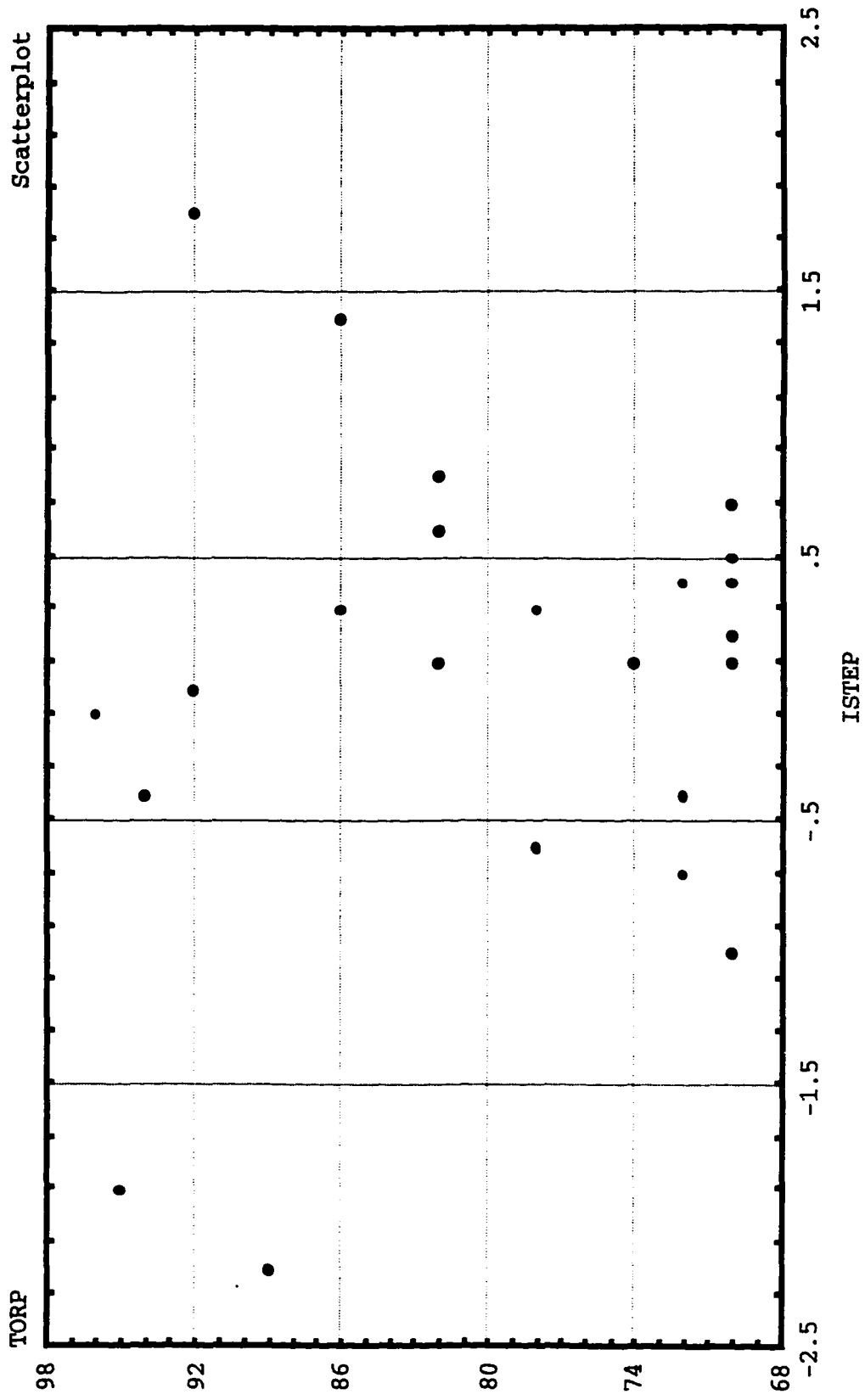


Chart 3: Scatterplot of TORP and ISTEP Scores for Skills-Oriented Principals

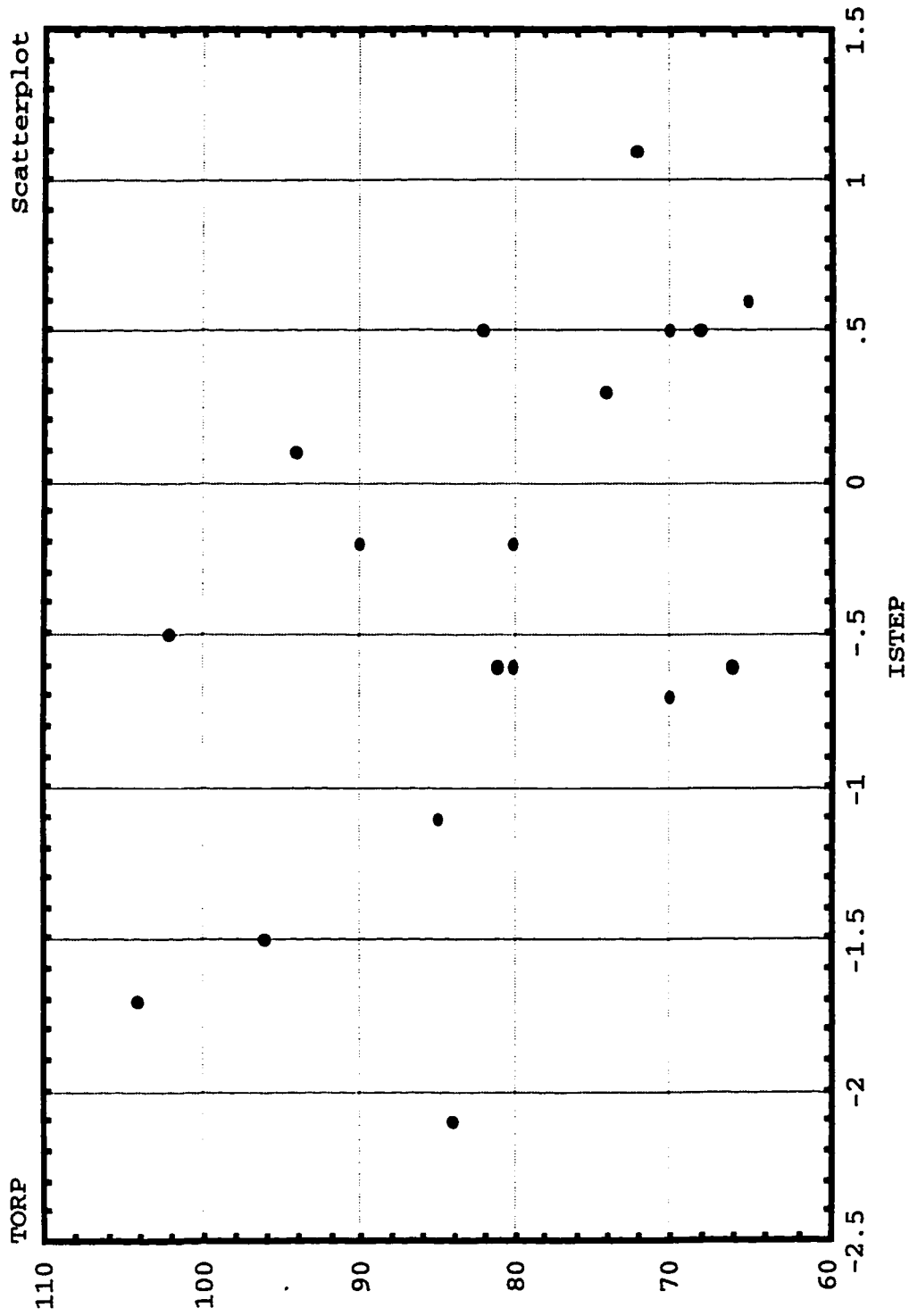


Chart 4: Scatterplot of TORP and ISTEP Scores for Eclectic-Oriented Principals

Hypothesis 3. There is no statistically significant relationship between principals' actions with regard to reading instruction in their schools and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP.

Results. The individual scores on the Principal Actions Questionnaire and the individual school scores of the predicted reading comprehension of the ISTEP were used to calculate a Pearson r . The resulting correlation coefficient for this hypothesis was -0.3725 , $p = .014$. This statistic means that the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between principals' actions with regard to reading instruction in their schools and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP. In other words, a negative relationship exists between principal actions with regard to reading instruction and reading comprehension scores for third-graders. (See Table 4 for the scores for each variable.) Chart 5, below, graphically represents the relationship between Principal Actions Questionnaire and ISTEP scores.

To investigate further the negative relationship between Principal Actions Questionnaire and ISTEP scores, the correlation coefficients were calculated for two subgroups of principals, that is those with a skills theoretical orientation to reading ($n = 24$), and those with an eclectic theoretical orientation to reading ($n = 19$). For the skills-oriented group of principals, the obtained correlation between Principal Actions Questionnaire and ISTEP scores was

.0172, $p < .938$. For the eclectic-oriented group of principals, the obtained correlation was $-.7082$, $p < .001$. Charts 6 and 7 below graphically represent these relationships.

Hypothesis 4. There is no statistically significant relationship between the consistency of principals' beliefs and actions with regard to reading instruction and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP.

In order to obtain a numerical value to represent principals' consistency between their beliefs and actions, the researcher calculated two sets of z-scores for the distribution of TORP and Principal Actions Questionnaire raw scores. These two sets of z-scores were then transformed to T scores. (See Chapter 3 for rationale.) To determine a principal's consistency score, his or her Principal Actions Questionnaire T-score was subtracted from his or her TORP T-score. This subtraction yielded a result which indicated both direction and magnitude. Results close to 0.00 indicated greater consistency, while results farther from 0.00 indicated inconsistency. Table 5 includes each principal's TORP and Principal Actions Questionnaire raw scores, z-scores, T-scores, and Consistency scores, as well as their school's ISTEP scores.

