The Impact of Using a Proficiency Test as a Placement Tool: The case of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC)
RÉSUMÉ

Une des préoccupations du domaine de l’évaluation est celle de la validation des tests puisque les tests sont conçus pour un usage particulier. Les tests sont aussi évalués pour s’assurer qu’ils mesurent ce qu’ils prétendent mesurer, que les scores obtenus sont valides et qu’aucun de ces deux aspects n’a d’impact négatif sur les parties prenantes (Bachman 2005). Dans la présente étude, la validation visait à cerner l’impact de l’utilisation d’un test à des fins pour lesquelles il n’avait pas été conçu à l’origine. En particulier, la question de recherche visait à vérifier si l’utilisation d’un test de compétence standardisé, Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), comme outil de classement avait un impact, tel que défini comme une des six qualités à l’intérieur du modèle de l’utilité des tests de Bachman et Palmer (1996). À la phase I de cette étude séquentielle évaluative de type mixte, 15 enseignants (dont un conseiller pédagogique) et 677 étudiants ont répondu à un questionnaire au sujet de leur expérience avec le TOEIC. Premièrement, les résultats ont montré que les 126 étudiants jugés mal classés différaient sensiblement des 551 qui avaient été jugés correctement classés, en fonction des aspects suivants: expérience avec l’anglais au niveau collégial, âge, première et deuxième langue. Le facteur « expérience avec l’anglais au niveau collégial » a donné lieu à la plus forte corrélation. Deuxièmement, les enseignants possédant une maîtrise ont eu significativement moins d’échecs dans leur classe que les enseignants détenant un baccalauréat. Pour donner suite aux résultats indiquant que l’impact est présent sous la forme de mauvais classements d’étudiants, les entrevues de la phase II ont été centrées sur les expériences vécues en lien avec ce mauvais classement. Cinq enseignants, certains détenteurs d’une maîtrise et d’autres possédant un baccalauréat et 13 étudiants, mal classés (8) ou correctement classés (5), ont indiqué que, selon eux, ce serait l’effet d’évaluer les compétences productives avec les compétences réceptives qui serait à l’origine des scores erronés produits par le TOEIC et qui donnerait lieu au mauvais classement. Trois conséquences en découleraient: la réaction du professeur et celle de l’étudiant au mauvais classement et la suggestion de changement de niveau de cours, le désir de l’étudiant de travailler, et la décision du professeur d’accorder à l’étudiant une note de passage. Des preuves indiquent que l’utilisation d’un test de compétence standardisé comme outil de classement produit le mauvais classement observé chez certains groupes d’étudiants, mais l’impact touche également toutes les parties prenantes.
ABSTRACT

The field of testing is concerned with the validation of tests, for tests are designed for a particular use. Tests are also evaluated to ascertain that they measure what they purport to measure, the test scores are valid, and neither of these two aspects create negative impact on the stakeholders (Bachman, 2005). In this study, test use validation focused on the impact (area, extent and direction) of using a test for a purpose which it was not originally designed. In particular, the research questions asked if a standardized proficiency test, TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication), when used for placement purposes, had impact, defined as being one of the six qualities within the model of Test Usefulness (Bachman and Palmer, 1996). In Phase I of this sequential mixed methods evaluative study, 15 teachers (including the pedagogical advisor), and 677 North American university students who were studying English as a second language answered questionnaires about their experiences related to the taking of the TOEIC. Inferential results showed that the group of misplaced student participants, 126, differed significantly from the correctly placed, 551, on the following aspects: college English experience; age; and first and second languages with the factor of college English experience being most strongly correlated to misplacement. These differences were found to relate to the TOEIC and its practice of predicting productive skill ability from formally measured receptive skill ability. Secondly, teachers who held Master’s degrees had significantly less student failures in their classrooms than teachers with Bachelor’s degrees did. In response to the study’s finding that impact exists in the form of student misplacement, in Phase II, teacher and student interviews focused on experiences related to misplacement. Five teachers, who held a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree and 13 students, 8 misplaced and 5 correctly placed, supported Phase 1 findings. The practice of predicting productive ability from receptive ability resulted in misplacement for certain groups of students. In turn, this misplacement resulted in three consequences for stakeholders involving: the face validity of the TOEIC in regards to making course level changes; the misplaced students’ willingness to work; and the teacher’s decision of granting passing grades to the misplaced. There is evidence in this study that when a proficiency test is used for placement purposes, misplacement occurs on identifiable groups of students and impacts all stakeholders.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

And looking down over the whole mountain in the softening air to the valley beneath, it was as when the last load of wood had left the log road for the smooth fields and you looked back and saw the stumps where the chain had caught, and the rock that had smashed the runner the noon when the going was best, and the place where the skid had broken and upset the sled...but this was the last load. There was nothing left on the road to go back for now. The sweating and straining and fearful caution as you eased the patched-up runner over the cradle hills, and the sharp watch on the sun that threatened to take all the snow, were all of yesterday: made now a comradely kind of song (Buckler, 1952: 299).

First and foremost, I would like to express gratitude to my director Zita De Koninck. Our fifteen year relationship has not only produced this Doctorate, but also a Master’s, neither of which would have been possible without the long hours of patience, guidance and importance that you have given freely to both me and my work. I sincerely thank you.

To Janna Fox, the co-director of this thesis, I am grateful that you agreed to become part of the project. I appreciate the enthusiasm you brought and the time you devoted. Most of all, I wish to thank you for sharing your expertise and interest in the area of testing with me.

To the committee members, Doctors Robert Edwards, Diane Huot, and Pierre Valois, I would like to thank you for giving your time and knowledge for your comments have helped me to produce a better piece of work.

I thank all those language school teachers and students who participated at different phases of the study. I want to especially mention Rachel Vogel, Sheila Hadvick, Sylvie Frégeau, Vern Demelt, Dave Zinck, Fez Amin-Lari, Steve Nelson, and Terrence Keller. To Marc Lafontaine, I recognize and appreciate your expertise and advice at various stages of the study.

Last, but certainly not the least, I thank my family. First, thank you to my parents who allowed me to believe I could do anything that I wanted. To Kate and Tom, I am grateful for the endless patience over the years. Finally, David, I thank you for the ability to see alternatives, a giving and generous nature and tireless interest, but most of all, the endless love, encouragement and support.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 17

CHAPTER I IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 Evaluation and Test Design ......................................................................................... 22
1.2 Placement Tests at the Language School (LS) ........................................................... 23
   1.2.1 In-house Placement Test .................................................................................... 23
   1.2.2 History of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) ....... 26
   1.2.3 The Context of the Study – Language School (LS) ........................................... 27
      1.2.3.1 Organization of Language School ................................................................. 28
1.3 An Examination of the TOEIC’s Validity ................................................................. 29
   1.3.1 Description of Test Sections .............................................................................. 29
   1.3.2 ETS Claims of the TOEIC’s Validity ................................................................. 31
   1.3.3 Test Interpretations of the Validity of the TOEIC ............................................ 32
   1.3.4 The Validity of the Test Use of the TOEIC ....................................................... 34
1.4 Impact of the TOEIC .................................................................................................. 35
1.5 Research Problem and Questions ............................................................................... 38

CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Reliability and Validity: A Historical Background ..................................................... 39
   2.1.1 A Discussion of the Concept of Reliability ....................................................... 39
   2.1.2 A Discussion of the Concept of Validity ........................................................... 42
2.2 The Progressive Matrix .............................................................................................. 43
2.3 The Model of Test Usefulness .................................................................................... 47

CHAPTER III REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

3.1 Evaluating a Placement Test ....................................................................................... 51
3.2 An English Language Placement Test: Issues in Reliability and Validity ................. 55
3.3 The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC):
    Necessity, Proficiency Levels, Test Score Utilizations and Accuracy ...................... 57
3.4 Correlations between Active Skill and Passive Skill Test Scores ............................ 59
3.5 The Unified Validity of the Four Skills Exam: Applying Messick’s
    Framework .................................................................................................................... 63
3.6 Test Decisions over Time: Tracking Validity Impact ................................................ 67
3.7 Conclusions ............................................................................................................... 71
CHAPTER IV METHODOLOGY

4.1 The History of Mixed Models .................................................. 74
4.2 The Research Design .............................................................. 78
  4.2.1 Participants .......................................................................... 79
    4.2.1.1 Students ..................................................................... 79
    4.2.1.2 Teachers .................................................................... 81
    4.2.1.3 Pedagogical Advisor ................................................... 81
4.3 Instruments of Phase I Quantitative Data Collection .................. 82
  4.3.1 Choice of Instruments ......................................................... 83
  4.3.2 Questionnaire Design ......................................................... 85
  4.3.3 Description and Rationale of Questions in Teacher Questionnaire.. 86
    4.3.3.1 Teacher Questionnaire Questions 1-6 .......................... 87
    4.3.3.2 Teacher Questionnaire Questions 7-16 ......................... 89
    4.3.3.3 Teacher Questionnaire Questions 17-26 ....................... 91
    4.3.3.4 Teacher Questionnaire Questions 27-32 ....................... 94
  4.3.4 Verification of Teacher Questionnaire .................................. 96
  4.3.5 Description and Rationale of Questions in Student Questionnaire.. 98
    4.3.5.1 Student Questionnaire Questions 1-13 ......................... 98
    4.3.5.2 Student Questionnaire Questions 14-21 ...................... 101
    4.3.5.3 Student Questionnaire Questions 22-26 ...................... 103
    4.3.5.4 Student Questionnaire Questions 27-36 ...................... 104
    4.3.5.5 Student Questionnaire Questions 37-38 ...................... 107
  4.3.6 Verification of Student Questionnaire .................................. 108
  4.3.7 Approbation of Written Communication for Participants ........ 110
  4.3.8 Pilot Test of Student Questionnaire Procedures .................... 111
4.4 Procedures of Phase I Quantitative Data Collection .................. 113
  4.4.1 Procedures for Distributing Teacher Questionnaires ............... 113
  4.4.2 Procedures for Distributing Student Questionnaire ............... 114
  4.4.3 Teacher Questionnaire Data Transcription .......................... 115
  4.4.4 Inter-rater Verification of Teacher Questionnaire Questions 25 and 26.. 117
  4.4.5 Student Questionnaire Data Transcription .......................... 118
  4.4.6 Inter-rater Verification of Student Questionnaire Questions 37 and 38.. 120
4.5 Announcement of Instruments for Phase II Qualitative Data Collection ............................................. 121

CHAPTER V ANALYSIS OF DATA AND RESULTS OF PHASE I QUANTITATIVE DATA

5.1 Descriptive Data Analysis of Teacher Questionnaires ................. 122
  5.1.1 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question1 ........... 123
  5.1.2 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 2-4 ....... 124
  5.1.3 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 5-6 ....... 125
  5.1.4 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 7-10 ...... 126
  5.1.5 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 11-16 ...... 128
5.11 Results and Interpretation of the Descriptive Data Analysis of Student Interviews

5.11.1 Results and Interpretation for Topic One - Demographic Information of Student Interviewees

5.11.2 Results and Interpretation for Topic Two – Student Comments about Experience with the TOEIC

5.11.2.1 Student Reaction to the TOEIC Scores

5.11.3 Results and Interpretation for Topic Three – Student Comments about Refusal to Move

5.11.4 Results and Interpretation for Topic Four – Student Comments of Abilities in Skill Areas

5.11.5 Results and Interpretation for Topic Five - Student’s Willingness to Work and Refusal to Drop the Course

5.11.6 Results and Interpretation for Topic Six - Student Comments on the Granting of Passing Grades

5.11.7 Results and Interpretation for Topic Seven - Student Description of Misplacement

5.11.8 Results and Interpretation for Topic Eight – Student Suggested Solutions to Misplacement

5.11.9 Results and Interpretation for Topic Nine - Students’ Final Comments

5.11.10 Interpretation of the Major Findings from Student Interviews

5.12 Major Findings for Teachers and Students from Questionnaire and Interview Phases

5.12.1 Major Findings for Teachers from Questionnaires and Interviews

5.12.2 Major Findings for Students from Questionnaires and Interviews

5.12.3 Major Findings Related to the Impact of the TOEIC on Teachers and Students

CHAPTER VI DISCUSSION

6.1 Evidence of the Existence of the Six Qualities of Test Usefulness

6.1.1 The Test Usefulness Quality of Reliability

6.1.2 The Test Usefulness Quality of Construct Validity

6.1.3 The Test Usefulness Quality of Authenticity and Interactiveness

6.1.4 The Test Usefulness Quality of Practicality

6.1.5 The Test Usefulness Quality Impact

6.2 The Consequences of Misplacement for Teachers and Students

6.2.1 Student Reaction to Being Identified as Misplaced

6.2.2 The Willingness to Work of the Misplaced Student

6.2.3 Teacher Decision about the Pass or Fail Situation of the Misplaced Student

6.2.4 Conclusions of the Discussion
6.3 Recommendations for Future Research ................................................. 311
6.4 The Limitations of the Study ................................................................. 311
CONCLUSION .................................................................................................... 314
REFERENCES .................................................................................................... 317
TABLES

Table I
Facets of Validity as a Progressive Matrix (Messick, 1989: 20) 44

Table II
Number of Teacher Suggested Student Moves and Actual Student Moves to Higher or Lower Course Levels 129

Table III
According to Teachers, the Frequency that Certain Factors Influence Students to Not Change Course Level 131

Table IV
Frequency at which Misplaced Students at the Basic Level (Basic I and II) Need Extra Help in the Major Skill Areas According to Teachers 133

Table V
Frequency at which Misplaced Students at the Intermediate Level (Intermediate I and II) Need Extra Help in the Major Skill Areas According to Teachers 134

Table VI
Frequency at which Misplaced Students at the Advanced I Level (Advanced I and II) Need Extra Help in the Major Skill Areas According to Teachers 135

Table VII
Frequency at which Misplaced Students at the Advanced II Level (Advanced III and IV) Need Extra Help in the Major Skill Areas According to Teachers 136

Table VIII
Frequency of Factors Used by Teachers When Considering to Grant a Passing Grade to a Student Who Does Not Succeed in Obtaining a 60% in the Course 138

Table IX
Fisher’s Exact Test to Measure Relationships Between Variables and the Responses of the More and Less Experienced Teachers 145

Table X
Results of Cramer V to Test Strength of Association on Variables with Unbalanced Tables 148

Table XI
Effect of Educational Level and More or Less Teaching Experience on Number of Student Failures 151
Table XII
Poisson Regression for Variables of Education and Number of Student Failures 152

Table XIII
Number of Respondents Who Indicated The Extent that Certain Un-Listed Factors Bothered the Respondents during the Taking of TOEIC 166

Table XIV
Frequency (in Percentage) of Factors used by Misplaced Students in Deciding to not Change Course Level 172

Table XV
Percentage of Students Whose Initial Course Level Placement Is the Same as the Current Course Level 184

Table XVI
Chi-square to Measure Relationships Between the Responses of the Misplaced and Correctly Placed Students 187

Table XVII
Fisher's Exact Test to Measure Relationships Between Variables and the Responses of the Misplaced and Correctly Placed Students 189

Table XVIII
Results of Phi Coefficient to Test Strength of Association on Variables Chi-Square Found to be Significant with Balanced Tables 191

Table XIX
Results of Cramer V to Test Strength of Association on Variables with Unbalanced Tables 192

Table XX
Results of Means and Standard Deviation for Variables of Frequency of English Activities and Disturbances during TOEIC Testing 193

Table XXI
Results of the T-test for Differences between Misplaced and Correctly Placed Students on Variables of Frequency of English Activities and Disturbances during TOEIC Testing 194

Table XXII
Results of Odds Ratio Estimates for Three Significant Variables 195
Table XXIII
Description of Teacher Demographical Information 237

Table XXIV
Description of Student Demographical Information 256

Table IA
Elementary School English Second Language Classroom Evaluation 323

Table IIB
Secondary School English Second Language Classroom Evaluation 325

Table IIC
College Level English Second Language Classroom Evaluation 326
## APPENDIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>The Context of the Study</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Teacher Letter of Introduction for Questionnaire</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>Student Letter of Introduction for Questionnaire</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D</td>
<td>Direction Sheet for Teachers Regarding Student Questionnaire Completion</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E</td>
<td>Letter for Teacher Questionnaire Completion</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F</td>
<td>Teacher Questionnaire</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix G</td>
<td>Student Questionnaire</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix H</td>
<td>Introduction Letter for Interviews</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I</td>
<td>Recruitment Notice</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix J</td>
<td>Consent Form</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K
Teacher Interview Questions 372

Appendix L
Student Interview Questions 374
INTRODUCTION

For an English teacher in a language school within a North-American university, student placement tests are of prime interest, for failure to place students in the correct course level has negative results on the language classroom. The English division of Language School (LS) had used the same in-house placement test for sorting university level students into English courses for about ten years. There was only one version of the test, many of its copies were lost over the years and teachers complained of its lengthy and complicated administration. However, neither the placement test’s structure and content, nor the resulting decisions of the test, raised any debate. The impetus for a change in the choice of in-house placement test came when the student population at the language school grew very quickly, which in turn made test administration increasingly arduous; therefore, a new placement test was chosen. Following the adoption of a standardized proficiency test as a placement tool, teachers were no longer charged with placement test administration, but began to voice dissatisfaction with: 1) the fact that the test only measured two of the four language skills and 2) the business content of the new test. Both of these factors were raised as possible causes for the increased amount of student misplacement; therefore, the appropriateness or validity of the use of the new placement tool was questioned.

Test validity is one of the two areas on which researchers in the field of testing have traditionally focused (McNamara, 2000). “Validity refers to the degree to which evidence and theory supports the interpretations of test scores entailed by proposed uses of tests” (Standards, 1999: 9). In other words, validation concerns itself with the appropriateness of testing procedures, particularly a test’s design, but also the consequences of that use, intended or unintended, positive and negative, and the empirical evidence gathered to support interpretations (Wall and Alderson, 1993). Therefore, in questioning a test’s validity, the design of the test must reflect its purposes in the goal of supplying the information sought.

One of the most common types of tests is a placement test, which is most often used to identify the development of the abilities of the test takers. Ideally, the result of this type of
testing allows for a student to be placed into a language program with specific course levels or groups. A placement tool needs to distinguish what the learner already knows from what he does not know. The results allow the teacher in a program to determine the route to be taken in further learning. Another common test type is a proficiency test, which aids in screening and selecting and is a global measure of ability. Its strength is that it allows test-takers to be compared as their scores are spread out along a proficiency range (Henning, 1987). As part of job promotion or hiring practices, it is desirable that test scores are placed along a continuum, so that candidates can be easily compared. Each test type has its own specific design and purpose, which should not be overlooked or ignored, for one test cannot simply be exchanged for another. As Brown and Hudson (2002: 32) state:

Tests are effective, reliable, and valid for particular purposes with specific types of students who have a particular range of abilities. In other cases, tests, which are not fully evaluated for particular populations and settings, can possibly be considered ineffective, unreliable, invalid or all three.

Therefore, the practice of using a proficiency test for placement purposes raised questions about the consequences of such use.

It has been stated that test validation concerns the appropriateness of testing procedures, particularly a test’s design, but it is also concerned with the consequences of that use. The consequential aspect of validity (consequences of test use) or the impact of a test is evaluated considering the aspects of: unfairness in the test scoring and interpretation, test use, and positive or negative test effects on teaching and learning otherwise known as positive or negative washback (Messick, 1996). Negative washback of a test can be linked to construct under-representation, which describes a test that does not include all-important elements which results in tests scores that do not truly reflect competence. Another threat to test validity is construct-irrelevant variance, which occurs when a test includes elements that interfere with test-takers’ ability to demonstrate their competence (Messick, 1989). Negative washback not only threatens the validity of a test, but also raises questions about the impact of such score use on learners and teachers.
The fact that proficiency tests and placement tests have different designs, due to their different purposes, seemed to indicate that, in general, one test type could not be exchanged for another without consequence. In addition, the particular proficiency test used at the language school as a placement tool only formally evaluated two language skills, not four, and was specifically designed to be used in a business context. These two facts strengthened the argument against the use of the test at LS, which has Four Skill classrooms in an academic setting. Having made a case for the possible inappropriateness or invalidity of the use of a proficiency test as a placement tool at LS, the consequences of such use for both teachers and students was questioned. It was the consequences of the test’s use which this teacher, cum researcher, chose to examine. She inquired into the validity of using a standardized proficiency test as a placement tool by examining the impact, or negative washback, of such a practice on stakeholders, namely, teachers and students at LS.

This thesis is organized into seven chapters. The purpose of the first chapter is to situate the reader in the field of testing, particularly in the areas of test evaluation (test score and test use) and design. In general, tests are designed for particular contexts; therefore, the particular context of this study, and its in-house placement test, is explored. Tests are also designed for particular purposes; consequently, the validity of the use of the standardized proficiency Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) for placement purposes is examined. When the validity of a test score is deemed inappropriate for a particular context, questions as to the impact of the test are raised, which led this researcher to ask if a standardized proficiency test, in the context of Language School, can be used as a valid placement tool without having negative impact on stakeholders?

The second chapter is intended to present the theoretical framework on which the study relies. It begins with a historical overview of the use of the terms reliability and validity, from their origins in the domain of psychology to their applications in the field of second language acquisition. Secondly, validity, the still hotly debated concept, is explored historically through to the Progressive Matrix of Messick (1989). In the Matrix, validity has a number of facets all of which combine to make a unified framework. The Progressive
Matrix discusses validity in general terms, but the Model of Test Usefulness by Bachman and Palmer (1996) considers validity as it pertains to second language situations in particular. An essential element of both the Matrix and the Model of Test Usefulness is the general concept of impact, which is defined by Messick (1989) as the social consequence of tests. Bachman and Palmer (1996) include the specific term washback, which is the effect of testing (whether negative or positive) on teaching and learning, as part of their description of the term impact. Both of these terms, impact and washback, are discussed in depth.

The third chapter summarizes previous research related to the specific problem of evaluating the validity of proficiency and placement tests. Related research has included formal evaluations of in-house placement tests (Wall, Clapham and Alderson, 1994; Fulcher, 1997); validity studies related to a standardized proficiency test (Moritoshi, 2001; Hirai, 2002); and two studies which focused on test impact (Guerrero, 2000; Fox, 2004). This review of the literature highlights the fact that no studies investigating the consequences of the use of the TOEIC as a placement tool within this particular context were found.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to giving a precise description of the methodology of the study. First, the historical aspects of the chosen research design are outlined and the participants, who include students, teachers, and the pedagogical advisor of the language school, are described. This chapter then discusses the instruments and the procedures of the quantitative phase of the study, and briefly explains that the qualitative data in the second phase of the study is derived from the first phase. The rationales and descriptions for both teacher and student questionnaire design and the choice of topics are discussed in addition to the verification and piloting procedures of both questionnaires. Lastly, procedures related to questionnaire completion are described, namely data collection, transcription procedures and verification.

In the following chapter, the fifth, a presentation of the results of both phases of the study are carried out. The first section of the chapter focuses on Phase I of the study where the results of teacher and student data are descriptively and inferentially interpreted. Upon
completion of the presentation of Phase I, the second portion of the chapter is devoted to presenting the qualitative portion of the study. It offers the justification of the interview format as the choice of instrument, followed by a rationale and description of the choice of interview topics. All procedures related to interviews, and the data transcription process follow. The chapter then concludes with a focus on the major results and interpretations from each phase of the study.

In the sixth chapter is the discussion of major findings of the two phases of the study; first with reference to previous studies and second within the model of test usefulness which includes the concept of impact (Bachman and Palmer, 1996). The limitations of the study are outlined, and areas of future research are recommended. Finally, the pedagogical implications of the findings of the study are stated.

The conclusion of the thesis details the study.
CHAPTER I IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

In general, this study focuses on the validity of using a standardized proficiency test as a placement test through the examination of the impact or negative washback on the stakeholders: students and teachers in a particular university setting. The goal of this chapter is to situate this research in the domain of second language testing. First, the general concepts related to test design will be discussed. Second, the university’s previously used in-house placement test will be contrasted with the standardized proficiency test that is now being used. Third, the concept of validity in regards to the proficiency test will be discussed. Last, the research question of the study will be stated.

1.1 Evaluation and Test Design

Evaluation “is a systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of the curriculum and assess its effectiveness and efficiency” (Brown, 1989: 223). Evaluation can occur in many settings, in both informal and formal educational settings. In either case, the most common method of collecting information is through testing, which is defined as, “any procedure for measuring ability, knowledge or performance” (Johnson and Johnson, 1998: 291). There are different uses for tests, for example, to screen and select candidates, to place students at an appropriate course level, to evaluate a particular program, or to elicit attitudes toward an issue. There are also different types of tests, for example, proficiency, achievement, and placement; however, “for each test purpose there is an appropriate type of test and for each test type there is a particular test” (Henning, 1987: 33). Therefore, not every test can be used for every purpose.

For measuring second language ability, three specific types of tests are commonly used. First, there are proficiency tests which “access a learner’s level of language to some absolute scale or specifications of some job which has a language requirement” (Johnson and Johnson, 1998: 248). This means that the score on a test can be equated with a list of functional abilities, which fulfill specifications for a particular situation. A second type of
test is an achievement test which measures how successful a student is in a formal learning environment (Johnson and Johnson, 1998). This type of test corresponds directly with what is formally or explicitly taught in the classroom. Most learners are familiar with a test, which measures the amount of material, acquired in a particular educational situation. A third type of test is a placement test. It provides “information about students' ability which will assist their placement at suitable levels in a teaching program, i.e. in classes appropriate to their language ability” (Johnson and Johnson, 1998: 248). Placement test scores identify individuals with similar language abilities in order to allow for the sorting of these individuals into groups. This type of test is concerned with what knowledge or abilities a potential student has, or does not have, before formal instruction begins. These three types of tests are designed for particular purposes and supply particular types of linguistic information.

1.2 Placement Tests at the Language School (LS)

In order to situate this study in its particular context, LS, the first in-house placement test used in the 1980's and 1990's will be described, and its weaknesses commented on, followed by a description of the current placement tool.

1.2.1 In-house Placement Test

In order to place students in the appropriate course level, an evaluative test is given. Prior to 2001, students would take an in-house placement test whose score was equated with a particular performance level and an appropriate level of instruction. After speaking with two of the five original designers, it was revealed that this test was based on the textbook used at the language school in the 1980’s. The American Kernel series, conceived in the late 1970’s, is a grammar-based method that included readings, cassettes with listening and phonetics, along with writing and speaking suggestions. The five test designers were second language teachers without any specialized testing experience. They volunteered to create one version of a placement test that mirrored the textbook. The textbook series and consequently, the placement test focused on a structured grammar approach. This test was
not formally piloted, nor validated, but was utilised from the late 1980's until the early 2000's. It had 75 multiple-choice grammar questions and 25 cloze questions to total 100 points. Of the 75 questions, 25 required students to listen to a question or statement and then choose the correct response. The other fifty questions required students to read a question or statement and then choose the correct response. All questions focused on grammar.

The cloze section was composed of one text with twenty-five fill-in-the-blank items where no word choices were given. They also listened to 25 recorded questions whose answers were written. This section measured grammatical and lexical knowledge. The test did not contain a speaking or a writing section. A sample of the student's writing was collected from the first class of the course, but there were neither common criteria nor a measuring scale for this writing. During the first class, speaking activities were employed to help the teacher verify placement, but there were no common guidelines or correction tools. Each test score originally corresponded to one of four course levels (Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced and High Advanced) in the early 1990's. The same 100 point score on the placement test corresponded to courses Basic I and II, Intermediate I, and II, and Advanced I, II, III, and IV in the late 1990's.

The in-house placement test was replaced in 2001 by the institutional version of the standardized proficiency test the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication). One reason for the change was related to the fact that there was only one version of the former test and it was felt that the student body was too familiar with the content. Also, the increasing numbers of students, due to the introduction of second language requirements in various faculties within the university, demanded administrative efficiency. The in-house test was not efficient; it required all students to be tested in one of the three cassette laboratories with a fifty-seat maximum resulting in testing sessions, which continued for hours. The in-house test needed to be corrected by hand and finding staff to do the work was difficult. The increasingly large numbers of tests that had to be corrected in a short time also led correctors to make errors due to fatigue. Lastly, the inefficiency of the in-house test
slowed the creation of classes and the assigning of those classes to teachers. For all these reasons, an alternative to the in-house placement test was required.

Following the placement of students in classes, there were often difficulties for students and teachers. One difficulty was the number of students who were considered to be incorrectly evaluated and placed into classes where they were either too strong or too weak. These misplaced students appeared to arise as a result of the lack of formal testing of the two productive skills, for neither speaking nor writing was formally evaluated using a common set of guidelines. To overcome this situation, the classroom teacher would re-evaluate the student and try to identify any misplacement. Without guidelines for the task, or the correction, this evaluation process was haphazard. Usually the teachers asked the students to write a short composition on a topic of the teacher’s choice and the teacher would try to speak briefly to each individual. This writing and speaking sample was the re-evaluation tool from which the teacher would identify misplacement and suggest level changes. However, even when a student was found to lie outside of the normal ability for a particular level, a course level change was not always made. Many students did not change levels when it was suggested and many teachers opted to keep students because a new student often involves extra work to teachers. In either case, the result was a student who was identified as misplaced, due to stronger or weaker abilities in certain skill areas, but who remained in the course level.

The ever-growing number of students to be tested in a limited amount of time with minimal resources, in conjunction with the often inaccurate test scores from the in-house placement test (perhaps originating from a lack of evaluation of the productive skills) led to administration and teacher dissatisfaction with the test. Therefore, a standardized proficiency test replaced the in-house placement test of the language school.
1.2.2 History of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC)

An English language proficiency test to evaluate listening and reading skills was requested by the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry in the mid 1970's. (Gilfret, 1996) They took this demand to the Educational Testing Service (ETS), which is a large and well-known American educational measurement organization and the result was the creation of the TOEIC: “The TOEIC was designed to meet the need for a measure of English language skills outside of the traditional academic context” (Woodford, 1982: 64).

Over the last thirty years, the use of the TOEIC has shifted from Japanese corporations to a worldwide market, including North American universities. The institutional version of the TOEIC today “is a commercially available test of English listening comprehension and reading skills, to be taken by non-native speakers of English” (Nall, 2004: 1), for the purpose of measuring “the everyday English skills of people working in an international environment” (TOEIC Examinee Handbook, 2002: 1). In this capacity, TOEIC has been, and still is, very successful at helping corporations make significant personnel decisions. While maintaining their position as a corporate tool, TOEIC has also expanded their clientele to include language schools and universities. Corporations, who have recently begun requiring new employees to have a second language proficiency score, initiated this change, and universities and language schools have complied (Gilfert, 1996).

The institutional TOEIC is a norm-referenced English language proficiency test, with two hundred multiple-choice questions, which are divided equally between listening and reading comprehension sections. ETS states that no specialized business or technical vocabulary is needed prior to taking the test, only the basic knowledge of English used in everyday work activities. Questions are formed around such topics as: corporate development, dining out, entertainment, finance and budgeting, general business, health, housing/corporate property, manufacturing, offices, personnel, purchasing, technical areas and travel (TOEIC Examinee Handbook, 2002: 8). Clearly, the target clientele for the TOEIC is business people, as reflected in the topic choices.
One reason for the prolificacy of the TOEIC and similar standardized proficiency tests is their reliability. ETS publishes a very high reliability co-efficient for the TOEIC which guarantees that one test version will resemble another and both versions will give a similar test score to a test-taker. As well, reliability is increased by the computerized correction of test papers by TOEIC Services, sometimes within 2 hours. Another advantage for using the TOEIC is its practicality. Requiring only a room in which to play an audiocassette and a table on which to complete the computerized answer sheet, groups, rather than individuals, can be quickly evaluated. Thirdly, all test-takers are given scores on the same scale so comparisons between test takers and their test scores are easily carried out. For all these reasons, TOEIC is a very attractive option for measuring linguistic ability (Nall, 2003).

The TOEIC was designed to fulfill the specifications of a particular organization. ETS created the TOEIC to correspond to the reality of their target clientele, international business people who needed their linguistic proficiency measured for the purposes of employment or promotion. The research data used to support its reliability has been carried out when the TOEIC is used as a proficiency test, not as a placement test. Today however, the institutional version of TOEIC with the same business content is also advertised and sold to North American universities to measure second language English proficiency for placement purposes.

1.2.3 The Context of the Study – Language School (LS)

At LS, which is the context of the study, even with the changes in the bachelor’s degree programs in November 1998, and the introduction of the use of the TOEIC, there have been no major changes in the English as a second language course curriculum. Courses were and continue to be Four Skill in design for numerous reasons. First, this type of course mirrors the second language courses found in the province’s elementary and secondary schools and colleges (complete descriptions of these English second language classrooms are found in Appendix A); therefore, the format is familiar to students. Second, the university requires all bachelor’s degree level students to have a sufficient knowledge of English as a second language and ensures such knowledge with the use of departmental
language requirements. It is not clear, if the “sufficient knowledge” refers to the student’s ability to use English for their personal use or future career, or if the student needs a sufficient knowledge of the second language to help him in his academic studies. In the absence of a clear mandate, the more general four skill courses have been maintained. Third, the number of different programs with different needs, represented in a single classroom, could create potential conflicts. Therefore, a more general four-skill course is believed to please the majority of students. Last, there has been no validated needs analysis with the goal of ascertaining the needs of all the stakeholders: departments, professors, teachers, and students. Without clear direction from the stakeholders, the four-skill course structure still exists. Until specific needs are established and changes demanded from the stakeholders involved, four-skill courses will certainly be maintained.

1.2.3.1 Organization of Language School

The particular language school in the study offers eight levels of Four Skill language classes. All students are placed into one of the eight levels which are designated as Basic I, and II, Intermediate I and II, and Advanced I, II, III, and IV. There are also two levels of reading courses and one specialized business course (more advanced English courses are given in undergraduate programs which fall under the jurisdiction of a Faculty). Contrary to the on-going work with the Threshold Level, a program in which classes are organized around progressive mastery of student ability or Can-Do levels that the student can do or produce for work situations in a second language context (see Van Ek (1976) and http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/Linguistics/DNR_EN.asp#), the language school courses are organized around the four skills. These courses emphasize what the student is able to produce, both orally and in writing, in a foreign language academic environment, with less focus on listening and reading. There are approximately 1200 students enrolled in each fifteen-week Fall and Winter session, and the majority of students score, by means of a placement test, into levels Intermediate I and II. All course levels are given in three-hour blocks. There is a mandatory 50 minutes spent in either a cassette tape and/or computer laboratory at two week intervals, except for the two highest course levels. Each 45-hour course officially requires 90 hours of personal outside of class work. Each class has one teacher who is responsible for the instruction and evaluation of all four language skills.
Every teacher is required to cover certain grammatical notions. The standard course outline also includes instructional guidelines. Although the course outline is standard, it has become so vague that one class is similar to another only in the most general of terms.

After consideration of the detailed description of the setting of the study and the organization of the English sector, it would appear the TOEIC does not respond to the needs of stakeholders. First, the TOEIC is a norm-referenced proficiency test, which means it was designed to measure the overall linguistic ability of test-takers. However, the potential students for English second language classrooms at the LS require a criterion-referenced placement test: A test designed to distinguish what learners can do from what they cannot do and be sensitive enough to detect slight learning gains (Brown, 1989). From the test score of a criterion-referenced placement test, a particular course level and approach to formal learning can be chosen. Second, the TOEIC’s target clientele are business people working in international settings; therefore, the content of the TOEIC reflects the needs of this population. However, university undergraduates study in a variety of programs and few of them are related to business and even fewer have contact with international settings, and therefore do not fit the description of the TOEIC’s target clientele. These major differences raise doubts as to the appropriateness of the use of the institutional TOEIC as a placement test at the language school.

1.3 An Examination of the TOEIC’s Validity

The TOEIC has been discussed in terms of its target clientele and general purposes. The following section will now discuss the evidence which has been presented by ETS as to the TOEIC’s validity.

1.3.1 Description of Test Sections

During the institutional version of the TOEIC test, in the 45-minute listening comprehension section, test-takers must follow the recording and cannot advance, nor remain on any item for longer than the 1.7 minutes. There are four sub-sections: statements,
questions, short conversations, and short talks. The statement portions involve looking at a picture and choosing one of the four recorded statements which best reflects what is happening in the picture. The question-response section asks test-takers to choose the correct response to a question when they are given three choices. The question is not printed in the booklet. Short conversations involve listening to two speakers interact and then choosing the correct answer to a written question related to the discourse. The last type of question is known as short talks. Test-takers listen to a short talk by one speaker and then they read and answer a number of related questions. There are four choices in these last two sections (TOEIC Examinee Handbook, The Chauncey Group Ltd., 1996).

In the 75-minute reading section, there are one hundred questions. The fill-in-the-blank type questions ask test-takers to read an incomplete sentence and choose the word, from four choices, that best completes the sentence. This section focuses on the meaning or the form of a word, collocations or syntax. Error recognition questions consist of a complete sentence with four of its parts underlined. One of the four parts contains an error, which the test-taker must identify. Again, the nature of the error may be grammatical, syntactical, or semantic. Reading comprehension questions require the test-taker to answer short questions from four possible answers after reading a variety of business related texts (newspapers, letters, and schedules). Questions can involve information from what is implied or directly stated in the text.

The version of the TOEIC used at LS has a total score of 990 points, split into 495 points from each the listening and the reading sections. Each question is valued at 5 points, with no loss of points for incorrect answers; in fact guessing is openly encouraged. From these two scores ETS publishes a list of functional tasks the test-taker should be able to do in terms of listening, speaking, reading and writing. For example, a score of 305-390 in the listening section indicates that the test-taker in terms of listening can understand "explanations of work problems, requests for products by phone, discussions of current events by native speakers of English, headline news" (http://www.toeic.ca). From this listening score the TOEIC determines that in terms of speaking the test-taker can "adapt language use for different audiences in most cases, make short (30 minute) formal
presentations if prepared, discuss topics of general interest using non-elaborate structures” (http://www.toeic.ca). From a score of 305-390 in the reading section, ETS states that the test-taker can “read with only the occasional use of a dictionary: technical manuals, many news articles, popular novels, and identify inconsistencies in points of view.” (http://www.toeic.ca) Again, from this reading score, ETS says test-takers can “write with some effort: letters to potential clients, five-page formal reports, summaries of meetings, job application letters” (http://www.toeic.ca). When the two scores are combined (605-780 corresponds to the fourth of eight course levels at the the language school) the proficiency of a test-taker is classified as having a “Basic Working Proficiency in this particular situation”. His rating translates into a global proficiency which describes the test taker as being, “Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements” (http://www.toeic.ca). From the test score and the functional descriptions that extend from it, a corporation can decide if the test-taker has the linguistic proficiency to perform the duties of a given job.

Two important issues are raised from the description of the two sections of the TOEIC. The first is the fact that the institutional TOEIC formally measures only the receptive skills (listening and reading) and extrapolates inferred performance in the productive skills (speaking and writing). The second is the formal measurement of mostly grammatical elements and the translation of those skills into stated linguistic abilities or functions. In discussing these two paradoxes, the validity of the TOEIC will next be addressed.

1.3.2 ETS Claims of the TOEIC’s Validity

The institutional version of the TOEIC does not directly measure writing and speaking. The TOEIC Examinee Handbook (2002) states that time and expense in testing and scoring are the reasons for not testing these areas. To evaluate if the two receptive skills of reading and listening can be extrapolated to the two productive skills of speaking and writing, criterion-related validity is used. ETS has carried out a number of their own validation studies on the listening, reading, and writing sections of the TOEIC. From their
results the TOEIC is reported as being a good indicator of the ability of a test taker to listen, read and write. In terms of speaking, it is stated that high correlation between the two receptive skills, "would seem to indicate that the TOEIC part score is a good predictor of the candidates' ability to speak" (Woodford, 1982: 71).

However strong the evidence for the validity of a test score, it alone is not sufficient in determining the validity of a test. According to Bachman (2005), the test performance, and the test interpretations, which come from the test score, must be valid, but a second aspect is also necessary. The second aspect is the interpretation of the test and the use of those interpretations. To evaluate the validity of a test both aspects need to be considered.

1.3.3 Test Interpretations of the Validity of the TOEIC

The traditional view of validity encompasses content, construct, and criterion (concurrent and predictive) validity. Construct validity demands that a test accurately measure what it is supposed to measure. Components of construct validity are content and criterion validity. To carry out validation evaluation, the test tasks or the content must be evaluated and there must be evaluation of the possible correlations between the test and other similar tests (criterion-related). If these two measures are found acceptable, then construct validity can be evaluated.

If the TOEIC is put to such a validity evaluation, there are some surprising results. First, the questions on the TOEIC are indirect; consequently, the tasks (multiple-choice questions) do not ask the test-taker to actually carry out the tasks from which conclusions are drawn. For example, from four choices, the TOEIC asks test-takers to choose the proper salutation for a business letter; however, they do not actually write a business letter. The more similar the test tasks to real life tasks, the more direct they are, the higher the content validity. The tasks in the TOEIC are far removed from the tasks the typical university student in a second language class is asked to execute. Evidence to support the content validity of the TOEIC is further weakened when the business content of the TOEIC is
considered. The TOEIC is designed to measure linguistic proficiency in business situations. Since university students at the language school have limited working experience and typically, even less experience in the world of international business, their business knowledge is non-existent. Therefore, the content validity of the TOEIC is questionable in this academic university setting. Furthermore, Moritoshi (2001) notes the proportion of linguistic aspects of the TOEIC’s content may, or may not, be representative of a real life linguistic situation, there is no evidence with which to support or deny this. Furthermore, he states that while content validity is probably acceptable on the business aspects, and perhaps on the linguistic aspects, the content validity does not apply to any skills except those tested: reading and listening.

In a study carried out by Hirai (2002), with Japanese students enrolled in a business English course, correlations between speaking and receptive skills and between writing and receptive skills using the BULATS Writing Test and the TOEIC were investigated. Hirai (2002) found that correlation coefficients maintained moderate association when all test scores were combined, but dropped when low scorers were separated from high scorers. He states that, “TOEIC scores cannot be employed as a reliable measure of writing skills in business contexts” (Hirai, 2005: 7). If the TOEIC, with its business content, cannot be used to infer writing skills in a business context, then how can the TOEIC scores be valid in predicting writing skills in an academic context?

The preceding discussion attempted to evaluate the TOEIC in terms of validity (content and criterion-related) to ascertain the interpretations, which come from the test score, and to answer the following two questions: is the content of the TOEIC valid for the test-takers at university outside a business context and can receptive skills be extrapolated to predict ability on productive skills? To answer the first question, it appears the content validity is weak, for the test is an in-direct, grammar-based, business-themed test, which reflects neither the current second language classroom situation of the study, nor the typical work background of the potential student. The second question asks if receptive skills can be predictors of writing skills. The answer based on the study by Hirai (2002), is yes if the correlation scores for the weaker scorers are kept together with the high scorers. However,
when scores are separated, discrepancies are found. Hirai (2002) found that the lower level students' scores could not correlate receptive skills to writing skills. As the majority of students at the language school place at the lower levels of the TOEIC scores, its ability to correlate to writing skills is questionable.