Table 5

TORP, PAQ, z, T, Consistency, and ISTEP scores

<u>Code</u>	<u>TORPz</u>	<u>PAQz</u>	<u>TORPT</u>	<u>PAOT</u>	<u>Cons</u>	<u>ISTEP</u>
01	-1.038	-0.328	39.62	46.715	-7.095	0.5
02	-0.682	-1.557	43.184	34.433	8.751	1.1
04	-0.860	0.49	41.402	54.903	-13.502	-0.7
05	0.477	0.9	54.765	58.998	-4.232	-1.1
06	-1.573	-0.738	34.275	42.621	-8.346	1.5
07	0.833	-0.328	58.329	46.715	11.614	-2.2
08	-0.682	-0.328	43.184	46.715	-3.532	-0.4
10	0.0310	0.9	50.311	58.998	-8.687	-0.7
11	-0.682	-0.328	43.184	46.715	-3.532	-0.7
12	-1.929	-0.738	30.711	42.621	-11.910	0.7
14	-0.147	0.081	48.529	50.809	-2.280	0.3
15	-0.503	0.081	44.965	50.809	-5.844	0.3
16	0.209	0.695	52.093	56.95	-4.858	0.8
17	0.209	1.514	52.093	65.139	-13.046	0.1
18	-0.86	-1.147	41.402	38.527	2.875	0.2
19	-0.86	-0.738	41.402	42.621	-1.219	-1.0
21	0.566	0.081	55.656	50.809	4.847	1.4
22	0.031	0.081	50.311	50.809	-0.499	-0.2
23	1.278	0.9	62.783	58.998	3.786	-0.4
24	-0.503	-0.738	44.965	42.621	2.344	0.1
29	0.12	1.719	51.202	67.186	-15.984	-0.6
30	0.387	2.128	53.874	71.28	-17.406	-2.1
31	-0.86	0.9	41.402	58.998	-17.596	0.7
32	1.367	-0.738	63.674	42.621	21.053	-1.9
33	1.991	0.9	69.91	58.998	10.913	-0.5
36	1.1	-1.557	61.001	34.433	26.569	1.8

38	0.209	-0.738	52.093	42.621	9.471	0.5
39	-0.86	-1.557	41.402	34.433	9.969	0.1
40	1.1	-1.557	61.001	34.433	26.569	0.0
41	1.278	0.49	62.783	54.903	7.880	0.1
43	1.457	-0.328	64.565	46.715	17.85	-0.1
44	0.566	0.9	55.656	58.998	-3.341	0.3
46	-0.147	-0.328	48.529	46.715	1.814	-0.6
47	0.209	-0.943	52.093	40.574	11.519	0.6
48	-0.86	-0.738	41.402	42.621	-1.219	0.4
49	1.457	0.081	64.565	50.809	13.756	-1.5
50	2.169	1.719	71.692	67.186	4.506	-1.7
52	-1.305	0.286	36.947	52.856	-15.909	0.6
53	-0.86	0.081	41.402	50.809	-9.407	0.5
54	-0.682	0.9	43.184	58.998	-15.814	0.4
55	-1.216	-0.328	37.838	46.715	-8.877	-0.6
56	-0.86	-1.761	41.402	32.386	9.016	0.5
60	0.922	1.719	59.22	67.186	-7.966	-0.2

Results. Scores representing the consistency of principals' beliefs and actions with regard to reading instruction and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP were used to calculate a Pearson r. The resulting correlation coefficient for this hypothesis was 0.02202, $p = .889$. This result means that the null hypothesis is retained. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no relationship between principals' consistency of actions and beliefs with regard to reading instruction in their schools and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the

ISTEP. Chart 8, below, graphically represents the relationship of consistency scores for TORP and Principal Actions Questionnaire scores and ISTEP scores.