1.3.4 The Validity of the Test Use of the TOEIC

The second aspect of test evaluation is test use and the effect of using the interpretations of the test score, which is known as the concept of washback (Wall & Alderson, 1993; Clapham, 2000). Washback is the effect of a test on instruction, be it positive or negative (Bachman, 1990: 283). The typical negative washback effect of a standardized test on instruction is teaching to the test. Test-takers require a particular score and naturally will want to do what is necessary to attain this score. There is also positive washback referring to the fact that the test mirrors practice activities and vice versa. Unfortunately, practicing for the test is often reduced to studying test-taking strategies, not studying content (Nall, 2004). There is no teaching to the test at LS because the TOEIC is only used as a placement tool. If students at LS do not achieve the test score necessary to fulfill their requirement, they can alternatively have a passing grade at a particular course level from LS. However, that is not to say there is no negative washback, or that the TOEIC consequently produces positive washback. This is not the case because tests do not exist in isolation; they exist within institutions and educational systems, and society. When the washback of tests moves outside of the classroom, the term impact is employed.

Impact is one of the four aspects of consequential validity that needs to be considered when exploring ethical questions in high-stakes testing situations (Messick, 1996). According to Bachman (2005: 16), impact (extent, area and direction) is one of the six qualities of test usefulness that need to be considered when deciding to use a particular test in a particular situation for “it is possible for the results of assessment to be used inappropriately, even though these assessments are valid indicators of the abilities they are intended to measure”. In other words, a test can be found to be invalid and therefore cannot
be used to make valid interpretations; however, a test can also be found to be valid, but used to make unsubstantiated decisions. Both situations would result in impact for the stakeholders.

In conclusion, the TOEIC appears to be of questionable use at LS in terms of its ability to make valid interpretations from the test scores due to the discrepancy between its target purpose and population. Secondly, the TOEIC’s validity is questionable due to weaknesses in content and concurrent validity for many researchers have investigated those types of validity. However, the concept of the TOEIC’s consequential validity (Messick, 1989) or the impact of the use of the TOEIC test score (Bachman and Palmer, 1996) for placement purposes has not previously been investigated.

1.4 Impact of the TOEIC

The preceding discussion leads to the questioning of the use of the TOEIC as a valid placement tool at LS. Firstly, its design, as a proficiency test, is most likely incompatible with its use as a placement test. A proficiency test measures general ability and a placement matches specific ability to a learning situation. In particular, the TOEIC only measures two of the four language abilities, but a placement test would need to formally measure all four abilities in order to make the necessary instructional recommendations. However, it was found that on the Canadian ETS website that the TOEIC is clearly marketed as a placement tool to Canadian colleges and universities (http://www.etscanada.ca/fr/teachers/articles/seneca.php). The focus of the advertising is on its practicality, without any mention of its validity as a placement tool (its validity as a proficiency test is published). Secondly, the questionable content and criterion-related validity of the TOEIC, when used within the context of LS, is supported by both researchers who did and did not use ETS data. These facts underscore the problems with validity of the use of the TOEIC in this context and mean that test score interpretation and use are possibly invalid. If the TOEIC test scores and their subsequent use in placing students into appropriate language levels are invalid, then what is the impact in second language English classes at LS?
Commercial standardized proficiency tests typically provide a test score of global language ability, which is then paired with a corresponding list of functional language abilities. The TOEIC provides a test score of global language ability accompanied by a corresponding list of functional language abilities within a work-related setting. As previously discussed, LS is not an enterprise that wishes to know how a particular test-taker would perform in English in a work-related setting. The particular population in the context of this study is composed of undergraduate and graduate level academic students who need to develop their English language proficiency in order to fulfill English second language requirements in four-skill grammar-focused courses. However, LS does however wish to know what aspects of the language the test-takers have acquired and to which aspects they may next be formally introduced. Nor, in particular, does the TOEIC score correspond directly to the course levels at LS which are, in fact, based on grammatical aspects, not functional abilities. As a result, TOEIC scores and functional language abilities do not match with the grammatical notions used to describe English as a second language courses at LS.

In addition, the difficulty of fitting 990 test points, gleaned only from two receptive language skills, into eight levels of four-skill, grammatically-focused (both receptive and productive) courses becomes evident. As the TOEIC and most norm-referenced tests “are usually developed independently of any particular course of instruction, it is difficult to match results perfectly with instructional objectives” (Henning, 1987: 8). This is a fact, as this process of fitting the TOEIC scores into eight course levels at LS and a list of functional abilities has resulted in some course levels having a 300-point spread (the first course level includes students with scores from 5-299) and others having a 75-point spread (the sixth of the eight levels has scores of 750-824). The result of this reality is often the non-homogeneity of the students in English second language courses at LS.

Moreover, the institutional TOEIC only formally measures two skills, listening and reading, and does not formally evaluate the two productive skills of speaking and writing. As the classrooms at LS are four-skill and grammar-focused, a placement test, in order to be
a valid measure, must either evaluate these four skills or be able to prove the validity of testing two receptive skills to indicate ability in the other two productive skills. The TOEIC does not do either. The TOEIC is not a four-skill test, nor does it provide strong evidence of validity when scores are extrapolated. There is no formal evaluation of the two productive skills, which are heavily focused on and evaluated at LS in English second language classrooms, which means that a TOEIC score does not formally evaluate the student’s ability in skill areas in which he will be taught and/or evaluated.

Although TOEIC is a proficiency test, it markets itself as a test, which can be used for placement purposes within a Canadian university setting; therefore, there is incompatibility of test design and test use within this particular context of LS, in addition to the failure of formally measuring the two productive skills. One obvious result is washback. The negative backwash or the impact of the use of the TOEIC in this particular case is misplacement. The consequences of misplacement, derived from the use of the TOEIC score, are felt by a number of stakeholders, such as: students, the pedagogical advisor, and teachers.

For the reasons previously stated, English language classes at LS often misplaced students at a variety of levels. If either the student or the teacher is able to realize there is a mismatch between student ability and course level quickly, a move to another level can be initiated and the negative consequences of incorrect placement could be avoided. However, there are many obstacles to early detection of the misplaced and subsequent change of level. First, the teachers need to identify the misplaced students quickly and correctly, but there are no standardized re-evaluation practices, and if the student is admitted after the first class of the course, they are not usually re-evaluated by the teacher. Secondly, the student must be quickly notified and the move discussed between the teacher and the student because the teacher cannot force a move. This is a delicate discussion process, under the pressure of time, between a teacher and a student who have spent a maximum of two and a half hours together. At the end of the discussion, the student can always refuse the move for any reason, which he does not have to divulge.
One would like to say that the coming together of teacher and the misplaced student is a relationship which does work and does not have negative consequences for either party. But is this what happens?

1.5 Research Problem and Questions

As discussed, tests are designed for particular purposes, particular populations, and settings. Test scores, their use and the interpretations which follow are valid if they measure what they are designed to measure for a particular context. At LS, the result of using a proficiency test to do the job of placing students in course levels, a job for which it was not designed, appears to create the problem of misplaced students. Some misplacement can be corrected, but other misplaced students remain in inappropriate course levels. It is the impact of this type of misplacement from the TOEIC scores, which cannot be overcome by course level changes on both the teachers and the students who are directly involved, which is at the heart of this study. This researcher wished to explore the impact of misplacement on those stakeholders (teachers, and students) who must deal with the effects of using the TOEIC, a proficiency test, as a placement tool. Therefore, this study proposes the following research questions:

First, when the TOEIC, a proficiency test, is used as a placement tool at LS what is the impact on teachers and students?

Second, what are the extent, area and direction of the impact felt on the stakeholders?
CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to explore the research questions, definitions of the key concepts related to the theoretical background will inform and situate the study. First, two types of test analysis, reliability and validity, which are part of the validation process, will be examined. Validity will then be examined through the lens of the Progressive Matrix by Messick (1989). Lastly, validity as examined within the six qualities of the model of Test Usefulness, especially the concept of impact, will be discussed.

2.1 Reliability and Validity: A Historical Background

Psychology, in the United States during the 1950's, was keenly interested in “ensuring that scientific standards were met by procedures for gathering and treating data in laboratory and non-laboratory research” (Fuchs and Milar, 2003: 17). This movement toward structured methods in scientific research led to a focus on tests, which play a large role in inquiry. With the development of the first intelligence test, in the early 1900’s, a measurement tool created specifically for education was introduced (Cronbach, 1990). One type of measurement tool (which assigns categories or rankings) is the test, which is used to elicit the behaviour that will be measured (Bachman, 1990). Today, education, in general, and specifically, second language research is keenly interested in ensuring that a test, its scores and interpretations are reliable and valid. The following sections will consider the terms of reliability and validity in a historical light and conclude with a justification of the adopted concepts.

2.1.1 A Discussion of the Concept of Reliability

Henning has stated that “Reliability refers to the consistency of the scores obtainable from a test” (1987: 196). Test validation research must identify all sources of possible error in test scores and then be able to estimate the effects of such error on test scores. It is of extreme importance in the validation process for “in order for a test score to be valid, it must be reliable” (Bachman, 1990: 160).
The investigation of reliability includes the identification of possible test score error and the degree of the effect of error. Identifying test score error leads to the statistical operations used to determine the amount of error. Based on the type of error, a certain statistical method is required.

One statistical method of estimating the effect of error reliability is the classical model or the Classical True Score measurement theory (CTS) developed in the early 1920’s (Bachman, 1990). It is still popular today, although it does have its limitations. First, CTS does not allow for the statistical analysis of more than one source of error in the same investigation and also considers all error to be random, not allowing for systemic error, however, there can be a random or systemic error effect on the test score (Bachman, 1990). Random error is uncontrolled error and decreases reliability, whereas systemic error increases reliability by affecting scores for all test-takers. An example of random error is a test-taker who has personal difficulties on a given day or variation in the test’s administration. Systemic error includes the test type choice and individual traits (individual’s field independence). It is not uncommon, that during a test-taking session, that a variety of sources of error are interacting on the test score. To attempt to overcome these two weaknesses, Cronbach, Gleser and Rajaratnam (1972), brought about the more powerful Generalizability theory or G-theory, which generalizes one set of test scores to other contexts while allowing for the investigation of more than one type of error. Another concept, included in CTS, is the idea of test-retest involving the comparison of two similar tests to establish reliability, but it is extremely difficult to tightly control variables over time and requires a large population sample. Even though G-theory strengthened CTS, both models have the weakness of only being able to analyse the group’s test scores, not the individual’s.

In response to these lacunas, the Item Response Theory (IRT), or latent trait theory (Bachman, 1990), was developed in the mid 1980’s, which relates the individual’s test score to the individual’s ability. It also takes into consideration the difficulty of the test items and
the test-taker’s ability. Therefore, by looking at the responses to questions and the total score of each test-taker, one can mathematically determine the amount of variation between ability levels and test questions. This theory is a more powerful tool and makes stronger assumptions because it is more rigorous. IRT requires an assumption about the parameters to be analysed and each parameter is analysed individually, although there can be 2 or 3 parameter item investigations. Because parameters must be evaluated separately, IRT is not always an option.

Today, all three models are currently utilised; the choice is dependent on the particular testing situation. Considering the test type, number of test-takers, and resources often certain tests are not feasible. For our research study, our test type limits our choices as to how we will statistically measure reliability. The study will not be a test-retest situation as the TOEIC is not easy or inexpensive to take. As students pay to take the institutional TOEIC as a placement tool, there is no reason, except for the sake of the study, for a student to retake the test. Therefore, students cannot be asked to pay nor take their time to take the TOEIC twice. As well, there is the inability of having an item-by-item investigation due to the number of versions of the TOEIC used at LS. As there are numerous testing sessions before the beginning of every session at LS, the total number of test versions is huge and item-by-item investigations become unwieldy. Item-by-item verification is made difficult when there is a series of questions all related to the same passage, as is the case in the TOEIC, making the isolation of questions difficult. All these reasons make an IRT investigation difficult. Lastly, and most importantly, the TOEIC is a norm-referenced test which means scores have been interpreted with regard to the other scores. Test scores are spread out for the express purpose of highlighting the differences between test scores or the variance that reliability studies seek to measure. Therefore, this study will not delve into the reliability of the TOEIC, but will use any related evidence gathered from the study to help to evaluate the usefulness of the TOEIC at LS.

Whereas test reliability is concerned with the identification and degree of variation in test scores, test validity is concerned with the factors that produce the variation in test scores (Bachman, 1990), and will be discussed in the following section.
2.1.2 A Discussion of the Concept of Validity

Historically, test measurement studies, which focus on test validity, began as part of the domain of educational psychologists; the following section will discuss the concept of validity from its beginnings to its current form in the second language domain.

According to Messick (1989: 13), "Validity is an integrated evaluative judgement of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores or other modes of assessment." The theoretical conception of validity has evolved through the years. In the 1950's, educational psychologists, such as Anastasi (1986), presented a version of validity, which was composed of four components: face validity, content validity, factorial validity, and empirical validity. Face validity is the measure of how the test-takers view the task asked of him or her during the test-taking situation. Content validity is the measure of the extent to which the test is representative of a given domain of ability. Factorial validity evaluates the test's external structure (correlation between the test-task and other measures). Lastly, empirical validity is the measure of the relationship between test scores and what the test is supposed to measure. Due to the fact that face validity is not really a measure (but rather a judgement) and that factorial and empirical validities evaluate the same quality of the test-taker, Anastasi (1986) modified her vision of validity.

In 1961, there was a second edition of validity which included: content, predictive, concurrent and construct validities. The basic difference between the two versions is the increased importance of construct validity. In this new conceptualization of validity, construct validity included factorial, and other empirical measures, however, face validity was eliminated. Predictive and concurrent validity both refer to the test's scores ability to indicate a certain behaviour, in the future or the present. Anastasi (1986) modified the framework three more times, all the while expanding the concept of construct validity.
Working in parallel, Cronbach, another educational psychologist, (1990), first in the 1960's, conceived his framework of validity. It was composed of three types of validity: content validity; criterion-related validity, including predictive and concurrent; and construct validity. The last type of validity is construct validity, which is a quality of the test score. Even with this framework of the three distinct validities, Cronbach (1984) states they all must join together if the inquiry is to be complete. Although this study will not be a validity study of the TOEIC, this concept will be considered as it related to the Model of Test Usefulness.

The most commonly cited concept of validity is Messick’s (1989) progressive matrix which outlines validity as a unified concept and will be examined in the following section.

2.2 The Progressive Matrix

Messick (1989) added to the work of Anastasi (1986) and Cronbach (1984) by proposing that validity is a unitary concept because score meaning underlies all the inferences that come from the test situation. In other words, all validity is, in fact, construct validity and cannot be divided into types of validity. He argues that because content and criterion-related validity come together to contribute to the score meaning of a test, they both belong under the umbrella of construct validity. Secondly, Messick (1989) believed testing could not ignore the social values and consequences of its practices, which include the “appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of score-based inferences” (Messick, 1989: 19). Messick (1989) allows for the formal introduction of the social consequences of test scores and asks what effects a test score can have on populations. Therefore, the three traditional categories of validity (content-related, criterion-based, and construct-related) can be considered as belonging to one category. In the following discussion of Messick’s (1989) progressive matrix, construct validity will be understood to be composed of the three validities.
Table I
Facets of Validity as a Progressive Matrix (Messick, 1989: 20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test Interpretation</th>
<th>Test Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidential Basis</td>
<td>Construct validity</td>
<td>Construct validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+ Relevance/Utility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequential Basis</td>
<td>Construct validity +</td>
<td>Construct validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Value implications</td>
<td>+ Relevance/Utility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+ Value Implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+ Social Consequences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Messick's unified validity framework comprises four cells, or quadrants, under the headings of interpretation and use of test results. The interpretation aspect, or the actual test scores, must inform the aspect of test use; hence, the evidence, or test scores, which are used to make interpretations, is the first area of inquiry. In the upper left hand side of the matrix, there is the cell containing construct validity (composed of content-related, criterion-based, and construct-related validities). Before test scores can be used for any interpretations, they must first be evaluated in terms of content-related, criterion-based, and construct-related validities; for test scores must, first and foremost, be able to support interpretations and be valid indicators of a given ability. If the construct is found to be invalid, there can be no further investigation. If, after this investigation, the evidence or test scores are valid, the evidence can be the basis of further investigation.

The second cell (top right) of the Matrix involves the use of the test scores. In the process of test score use, the test itself must be questioned in terms of its construct validity, relevance, and utility. Construct validity is again found in this cell because without it there cannot be test score use. Relevance refers to the test’s ability to adequately cover the appropriate content in an applied setting and for a specific purpose. Utility refers to the degree of involvement of the individual test taker when performing test tasks. If individuals
and institutions are to use the test scores to make interpretations, the tasks must allow the test taker to show those abilities which need to be measured. For example, can the score from a multiple-choice grammar test reflect or accurately measure a person’s ability to write or read in a second language?

The third cell (bottom left) considers the consequences of the interpretation of the test scores. Again, there must be evidence of construct validity before examining the values involved in interpreting test score. The interpretation of test scores and the possible consequences of the score must take into consideration the values of the stakeholders involved. For example, what valid decisions can be made based on test scores? Can a particular test be the basis for making placement choices, or job promotions?

The last cell (bottom right) includes, as always, construct validity; along with the relevance and utility of the content of the test; the value judgements of the test score and lastly, the social implications of the use of the test scores. In order for a test to be used, the consequences of such a test must be evaluated. First, the test scores must be valid measures of the ability being measured. If the test measures validly, then the test scores can be used, if the content of the test fully reflects the ability being measured. However, with the use of any test, there are consequences. The consequences of the use of the test scores need to be included, in terms of what decisions can be validly interpreted from the test scores. The consequences of test use on the individual, the institution, and society all need to be considered before test scores can be used to make decisions. However, if the test scores are not valid, if there is no construct validity, if the content is not appropriate and complete, if the value judgements are ungrounded, then the test cannot be used to make decisions. If it is used its interpretations can have far-reaching and perhaps serious, negative consequences.

One negative consequence, which has been identified in language testing, is washback, “the effect of testing on instruction” (Bachman, 1990: 283). Ideally, one wants the classroom instruction to have positive effects on the test score. In this case, test scores would reflect the fact that the learners had learned what the teacher had taught and then
tested. In other words, the instructional activities mirrored the test activities and positive washback occurred. On the other hand, it is possible for instruction to have adverse effects on the test score. A clear example is the learner who bypasses the learning and instead focuses on test-taking strategies. This is termed negative washback. There can also be washback which is separate from the quality of the test related to intervening variables such as: classroom teaching methods or learner differences. Regardless of the variable responsible for negative backwash, it is an aspect that needs to be diminished while positive washback needs to be promoted.

Washback is a threat to the consequential use cell of the matrix. In order to promote positive washback, and support the use of the test score evidence to make valid interpretations, the measurement assessments must be authentic and direct. Authenticity includes all the important dimensions of the constructs with nothing important having been left out. This concept is termed minimal construct under-representation. At the other end of the spectrum is the concept of directness. If the test is not direct enough, the assessment is too broad and includes irrelevant dimensions of the construct (Messick, 1996). Nevertheless, controlling directness and authenticity, does not always result in positive washback, as both are very difficult to completely control. To balance the threats to validity, evidence must be brought forth which counters their negative effects on the consequences of test use.

The four cells of the unified validity framework, taken as a whole, has provided a more complete notion of construct validity as a theoretical model. Messick recognized that test scores must be interpreted before being used, the consequences of using any test must be considered, and also that construct validity is at the heart of both of these two operations. Messick’s work was ground breaking as the progressive matrix was the first to envision a unified validity, one in which construct validity is necessary for test score interpretation and use. He also formally included the consequences of test use. Although, the matrix pushes the concept of validity to new levels, for language teachers, who routinely create tests, Messick’s theoretical model is lacking. First, it is rather difficult to put to practical use and secondly, it does not address a particularity of a second language situation which is the
difficulty of separating knowledge in a content area from ability in the language domain. For that reason, Bachman and Palmer (1996) used the theoretical underpinnings of Messick’s framework, to propose the Model of Test Usefulness. The model offers a practical approach to gathering evidence of test validity within the second language domain.

2.3 The Model of Test Usefulness

Bachman and Palmer (1996), proposed the Model of Test Usefulness, which includes six qualities used to measure the usefulness of a test. These qualities are reliability; construct validity, authenticity, interactivity, impact, and practicality. These six qualities represent the exact qualities found in the bottom left cell of Messick’s framework (1989), but are specially designed for the particularities of second language testing and made into a practical checklist for teachers and test creators to use.

The first aspect to be considered is construct validity. Messick (1989) speaks of construct validity as encompassing reliability within criterion related validity; however, Bachman and Palmer (1996) divide the two concepts. For Bachman and Palmer (1996) construct validity includes content, criterion-related, and the related predictive validity. Content validity focuses on the test tasks and requires that those tasks are relevant to the ability being measured and that they represent the ability completely. Concurrent validity examines test scores to identify differences among individual test takers and abilities; and correlations among the measures of abilities, whereas predictive validity evaluates how well the test scores will predict a future behaviour. Construct validity is the evidence needed to justify the interpretations that come from the test scores and it is measured in degrees, for there is never 100% construct validity.

As discussed above, a related quality of construct validity is reliability, which verifies that the test scores will be similar on similar tasks in different settings and instances. Reliability is an essential quality of test scores, for the constancy of scores must exist for any interpretations to be made. Reliability is a condition for validity. For without a degree of these two measures, the test scores are invalid and cannot be used for further interpretations.
But construct validity and reliability, while being necessary to overall test usefulness, are insufficient for content validity, and as part of construct validity they are not generous enough to include all the knowledge of any given language ability. Therefore, test usefulness has two other qualities related to content validity.