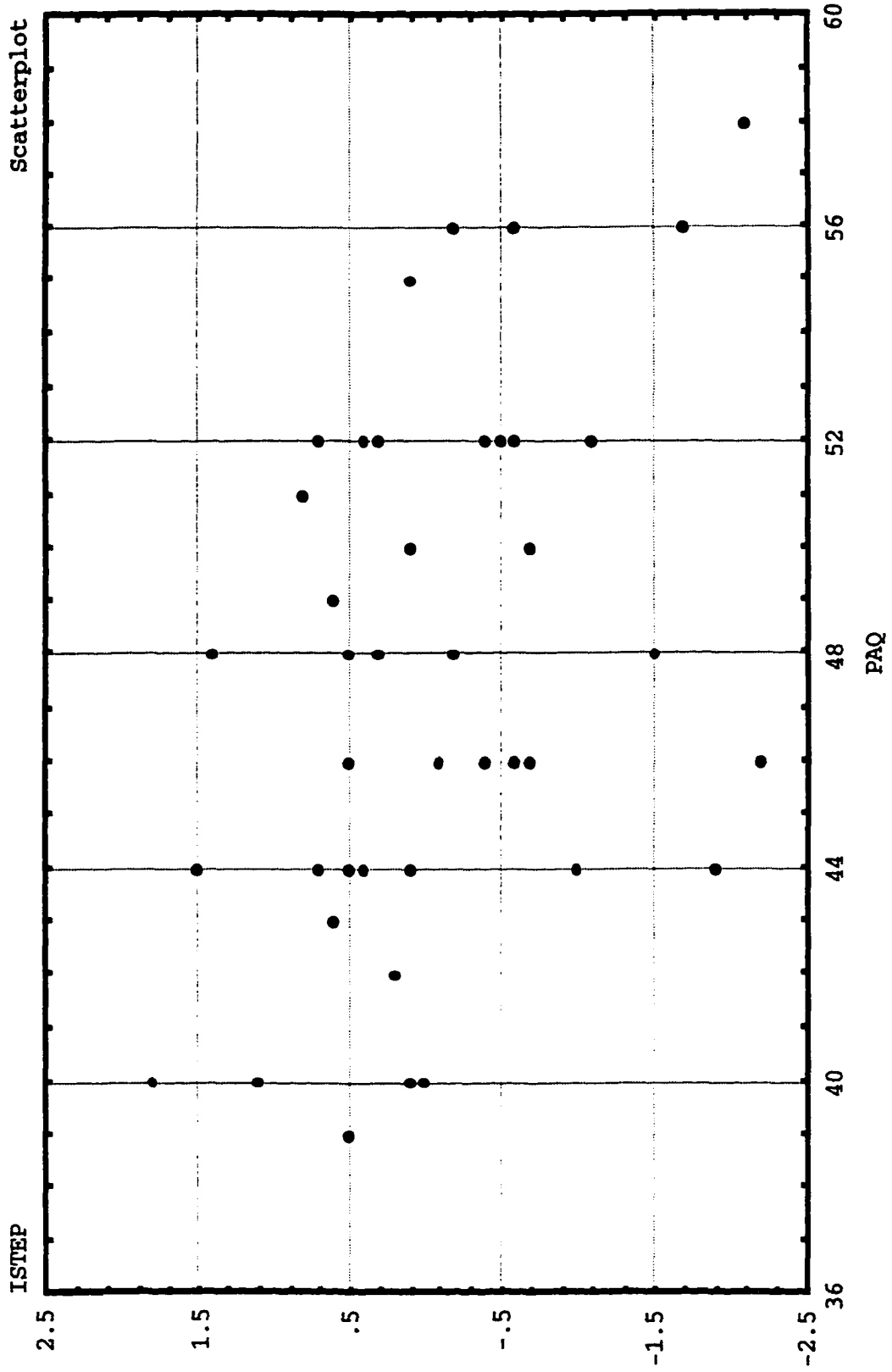


Chart 5: ISTEP x PAQ Scatterplot

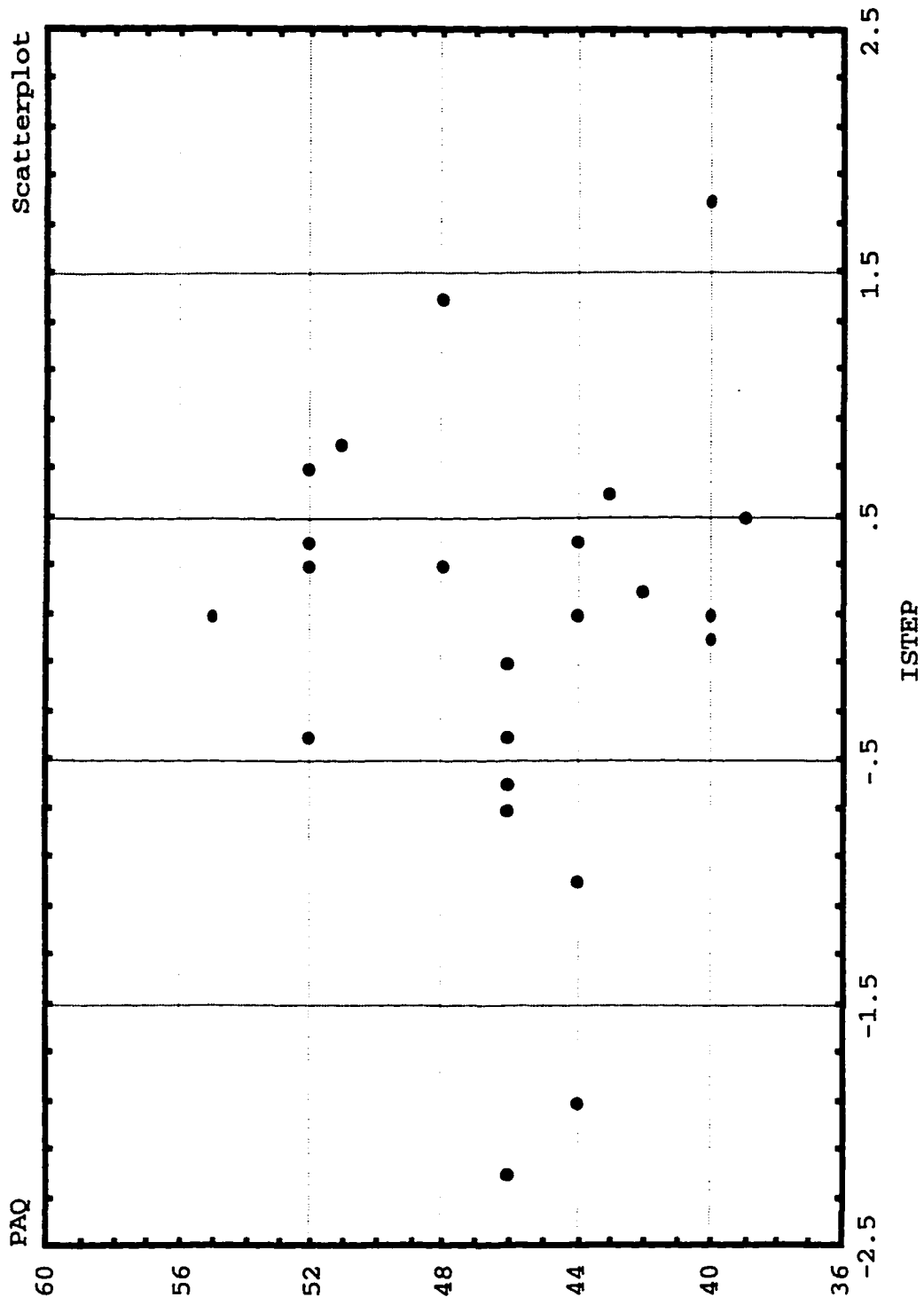


Chart 6: Scatterplot of PAQ and ISTEP Scores for Skills-Oriented Principals

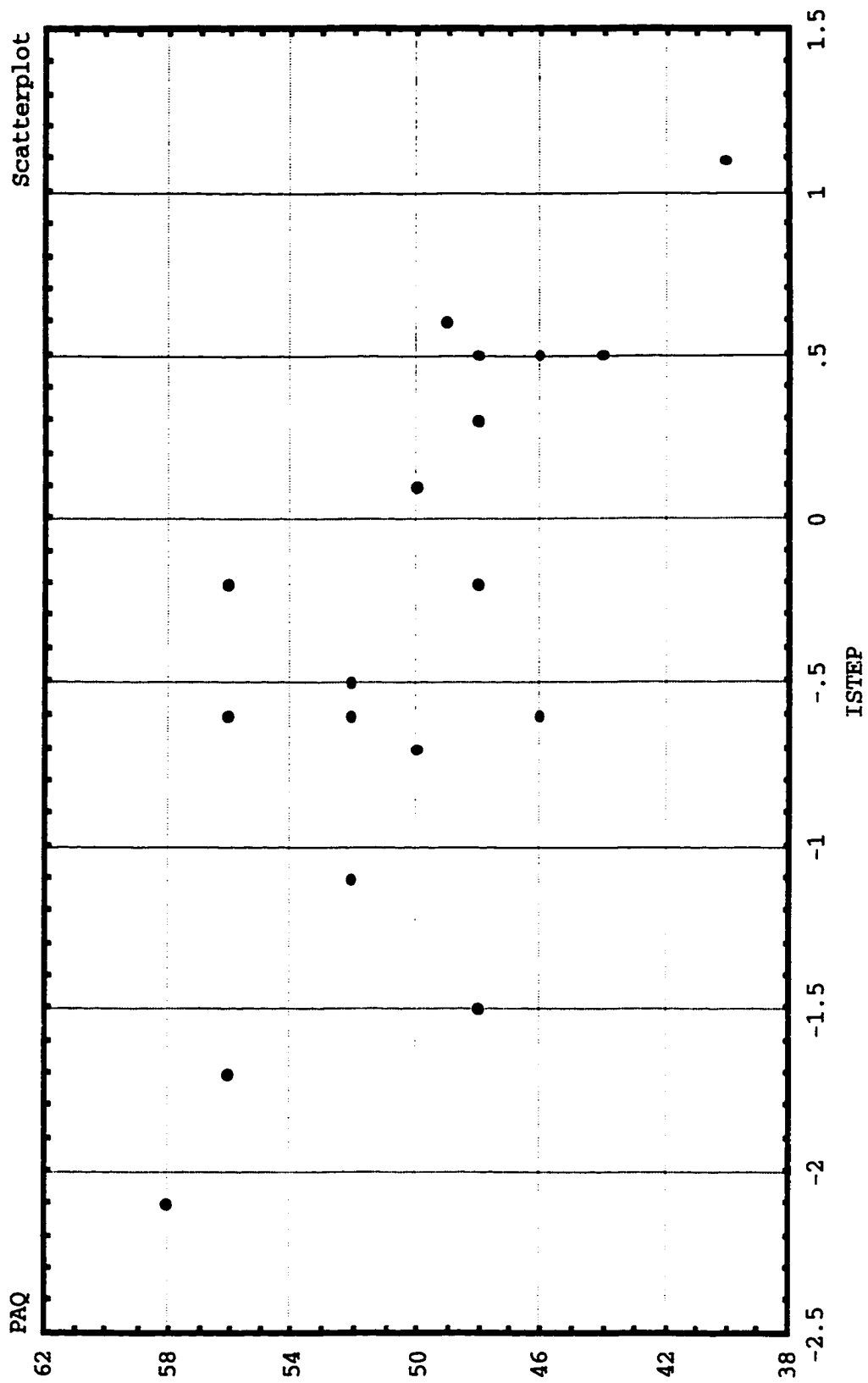


Chart 7: Scatterplot of PAQ and ISTEP Scores for Eclectic-Oriented Principals

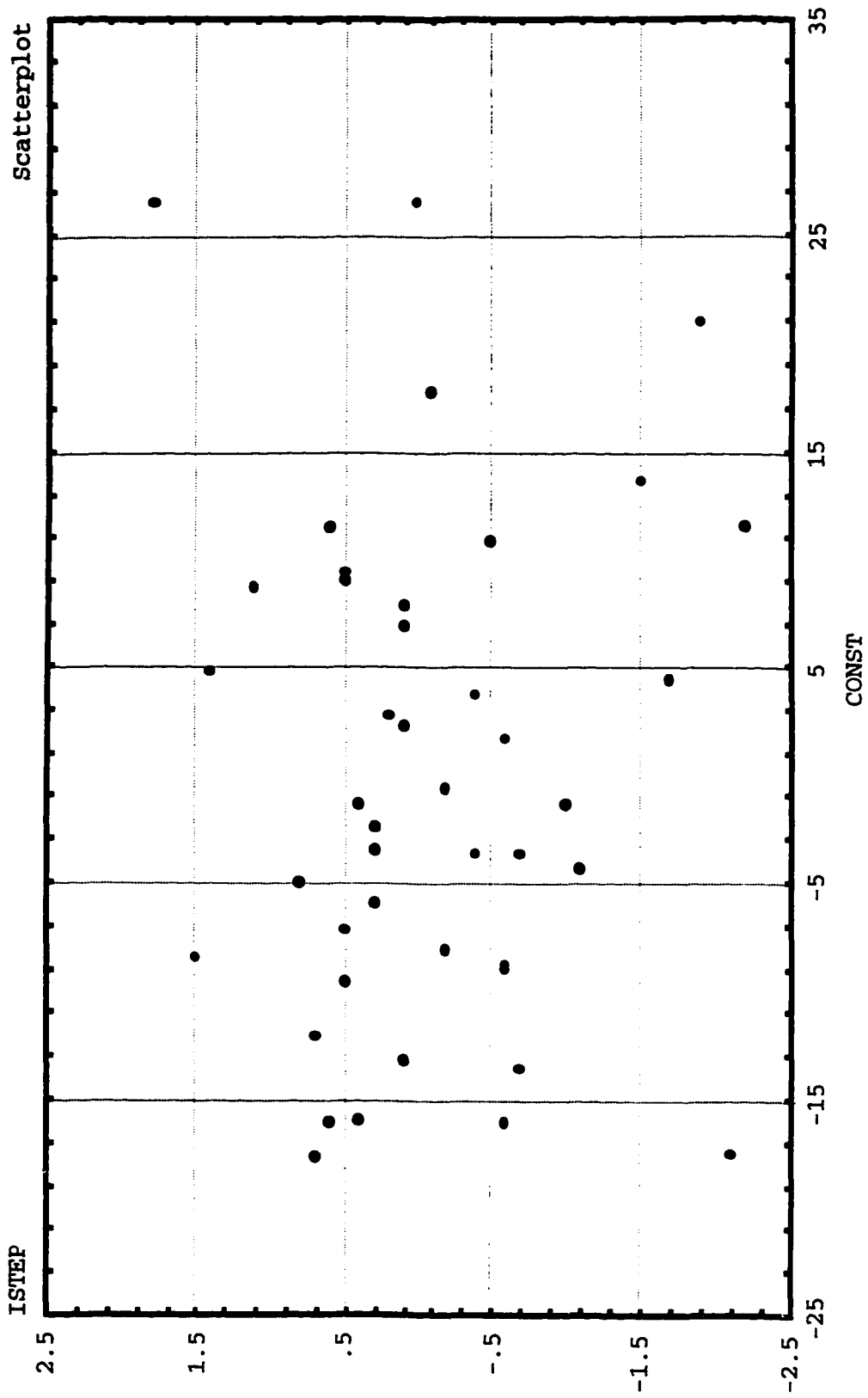


Chart 8: ISTEP x Consistency Scatterplot

Hypothesis 5. There is no statistically significant difference in mean ISTEP scores among schools grouped according to their principals' theoretical orientations (i.e., whole language, skills, phonics, eclectic) with regard to reading instruction.

Results. A one-way ANOVA was performed to determine whether significant differences existed among mean ISTEP reading comprehension scores of third-graders, grouped according to their principal's theoretical orientation to reading (i.e., phonics, skills, whole language, eclectic) as determined by each principal's TORP score. Results of this ANOVA, presented in Table 6 below, yielded no significant differences among group means. Thus, null hypothesis 5 is supported.