Two other qualities, authenticity and interactiveness are related to content validity as they are concerned with the content of the tasks. However, authenticity is defined as "the degree of correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test task to the features of a Target Language Use (TLU) task" (Bachman and Palmer, 1996: 23). The TLU can refer to either a real-life or a language instruction domain. Tasks can be used in a test situation because they mimic the real-life situation where the target language will be used, or the tasks mimic the language instruction situation (classroom activities). A test must be as authentic as possible so that the conclusions drawn from the test scores are as valid as possible. It is important for test usefulness that the tasks on the test are perceived by the test taker to be authentic in order to create a positive response to the test and for them to give their best performance.

The other quality is interactiveness, which refers to the extent and the type of involvement the test taker's individual characteristics are employed in accomplishing the test task (Bachman and Palmer, 1996). In language testing, this usually involves other language abilities such as language knowledge, strategic competence, metacognitive strategies and topical knowledge (Bachman and Palmer, 1996). In any testing situation, the test taker needs to use all of his knowledge, not only linguistic, in order to perform well. Together, authenticity and interactiveness are concerned with choosing a test which mirrors, as much as possible, the real life or language learning context of the test taker and also engages, as much as possible, the learner in using all the various language abilities. These two qualities are important because they are what differentiate test usefulness from Messick's framework. Test usefulness considers the TLU domain and the linguistic competences, which are specific to a second language situation. Messick does not address these particularities.
A fifth test quality is impact, which considers the effects of the testing, be it on the individual, a particular institution, or society as a whole. This concept is equivalent to the social consequences in Messick’s framework. Impact can be defined in terms of the extent of the effect (individuals, institutions), the direction of the effect (positive or negative) or the areas the test impact affects (teaching, methodology, assessment). Impact needs to be addressed for test use and the interpretations which follow, often have far-reaching and serious consequences.

The last quality of test usefulness is practicality, which concerns itself with the implementation of the test, and the necessary resources, both what are needed and are available. There are human resources, material resources, and time to be considered. Without the necessary resources, no test can be of quality; therefore, no quality interpretations can come from it.

The six qualities of test usefulness need to be balanced in any given situation including the available resources. To help in establishing this balance, Bachman and Palmer (1996) established three principles: first, overall test usefulness is to be maximized, while the importance of individual qualities minimized; second, test qualities must be evaluated in terms of combined effects; and lastly, since every testing situation is unique, the balance between test qualities must be examined for every situation.

Test usefulness has been the only model for evaluating a second language test which takes into consideration the importance of the ethical use of tests while still considering the practical aspects of test use or creation. For “as test developers and test users, therefore, it is our responsibility to provide as complete evidence as possible that the tests that are used are valid indicators of the abilities of interest and that these abilities are appropriate to the intended use, and then to insist that this evidence be used in the determination of test use” Bachman, 1990: 285). It is the use of the test scores which is of interest to this researcher. For if test scores are valid and there is evidence of test validity, then an examination of the validity of the use of the test scores can be evaluated. This evaluation must consider the
impact of the use of the test and its scores on stakeholders. For impact is the examination of the consequences of washback from the test-taking situation in terms of the: 1) extent of its effects on stakeholders (individual, institution, and society), 2) direction of the effect (negative or positive) and 3) area in which the impact is felt (teaching, method or assessment). As the TOEIC is a test used in a second language situation, this study will adopt the test usefulness model while focusing on the concept of impact, as discussed by Bachman and Palmer (1996), for its ability to reflect the particular context of LS. Therefore, the focus of the study will be an evaluation of these three areas of impact as they arise from the use of the TOEIC as a placement tool at LS.
CHAPTER III REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As this study investigates the use of the TOEIC as a placement tool at LS, studies from the field of testing which involved placement tools were researched. Some researchers have questioned the adequacy of certain in-house placement tests (Wall et al. 1994; Fulcher, 1997), which will be discussed in the first two sections of this chapter. As the TOEIC was the focus of the study, two studies which evaluate the TOEIC (Moritoshi, 2001; Hirai, 2002) are also discussed. Lastly, certain researchers have questioned the impact of proficiency or placement tests on test-takers (Guerrero, 2000; Fox, 2004) which will be outlined at the end of this chapter. All six studies have brought forth a certain number of findings, but there still remain questions to be answered about tests, used for placement in particular, and their impact.

3.1 Evaluating a Placement Test

Wall, Clapham and Alderson (1994) are responsible for one of the first formal evaluative studies of an in-house placement test. Lancaster University and its population, which served as the setting for the research, had a particular need. All foreign students coming to the British university had their English language ability evaluated because English linguistic background knowledge was often insufficient and inconsistent among students. The placement test evaluated the students’ English and study skills. If a student was deemed to require language support, he did so outside of his program and without any extra credit.

In this study, researchers wished to know if their placement test was valid and if the interpretations coming from the test scores were justified. The study’s research question asked if the placement test did the job of choosing who needed English second language classes, and if its content was appropriate, and reliable (Wall et al, 1994).
The placement test had four sections: grammar, writing, reading, and listening. The grammar section had 32 discrete point items in a multiple-choice format within a fifteen-minute time frame. For the forty-minute writing section, students wrote a 200-word summary of an article, which they could consult while writing. Students were evaluated on the adequacy and relevance of the content, organization, cohesion, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Each section was marked on a 4-point scale from 0-3. In the thirty-five minute reading section, there were questions which included text ordering, paragraph matching and thirteen short answer questions, for a value of twenty-three points, based on the article used in the writing section. To evaluate listening, students listened to the details of a fictitious assignment, which was read aloud. Students were asked to write down all the pertinent details. Based on the amount of information they were able to obtain; they were given a mark out of thirty points.

One hundred and thirty students took the test in 1990 and were used in this research study. Unfortunately, no other information on the participants, other than gender and level of post-secondary study was given.

Researchers wished to examine the placement test’s validity (face validity, content validity, construct validity and concurrent validity) and reliability. To do this, they used a five-page long student questionnaire, while tutors in each academic department and second language teachers were sent two-page questionnaires. Results on student questionnaires showed no bias for sex, academic level, or test score. Unfortunately, the response level to the questionnaires limited discussion on correlation because less than 50%, or about 60, of the students answered; about 60% of tutors answered and 70% of language teachers. In addition, there were rarely questionnaires from each of the three groups for the same student.

Grammar, reading, and listening sections of the placement test showed score distribution was negatively skewed and quite varied; mean scores were at 70-76%. However, the writing section showed different results. In this section, score distribution was
narrow and the mean was very low with small standard deviation. Therefore, this section of the placement test was not very reliable. These particular findings raised questions about the effectiveness of the raters used to judge the writing samples and the scale they used when evaluating the writing portion of the test.

For face validity, results were generally favourable. Content validity was satisfactory in all areas except the writing section. Language teachers did not think this portion of the evaluation, in terms of how much information students could perceive and correctly note, was representative of students' real needs. Construct validity was satisfactory in all areas except the writing section; this was understandable due to its low reliability. In terms of concurrent validity, the study revealed low correlations between the questionnaires and students' actual scores for reading, writing and listening. There was no level of significance found between the questionnaire answers from departmental tutors and the scores for reading and writing. However, tutors mentioned five areas of difficulties they experienced in judging test-taker ability: First, time lapses as the students' language abilities had changed between the test period and questionnaire completion. Second, for other tutors, due to class size or the structure of the course, they could not evaluate linguistic ability. Third, tutors found it a challenge to separate language difficulty from difficulty with course material. Fourth, sometimes tutors made allowances for foreign students, whereas others did not. Lastly, tutors mentioned that not all native speakers could be held up as models for second language speakers.

For the language teacher's questionnaires, their answers correlated more highly with grammar than with any other section of the test. The teachers' questionnaires showed a high rate of correlation between score and placement in a language class. Two problem areas were outlined from these questionnaires. Again, the question of the lapse of time between testing and questionnaire completion and the small amount of student variation in terms of language ability was raised. Test scores and correlation with other tests could not be carried out, due to the lack of prior scores from placement testing on the part of the students.
Analysis found reliability to be high in the areas of writing and reading for both groups of inter-raters and intra-raters. However, the correlation between the two groups was found to be very low. This was most likely due to the lack of practice and consensus between raters at the onset.

The conclusions to be drawn from this study are twofold. First, with the placement test as a whole, it appears to be satisfactory: in terms of face and content validity, contributions of each section to the whole and score distribution. In the area of concurrent validity, there are questions about the effectiveness of the raters and scales employed in writing samples. The second conclusion comes from the study of validity, especially external validity. Lack of prior standardized language testing, lack of tutors' and professors' judgements, along with weak student assessment, and lack of subsequent attendance in language courses all raise questions as to the total validity of such a placement test.

The strength, and weakness, of the study lies in the questionnaires, which were used to examine external validity. All stakeholders were included in this part of the study, but unfortunately, there were a relatively small number of responders, who could offer pertinent information. The lack of concurrent validity information severely limited the results of the study, as does the absence of any formal attention paid to the ethics of such testing. Even with these drawbacks, this study is still one of the first empirical studies done on placement tests and therefore warrants attention.

To overcome the same problem of low questionnaire response, this study used a larger sample size (upwards of 1000 students per semester), and had teachers who have had contact with the student participants (in classes every week as part of their program so there is personal contact between teachers and students). Therefore, student participants were easier to contact.
3.2 An English Language Placement Test: Issues in Reliability and Validity

In response to the study done by Wall et al. (1994), another researcher named Fulcher (1997) replicated their study in many ways and expanded it in terms of methodology.

At Birmingham University, where the study was conducted, all entering students were required to take an in-house placement test in order to evaluate possible difficulties students may encounter in completing the academic workload due to linguistic limitations. Based on the score on the written portion of the test, students were referred to the oral evaluation. Following this step, the decision as to which students needed linguistic help was made. Although all students, upon entry to the university, took the placement test, only those with English as a second language were included in this study. This division was done after analysis, which evaluated the statistical significance between the two groups of test takers.

The placement test had three sections: writing, grammar, and reading. The writing section contained two writing samples. One was to write a descriptive essay and no choice of topic was allowed. The second essay was argumentative and there was a choice of topic (one out of three). The grammar section had ten items. Lastly, the reading section had eight items. It was mentioned that the complete test had to be completed in sixty minutes. However, no information was supplied about: the score value of each item, the time limitations on each section and the type of tasks the students were asked to perform. In addition, the last section of the test, the oral interview, was not even mentioned.

The placement test was evaluated in terms of its reliability and validity (construct, concurrent, content, and face validities). Inter- and intra-raters judged the reliability of the test using twenty randomly chosen essays. Correlation between the raters was not significantly different, but further discussion between them was deemed desirable by the researcher. In the grammar section, due to three items which had more than one possible answer, reliability was low; therefore, this portion of the test would be unacceptable for a
high-stakes test. However, due to the grammar section's ability to provide detailed discrimination between students, the section was considered reliable. This was not a high-stake test; therefore, the section's results were satisfactory.

Validity was first evaluated first by correlating the sections of the test to one another. All sections were designed to measure three distinct abilities; therefore, significance between sections should have been low and this was the result. Concurrent validity used thirty-three students who had the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores gathered at approximately the same time period. Only moderate association between the two tests was found, perhaps a larger sample would have provided greater association. In general, content validity was found to be high. Face validity was measured using student questionnaires, the results of which showed that test-takers believed the test to be fair. The results came from a sample of seventy-one test-takers, which represented a mere 16% of the total test population; therefore, conclusions must be drawn cautiously.

Overall, Fulcher (1997) was not able to state that the in-house placement test he investigated was reliable or valid. He mentioned that the small test taking population, the length of the test and administrative constraints all limited the results of the study. The three limitations Fulcher (1997) discussed are, in fact, concerns for all institutions, which give in-house placement tests. However, the study highlights the importance of having a large enough sample size to obtain statistical significance. To overcome this problem, the potential sample size for this study was approximately 1000 students and 35 teachers. With such a large sample, it was hoped to help avoid the pitfalls of the first two studies. The two studies of in-house placement tests (Wall et al, 1994 and Fulcher, 1997) exposed certain inherent problems with in-house tests, which is why standardized tests may appear promising to institutions that need to evaluate students for placement. The next section will consider an evaluation of a proficiency test.
3.3 The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC): Necessity, Proficiency Levels, Test Score Utilizations and Accuracy

The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) is a standardized proficiency test, which was not designed to be a placement test. The format of the test is multiple-choice with two equally weighted sections (listening and reading). The listening section is divided into four subsections and the reading has three subsections. It takes two hours to administer. Answers are marked on computerized sheets and machine scored. The two sections are added to make a total score of 990. The scores are then equated with functional language descriptors.

Moritoshi (2001) considered TOEIC in terms of necessity, proficiency levels, accuracy, validity (construct, criterion, content and face), reliability, and fairness. The study considered the necessity of using a proficiency test from the point of view of test-users (corporations and educational institutions) and test-takers (employees and language students). Moritoshi (2001) found the test was necessary for the following reasons: 1) the test is cost effective, 2) rapid and convenient, and 3) recognized worldwide.

Moritoshi (2001) evaluated accuracy by examining validity, reliability, and fairness. The first aspect, validity was further divided into construct, criterion, content, and face validity. Construct validity for a proficiency test would mean the four language abilities of reading, writing, listening and speaking needed to be operationalized or formally evaluated. Only the receptive skills of reading and listening were evaluated, while the productive skills were not. Therefore, criterion validity was weakened for the TOEIC unsuccessfully uses concurrent correlational evidence (that the receptive abilities correlate highly with productive abilities) to buttress construct validity.

Correlational evidence was weak, for within the area of criterion validity only concurrent, and not predictive validity, was measured. This in itself was a weakness, but
coupled with the fact that three of the tests on concurrency were not validated and scored subjectively, there was no proof that the test was not testing other abilities. Construct validity was therefore found to be weak. Lastly, there was no evidence for predictive criterion, which is needed to make any future decisions pertaining to score.

Content validity was based on needs analyses that described common requirements in multi-national companies in different countries. They did not mention theoretical considerations, operational definitions, or any justifications about the authentic target language, and added to the fact that listening and speaking were not tested directly, content validity was weak.

Face validity was not evaluated, for there were no actual test-takers; therefore, Moritoshi (2001) could draw no conclusions.

Reliability was acceptably high, but only for the two abilities that the test formally measured. Variation within individual scores was also at acceptable levels. These findings were most likely due to the standardization of the administration, scoring, task-type, and adjustments for differences in test forms.

Fairness was found to be acceptable as no specific or specialized knowledge was necessary (Moritoshi 2001). However, fairness in regards to the consequences of the test, not the test itself, was not explored.

In conclusion, content validity was found to be acceptable in terms of incorporating business aspects in the test content; however, the linguistic content was not evaluated. As the participants of this study are students in an academic setting, content validity and the lack of linguistic content validity raise major questions in terms of the validity of the TOEIC. The only truly positive findings relate to reliability and fairness, but multiple-choice type questions typically result in an acceptable level of reliability. Fairness of the test itself
is seen as acceptable, but the consequences of the test or its impact were not investigated. Face validity was unexamined and needs to be exploited further. However, the aspect of impact has not been duly addressed in this study.

Most importantly, the study also reports the TOEIC as weak in the areas of construct and concurrent validities. These lacunas mean that there is no proof that the TOEIC can make any validity claims except on the two receptive skills that it measures. Recalling that this study's participants have had past exposure to four skill classrooms and will be placed in classrooms with the same type of structure, the lack of validity on all four linguistic skill areas is a major problem. Therefore, the method of extrapolating proficiency in the two productive skills from the TOEIC scores from the formal evaluation of the two receptive skills is the focus of the following study.

3.4 Correlations between Active Skill and Passive Skill Test Scores

The study by Hirai (2002) focused on the correlation between speaking and the receptive skills (listening and reading), and writing and the receptive skills (listening and reading). To measure the correlations, three different types of tests were employed. The first was an oral interview test, which had been developed by a particular Japanese language institute for its own use at rating the oral proficiency of its business-focused, language immersion students. The second test which was employed was a standardized, proficiency test, which is also marketed as a placement tool. The Business Language Testing Service (BULATS) developed the test, which has four separate parts, each pertaining to a particular skill area. Only the writing portion of a complete four-part test was used in this study and it is known as the BULATS Writing Test. The last test, used in the study, was the standardized proficiency test, created by ETS, known as the TOEIC.

The in-house interview test has a series of questions; spoken answers to those questions allow the interviewer to evaluate aural comprehension, pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary, and fluency. The test takes between ten and twenty minutes, and has twenty-four items that cover about twelve business-related topics. The
BULATS Writing Test asks the test-taker to write two different business-related types of correspondence within a forty-five minute period. The evaluation focuses on the organization, linguistic accuracy, and appropriateness of the language. The TOEIC is a multiple-choice test in which the test-taker listens to or reads English from business situations. From the input, the test-taker is asked to make inferences, judge or respond to appropriateness or grammaticality. Each portion of the test has a hundred questions and it takes one hour and twenty minutes to complete.

The participants of the study were enrolled in an intensive, total immersion English language program for businesspeople, at either an Intermediate (TOEIC score of 730 points or less) or Advanced English (TOEIC score of 730 points or more) proficiency level, at a particular institute for foreign languages in Japan.

475 students were part of the investigation into the correlation between the speaking skill and receptive skill portion of the study. These students had their speaking ability evaluated twice; once at the beginning of their course and again at the end using the institute’s in-house interview test over a two-year period from 1999 to 2001. These 475 students had also taken the TOEIC on at least one occasion before starting their immersion studies and all students with an Intermediate proficiency also took the TOEIC at the end of the immersion program. Therefore, students at the advanced levels had their most recent TOEIC score and the Intermediate learners had two TOEIC scores, one before and one after the program, with which to correlate the in-house interview assessment.

The investigation into correlation between the writing skill and receptive skill portions of the study involved a much smaller sample of 102 participants. 90 of them were students at either advanced or intermediate level proficiencies who were enrolled in the immersion program and 12 were not students during that period. All 102 took the BULATS Writing Test in the spring or fall of 2001. All participants had also taken the TOEIC; the students at the intermediate level had sat it upon completion of the immersion, and for the advanced students, their most recent score was used.
The results of correlating the participants’ scores of the in-house interview to the TOEIC’s Listening and the TOEIC’s Combined (reading and listening) scores, in terms of speaking ability, reported high correlation. However, when the participants were divided by proficiency level, intermediate and advanced, the co-efficient dropped to a much lowered number than the 0.74 that the TOEIC reported in its literature. In fact, the correlation co-efficient dropped from 0.78 (Combined) and 0.73 (Listening) to 0.49 (Combined) for the Intermediate group and 0.65 (Combined) for the advanced group. Lower proficiencies correlated less strongly than the higher proficiencies in terms of listening, but this difference was flattened when combined.

The results of correlating the participant’s scores on the BULATS Writing Test and the scores on the TOEIC Reading and TOEIC Combined (Reading and Listening) reported a correlation co-efficient of 0.66 for the TOEIC Combined and 0.59 for the TOEIC Reading score. Officially, the TOEIC is reported to have a co-efficient of 0.83, which relates the TOEIC Reading score to productive abilities. Therefore, there is a weak correlation between the TOEIC’s receptive skill scores and writing.

The results lead to the conclusion that there is a high degree of correlation on speaking skills between the in-house interview test and the TOEIC (Combined and Listening) scores, for a representative sample population. The total sample of participants, Japanese businesspeople studying English with TOEIC scores from 255-935 out of a possible 990 points, is a typical sample of test-takers for the TOEIC. Although, when the participants were divided into two groups - intermediate or advanced groups in an immersion situation according to their TOEIC scores with 730 score points as the arbitrary dividing line, the co-efficient value dropped. These results were mediated by the fact that the study’s population, when separated, was no longer representative of the TOEIC sample population, which included all proficiency levels.
The low correlation co-efficient between the BULATS Writing Test score and the TOEIC (Combined and Reading) score can be related to the differences in tasks. The TOEIC uses the results from three tasks; sentence writing, sentence translation, and the writing of a short business letter, to buttress the validity of extrapolating productive writing ability from the two receptive skills. Although only one of the tasks is a direct measure, all three of the tasks are treated as one to even out the differences in standard deviation and means; hence the large correlation co-efficient. Secondly, the two BULATS tasks are both direct measures and are significantly longer and more involved than the writing tasks employed by TOEIC, these facts help explain the low correlation co-efficient between the two sets of scores on writing skills.

In conclusion, the Hirai (2002) study reported that scores from the in-house interview test and the TOEIC scores correlated at acceptable levels, when all proficiencies were kept together as a whole; however, it was not the case for the writing skills. Scores from the BULATS Writing Test and the TOEIC scores correlated less strongly. Therefore, Hirai (2002) states that the ability to extrapolate business writing ability from TOEIC scores gathered from the two productive skills must be done cautiously.

The preceding study involved an evaluation of the TOEIC and its ability to validly extrapolate productive language ability from receptive ability as measured in scores. With only the minimum of details concerning participants, in-house oral test design and description, subsequent evaluation techniques, and the study’s methodology, there are many unanswered questions from which conclusions are difficult to generalize. The lack of business content in the BULATS Writing Test portion of study compared to other business-focused tests is another weakness. Lastly, the small number of participants, especially in the second portion of the study, also limits conclusions.

Hirai (2002) investigated the TOEIC and questioned its claims of validity. Participants in the study were the businesspeople that the TOEIC is purported to be designed for, and not university students in an academic situation. The tests used in the study were proficiency
tests not placement tests, nor were they used for placement purposes. Hirai (2002) did not consider the concept of fairness of test or impact in his study. Therefore, the next study will focus on the impact of a placement test on stakeholders in a university setting, which is similar to the setting of this research study.

3.5 The Unified Validity of the Four Skills Exam: Applying Messick’s Framework

The study by Guerrero (2000) evaluated a Spanish language proficiency test, which was intended "to distinguish between those educators who are proficient in the target language and those that are not." (Guerrero, 2000: 399) The purpose of his study was to determine if Messick’s (1989) unified validity framework (which includes evaluation of the impact of the test) was applicable in a bilingual education setting, as it was not specifically designed for second language use.

Guerrero wished to determine if the Four Skills Exam (FSE) was a valid proficiency test and addressed: 1) to what extent the FSE was reliable and valid; 2) if the content of the test was relevant and complete, 3) whether all sections of the test or only certain parts were used to make the pass or fail decision and 4) if there were unintended social consequences as a consequence of the test-taking.

All sections of the FSE had to have a passing grade in order to have a passing mark overall. The test was timed and lasted two and one half hours. The paper-and-pencil test had three forms and four scores: aural, oral, reading and composition.

The aural section was designed to be completed in a language laboratory. In thirty minutes, test-takers had twenty listening comprehension multiple-choice questions; twenty dictation questions, which required test-takers to fill-in-the-blanks; ten multiple-choice questions about informal regional words and ten multiple-choice questions about formal equivalents of a given vocabulary word.
The second part was a spoken language test. In fifteen minutes, test-takers prepared, produced and recorded five minutes of speech on three designated subjects, which were related to typical teaching situations. The recordings were graded holistically (1 to 5: poor =1, weak =2, fair =3, good =4, and very good =5). To pass, test-takers needed an average score of 3 (fair), on two of the three recording tasks.

The reading section lasted ninety minutes and had four sub-sections (accents, spelling, identifying concepts and understanding words in context). Test-takers needed 80%, or forty eight correct answers out of sixty, to pass this section. In the first sub-section, test-takers chose from four multiple-choice answers the one word that contained the correct accents. The second sub-section asked test-takers to find the misspelled word in twenty sentences and give the correct spelling. The third sub-section consisted of four passages taken from third and fourth grade readers. Test-takers read and then answered questions.

The final section required test-takers to write a 150 to 200-word composition related to a school situation (i.e. a letter to parents). It was scored holistically for communication, appropriateness and expression using the same scale as the oral section (1 to 5: poor =1, weak =2, fair =3, good =4, and very good =5). If the score was a 3, or better, then errors were examined. Errors were counted in terms of their severity (1 point for a spelling error, 3 points for an error in syntax). In order to pass, no test-taker could have an error score greater than 20.

The number of participants was 217. 74% had Hispanic names, 26% did not. The majority of test-takers (54%) were born in New Mexico, U.S.A. The others came from the Southwest of the U.S.A. (9%), other American states (13%) and other Spanish-speaking countries (5%). 53% spoke Spanish at home during childhood and presently spoke Spanish at home, 22% did not speak in either situation and 24% spoke Spanish in one of the two situations. The majority of test-takers (56%) had formally studied Spanish in high study and college. 59% of the test-takers were teachers, and 55% were teaching in bilingual programs, and 45% in elementary schools.
Overall, the results from the first series of research questions showed reliability was low on any section objectively evaluated (aural and reading sections). Inter-correlations between sections showed statistical significance. Lastly, the results of the group of test-takers who spoke Spanish in childhood or at home were statistically significant in the reading comprehension section. The results of the group with formal language education had significance in scores in all sections of the test except composition.

The second series of research questions that related to content relevance and coverage, showed that some sections did not correlate with the tasks of an immersion classroom.

The third section of research questions inquired into the value implications of the score meanings. The pass/fail nature of the test meant it was a high-stakes test for test-takers who did not receive certification, and hence, a job teaching in an immersion classroom. The failure rate of the test was 80%.

Lastly, the intended social consequences of the FSE were to verify the proficiency of teachers in immersion classes with the aim of improving the quality of the teachers. However, the reading level of that section of the test was only a third to fourth-grade level; 80% of teachers both inside and outside the system failed the test; and lastly, teachers with non-Hispanic last names out-performed those with Hispanic last names. These three results mean the social consequences of FSE seem high and unjust to test-takers.

Reliability of the FSE was limited due to internal validity which was linked to the quality of recordings in the aural section and certain difficulties found with item construction or test formats. Inter- and intra-rater reliability was overlooked, yet scores correlated highly due mainly to the “halo effect” (Guerrero, 2001: 416) of one main criterion determining all the other criteria which resulted in very similar scores for test-takers.
Validity was questioned as the aural sections and reading sections focused on spelling and vocabulary, neither of which really evaluated listening or reading. In addition, questions are raised in response to the fact that the test-takers, who reportedly spoke Spanish in childhood and in their present day life, scored significantly lower than the other groups in the reading section. Perhaps this was because most of the reading section pertained to spelling and accentuation, or perhaps native speakers do not have adequate training in those areas whereas second language learners do, having had prior formal language training. In fact, the heavy weighting of grammar seemed to favour test-takers who had formally studied the language, not native speakers.

The lack of content relevance, the actual ability to teach in the second language, was a serious threat to the test's validity, as test-takers were never evaluated on their ability to perform the task for which they were trying to be certified. The change in standards for certification, along with the increase of grade levels which the certification encompassed, were both serious threats to the validity of the FSE.

Socially, as in all other areas, the FSE did not perform well, for it did not fulfill its intended purpose, which was to have proficient teachers in the bilingual classrooms of New Mexico. The lack of success in this area could be due to the lack of preparation for the test-takers or sub-standard equipment during testing. In any case, there were teachers who were not certified based on the results of FSE. Secondly, test-takers with Hispanic last names experienced difficulty passing the test.

Guerrero (2000) found the FSE had serious drawbacks to its use as a proficiency test for measuring the language proficiency of Spanish/English immersion teachers in New Mexico, U.S.A. However, the impact of the test on the various groups of stakeholders was not formally investigated. Guerrero (2000) used Messick’s framework in a way it had never been used, in a bilingual language context. Although Guerrero (2000) evaluated the values and social consequences of a test, which Wall et al. (1994) and Fulcher (1997) did not, there was not sufficient investigation. The FSE test does not adequately represent the bilingual
classroom and the language abilities that a certified teacher would need to possess and which the test needed to reflect. Another weakness in the study is the fact that Messick's framework does not appear to be adequate for language test evaluations, due to its inability to include the specific language situation in the evaluation of validity. The next study will consider a standardized proficiency test, which is marketed to a general population and is currently used at LS.

3.6 Test Decisions over Time: Tracking Validity Impact

The study by Fox (2004) examined the effectiveness of the placement test, Canadian Academic English Language (CAEL) Assessment, in evaluating the language threshold required by students who wish to do academic course work in a Canadian university. Students wishing to study at a university level, and who do not have English as a first language (or a specific score on a similar standardized test) are required to take the CAEL. Based on their CAEL score, they are either placed into only English language courses (if their score is very low) or in English language courses in conjunction with courses in their fields of study. The ratio of English courses to regular courses depends on the student's CAEL score. Following the placement test and assessment, students are placed into English language courses where the level of the course and the level of course material is predetermined and unbending; therefore correct placement is critical.

Some students with very low CAEL scores are required to complete English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses before gaining full access to their field of study courses. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to evaluate the predictive validity of CAEL. If a test score is questionable and cannot correctly predict what is needed to support the future success of a student in his field of study, then limiting academic study from those students based on their score is unjustified. The fact that students who do not perform well in EAP classes do not gain access to their field of study and often disappear from the university means that there are no later test scores to support the initial score on CAEL. Therefore, the EAP teachers were seen as a group that could possibly supply evidence of validation on the following research questions: 1) how effective are the decisions made by CAEL on language
threshold (the level of language required to engage in and sustain an academic workload); 2) how effective are the decisions on projecting learning trajectory; and 3) what factors affect the learning trajectory.

Participants were composed of two different groups of stakeholders: EAP teachers with past ESL teaching experience and education, and CAEL Assessment test-takers/EAP students. Student participants were 60% male, between the ages of 18-35 and the majority had first languages of Arabic, Cantonese, or Mandarin. Fields of study for these students were usually engineering, computer science, or business, and 85% were attempting study at the undergraduate levels.

The instruments of the study included: 1) a questionnaire designed for the study, which inquired about misplaced students, and was answered by EAP teachers; 2) detailed information about each EAP course; 3) for each test-taker, the completed sections (listening, reading, writing, speaking) of CAEL; 4) the sociological information gathered as part of the test and test scores; and 5) a post-test questionnaire designed for the study.

Questionnaires, answered by EAP teachers, helped to identify students misplaced from their CAEL score. These same EAP teachers also agreed to subsequent follow-up interviews. A theoretical sample of test-takers, whose test scores on CAEL matched the identified misplaced sample by EAP teachers, was created. This provided another list of test-takers with similar scores who had not been identified as misplaced by EAP teachers. Lastly, a random sample of test-takers was compared to the teacher-identified sample.

Results of the EAP questionnaires indicated three areas teachers consistently discussed in describing misplaced students: 1) the notion of superficial fluency (students who first appear to be fluent, but actually are not, especially with academic reading and writing); 2) students’ inability to understand academic requirements; and 3) attitudes toward EAP courses.
Results of the data-generated sample of students not identified as misplaced by the EAP teachers, was compared to the students identified as misplaced by EAP teachers and these results showed that the groups performed differently. The majority from the first group performed well in both EAP courses and regular program courses, but the other group performed at below average in those same classes. There were, however, other differences between the groups in terms of gender, first language, and attendance. In terms of gender, three males were identified as misplaced by EAP teachers compared to one female; although, test-taker population was 60% male and 40% female. Secondly, there were also a higher number of Arabic speakers classified as misplaced by teachers than any other language. Arabic speakers were 19% of test-takers, but made up 42% of test-takers classified as misplaced. However, the largest difference was in the area of course attendance. The data-generated group had perfect attendance and good grades in their regular field of study courses. The teacher identified misplaced group had absent rates of nearly 30% across the board with rates actually climbing to 76% and grades of C or lower in EAP and regular classes.

From these results, the study focused on 10 students who had been placed in EAP classes based on CAEL scores. They had participated in those classes and had been identified by the EAP teacher as misplaced. These ten were then paired with ten similar students from the generated sample. Through this matching four students, (two from the test-takers and two from the sample), were found to be under-performing in EAP and regular classes although they had not been identified as misplaced. All four had the same EAP teacher so the study focused in on her perspective on misplacement.

The teacher interview led to conclusions about the two students (both with a first language of Arabic and 20-22 years in age) in terms of oral and written fluency. In both cases, fluency seemed suitable until students were asked to produce work on academic subjects. They then had difficulties in paraphrasing or summarizing a text as the basis for their own writing. When required to generate their own personal productions they appeared capable, but when asked to incorporate work from other sources into their own productions,
they could not. In addition, neither student was able to follow oral instructions. Socio-culturally, one student seemed to be having problems adjusting to a new country and absenteeism seemed to be a part of these social difficulties. The other did not have these particular problems; however, he was unable to deal with the academic workload. The other two sample-generated students, who had not been identified as misplaced but had scored similarly on CAEL, were also not succeeding. Their situations were explained by motivation and attitude.

Following these details, gleaned from the interviews, the study then focused on how the sections of CAEL were evaluated. The re-marking, or re-evaluating, of a sample of tests by CAEL raters found discrepancy between the lower end scores, especially in the writing section. As the writing criterion was evaluated higher in the final score than other sections, over-scoring (in the form of under-specifying the importance of superficial fluency) in this section often led to higher overall scores and then misplacement.

Comparison of a random sample of test-takers, including both the teacher identified misplaced sample and the data-generated sample, were analysed. Analysis between the three groups showed significant differences in listening and writing ability. The random sample of test takers out-performed the other two in these two areas. Post-test questionnaires provided little useful information; the low number of respondents was given as one possible reason. A case analysis of a cross section of test scores showed a relationship between listening comprehension and academic performance. Listening comprehension is crucial in the handling of course work. The case analysis also pointed out the link between attendance and attitude (going to classes and doing the course work) and the frequency of retaking CAEL and absenteeism (not doing the class work and hoping to test out of the need for EAP classes). When students did attend classes and did the class work but still failed, questions of academic adjustment or acculturation were suggested as possible reasons.

In conclusion, how effective are the decisions made by CAEL? They are generally effective in suggesting the need for EAP classes. Secondly, of those who were misplaced,
how effective was CAEL in projecting the learning trajectory? In general, students who
attend classes and do the required work succeed. When students fail, failure could be traced
to over-scoring in the writing section of the test, which failed to consider superficial fluency.
Failure was also attributed to the undervaluing of the listening component in scoring. Lastly,
it was found that any score on any section of CAEL at the lowest levels indicates potential
problems. The last research question asked what factors influence the learning trajectory.
The study found that attendance and participation are crucial, but socio-cultural factors, such
as acculturation can also undermine academic success.

In the Fox (2004) study, attendance was a major factor in a student’s failure or success
in university; therefore, the motivation behind this absenteeism needs to be further explored.
The study had a small number of participants and placed a great deal of emphasis on one
teacher’s input in an interview situation. More participants could have meant more teachers
with misplaced students. This would have resulted in interviews with a number of teachers,
rather than just one, and could have uncovered other factors that could have possibly led to
failure. In-class observation of students in those EAP classes might have also brought forth
other reasons for failure. The extent of the investigation and the variety of methodological
instruments used are strong aspects and are models for this research study.

3.7 Conclusions

The study by Wall et al. (1994), which examined an in-house placement test, had as a
weakness, the fact that subjects were not required to take language classes after being
identified as needing them. This meant that follow-up was difficult and concurrent validity
was compromised. Positively, it was the first empirical study of the validity of a placement
test and has led the way to future investigation. Fulcher (1997) tried to overcome the
problems encountered by Wall et al (1994) with the evaluation of another in-house
placement test. Unfortunately, concurrent validity was also weak in his study. This fact can
be partly explained by the small number of participants, which in fact hindered both studies.
In-house placement tests often have small populations, which result in less than conclusive
findings. Also neither of these two studies considered the ethical use of the consequences of
test use on stakeholders. Both Hirai (2002) and Moritoshi (2001) evaluated the TOEIC, a standardized proficiency test. The results from both studies raised questions, not because of small sample size or test content in general, but because there was a lack of a direct measure of the two productive skills of writing and speaking and an inability to make claims about those abilities. Again, the TOEIC has not been evaluated in terms of the ethical considerations of using the test nor has either of these two studies considered test impact on stakeholders. Guerrero (2000) did consider the ethical consequences of testing when he evaluated a proficiency test, which targeted the particular population of potential public school second language Spanish teachers in New Mexico, U.S.A. Population size was not a problem, but the results of this proficiency test showed weakness in the areas of content and social consequences. However, no follow-up study was carried out regarding the long term impact of using the test on those stakeholders. Lastly, Fox (2004) carried out an impact study on the use of the CAEL, a placement test, as a predictor of academic success and learning trajectories. She found that the CAEL provided evidence to support an argument for validity of the inferences drawn from the test, and, with some fine-tuning, of success and learning, but other aspects such as class attendance and socio-cultural integration could interfere.

The results of the preceding studies vary greatly in terms of the types of tests, test populations, test purposes, and test settings. All have attempted to empirically evaluate the validity of a test in a second language context, and all used an appropriately designed test for the desired use. There were weaknesses on various points, but there were also some very strong elements. However, none of these studies used a test for a purpose other than what it was originally designed; for example using a proficiency test scores to make placement choices. Although the Fox (2004) study investigated the impact of a placement test, the researcher did not carry out the study at LS in order to investigate the impact of the use of the TOEIC as a placement test on stakeholders nor did she employ Test Usefulness as the lens with which to investigate impact.
It appears that there has been little or no examination of the impact of using the TOEIC. There has been no study found which has investigated the impact of using a proficiency test, for placement purposes on teachers and students and it certainly has not been explored at LS. Therefore, the following research questions were proposed:

**First, when the TOEIC, a proficiency test, is used as a placement tool at LS what is the impact on teachers and students?**

**Second, what are the extent, area and direction of the impact felt on the stakeholders?**
CHAPTER IV METHODOLOGY

This study investigates the concept of impact, which according to Bachman and Palmer (1996) is the consequence of test-taking on the individual, institution and/or society. It investigates, specifically, the use of TOEIC scores for placement purposes on the students and teachers of LS. The following chapter will first outline the historical aspects of the chosen research design, followed by the study’s participants, who include students; teachers; and the pedagogical advisor of the language school. This chapter will then describe the instruments and procedures of both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study, but it first focuses on Phase I of study. The rationale and description for both teacher and student questionnaire design and the choice of topics are then discussed, in addition to verification and piloting procedures of both questionnaires. Lastly, the procedures to be carried out during the completion of the questionnaires are reported. Once the data is collected, the data transcription procedures and their verification are outlined.

4.1 The History of Mixed Models

The philosophical underpinnings of the two major points of view toward approaches to research (qualitative or quantitative methods) involve the paradigms of positivism, post-positivism, pragmatism and constructivism (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 1998: 3). A quick overview positions the positivists as believing all knowledge is based on observable fact, and those facts come together to form reality, of which there is only one. In addition, inquiries are not limited to a particular time and place, nor are the generalizations which are generated. Lastly, in inquiry, there can be complete separation between the investigator and the investigation and any associated values with an emphasis on deductive logic and hypotheses. It was dissatisfaction with the rigidity of positivism that led to the creation and rise of post-positivism.

Post-positivism differed from positivism for it believed the chosen hypotheses influence the investigation and the values of the investigators. For post-positive thinkers, the
concept of reality was constructed so that the researcher remained neutral in order to prevent values or biases from having undue influence on the work (Mertens, 2005: 11). Complete separation of investigation and the influence of reality were seen as possible. Both positivism and post-positivism philosophies underlie quantitative inquiry and experimental methods.

From another perspective, came constructivism. It was based on the belief that reality is multiple and socially constructed, and is confined to a particular time and place. There is also the belief that in inquiry there cannot be a complete separation between the investigator and the investigation or any associated values. Researchers, therefore, should try to understand the complexity of reality from the point of view of the persons most affected, with an emphasis on inductive logic and grounded theory (Mertens, 2005). The constructivist philosophy underlies qualitative inquiry.

A positivist approach to methodological choice within a study centres on the importance of controlling the setting of an experiment with the aim of ensuring internal validity. Positivists utilise quantitative data methods in order to generalize results from one inquiry to the population at large and to confirm or refute hypotheses. The research inquiry must also be able to be replicated at a later date as closely as possible.

On the other hand, a constructivist approach centres experimentation in natural settings, and is concerned with external validity. Qualitative methods are used in the analysis of the data to determine its credibility within a particular setting; one common method of determining credibility is through thick and rich descriptions (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 1998). These descriptions provide the evidence “for the transferability of interpretations and conclusions” (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 1998: 90). The research inquiry must be understood and explained as completely and deeply as possible within one particular context, not generalized.
Lying between strict adherence to the conceptional underpinnings of post-positivism and constructivism is a third paradigm, known as pragmatism (Mertens, 2005). This paradigm allows for the compatibility and combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods based on the researcher and the study’s particularities. Pragmatists believe in employing “whatever philosophical and/or methodological approach works for the particular research problem under study” (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 1998: 5). “Quantitative and qualitative methods are, in this model, merely tools for researchers to use as and when appropriate” (Gorard, 2004: 4).

Pragmatists therefore employ mixed methods designs, which include both quantitative and qualitative methods within a single study. These methods are often used in complex educational or social contexts (Mertens, 2005) where background theory is minimal. This particular research study has both criteria. First, the particularly complex educational context of LS and its stakeholders and second, the lack of prior research in the area of standardized proficiency tests, the TOEIC, used as a placement tool lead to the adoption of a mixed method design.

The superiority of one research approach or method over another is no longer a current debate. Today, it is possible to investigate using either one of two methodologies or a mix of the two throughout various stages of the research study. The inquiry’s focus determines the approach to be used. However, the two approaches do have certain inherent weaknesses. An over reliance of statistical data and failure to include more qualitative type data are complaints against quantitative methods. Accusations of providing alternative perspectives in findings, the expression of too much personal opinion or generalizations which are limited to individuals are some of the complaints against qualitative methods (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 2003: 65). Therefore, the popularity of mixed methods in education and social sciences has grown (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 2003: 169). Mixed methods not only reduce weaknesses of qualitative or quantitative methods, they can be useful in confirming findings from different sources (Creswell, 2003: 210). In order to benefit from the strengths of the
design of the study or type of investigation; the type of measurement or data collection; and the operations and the type of analysis and inference (qualitative or quantitative).

Tashakorri and Teddlie (2003) took the first component in Patton's (1990) framework, the design of the study, and divided it into two areas: confirmatory (a study which has a research hypothesis) or exploratory (a study with very general research questions). The second component, type of measurement or data collection, was divided into qualitative or quantitative data. The last component was divided into statistical analysis and inference or qualitative analysis and inference. These dimensions, within components, formed six different mixed model design studies. These six designs can be further varied by adding applications which can be either sequential (the use of a qualitative phase then a quantitative phase of a study or vice versa) or parallel/simultaneous in form (both qualitative and quantitative data collected at the same time with different groups of subjects). These eight designs include all possible combinations.