Table 6
One-Way Analysis of Variance

<u>Source</u>	<u>D.F.</u>	<u>Sums of Squares</u>	<u>Mean Square</u>	<u>F Ratio</u>	<u>F Prob.</u>
Between	2	4.2611	2.1306	2.7143	.0785
<u>Groups</u>					
Within	40	31.3975	.7849		
<u>Groups</u>					
Total	42	35.6586			

Table 7, below, includes ISTEP minimum, maximum, mean scores and standard deviations for each group of principals, as categorized by their TORP theoretical orientation to reading category.

Table 7

ISTEP Mean Scores x TORP Orientation of Principal

<u>TORP</u> <u>Group</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>ISTEP</u> <u>Min</u>	<u>ISTEP</u> <u>Max</u>	<u>ISTEP</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard</u> <u>Deviation</u>	<u>Standard</u> <u>Error</u>
Phonics	2	0.7	1.5	1.100	0.5657	0.4000
Skills	23	-2.2	1.8	0.0174	0.9079	0.1893
Eclectic	18	-2.1	1.1	-0.3444	0.8726	0.2057
Whole Language	0	0.0	0.0	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Total	43	-2.2	1.8	-0.0837	0.9214	0.1405

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This chapter will provide a discussion of the results found in Chapter 4. Included will be a summary of the major findings and conclusions drawn from those findings of the study, which will be described after each hypothesis. Also, the educational implications will be provided. A caution as to the limitations of the interpretation of the results of this study will be examined. The chapter will conclude with a list of recommendations for further research.

Summary and Discussion

Null Hypothesis 1. There is no statistically significant relationship between beliefs and actions of school principals with regard to reading instruction in their schools.

This hypothesis was rejected meaning that the more a principal believed in a particular theoretical orientation to reading, the more closely his or her reported actions matched that belief.