The design of this study will be Type VIII: Sequential Mixed Model Study (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 1998: 151) with more importance placed on the first of two phases of the study and two distinct phases of data collection and analysis, one following the other. The first phase of the study is quantitative in nature and is the focus of the study. Once the data is collected and treated, the second phase begins. The second phase of the study, of secondary importance, is qualitative and allows for deeper exploration and triangulation of the findings from the first phase.

4.2 The Research Design of the Study

The design of this research study was a mixed method sequential type with the quantitative phase of the study preceding the qualitative phase (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 2003). This type of design was chosen for several reasons. First, the study was exploratory in nature for it did not have a hypothesis. Second, there were two general research questions, which were: "When the TOEIC, a proficiency test, is used as a placement tool at LS what is
the impact on teachers and students?” and “What are the extent, area and direction of the impact felt on the stakeholders?” Third, data collection included both questionnaires and one-on-one interviews and qualitative and quantitative analysis phases. A detailed description of the study follows.

4.2.1 Participants

This study examined the impact of the use of the TOEIC on the stakeholders at LS. As the TOEIC is used as a placement tool for students wishing to enrol in an English as a second language course at the language school, stakeholders are students who must take the TOEIC test and teachers who teach those students English as a second language. The pedagogical advisor, a liaison between teacher and student, who deals with administrative issues, is also a stakeholder. Therefore, students, teachers, and the pedagogical advisor of the English second language classes at LS are the participants in this study.

At the planning stages of the study it was hoped that the participants who answered questionnaires in the first phase of the study would also agree to be interviewed for the second phase. This was not the case. The Ethics Committee of the University where the study was carried out did not allow the personal identification of students from intact classes to be gathered, and then kept for use at a later date. This meant that student participants varied in the two phases of the study so those who answered questionnaires would not be interviewed or vice versa.

4.2.1.1 Students

Participants were from among the approximately 1200 part-time or full-time LS students who study English as a second language during any particular session. These students were not necessarily enrolled in a particular program; graduate or undergraduate, for anyone meeting basic university entry requirements can take an English as a second language course, but more often than not, students were enrolled in a full-time program at the undergraduate level. The majority were born in the province where the study takes place,
and have French as a first language. The percentage of female and male resembles the general university population, which is approximately 55% female to 45% male. The majority of the students studied English as a second language in elementary school, secondary school, and in college.

Before attempting to fulfill their program’s second language requirement, all students must take the TOEIC. Once the test has been electronically corrected, the students are sent an e-mail. This e-mail informs them of their score on the test and gives them two other pieces of information. It tells them that their score has classified them as having acquired a particular course level, and therefore, they need to register in the next highest course, and this course level is listed. Based on the test scores, students can then register for the English as a second language course which corresponds to their test score. Together with the level indicated in the e-mail and the LS course schedule for the following session, students electronically place themselves into one section of the required course level.

With eight course levels in various time slots, there are approximately fifty English as a second language classes, ranging in size from about twenty-three to twenty-seven students, each session. These students were solicited as participants of the study. Of the fifty classes, reading courses are not four-skills, so the students in these classes were excluded from the study. The majority of student scores tend to score between 500-700 points on the TOEIC scale. This correlates with the third and fourth LS course levels which are the minimum second language requirement for most of the university’s departments; therefore, there are a large number of those courses. Approximately two thirds of all English classes (35 classes) are, in fact, sections of one of those three course levels. Due to extensive prior exposure to English, few students score into the two lowest course levels and as most program requirements are completed at the fourth or fifth course levels, there are fewer sections of the higher levels. As a result, the lowest course level sometimes cannot be offered due to low enrolment and the highest may only have one section or two sections per session. Therefore, the ideal situation of having a large number of subjects from all levels of
proficiency reflecting the full range of possible scores on the TOEIC, so as to have a representative sample, may not be feasible.

4.2.1.2 Teachers

Thirty-six instructors, who can be divided into two groups of: six full-time salaried employees and thirty part-time sessional employees work as teachers of English as a second language at LS. During a typical session, all the full-time and about twenty of the part-time teachers will be employed. Full-time teachers teach four classes at two different levels per regular session. Part-time teachers can teach up to four classes in rare cases, but most often teach two per session, often at two different levels.

Teachers all have some experience in teaching English as a second language at the high school, college, or university level. At LS, full-time teachers have an average of 70 points of seniority with 1 point equal to having taught one 45-hour course. Part-time teachers have an average of 44 points of seniority. The minimum education of all teachers is a university Bachelor's degree, but approximately 50% also carry Master's degree and/or the beginnings of Doctoral studies in various related domains. Two thirds of the teachers are female and their average age is in the late thirties to early forties. The majority of teachers were born in Canada, but not in Quebec. Most speak English as a first language and French as a second. All of the English as second language teachers at LS were solicited for this study.

4.2.1.3 Pedagogical Advisor

The pedagogical adviser, for the English sector of LS, is typically a staff teacher who has applied for and received a one-to three-year mandate for this position. This person works under the guidance of the Director of LS, as the leader of the teachers and as a counsel to students. Although various clerical tasks are required, the duties are, largely, pedagogical including: teacher and student co-ordination, course design, and evaluation. This person is in
She was included in the study and considered as part of the teacher sample in the qualitative phase of the study.

The study gathered information from teachers and students of LS as the basis of exploring the impact of the TOEIC on these particular stakeholders. There were two groups of participants, students and teachers of English, including the pedagogical advisor, at LS. In the first phase of the study, questionnaires were answered by teachers who had been offered classes in Fall 2007. There are roughly 36 teachers each session, it was not expected that they all would answer questionnaires, but they were all solicited. Questionnaires were also answered by a representative sample of the student population who were enrolled in English as a second language classes at the language school for the Fall session 2007. The second phase of the study, the interviews, also included both students and teacher participants. Although the same group of teachers from Phase I would be solicited for interviews in the second phase, the student participants would possibly differ as a new group of students from the Winter 2008 session would be solicited.

4.3 Instruments of Phase I Quantitative Data Collection

As previously discussed, this study used a mixed methods approach, involving both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The benefit of such a choice is that this approach allows for the triangulation of data, associated with qualitative data collection, which strengthens the support for valid and quality inferences or the “credibility of results” (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 2003: 70). Therefore, this study has two distinct data collection and data analysis phases, one following the other. The first and main phase, Phase I, is quantitative. The following section will describe both the teacher and the student questionnaire design and choice of topics and questions. Lastly, verification and pilot testing procedures are outlined. After the collection and analysis of Phase I data, Phase II, which is qualitative in nature and derived from the findings in the first phase, begins.
4.3.1 Choice of Instruments

Among the possible data collection instruments, the questionnaire format held promise as it has its strengths in: 1) the ability to collect data from a large number of participants within the restraints of time and money; 2) anonymity, uniformity, and fairness of questions and answers; and 3) straightforwardness in data collection and treatment (Gillham, 2000). These three strengths were important considerations in choosing a data collection tool for a number of reasons. Firstly, the study would solicit approximately 1200 students and some 30 teachers to answer questionnaires, so an instrument which would allow for the easy treatment of a large number of participants was necessary. This study was also part of a doctoral thesis; therefore, there were constraints of both time and money. Secondly, it was important to have anonymity, uniformity, and fairness of questions and answers. This was an important aspect as there were a large number of participants, who were heterogeneous and completed the questionnaires at different times. The questionnaire needed to be fair and just for all participants, so the collected data would provide a quality sample of the population. Lastly, the questionnaire format allowed for ease of coding and analysis using computer programs. As this research study was not funded, this was an important aspect for the researcher. Although the questionnaire format has its strengths, there are also drawbacks.

Some of the major problems of the questionnaire format are: 1) quality control of questions; 2) insufficient return of questionnaires; 3) motivation of the participants; and 4) diversity of answers. Gillham (2000) states that when working with a questionnaire, data collected are only as good as the individual questions; therefore, the quality of each question was of the utmost importance. To attempt to overcome these drawbacks each question of the questionnaire was checked at every stage of creation and piloting for clarity, precision, along with logical and developmental position in the progression in the questionnaire. Secondly, the failure of participants to answer and return questionnaires could be a huge problem. To combat this, respondents answered questionnaires inside classes, with the teacher as the solicitor of participants, and respondents were not able to leave the class with the
questionnaire. In addition, the large number of potential participants in this study could support a substantial loss of respondents. Thirdly, in order to motivate the participants to spend their time answering the questions, it was necessary to keep the questionnaire short; therefore, the teacher questionnaire had only thirty-two questions and the student questionnaire had thirty-eight. The topics raised in the questionnaire pertained to the participants' real-life experiences. Therefore, respondents should have had opinions on the topics found in the questionnaire, which provided motivation for them to share those opinions. Fourthly, choosing semi-structured questions in the questionnaire hopefully would have overcome the weakness of too much diversity in the answers. This particular questionnaire format allowed for both easier data analysis, for the number of possible answers was limited, while offering the participants the possibility of adding an unlisted response to a question (by having them write in their personal answer to a question in an "Other" category).

Although there were disadvantages to the questionnaire format as an instrument in data collection, there were also many advantages. Considering both sides of the argument and the fact that the disadvantages were able to be tempered, the advantages of a questionnaire format outweighed the disadvantages. Therefore, the questionnaire format was the chosen instrument for the quantitative phase of this study.

For the second phase of the study, the qualitative portion, interviews were chosen as they are well-known (therefore, interviewees are easily solicited), easily carried out (require only space and a recording device) and allow for in-depth coverage of a variety of topics (researcher can probe and yet cover many topics). As this second phase of the study explored only a certain number of specifically chosen topics in order to have information from a theoretical sample of students and teachers, the small number of interviewees was not anticipated to be a limitation to the study (Dörnyei, 2007).
4.3.2 Questionnaire Design

Following the adoption of the instrument for the quantitative phase of the study, the questionnaire itself was designed. At this stage, if possible, an existing questionnaire, which investigated a similar phenomenon, would have been used. The questionnaire could have been in its original format or modified to suit the context of the particular study. However, as it has already been stated, this researcher did not find another study which investigated the use of a standardized proficiency test for placement purposes; therefore, there was no existing questionnaire which could be used or modified. As a result, the researcher designed and developed the questionnaire for this particular study.

The study’s research question examined the impact of using a standardized proficiency test as a placement tool on teachers and students. In investigating this question, there were three topics to be covered: the test itself, the TOEIC; the particular placement practices at LS, and the impact of these two factors on students and teachers. These topics were the focus of all the questions in the questionnaire portion of the study and were explored in a number of different categories of questions.

After choosing the questionnaire as the means of gathering data in the quantitative phase of the study, the specific categories of questions needed to be identified. A number of authors focus on methodological issues; however, Patton’s (1987) six categories of questions for investigation were clear and well-suited to this study. The categories involve questions related to: experience, opinion, feelings, knowledge, sensory experience, and demographical background (Patton, 1987). All of these categories served as the basis of question formation; however, the sensory category was excluded from the teacher version of the questionnaire for teachers did not have the TOEIC test-taking sensory experience.
4.3.3 Description and Rationale of Questions in Teacher Questionnaire

The questionnaire format contained questions that were of the closed and semi-closed type with selected and ranked responses, along with a small number of open questions without listed answers. There were two reasons for the majority of questions being of the closed type. First, with the large number of participants who would answer the questionnaires, closed and semi-closed questions made for easier analysis. Open questions would be more difficult to analyse because of the variety of possible answers. Second, as there had already been direct contact with the field where the research was carried out; the most common answers were able to be anticipated. If however, a participant wished to voice an answer which had not been anticipated, he could always add the answer in the “Other” category. In this way, the participant was not disadvantaged from the closed question format where none of the listed answers was the desired choice, for the participant usually had the freedom to give another answer. In addition to giving the participants a choice within closed question format, the open questions, which were limited in number as to not affect data analysis, allowed the participants to voice their opinion freely on certain topics.

The questionnaire was the chosen instrument for the quantitative phase of data collection; all questions related to the topics of: demographic background of the participant; the standard proficiency test, the TOEIC; placement practices at LS, re-evaluation practices, abilities in the various skill areas of language learning; and the impact of placement practices on students and teachers. All questions focused on the experience, opinions, feelings, knowledge, sensory events, or demographical background of the participants on those topics.

Specifically, the teacher questionnaire examined teachers' knowledge of the testing context; their opinions of the re-evaluation processes of students after the TOEIC placement; opinions of student abilities; the needs of students who were considered to be misplaced; teachers' personal feelings toward students who are considered misplaced and the teachers’
factual demographical information. The thirty-two questions found in the teacher's questionnaire were designed with these five topics and categories as the foundation; therefore, the following sections are divided similarly.

4.3.3.1 Teacher Questionnaire Questions 1-6

The first section of the teacher questionnaire contained five questions, Questions 1-6, which focused on the number of times a teacher has given a particular course; knowledge of the teachers at LS about the TOEIC; and the different departmental English second language requirements at UU. Answers to questions in this section were either "yes" or "no", or multiple-choice in form. Responses to Question 1 outlined teacher experience for each course level. Questions 2, 3, and 4 all sought to determine how familiar teachers were with the TOEIC followed by a variety of selected responses. The last two questions of this section, 5 and 6, asked about the knowledge teachers have about departmental second language requirements. Question 5 was a "yes" or "no" type answer; however, Question 6 required respondents to check the appropriate requirement for students in certain programmes. Questions 1, 3 and 4 required the checking of more than one response to completely answer the questions.

Question 1 asked teachers to identify the number of times they had already taught each of the eight course levels at LS. The course name and number identified each level. Listed responses were: "0 times", "1-2 times" and "3 or more times". These responses covered all possible answers. The response, "Three or more times", was believed to include the minimum number of times (three) the same course needed to be given by a teacher to be considered experienced for the level. This question ascertained the course level at which teachers had the most experience. Question 2 asked if the respondent had already seen a version of a TOEIC. If they answered "yes" to this question, then Questions 3 and 4 pertained to the TOEIC itself. Question 3 asked about the type of questions those participants had seen or heard. The listed choices included: multiple-choice; fill-in-the-blank; short and long answer; and matching. Question 4 asked about the skill areas included in the TOEIC test they had seen or heard. The listed answers included: reading and listening
comprehension, writing and speaking production. These two questions were used to confirm the answer to Question 2. If a respondent answered affirmatively to Question 2 (he had seen or heard a copy of a TOEIC), then the following two questions should be correct. The correct answer in Question 3 was that only multiple-choice questions were employed and in Question 4 that only reading and listening comprehension were evaluated in the TOEIC that the respondent had seen or heard. However, if the respondent answered affirmatively in Question 2, that he had seen or heard a copy of a TOEIC, yet failed to answer Questions 3 and 4 correctly, we may ascertain that the respondent thought a good teacher should be familiar with the placement test and so he answered affirmatively; although, he had not ever seen or heard a TOEIC. If, on the other hand, the respondent answered negatively to Question 2, that he had never seen or heard a TOEIC, he skipped to Question 5 and did not answer Questions 3 and 4. The last two questions, 5 and 6, of this section, asked about the knowledge the teachers had about departmental second language requirements. Question 5, which required a “yes” or “no” answer, questioned whether teachers had knowledge of the existence of departmental requirements for programs at UU. If the answer was no, the respondent skipped to Question 7. If the answer was yes, Question 6 required respondents to check the appropriate requirement for students in certain programs. The four programs chosen for this question were: Administration, Communication, Pharmacy, and Engineering. They were chosen because these programs had language requirements that represented all the possible variations of requirements (a certain course level or a certain number of courses) and represented the three major areas of programs (Science, Arts and Administration) offered at UU. Teacher knowledge of students’ second language requirements was investigated as it proved to be an important element in the interaction between teacher and a misplaced student.

Together the five questions in this section sought to ascertain the teachers’ knowledge about the TOEIC and departmental language requirements. They were included in the questionnaire for it was important to know if the teachers had knowledge of the structure of the TOEIC and the context of the population of the English sector of the language school. Correct answers by respondents in this section confirmed the knowledge and therefore the credibility of the respondent for incorrect answers were easily identified. Without
confirmation of the respondent's knowledge of the subject area, the answers he or she supplied in the next sections of the questionnaire could be questioned.

4.3.3.2 Teacher Questionnaire Questions 7-16

The second section, which included Questions 7-16, asked for the opinions of teachers about the re-evaluation process of students after placement in language classes based on the TOEIC scores. This series of questions, once again, used “yes” or “no” and multiple-choice type answers. This group of questions were progressive in their nature, as one answer led logically to the next question. This was an important feature of this series as topics and questions became more complex and demanding more from the respondent in terms of responses.

Questions 7 to 11 focused on the re-evaluation process, which usually takes place in the first class of any English course at the language school. Question 7 asked if the teacher carried out re-evaluation; Question 8 asked if activities were used to re-evaluate students; Question 9 and 10 asked about the types and frequencies of activities or factors involved in re-evaluation; and lastly, Question 11 asked if the re-evaluation process was used by the teacher to identify students who needed to move to other course levels. Questions 7, 8 and 11 had “yes” or “no” type answers. Question 9 and 10 asked respondents to check one or more than one answer from among listed responses. Possible answers, in Question 9, included the four skill areas and the areas of pronunciation and grammar. Question 10 listed other factors, which could be part of the re-evaluation process, for example: knowledge from other English classes; previous English language experience; students' overall proficiency; and student claims of misplacement by the placement tool. The question asked the teacher to identify the frequency of the use of these factors. In both Questions 9 and 10, there was an “Other” option, if a respondent desired to add another answer, which was not listed.

These five questions (Questions 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11) supplied information about how each teacher handled the re-evaluation process of students after placement by the TOEIC
scores. First, it had to be determined if re-evaluation actually occurs; although teachers are required to re-evaluate; there is no follow-up by administration. Secondly, if there was a re-evaluation process carried out by teachers, the types of practices that are utilized needed to be identified, for there are no standard practices put in place by the language school. Therefore, the answers to these four questions clarified the process of re-evaluating students who were placed in classes by TOEIC scores, and from this knowledge, the effects of such evaluation could be investigated.

The second part of this series of questions related to the consequences of the re-evaluation process as identified in Questions 7-11. Questions 12-16 asked respondents to identify the number of students who, after in-class re-evaluation, are usually identified as needing to be moved to either a lower or a higher level and the number of those students who actually move to the teacher proposed course level. Question 12 asked if the teacher usually identifies students who need to change level after the re-evaluation process and required a “yes” or “no” response. Question 13 asked respondents to indicate the number of students usually identified as needing to change level after re-evaluation. Question 14 asked if the majority of changes are for lower or higher level courses so teachers had only two possible responses: “a higher course level” or “a lower course level”. Question 15 asked how many of the students, identified as needing to move to a higher level course, typically change course level and lastly, Question 16 inquired into the number of students who typically change to a lower course level. Questions 13, 14, 15 and 16 had selected responses, but there was only one possible answer for each question. The answers to Questions 13, 15 and 16 all corresponded to numbers of students; therefore, the range of answers offered in these questions ranged from 0-10, which represented from 0-45% in a class of 25 students, a large enough range that all possibilities were included.

These five questions (Questions 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) supplied information about the consequences of the re-evaluation process. Re-evaluation done by the teacher after placement using the TOEIC scores could result in certain students showing proficiency in one or many skill areas which is higher or lower than the average for that particular course.
level. These students are then considered misplaced in the opinion of the teacher. This section of the questionnaire wished to determine the possibility and the amount of misplacement occurring due to the use of the TOEIC scores. This series of questions also led respondents to the next section, which investigated the effects or the impact of student misplacement.

4.3.3.3 Teacher Questionnaire Questions 17-26

The next section of the questionnaire included Questions 17-26. This series of questions wished to identify the opinions and feelings of the teachers about the misplacement of students and the in-class and outside of class impact of those misplaced students who, although identified as needing to be moved, stayed in the level that the TOEIC score indicated. As the questions inquired into opinions and feelings, most answers were multiple-choice in format; although, there were also yes-no type answers. The possible answers, in the multiple-choice questions, referred to the frequency or the intensity of an activity. Possible answers referring to the frequency of an activity were: “never”, “sometimes”, “often” or “always”, while answers referring to the intensity of an activity are: “a lot”, “some”, “very little” and “none”. The four-response option, without a middle choice, was chosen as it offered simplicity (having one less answer) without a loss of results. In this type of question, there was no “Other” option. The choice of using such a rating scale was because “the method is simple, versatile, and reliable.” (Dörnyei, 2003: 36). Rated responses of this type were easy to understand, generally well-known, easily adapted to a variety of topics, simple to code and interpret. This last series of questions was the most difficult part of the questionnaire in terms of the topic and the choice of response. For these two reasons, it was placed near the end of the questionnaire. Respondents should have been familiar with the format of the questionnaire and able to adapt to questions, which demanded more thought, both in the topic itself and in the response. Although it was the hardest section for the respondent, due to the type of response required, it was also the most important part of the questionnaire as it delved into the issue at the heart of this study: the consequences or impact of misplacement when using the TOEIC scores as a placement tool in the English language classrooms of the language school.
Question 17 inquired into the factors that contribute to students, despite having been identified as misplaced by the re-evaluation procedure, remaining in the level they were initially placed by their TOEIC scores. There were six listed factors, all of which pertained to a student’s personal reasons, administrative concerns or the completion of previous course level. There was also an “Other” option, if none of the listed factors was adequate. The possible answers reflected the frequency (“never”, “sometimes”, “often”, or “always”) at which these factors influenced their decision in remaining in the initial course where they were placed or changing course levels. Questions 18 and 19 asked if the misplaced students required extra support either in or outside the classroom. Both questions had “yes” or “no” answers as these questions led the respondents to the next question. Question 20 required respondents to identify the quantity (“a lot”, “some”, “a little” or “very little”) of extra support a teacher most often gave a misplaced student at the various course levels. This question was divided into the four groupings, each included two of the eight course levels of the the language school. The first grouping included the two lowest levels; the second included the third and fourth course level; the third included the fifth and sixth course levels; and the last was made of the two highest course levels. Each grouping had the same subsections: help with grammar, reading, listening, writing, speaking, and pronunciation. There was also a statement, which read: “I have never taught this level” and allowed respondents to not respond if they were inexperienced at that particular level. This question was important as it highlighted the common weaknesses in the proficiency of misplaced students, according to teachers, within the various course levels. Question 21 required a “yes” or “no” answer and asked if the teacher’s extra support typically brings the student up to the proficiency level required to pass the course level. Question 22 asked about the number of misplaced students who remain in the initial course where they were placed and yet do not achieve the required 60% to pass the course. The possible answers were listed in terms of numbers of students and represented from 0-45% of a class of 25 students. Question 23 asked respondents about which aspects of the misplaced student’s second language were responsible for the failing grade. The respondents could select a response among: reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, pronunciation, and the “Other” option. Question 24 asked the teacher to indicate the extent (“a lot”, “some”, “a little” or “very little”) to which the various factors are usually used in considering if a teacher grants a passing grade to a
misplaced student who failed to accumulate the required 60%. There were eight headings, plus an “Other” option, which included the amount of improvement; work done; outside support sought; participation by student; attendance in the course; overall proficiency; and negative consequences for the student.

The last two questions in this series and in the questionnaire asked the respondent to give personal answers to open questions. Open questions allow the respondent to comment freely, without the constraint of the selected responses. The respondents had a half of a page on which to answer each question. The first question, Question 25, asked the respondent to describe, from their point of view, the behaviour of the typical misplaced student in the classroom. The last question, Question 26, asked the respondent to describe his own attitude toward the misplaced student. These two questions gave a view of the classroom dynamic and the impact of misplacement between the teacher and misplaced student within the classroom from the teacher’s perspective. These two questions potentially offer interesting comments, which could be further explored in the second and qualitative phase of the study.

The teachers’ opinion and feelings about the effects of student misplacement were included in the questionnaire for it was the goal of this research study to ascertain if, what type and to what extent impact from misplacement occurs. This section should provide answers about the choice of the misplaced student to remain in course levels, which are judged inappropriate by the teacher. When a misplaced student remains, it is important to know if they typically require extra help from the teacher, and also what kind of help and in which skill areas. From these responses, information about the extra resources required from the teacher will be known. After employment of the resources by the teacher, the next questions asked if there were positive results in terms of the students’ proficiency. In other words, do the extra resources give tangible results? If they do not, the next question asked about the possible reasons. Lastly, the two open questions were used to finish the questionnaire by allowing the teachers to voice their opinions freely while focusing on misplacement in terms of both student and teacher. It was hoped that these two questions would provide interesting comments that could be followed up in the qualitative or second phase of the study.
4.3.3.4 Teacher Questionnaire Questions 27-32

Questions of fact, pertaining to the demographical background (sex; first and second language; age; educational and teaching experience) of the teachers, constituted the last six questions and sought to describe the respondents. This series of questions was factual, straightforward, and direct, as were the answers. The demographical questions ended the questionnaire for two reasons. First, if such questions began the questionnaire, they could possibly bore the respondent, and secondly, as they were personal questions, they could be perceived as intrusive before a rhythm of questioning and answering has been established (Dörnyei, 2003). After the respondent is comfortable with the format and content of a questionnaire, he is more likely to give demographical information.

Questions 27, 28, and 29 were the typical demographical questions, which helped to describe the teachers at LS. The first three multiple-choice type questions, the sex, first language and age of the respondent, used a simple selected response type of answer which is a good choice when the possible answers are as predictable and simple as these first questions. Question 27 was answered in one of two ways, female or male. The next question, first language, had English and French as listed choices. There was also the possibility of answering the question by marking the "Other" option and then writing in the desired response. The third question, age, gave ranges of ages starting at 25 years. This choice was made in considering that teachers are required to have the minimum of 2/3 of a Masters program completed or 5 years of pertinent experience; therefore, 25 years is usually the minimum age one can begin to work at the language school. The upper range of ages ended with the choice of 60+ as most teachers take retirement at this age, so all possible answers were included. This basic information provided a description of teachers at the language school.

The next three multiple-choice questions, Questions 30, 31, and 32, were aimed at determining the teaching experience of the teachers at the language school. Once again, the
respondent used a simple selected response with which to answer, as the possible answers were highly predictable.

Question 30 asked the respondent to identify his or her highest educational level completed. The following question asked about the teaching experience of teachers outside of the language school, which was an important question for the vast majority of teachers work only part-time at the language school and often have full-time teaching positions at other institutions. If other pertinent teaching experience was not investigated, teachers may appear inexperienced when, in fact, they are only less experienced within the context of the language school. Question 32 sought to know the points of seniority accorded to the teacher by the language school. Every course of 45 hours, taught at LS as a regular teacher, equals one point of seniority. By knowing the number of points of seniority accorded, the teacher's teaching experience at the language school was known. These questions were necessary for very few points of seniority at the language school may still mean varied experience at similar institutions, and a large number of points, may represent extensive experience at only the language school. Therefore, the last two questions of this section worked as a unit describing the depth and breadth of the teachers' experience. This last section contained basic questions, which described the participant and the work experience inside and outside the language school. During the analysis phase of the study, answers to these questions may possibly provide important insight into differences or similarities between teachers and to the understanding of other answers and issues.

The answers to this teacher questionnaire sought to ascertain teachers' knowledge of the TOEIC and students' second language requirements; the re-evaluation process; impact on teachers of misplaced students; and demographic information of the teachers at the language school. The responses given supply information about the areas of interest and form the base from which the interview questions in the qualitative phase of the study will then be developed.
4.3.4 Verification of Teacher Questionnaire

After the teacher questionnaire was designed, but before its distribution, two individuals shared their expertise to the task of evaluating the questionnaire. In the last weeks of September 2007, one full-time lecturer at UU, who has vast experience conceiving and employing questionnaires, was asked to verify the questionnaire. He evaluated the questionnaire in terms of: question clarity; the level of correspondence between each question and its possible responses; grammatical correctness; physical layout of the questionnaire; and quality and ease of scoring for the researcher. A Master's student in Statistics at UU was also asked to be part of this evaluation process. She was asked to verify the scoring system of the questionnaires, especially in terms of the ease and quality of scoring for the researcher.

The two evaluators were each given copies of the questionnaire; time to read and make comments and then the following week the researcher met with them individually. Meetings took place in private locations and were recorded. The first of the two evaluators was told, while answering the questionnaire, to make note of any question that was unclear, did not fit with its possible responses or was grammatically incorrect. Both were asked to take note of the physical layout of the questionnaire; for example, physical placement of questions on the page; distance between questions and answers; and the distance between the possible answers themselves. Lastly, both were asked to scrutinize the scoring method to ensure answers would be easily discerned and coded from both the test-taker and the researcher's point of view.

During the recorded discussion with the first evaluator, the clarity of the directions, questions and possible answers was the first area of the questionnaire discussed. The direction section was deemed clear and concise and numbers were added to indicate each of the three types of questions found in the questionnaire, which would further highlight the fact that there were three types of questions (in the direction portion of the questionnaire).
All questions were judged to be clear; however, the order of possible answers in questions with scaled responses was discussed. After discussion, it was decided that possible answers in the scaled response questions would always be listed from the lowest frequency or quality to the highest ("not at all" to "a lot"). This change, it was hoped, would increase the ease of response for the test-taker and coding for the researcher. The place of the demographic questions of age; sex; first and second languages; educational background; and past work experience was also discussed. This evaluator brought to light the fact that demographic elements are best left for the end of the questionnaire for the following reasons. First, there is a higher rate of completion and less tedium with the questionnaire when the respondent is quickly engaged with the subject of the questionnaire. Secondly, there is less resistance to giving personal information at the end rather than at the beginning of the questionnaire (Dörnyei, 2007). For these reasons, the demographic questions were moved to the end of the questionnaire. The third area discussed was grammatical accuracy; however, in this area, no changes were discussed, nor made.

The second area of the questionnaire that was evaluated was the physical layout. Both evaluators were asked to comment on this aspect. In separate interviews, both commented on the benefits of legal-sized, rather than letter-sized paper, so the questionnaire would appear shorter. It was hoped more questionnaires would be answered if it appeared it could be answered quickly. This format change was completed before the printing process of the questionnaires. Both evaluators (one who was right-handed and the other who was left-handed) liked the proximity of the responses to the questions and the space available to answer, so no changes were made in this area.

The third area on which both evaluators were asked to comment was the scoring method. Both, in separate interviews, were concerned with the distance of the numbers, used in the scoring system, from the actual questions and responses. Although the distance was not expected to cause difficulties in answering the questionnaire, decreasing the distance could potentially make the coding easier. The distance, between the answer and its associated number used in the coding system, concerned both evaluators. These answers and
their numbers would need to be transcribed and such a large distance was feared to lead to transcription errors. Both evaluators suggested moving the coding system closer to the actual answers so it appeared to be part of the question/answer portion of the questionnaire rather than a separate system. This move would not affect the clarity of the questions or answers, yet this change was hoped to diminish potential errors in coding. These changes were carried out.

4.3.5 Description and Rationale of Questions in Student Questionnaire

The student questionnaire inquired into students’ demographical information; knowledge of the TOEIC; sensorial and experiential description of the testing experience; opinions of the use of the TOEIC for placement; and lastly, their feelings on the behaviour of students who are considered misplaced. The 39 questions, found on the student questionnaire, centred on these six categories.

4.3.5.1 Student Questionnaire Questions 1-13

Questions of fact, pertaining to the demographical background (sex, age, first and second language, past and present educational experience) of the students, constituted the first twelve questions and wished to describe the respondents. This series of questions was factual, therefore straightforward, and direct, as were the answers. The demographical questions began the questionnaire; their simplicity acted as a slow and easy introduction to the questionnaire’s format and established a way of responding (Gillham, 2000).

Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 were typical demographical questions whose answers helped to describe the students at LS. The first four questions, pertaining to the sex, age and first and second language of the respondent, used a simple selected response type of answer. It was a good choice, for these questions had highly predictable answers. Question 1, the respondent’s sex, had only two possible answers, either female or male. The second question, age, gave ranges of ages from which to choose an answer starting at 18 years (the
youngest age at which a student can typically arrive at university) and ending with 30+ which includes all possible ages. The third and fourth questions, which asked about the first and second languages of respondents, included Arabic, English, French, Spanish and “Other” as choices. These language choices, given in alphabetical order, covered the most common languages spoken by students in English classes at UU. A respondent, for whom these listed answers did not apply, would check the “Other” category and write in the language, which answered the question for that particular respondent.

The next three questions, Questions 5, 6 and 7, aimed at determining the respondent’s experience in previous English as a second language classes. Question 5 asked about the respondent’s English as a second language experience in the province’s elementary school context. The next question asked about the respondent’s English experience in secondary school and the last question targeted the English courses in the respondent’s collégial experience. Once again, the respondent used a simple selected response, either “yes” or “no” to answer all questions in this section.

The third group of questions in the demographic section of the student questionnaire inquired into the respondent’s current strengths and weaknesses in English and the activities most often engaged in by respondents. Question 8 and 9 asked the respondents to indicate their strongest and then their weakest skill area in English. Among the listed choices of: reading, writing, speaking, and listening, respondents indicated their choice. Question 10 asked respondents to identify the frequency (“never”, “sometimes”, “often”, and “always”) at which they carry out the ten activities that were listed. An “Other” category was offered. The activities generally related to one of the four skill areas and were specifically: reading; watching or listening to a variety of media; writing e-mails; and speaking to others in various situations (customers, friends). These three questions helped to further describe the respondent and his language habits.

The last series of the demographic section included Questions 11, 12 and 13 which focused on the educational status of the respondent. Question 11 asked the respondent to
identify the university degree he or she is currently working toward and the following question, Question 12, asked him to identify the program in which he was enrolled. The last question in this series asked which English as a second language course the respondent was currently enrolled. All the answers in this series were selected response type. Question 11 listed the three levels of post secondary diplomas attainable at UU, and listed them in ascending order from the Bachelor’s to the Doctorate. Question 12 alphabetically listed a variety of science and art programs offered at UU which represented the more popular and therefore larger programs. If the respondent was not able to find his program listed as a possible answer, there was the “Other” category in which he could write his choice. The last question, 13, listed all the English as a second language courses in which respondents could possibly be enrolled. The courses were listed from the lowest level to the highest.

The first four questions and answers in this series determined gender, sex, and the first and second languages of the respondent. All these basic questions helped to identify the demographical background of the students of English as a second language at the language school. The fifth, sixth and seventh answers established the respondent’s prior educational experience of English as a second language. These were important questions, which helped to complete the demographic background of the respondent’s second language history. Questions 8, 9 and 10 focused on the respondent’s current strengths and weaknesses of English and his most common language activities. Questions 11-13 established the respondent’s student-status in terms of: what degree, program and English language course they were enrolled. All of the four series of questions (1-4, 5-7, 8-10 and 11-13) in this first section of the student questionnaire sought to describe and supply insight into the differences or similarities between respondents. This first section contained basic demographic questions, yet may offer important information in identifying the misplaced, which might be brought to the fore during the analytical phase of the study.
4.3.5.2 Student Questionnaire Questions 14-21

The following section contained eight questions, which focused on the respondent’s knowledge and sensory experience of taking the TOEIC. This series of questions was divided into two sections. Questions 14, 15 and 16 asked about the respondent’s knowledge of language requirements and experience taking the TOEIC. The other section, which included Questions 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21, inquired into the experience of the test-taking itself and could perhaps shed light on possible reasons for misplacement.

Question 14 asked the respondent to identify his program’s English language requirement from among the list of possible responses. The selected responses, in this question, included all the possible language requirements for the various programs offered at UU. The answer to this question may possibly lead to the further identification of connections between student misplacement and their program of study. Yes-or-no type questions, Questions 15 and 16, asked about taking the TOEIC, which is the placement tool used at LS. All students should have taken this test; however, it needed to be ascertained that the respondent had, in fact, taken the test before the respondent could be asked to answer specific questions about the testing experience. If the respondents answered positively to Question 15, that they had taken the TOEIC, then Question 16 asked if the TOEIC was taken at UU. If the respondent answered no, that the TOEIC had been taken at another location, the questions pertaining to the testing experience at UU were skipped; therefore, the respondent skipped to Question 23. If the respondent answered yes to Question 15, then he continued with this series of questions.

This second series of questions in this section inquired into the possible elements, which may have resulted in the TOEIC score not being truly representative of the respondent’s language ability. Question 17 asked about the sound quality of the test recording, during the TOEIC test-taking session. The answers offered a scale with four choices (“excellent”, “satisfactory”, “poor” and “I don’t remember”) from which the
respondents had to choose. This four-point scale limited redundancy in choices, offered a neutral option, and allowed a respondent to not answer if he did not have a strong opinion (Gillham, 2000). This question was included in the questionnaire after an impromptu questioning of past test-takers showed complaints about the sound quality during the testing session. Question 18 examined the extent ("a lot", "a little", "very little", and "not at all") to which the respondent’s concentration was affected by various factors during the test-taking session. Respondents had six subsections (length of test, test format, recording quality, physical surroundings, stress, and movement in the testing room) and an “Other” category if they wish to offer a subsection of annoyances not already listed. Once again, this question may supply possible reasons for the TOEIC score not being truly representative of the respondent’s language ability. Question 19 asked the respondent to identify the percentage of answer guessing, from zero to more than 50%, that he or she did during the test taking session. ETS openly suggests and encourages the respondents to guess, if they are not sure of an answer to a TOEIC test question. This practice could possibly be related to misplacement. The last two questions, 20 and 21, of this section, asked about the experience of taking a test similar to the TOEIC. Question 20 asked if the respondent had experience with tests similar to the TOEIC and had a “yes” or “no” response. If the respondent answered no, that he had never taken a test similar to the TOEIC, he moved to Question 22. If the answer was yes, he answered Question 21, which asked how many tests, similar to the TOEIC, he had taken. The possible answers, the respondent could select from, were from 1 to more than 7 similar tests. From the choices offered, more than seven was a lot of experience, whereas 1 or 2 was relatively inexperienced. The importance of this question rests in the possibility that experience in such tests may result in the TOEIC score not being truly representative of the respondent’s language ability.

This second section of the questionnaire included Questions 14-21. It contained questions with “yes” or “no” type answers, and some selected responses and one that requires scaling. This series of questions was slightly more complicated for the respondents to complete, due to variation in response format; however, as respondents had already seen and answered twelve questions, this increased complexity should not have posed a problem.
4.3.5.3 Student Questionnaire Questions 22-26

The third section, which included the Questions 22-26, asked for the opinions of students about the possible consequences following placement by using the TOEIC scores. This series of questions, once again, used selected response type answers, and sometimes a yes-no format. This group of questions were progressive in their nature, as one answer led logically to the next question. This section also included a great amount of opinion-giving and routing of respondents to other sections of the questionnaire, all of which added to this section’s complexity which therefore demanded more concentration from the respondent in terms of responses.

Questions 22 and 23 focused on the initial placement by the TOEIC, Questions 24-26 asked about the opinions of students and teachers in regards to placement; and the last question, Question 26, asked about level changes. This section was crucial as it aimed at segregating respondents into two groups: those who were correctly placed and those who were misplaced using TOEIC scores. In order to aid this separation of respondents, there was much routing in this section.

Question 22 asked respondents to choose, from the responses given, the course they were assigned by their TOEIC score. All the possible courses were listed and the respondent needed only to check his selection. The question helped to determine if there was misplacement at a particular level more than any other or if misplacement occurred across all course levels. Question 23 asked if the respondent agreed with the initial placement. The respondent answered “yes” or “no”. There were no other choices offered, for a neutral response was not conducive to identifying misplaced students. If the respondent answered yes to Question 23, he agreed with the placement, and he was routed to Question 25. If he answered that he was not happy with the placement, he continued to Question 24, which asked if he was placed too low or too high for his ability. It was important to identify if placement, based on the TOEIC scores, at UU, resulted mostly in under or over-evaluating test-takers according to test-takers. Question 25, another yes-or-no type question, asked if
the teacher also identified the student as being misplaced. If the respondent answered no, he was routed to Question 38 for he had not been marked as misplaced and could not offer any further insight into misplacement. If, however, the respondent answered yes, he continued to Question 26, which asked if the respondent followed the teacher’s advice and changed course level. Question 25 was crucial in the identification of a misplaced student, for although the student himself may have felt he should have scored higher, the teacher’s agreement of this fact, by suggesting a move, supports the identification of the respondent as having been misplaced.

These five questions (22, 23, 24, 25 and 26) supplied information about whether or not there was agreement, by teachers and students, on the placement done by using the TOEIC scores. First, it had to be determined if the teacher and the student agreed with the placement based on TOEIC scores. If both parties believed that there was misplacement, respondents continued to answer the questionnaire, for they were considered misplaced, and it is those misplaced students who offer insight into the impact of misplacement.

From the responses in this section, a student was identified as misplaced or correctly placed. If a respondent answered that he declared that he felt himself misplaced, the teacher had identified him as misplaced and he had refused to change course level, he was considered misplaced. Failure to respond affirmatively to all three questions resulted in the respondent being identified as correctly placed. Therefore, the answers to these six questions were very important. The next section considered the effects or the consequences of misplacement on students.

4.3.5.4 Student Questionnaire Questions 27-36

The following section of the questionnaire included Questions 27-36. This series of questions identified the opinions and behaviours of the misplaced students. Only the students who identified themselves and were identified by the teacher as needing to change course levels due to misplacement answered questions in this section. This series of questions was the most difficult part of the questionnaire in terms of the topic and the choice
of response. Respondents should have been familiar with the format of the questionnaire and able to adapt to the question formats, which demanded more thought, both in the topic itself and in the response. It was the section of the questionnaire which delved into the issue at the heart of this study which was: the consequences of misplacement on the stakeholders in the English language classrooms of the language school.