As revealed by the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) (DeFord, 1985; Appendix A) and the Principal Actions Questionnaire (Appendix B), most principals in this study seemed to be skills-oriented or eclectic in their beliefs about teaching reading. Other studies have found

that most reading instruction is skills-oriented (i.e. Barry, 1992). Principals' beliefs seem to influence their actions toward the teaching of reading within their school buildings. Principals who have skills or phonics theoretical orientations to reading tend to have third-graders in their schools who perform better on the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) than the third-graders in the principals' schools who have eclectic theoretical orientations to the teaching of reading.

Within the domains of phonics and eclectic theoretical orientations to reading, principals scored significantly different on these two beliefs. Interestingly, no principal scored within the range identified as whole language on either the TORP or the Principal Actions Questionnaire. It could very well be that eclectic scores or higher scores, on either the TORP and the Principal Actions Questionnaire, indicate a principal who may be inconsistent in beliefs and actions, one who has no firm grasp of theory or reading instruction and, therefore, is a weak instructional leader in reading.

Null Hypothesis 2. There is no statistically significant relationship between principals' beliefs about the teaching of reading and the students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP.

This hypothesis was rejected meaning that there is a correlation between the principals' beliefs about the teaching of reading and the students' reading comprehension scores as measured by the ISTEP for the third grade.

Principals can be highly visible and influential

individuals in their schools (Conway, 1986). Therefore, principals can influence the theoretical orientations and subsequent actions (with regard to reading) of teachers in their schools.

In this hypothesis, a significant negative correlation revealed that the lower the scores on the TORP (indicating a phonics or skills theoretical orientations to reading), the higher the ISTEP scores for third-graders on the reading achievement section. However, further investigation revealed that the major contributor to this negative relationship may have been the group of principals with an eclectic theoretical orientation to reading. That is, when TORP and ISTEP scores were correlated for principals subgroups separately (i.e., for the skills-oriented, and eclectic-oriented subgroups), both obtained coefficients were negative, but only the eclectic-oriented group's obtained r was statistically significant ($r = -.5409$, $p < .02$). This might lead principals to possibly reconsider having an eclectic orientation to reading, if a primary objective is to do well on the ISTEP.

Although the teachers' actions were not investigated in this study, it can be surmised that teachers may be influenced by the beliefs of the principals in order for students to be affected by the principals' beliefs. Teachers may teach according to their principals' theoretical orientations to reading because they are evaluated, hired, and/or retained by the principal.

Null Hypothesis 3. There is no statistically significant relationship between principals' actions with regard to

reading instruction in their schools and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP.

This hypothesis was rejected meaning that there is significant correlation between principals' actions with regard to reading instruction in their schools and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP for the third grade.

McMahon-Dumas (1981) found that the more consistent a principal was in his or her beliefs, the more the students' reading scores improved. In their study, the higher the principals scored towards skills actions with regard to reading instruction in their schools, the higher the corresponding ISTEP scores. One explanation of this could be that the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress reading achievement section is primarily skills-based. However, further investigation revealed that the major contributor to the obtained negative correlation may have been the group of principals with an eclectic theoretical orientation to reading. That is, when Principal Actions Questionnaire and ISTEP scores were correlated for principals subgroups separately, the skill-oriented subgroup's obtained coefficient was positive, but of very low magnitude ($r = .0172$, $p < .938$), but the eclectic-oriented subgroup's obtained coefficient was both negative and strong ($r = -.7082$, $p < .001$). This unusually strong, negative correlation clearly indicates that within the subgroup of principals who hold an eclectic theoretical orientation to reading, the stronger their beliefs in eclecticness, the lower their school's third grade reading comprehension ISTEP score.

Null Hypothesis 4. There is no statistically significant relationship between the consistency of principals' beliefs and actions with regard to reading instruction and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP.

This hypothesis was retained meaning that there is no correlation between the principals' beliefs and actions with regard to reading instruction and students' reading skills achievement as measured by the ISTEP for the third grade.

It doesn't seem to matter whether a principal is consistent between his or her theoretical orientation to reading and the subsequent actions in relation to the third grade achievement scores on the ISTEP. However, the behavior of the principal may be related to the educational change within his or her particular school as voiced by Binkley (1989), Budan (1992), and Fishman (1986).

Null Hypothesis 5. There is no statistically significant difference in the ISTEP scores that can be attributed to the four principal theoretical orientations (whole language, skills, phonics, eclectic) with regard to reading instruction.

This hypothesis was retained meaning that no differences were found in the overall TORP and ISTEP scores. However, a Duncan post hoc analysis was conducted and found significant differences between phonics and eclectic theoretical orientations to reading.

In this case, the schools whose principals had a phonics theoretical orientation to reading had an average ISTEP score 1.100 standard deviations above the predicted scores for their schools; whereas, those whose principals had an

eclectic theoretical orientation to reading had an average ISTEP score of 0.34445 standard deviations below their predicted ISTEP score.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that most principals, even though they range from phonics to eclectic in their TORP orientations, seem to fall into the category of skills. Whole language advocates place more emphasis on meaning than upon components of the language. This makes sense because whole language advocates have said that most achievement tests are skills-based and, therefore, the results in students' reading achievement cannot be addressed in such skills-laden tests as the ISTEP.

Principals may orchestrate their reading program according to what is tested on the ISTEP. They seem willing to alter their theoretical orientation to reading to increase the achievement of the students in their schools (Gettys, 1990). In this study, most principals were skills-oriented; they matched their actions and beliefs; and they were obviously concerned about reading achievement. Thus, one could conclude they become skills-oriented to meet the expectations of the achievement test. They may use the catch phrases of lots of different orientations, but when it comes down to it, they are still skills-based. In the final analysis, in many instances, they may believe in teaching for the test.

It may be that principals with eclectic orientations want their schools to appear to be on the "cutting edge" of the

educational pendulum, when in reality they are not. This seems evident when reviewing the results from the Principal Actions Questionnaire because although most principals scored within the skills category, 47 percent marked their schools as whole language (see Appendix B). This parallels to the research by textbook companies (i.e. Silver Burdett & Ginn, 1995) in that those companies tend to incorporate many philosophies in order to appeal to the wide range of textbook consumers. Additionally, Levande (1988) and McKinney (1992) found that teachers also reported themselves to be of a different orientation (whole language) than the one they actually practiced (skills) in the classroom.

The principal, being consistent in his or her beliefs and actions, may not be a primary factor in the actual classroom teaching of reading in his or her school. Even though he or she is the instructional leader, this consistency between beliefs and actions of the principal did not seem to have an effect on the ISTEP scores in this study. One could conclude that other factors such as the teacher might have the actual control over the ISTEP variable.

The prior assumption of this researcher was that there would be a significant difference between those who believe in the phonics approach and those who believe in the whole language approach. Because there were no principals who scored in the category of whole language, it was not possible to compare the group of principals who had a whole language approach to the teaching of reading with principals in the other three categories (phonics, skills, and eclectic).

Implications

Many studies have highlighted the effects of teachers' theoretical orientation to reading (i.e. Button, 1992; McKinney, 1992; Wham, 1991; Gettys, 1990; Loven, 1990; Ord, 1990; Cahill, 1990; Burk, 1989; Levande, 1988; Vadella, 1988; Aimers, 1986; Vigil, 1986; Conway, 1986; Cavuto, 1992; Martoncik, 1982). Having found no studies highlighting the principals' theoretical orientation to reading, this study provides an initial foundation for this neglected area in the research literature. Also, this study further focused attention upon principals' actions with regards to reading instruction.

It has not been established in the literature that principals do have definite theoretical orientations to reading, however since most have been classroom teachers one can assume that they hold definite beliefs about the teaching of reading and that they attempt to carry them out into the school setting. This study reveals that the transfer of principals' ideas into the school setting does not necessarily occur. Given phonics, skills, or eclectic theoretical orientations to reading (according to the TORP scores), the more skills-based the principal, the more apt his or her third-graders are likely to do better on the reading achievement test, which is based highly upon skills.

If the primary instructional goal is to have better scores on the ISTEP, then it might be important to adopt a skills theoretical orientation to reading which tends to develop success in mastering isolated parts of language. Perhaps, since there were no principals in this study who

held a whole language theoretical orientation to reading, it is not possible to determine the consistency of whole language and ISTEP, however it is likely the successes of whole language are not presently being measured by the ISTEP. Consequently, whole language principals and teachers should not be surprised by lower-than-expected ISTEP scores. One of the reasons, in addition to the emphasis on isolated skills, that might cause standardized tests not to measure whole language methodologies might be that, as noted by Savage (1994), many whole language teachers choose to spend classroom time on thematic units and perhaps less time on isolated skills. Also, much of the recommended assessment strategies deal with portfolios (Valencia, 1990), kidwatching (Goodman, 1978), checklists, (Goodman & Goodman, 1992) and interviews (Tucker & White, 1992). Thus, the diversity of experiences in the whole language classroom might be greater than in others.

The consistency between principals' TORP and Principal Actions Questionnaire scores is not significantly related to the third-grade students' reading comprehension scores on the ISTEP. In reviewing the TORP/ISTEP correlation and the PAQ/ISTEP correlation for the eclectic-oriented subgroup of principals, clear evidence was found that within this subgroup, both strong eclectic beliefs and strong eclectic (reported) actions were significantly related to lower ISTEP reading comprehension scores for third graders. Thus, lower reading scores in schools where principals have an eclectic orientation may mean that a scattershot approach to reading programs (eclectic) with a grab-bag of strategies is not as

effective as an approach based on a particular orientation, such as phonics, skills, or whole language, which would bring with it a specific set of strategies based on that orientation.

Finally, although the consistency between principals' beliefs and actions was not found to be significantly related to reading comprehension achievement in this study, those two factors, individually, are important to the reading program of a school. As evidenced by the literature review, a reading leader in the schools is vital (Bauer, 1993; Hackett, 1993; Reitzug, 1988).

Limitations

This interpretation of the results of this study are limited in some very important ways. The sample size was relatively small compared to the number of principals in the entire population of principals. Generalizability and transference from one state to another or from different parts of the country to another is limited because they each have different educational standards and expectations. Binkley (1989), Haggard (1981), and Nufrio (1987) all concluded that the role of the principal varies across school districts. Thus, the ability to translate from one school district to another is limited.

Another important limitation is the observation that the principals who didn't respond to the questionnaires probably could have expanded the knowledge gained from this study. Thus, in this light, the sample is stratified. The assumption is that the principals did not answer in a

socially-pleasing fashion, and that they kept in mind the fact that their responses to the questionnaires were kept confidential. However, these assumptions cannot be verified.

This study is also limited by the fact that it was completed in the Summer of 1996 and, therefore, the conclusions and implications are limited to that time-frame only. Gibbs (1996) further stated that the principal's role is constantly changing and, therefore, the time-frame in which the study was conducted is a limitation of its own. Since the majority of the principals were engaged in end-of-year activities, the validity of their answers could be questioned because of a possible lack of priority they could have placed upon the completion of the questionnaires.

The principals used in the study were elementary school principals. No effort was made to ascertain their length of service as either teachers or principals. Several factors that could limit the results of the study included: (a) size of individual schools; (b) school personnel and characteristics of the study body; (c) grade levels contained in the school; and, (d) age and gender of the principal. Many of these factors could be important, as evidenced by Stepniewska (1992), who found that principal leadership style affected the reading proficiency scores of suburban schools, but did not affect urban schools.

Recommendations

This study investigated the relationship between principals' theoretical orientation to reading and reading achievement of third-graders in their schools on the Indiana

Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP). As a result of the findings of this study, several recommendations are offered as future research questions. Additionally, testing methods need to be developed to more aptly assess the learners from a whole language perspective.

1. Do we believe that actual classroom teaching should mirror theoretical orientation to reading instruction?
2. In order to provide continuity of the curriculum, is it important to have people with similar theoretical orientations to reading within the same school setting?
3. What is the importance of matching the teachers' theoretical orientations with the principals' theoretical orientations toward reading?
4. What is the basis for the formation of a principal's theoretical orientation to reading?
5. If teachers' theoretical orientations differ from the principal's, do they feel empowered to act upon their own orientations to the teaching of reading?
6. What is the relationship of student reading achievement (at other grade levels) to each theoretical orientation to reading?
7. Is it important to better understand the eclectic orientation to reading through further study?

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
THE DEFORD THEORETICAL ORIENTATION TO READING PROFILE (TORP)

The DeFord Theoretical Orientation To Reading Profile (TORP)

Name _____

Directions: Read the following statements, and circle one of the responses that will indicate the relationship of the statement to your feelings about reading and reading instruction.

SA 2 3 4 SD

(select one best answer that reflects the strength of agreement or disagreement).

1. A child needs to be able to verbalize the rules of phonics in order to assure proficiency in processing new words. SA 2 3 4 SD

2. An increase in reading errors is usually related to a decrease in comprehension. SA 2 3 4 SD

3. Dividing words into syllables according to rules is a helpful instructional practice for reading new words. SA 2 3 4 SD

4. Fluency and expression are necessary components of reading that indicate good comprehension. SA 2 3 4 SD

5. Materials for early reading should be written in natural language without concern for short, simple words and sentences. SA 2 3 4 SD

6. When children do not know a word, they should be instructed to sound out its parts. SA 2 3 4 SD

7. It is a good practice to allow children to edit what is written into their own dialect when learning to read. SA 2 3 4 SD

8. The use of a glossary or dictionary is necessary in determining the meaning and pronunciation of new words. SA 2 3 4 SD

9. Reversals (e.g. saying "saw" for "was") are significant problems in the teaching of reading. SA 2 3 4 SD

10. It is a good practice to correct a child as soon as an oral reading mistake is made. SA 2 3 4 SD

11. It is important for a word to be repeated a number of times after it has been introduced to insure that it will become a part of sight vocabulary. SA 2 3 4 SD

12. Paying close attention to punctuation marks is necessary to understanding story content. SA 2 3 4 SD

13. It is a sign of an ineffective reader when words and phrases are repeated. SA 2 3 4 SD

14. Being able to label words according to grammatical function (nouns, etc.) is useful in proficient reading. SA 2 3 4 SD

15. When coming to a word that's unknown, the reader should be encouraged to guess upon meaning and go on. SA 2 3 4 SD
16. Young readers need to be introduced to the root form of words (run, long) before they are asked to read inflected forms (running, longest). SA 2 3 4 SD
17. It is not necessary for a child to know the letters of the alphabet in order to learn to read. SA 2 3 4 SD
18. Flashcard drills with sightwords is an unnecessary form of practice in reading instruction. SA 2 3 4 SD
19. Ability to use accent patterns in multisyllable words (pho ' to graph, pho to'graphy, and pho to gra'phic) should be developed as part of reading instruction. SA 2 3 4 SD
20. Controlling text through consistent spelling patterns (The fat cat ran back. The fat cat sat on a hat) is a means by which children can best learn to read. SA 2 3 4 SD
21. Formal instruction in reading is necessary to insure the adequate development of all the skills used in reading. SA 2 3 4 SD
22. Phonic analysis is the most important form of analysis used when meeting new words. SA 2 3 4 SD
23. Children's initial encounters with print should focus on meaning, not upon exact graphic representation. SA 2 3 4 SD
24. Word shapes (word configuration) should be taught in reading to aid in word recognition. SA 2 3 4 SD
25. It is important to teach skills in relation to other skills. SA 2 3 4 SD
26. If a child says "house" for the written word "home", the response should be left uncorrected. SA 2 3 4 SD
27. It is not necessary to introduce new words before they appear in the reading text. SA 2 3 4 SD
28. Some problems in reading are caused by readers dropping the inflectional endings from words (e.g. , jumps, jumped). SA 2 3 4 SD

TORP Scoring Method

1. If 1 or 2 is circled for # 1,2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 20, 21, or 22 give 1 pt. each.
Total = _____
2. If 1 or 2 is circled for # 4, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 19, 24, 25, or 28 give 3 pts. each.
Total = _____
3. If 1 or 2 is circled for # 5, 7, 15, 17, 18, 23, 26, or 27 give 5 pts. each.
Total = _____
4. If 4 Or 5 is circled for # 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 20, 21, or 22 give 5 pts. each.
Total = _____
5. If 4 or 5 is circled for # 4, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 19, 24, 25, or 28 give 3 pts. each.
Total = _____
6. If 4 or 5 is circled for # 5, 7, 15, 17, 18, 23, 26, or 27 give 1 pt. each.
Total = _____
7. For any 3 which is circled give 3 pts. each.
Total = _____

TOTAL SCORE _____

APPENDIX B
PRINCIPAL ACTIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

Principal Actions Questionnaire

Directions: Circle the response which best indicates your actions in the area of reading.

Often Sometimes Don't Know Seldom Never

In the past 3 years, I have

- O So DK Se N 1. okayed a workshop on thematic teaching for my teachers.
- O So DK Se N 2. organized a reading seminar or workshop for teachers in my building on how to use the basal reader.
- O So DK Se N 3. encouraged my teachers to integrate subject areas like social studies with reading instruction.
- O So DK Se N 4. encouraged my teachers who have low student achievement in reading scores on ISTEP to concentrate on phonics.
- O So DK Se N 5. ordered workbooks or worksheet packets for our school reading program.
- O So DK Se N 6. suggested that teachers use predictable books with struggling readers.
- O So DK Se N 7. encouraged my instructional assistants to use phonics materials and worksheets with remedial students.
- O So DK Se N 8. suggested that teachers use predictable books with struggling readers.
- O So DK Se N 9. considered or have purchased "Hooked on Phonics" or similar programs for my school.
- O So DK Se N 10. purchased computer software for vocabulary and skill development in reading.
- O Se DK Se N 11. regularly encouraged my kindergarten teachers to use "the letter people" or a letter-a-week program.

Q Se DK Se N 12. allocated a large portion of my budget to buy "trade books" for the school library.

Q Se DK Se N 13. purchased SRA kits, or similar programmed comprehension packets for my school.

Q Se DK Se N 14. personally helped a child with his/her reading by helping the child with letter/sound relationships.

Q Se DK Se N 15. encouraged the use of or ordered basal readers for my school.

Choose one:

Generally, I would categorize my school K-2 reading program as:

_____ basal / workbook based.

_____ whole language / literature based.

_____ phonics based.

Questionnaire Scoring Method

1. If **often** or **sometimes** for # 4, 7, 9, 11, or 14 is circled give 1 pt. each.
Total = _____
 2. If **often** or **sometimes** for # 2, 5, 10, 13, or 15 is circled give 3 pts. each.
Total = _____
 3. If **often** or **sometimes** for # 1, 3, 6, 8, or 12 is circled give 5 pts. each.
Total = _____
 4. If **seldom** or **never** for # 4, 7, 9, 11, or 14 is circled give 5 pts. each.
Total = _____
 5. If **seldom** or **never** for # 2, 5, 10, 13, or 15 is circled give 3 pts. each.
Total = _____
 6. If **seldom** or **never** for # 1, 3, 6, 8, or 12 is circled give 1 pt. each.
Total = _____
 7. For any **don't know** which is circled give 3 pts. each.
Total = _____
- TOTAL SCORE = _____**

APPENDIX C
PRINCIPAL LETTER OF EXPLANATION OF THE STUDY