The last question in the previous section, Question 26, determined if the student had been identified as misplaced and had, or had not, changed course level. Those respondents who answered “yes”, that they had been considered misplaced, but had changed course level; did not answer questions in this section. However, if they answered “no”, that they did not change level, then Question 27, the first question in this section asked the respondent to indicate their reasons for not moving and changing course level. This question asked about the extent (“a lot”, “a little”, “very little”, or “not at all”) to which various factors were involved in the student not moving to a different level after being consulted about that possibility. Subsections in this question pertained to: scheduling problems; administrative difficulties related to moving; student desire to stay with friends; desire to not incur more costs or courses; and inability to move due to prior completion of a lower level course. There was always the “Other” category in the event that none of the predetermined answers was suitable. Questions 28, 29, and 30 asked in what areas the misplaced students typically have difficulties, if the misplaced students usually required extra support outside the classroom and what type of support they required. Question 28 asked respondents to identify the amount of difficulty (“a lot”, “a little”, “very little” or “not at all”) the various language skills gave them in the class. The skills that were listed were: reading; listening; writing; speaking; grammar; pronunciation; and “Other”. The answer to Question 28 gave a vision of the student’s area of weakness in the class while Question 29, a yes-or-no answer, asked if the respondent needed extra support. A negative answer routed respondents to Question 31. An affirmative answer to Question 29, led the respondents to the next question. Question 30 required respondents to select the amount (“a lot”, “a little”, “very little” or “not at all”) of extra support the student required in trying to obtain a passing grade in the course. The subsections, once again, included the four skill areas (reading, listening, writing, speaking), grammar, and pronunciation. There was also an “Other” category. These two questions
worked together to highlight the areas in which most misplaced students have difficulties and the most common kinds of help they seek in trying to overcome their linguistic shortcomings. Question 31 asked the respondents to indicate their frequency ("a lot", "a little", "very little" or "not at all") of involvement in various types of linguistic activities outside of class in which the respondents engaged. Subsections in this question included: talking about fears with the teacher; seeking help from the teacher; private tutoring; extra course work; working with other students; and an "Other" category. All possible activities, related to the four skill areas, grammar and pronunciation, were included. This question detailed which behaviours, and in which areas, misplaced students engaged in while trying to pass their particular course level. Question 32 was a yes-or-no type question, which asked if the respondent ever considered dropping the course due to the level of difficulty. The follow-up question, 33, asked respondents to identify the extent ("a lot", "a little", "very little" or "not at all") to which certain factors kept the respondent in the course. Whether the respondents answered yes or no to Question 32, he could answer Question 33 for a misplaced student, who has difficulty, remains in the course for identifiable reasons. Some of the possible reasons were listed in the subsections, they were: loss of full-time student status; costs of repeating the course; embarrassment; hope; too late to drop without penalty; belief that staying will result in some improvement; and an "Other" category. The repercussions of dropping a required course usually relate to loss of time, money, or status. Knowing that the course must be completed, dropping is certain failure whereas staying in the class has a possibility of success, however bleak it may appear. The next question, 34, asked the respondent to declare if he believed he would or would not have the required 60% at the end of the course. Students are usually good judges of their ranking within the class and their chances of passing; however, along with the "yes" or "no" answers there was "I don't know", a neutral position, for those who were unsure. The neutral option allowed respondents to not make a judgement about that which they did not feel comfortable. The follow-up question, Question 35, asked respondents to identify the extent ("a lot", "a little", "very little" or "not at all") to which certain factors should be taken into consideration by teachers when passing a student who did not reach the 60% mark. Some of the subsections included: the amount and/or quality of student improvement; work; extra support; participation; attendance; overall ability; the consequences of failure to the student in terms
of: time, money, status; the language requirement situation of the student and an “Other” option. This question supplied information about what factors a respondent believed should be taken into consideration if a misplaced student fails to attain 60% in the course. Answers to this question were hoped to supply insight into the opinions of misplaced students in regards to granting passing grades. The last question in this section, Question 36, asked if the teacher, for any one of the listed reasons, should pass a misplaced student. The “yes” or “no” answer was chosen to highlight the opinion of students in regards to passing misplaced students in classes who did not attain 60%.

The preceding section focused on the behaviours and opinions of the misplaced student in English classrooms at the language school. This line of questioning about their difficulties, explored the opinions of the misplaced on topics of: dropping courses; failing situations; and reasons for granting passing grades. Combined with the answers to the teacher questionnaire, a vision of the classroom dynamic, between the misplaced student and the teacher should be clearly discernible.

4.3.5.5 Student Questionnaire Questions 37-38

The last two questions in this questionnaire asked the respondent to give personal answers to open questions. Open questions allowed the respondent to comment freely, without the constraint of the selected responses. These open questions also helped the researcher to let the respondents lead, rather than follow. The respondents had a half of a page of space on which to answer each question. The first question, Question 37, asked the respondent to describe the feelings, from their experience, of the typical misplaced student in the English classroom. The last question, Question 38, asked the respondent to describe a teacher’s attitude toward the misplaced student. These two questions gave a vision of the classroom dynamic and the impact between misplaced student and teacher within the classroom from the student’s perspective. The same two questions were also asked on the teacher questionnaire.
The answers to this questionnaire were important for the information they supplied about: demographic information; knowledge and experience of taking the TOEIC; the consequences of placement by the TOEIC; behaviours and experiences in classrooms as a misplaced student; and lastly, feelings about being misplaced. The goal of this study was to identify the impact of this misplacement on students. Before the solicitation of participants for the questionnaire stage of the study, the student questionnaire was verified.

4.3.6 Verification of Student Questionnaire

Four individuals shared their expertise to the task of evaluating the student questionnaire in the last weeks of September 2007. Two Master’s students, who have French as a first language, at UU agreed to answer the questionnaire as a student would. They were asked to verify the questionnaire for question clarity; level of correspondence between questions and listed responses; grammatical correctness; and ease of response. One full-time lecturer at UU, who has a great deal of experience conceiving and employing questionnaires, was asked to verify the questionnaire for question clarity; level of correspondence between questions and listed responses; grammatical correctness; physical layout of the questionnaire; and quality and ease of scoring for the researcher. A Master’s student at UU was also asked to be part of this verification process. She was asked to verify the scoring system of the questionnaires especially in terms of the ease and quality of scoring for the researcher.

The four evaluators were each given copies of the questionnaire, time to read, complete and make comments. The two students wrote comments on their copies, which were included and consulted during the two interviews held separately with the other two evaluators. Interviews took place individually and were recorded. The two Master’s students and the first of the two evaluators were told, while answering the questionnaire, to make note of any question, which was unclear; did not fit with the listed responses; or was grammatically incorrect. The other two evaluators were also both asked to take note of the physical layout of the questionnaire; for example, the physical location of questions on the
During the recorded interview with the first evaluator, and while consulting the two Master’s students’ comments, the clarity of the directions and questions as well as possible answers, was the first area of the questionnaire that was discussed. The direction section of the questionnaire, from the point of view of all three evaluators, was deemed clear and concise. Numbers, to indicate each of the three types of questions found in the questionnaire were added to further highlight the fact that there were three types of questions. Secondly, questions were examined one by one, by consulting all three (two Master’s students’ and the lecturer’s) copies at the same time. If two of the three evaluators suggested a change of a particular word or phrase in a question or response, that change was automatically made. If only one evaluator of the three suggested the change, the change was discussed during the interview process. If either the researcher and/or the lecturer believed that the wording could possibly cause difficulty for respondents, it was changed. This resulted in the rewording of five questions or listed responses. No question was entirely removed nor new questions added. Thirdly, the order of listed answers in questions with scaled responses was discussed. After discussion, it was decided that listed answers in the scaled response questions would always be listed from the lowest frequency or quality to the highest. This, it was hoped, would increase ease of response for the respondent and coding for the researcher. The fourth point raised was grammatical incorrectness. As the original questionnaire was created in English, but there needed to be a French version, translation was required. Working with the two languages and two versions of the same questionnaire, and wishing to not lose meaning through language transfer; this area caused the longest discussions. Once again, the three copies were consulted and various concessions, in terms of verb tense, parallelism, punctuation, and word choice, were made if two of the three evaluators suggested a change. If only one evaluator of the three suggested the change, the change was discussed during the interview process. If it were ascertained either by the researcher and/or by the lecturer that the wording could possibly cause difficulty for test-takers, it was changed. However, in cases of disagreement, the researcher’s advisor was consulted. This resulted in a number of
small grammatical changes; however, none of these changes resulted in major shifts in any question.

The second area of the questionnaire which was evaluated was the physical layout. Two evaluators (the full-time lecturer and a Master's student) were asked to comment on this aspect. In separate interviews, both commented on the benefits of legal-sized, rather than letter-sized, paper, so the questionnaire would appear shorter. It was hoped more questionnaires would be answered if it appeared it could be answered quickly. This format change was completed before the printing process of the questionnaires. Both evaluators (one who was right-handed and the other who was left-handed) liked the proximity of the responses to the questions and the space available to answer, so no changes were made in this area.

The third area on which these two evaluators were asked to comment was the scoring method. Both, in separate interviews, were concerned with the distance and size of the numbers, used in the scoring system, from the actual questions and responses. Although the distance was not expected to cause difficulties in answering the questionnaire, it could potentially affect the ease of coding. The distance between the answer and its associated number used in the coding system was a concern to both evaluators. These answers and their numbers would need to be transcribed and such a large distance was feared to lead to transcription errors. Both evaluators suggested moving the coding system closer to the actual answers so it appeared to be part of the question/answer portion of the questionnaire rather than a separate system. This change did not affect the clarity of the questions and was hoped to diminish the possible errors in coding; therefore, these changes were carried out.

4.3.7 Approbation of Written Communication for Participants

Preceding and accompanying the arrival of the questionnaires, was written communication for the participants. The communication came in the form of formal
introduction letters to teachers and students. Copies of these various letters and notices are found in the Appendix section of the study.

For teachers, the formal introduction letter contained information related to the goal of the study; the two phases of data collection (questionnaires and interviews); the implications of agreeing to participate, the right of refusal; and lastly, the contact information for those teachers who wished to have more information. This letter conformed and was accepted by the ethics committee at UU. A copy is found in Appendix B.

For students, the formal introduction letter, explained the goal and focus of the study, informed the students of their rights as a participant, along with the right to refuse to be a part of the study. This letter of introduction was required, outlined and approved by the ethics committee of UU. A copy of the letter is found in Appendix C.

4.3.8 Pilot Test of Student Questionnaire Procedures

After the verification of the format of the questionnaires, a pilot test, which focused on the implementation guidelines for teachers, was carried out in the second week of October 2007. In order to ensure standardization in the procedures of administering student questionnaires, the pilot test focused on the steps to be followed by teachers. The procedures, once verified, were included in a direction sheet whose goal was to supply the directions for teachers who would circulate the questionnaires in their classrooms. A copy of this direction sheet is found in Appendix D. One complete class of the highest course level at the language school was used. This class and level were chosen simply for it was easily accessible to the researcher. The procedure began with the handing out, to all twenty-two students in the class, of a letter of introduction (Appendix C). After indicating their agreement to be part of the study, they were given a student questionnaire. While those students answered the questionnaire, the researcher was on site to observe and evaluate the procedure and answer any questions.
During this pilot testing of the student questionnaires, two participants asked two questions: 1) whether or not students could leave with the questionnaire and return it completed; and 2) what they were to do if their particular choice was not listed and there was no “Other” option. The researcher answered these questions by saying that no student could leave the room with the questionnaire (due to the potential for a large number of unreturned questionnaires). In addition, if a response were not already provided, respondents could add the response they wanted (this was an easy solution when no listed answer was suitable and it was expected this situation would be extremely rare). At the end of the completion of the questionnaire, the researcher asked the class if they wished to make any comments about the questionnaire. No one had any comments other than the questionnaire was easy to read, understand and complete.

The pilot testing session resulted in approval for the questionnaire and no changes were made to it.

However, in light of the two questions the students in the pilot test asked, changes were made in the direction sheet for teachers (Appendix D). If teachers found anything on the sheet pertaining to directions to be unclear, they were told to contact the researcher. This was done in the hopes of clarifying any misunderstanding before the data collection process. Teachers were also told that no questionnaires were to leave the room, that any question students found unclear should be left unanswered, and that students could supply an answer if their choice was not already listed. The sheet informed teachers as to the procedures in administrating the questionnaire, and after piloting, information about leaving the room with questionnaire and writing in another answer was included.

The teacher and student questionnaires were verified for content and lay-out. The student questionnaire was piloted for procedures. Following these verifications, data collection began. A copy of the teacher questionnaire is found in Appendix F and a copy of the student questionnaire can be located in Appendix G.
4.4 Procedures of Phase I Quantitative Data Collection

The following section describes the procedures which were carried out during the data collection portion of the quantitative phase of the study. Collection of both the teacher and student questionnaire data will be described in terms of: distribution, completion and return of the questionnaires for both students and teachers. The procedures involving data transcription and verification follow.

4.4.1 Procedures for Distributing Teacher Questionnaires

An introduction letter preceded the distribution of the photocopies of the teacher questionnaire (Appendix B). A copy of this letter was sent to the English pedagogical advisor at the language school the first week of October who in turn sent it electronically to all teachers who were on the current work recall list. Upon receiving the e-mail, five teachers replied to the researcher by expressing their interest in participating, others gave verbal agreement to the researcher. No teacher sought further information.

Two days after the electronic e-mail was sent to the teachers, the teacher questionnaires were placed in the individual mailboxes at the language school of the twenty-six teachers teaching in Fall 2007. Attached to the teacher questionnaire was a letter which included directions regarding the questionnaire’s completion and return. A copy of this letter for the teacher questionnaire’s completion is found in Appendix E. The questionnaire and the letter together were placed between a folded envelope which was addressed to the researcher’s mailbox at the language school, in which the teachers would place the completed questionnaire.

Over a three-week period, which finished the end of October 2007, the completed teacher questionnaires were returned through the internal mail system at LS. In total, fifteen out of twenty-six teachers, or 60%, completed questionnaires. The loss of eleven potential respondents could perhaps have been related to the fact that although twenty-six
questionnaires were distributed, not all teachers who were given questionnaires were actually teaching that session. As a result, some of those non-teaching teachers may not have ever retrieved the questionnaire from their mailbox and consequently, never completed them. There were likely other teachers who simply forgot to complete the questionnaire or submit it. The fact that the questionnaires were sent through the mail and teachers were under no direct obligation to complete them could also have contributed to a certain amount of loss (Dörnyei, 2007). Even though, there was less than 100% completion of the questionnaires, 60% was considered quite acceptable.

4.4.2 Procedures for Distributing Student Questionnaires

Data collection of the student questionnaires involved assembling a package for teachers. Student questionnaires, introduction letters for students, a sheet of directions for teachers who would distribute the student questionnaires and an addressed return envelop (with the researcher's name and mailbox number at LS) were prepared for each of the 47 English as a second language classes at the language school during the third week of October 2007.

On average, there are twenty-three students in an English class at the language school; however, there are often classes, which are somewhat bigger. Due to variation in class size and not wanting to lack questionnaires in any class, twenty-five copies of the questionnaire were made for each class. However, as class size sometimes swells to twenty-seven or twenty-eight, the pedagogical advisor was asked to identify those extra large classes. Those classes were given extra copies of the questionnaire, which equaled the actual class size.

Accompanying the student questionnaires were an equal number of information letters for students (Appendix C). These were bundled together and a sheet of directions for each teacher was attached (if a teacher taught more than one class, he or she was still only given one sheet of directions). Found in Appendix D, the sheet of directions was written in the form of a letter which addressed each teacher by their first name, in the researcher's
handwriting. The sheet asked teachers to follow the listed procedures: explain the subject of the questionnaire; hand out the information letter to each student (Appendix C); and have the student read it. After students indicated that they agreed to be part of the study, teachers were to distribute the student questionnaire. Completing the questionnaire was expected to take between 10 to 20 minutes. Completed questionnaires were put in the envelope that had been provided by the researcher, on which the researcher’s name and mailbox number at the language school was already printed, and the envelope was to be placed in the LS’s mailbox. Along with the address of the researcher, each envelope was also identified with the teacher’s name, the course level and section.

Completed questionnaires began arriving at the beginning of November 2007, continued until the end of the semester in early December, and represented all levels of English classes at the language school. In total, 677 students from eight different levels of courses completed student questionnaires. With an average of twenty-three students in forty-seven classes, there were approximately 1081 possible participants; therefore, this study recruited 63% of that total student population of the Fall semester of 2007.

Following the completion and return of both teacher and student questionnaires, the coding of the data began and will be described in the next portion of this section.

4.4.3 Teacher Questionnaire Data Transcription

Following the collection of the completed teacher questionnaires, the teacher responses were transferred to an Excel spread sheet. This relatively quick process was carried out in the beginning and middle of December 2007.

Each questionnaire was given a number, from 1-15, corresponding to the order of its arrival in the researcher’s mailbox. Although teacher questionnaires had a yellow cover page, and the student questionnaire’s was blue, each teacher questionnaire was also identified by a T, for teacher. The combination of the T and the number resulted in an
identification code, which in turn was used to identify the teacher in the spreadsheet. This information was placed in the first column to the left on the y-axis. At the top of each column, on the x-axis, going from left to right was the number of each question. If there were subsections to questions, each was given the number of the question and a letter. For example, Question 1 had 8 subsections, so on the spread sheet there was Question 1A, 1B, 1C etc.

All responses found in each teacher questionnaire were transferred in the same step. All questions, except Questions 25 and 26 were followed by a number of possible answers and each answer had a corresponding number. Therefore, Question 1A had 1, 2 or 3 corresponding to “0 times”, “1-2 times” or “3 or more times” as possible answers. This number (1, 2 or 3) was placed in the spreadsheet in the first column. This step was repeated for each question. When all the responses for a particular teacher were complete, the responses to another teacher questionnaire were recorded.

In Question 25, teachers were asked to describe the behavior of a typical misplaced student who was identified as needing to move to a lower level, but did not. Therefore, teachers were free to write their own comments to the two statements. This question had to be coded and later verified with the help of a second rater. After reading all the teachers’ comments for Question 25, and consulting with the student responses to the same question, the researcher organized the comments into four categories. Responses to Question 25 were 1) very negative (including 2 or more negative adjectives used in the response); 2) somewhat negative (including 1 negative adjective or overall negative tone); 3) neutral (teacher responded that he/she showed no difference in behavior toward students); and 4) positive (including students who considered the situation to be a challenge). The very negative response was coded with a 4 on the nominal scale; somewhat negative was given a 3; the neutral response was coded with a 2; and a positive response was given a 1.

Question 26 asked teachers to describe their own teacher behavior towards a typical student who the teacher identified as needing to move to a lower level, but did not. Again, it
was an open question, where the teachers were free to write their own response to the statement. After coding by the researcher, an inter-rater verified the procedure. When considering the method with which to code this question, the teachers’ responses to this question, and the students’ responses to a similar question were both taken in consideration. The responses were organized into one of four categories: 1) teacher offers or gives help; 2) teacher helps if student requests; 3) teacher gives similar treatment for all students; and 4) negative treatment by teacher. A nominal scale was used with a 4 corresponding to the first category which is that the teacher offers or gives help; a 3 was associated with the response that the teacher helps if student requests; a 2 equaled an answer which described similar treatment; and a 1 corresponded to negative treatment by the teacher.

4.4.4 Inter-rater Verification of Teacher Questionnaire Questions 25 and 26

In order to verify the coding procedures for Questions 25 and 26, an inter-rater was employed. The inter-rater was a Master’s student at UU who read both French and English fluently. The process took approximately 25 minutes where the inter-rater read the response to Question 25 or 26 for each teacher, compared it to the scale created by the researcher and announced the score that she would accord if she were coding the responses. At this point, the researcher would reveal what had already been coded and if there were differences, a discussion would ensue. Many discussions occurred as the teachers’ responses were extremely mixed which resulted in responses that crossed categories. Therefore, this type of response required a discussion to decide into which category the entire response fit or which comments took precedence. Regardless of the complexity in coding, the complete sample of fifteen teachers was small and the task of verification easily accomplished. After discussion, the inter-rater and researcher had 100% agreement on all responses.

Following the coding and verification of the responses to Questions 25 and 26 into a nominal scale and the transcription of the data into the Excel spread sheets; the data was verified. The small population that answered teacher questionnaires allowed for re-verification of the hard data and using the filter on the Excel program transcription errors
were corrected. The teacher data was then sent electronically at the beginning of March 2008 to the statistician who was hired to carry out the statistical analysis.

4.4.5 Student Questionnaire Data Transcription

Following the collection of the completed student questionnaires, the student responses were transferred to an Excel spread sheet. This relatively quick process was carried out at the end of December 2007 and the beginning of January 2008.

Upon the retrieval of the completed student questionnaires, the responses from the 677 questionnaires were transferred to an Excel spreadsheet. Each questionnaire was given a number, from 1-27 (the largest number of students in any class) corresponding to its order in the envelope in which it was submitted by the teacher. Although teacher questionnaires had a yellow cover page, and the student questionnaire was blue, each student questionnaire was also identified by S, for student. The combination of the S and the number resulted in an identification code, which in turn was used to identify the student in the spreadsheet. This information was placed in the first column to the left on the y-axis. The second column contained the course level and section of the class in which the student was enrolled. At the top of each column, on the x-axis, going from left to right was the number of each question. If there were subsections, each of the questions in that subsection was given the number of the question and a letter. For example, Question 10 had 11 subsections, on the spread sheet there was Question 10A, 10B, 10C etc.

All responses found in each student questionnaire were transferred in the same step. All questions, except 37 and 38, were followed by a number of possible answers and each answer had a corresponding number. Therefore, Question 10A had possible answers of: 1, 2, 3, or 4 corresponding to “jamais” (never), “à l’occasion” (sometimes), “souvent” (often) and “toujours” (always). This number (1, 2, 3 or 4) was placed in the spreadsheet in the 10A column. This step was repeated for each question. When all the responses for a particular student were complete, the responses from another student questionnaire from the same
class were transferred. This continued until all the answers from student questionnaires were transcribed.

In Question 37, students were asked to describe their own behavior as a typical misplaced student who was identified as needing to move to a lower level, but did not. Therefore, students were free to write their own comments to the statement. This question had to be coded and was later verified with the help of an inter-rater. After reading all the students’ comments for question 37, and consulting with the teacher responses to the same question, the researcher organized the comments into four categories. Responses to Question 37 were: 4) very negative (including 2 or more negative adjectives used in the response); 3) somewhat negative (including 1 negative adjective or overall negative tone); 2) neutral (student responded that teacher showed no difference between students); and 1) positive (students considered the situation to be a challenge). The very negative response was coded with a 4 on the nominal scale, somewhat negative was given a 3, the neutral response was coded with a 2 and a positive response was given a 1.

Question 38 asked students to describe a teacher’s behavior towards a typical student who the teacher identified as needing to move to a lower level, but did not. Again, it was an open question, where the students were free to write their own responses to the statement. After coding by the researcher, an inter-rater verified the procedure. When considering the coding of this question, the students’ responses, and the teachers’ responses to a similar question were both taken in consideration. The responses were organized into one of four categories: 4) teacher offers or gives help; 3) teacher helps if student requests; 2) teacher gives similar treatment for all students; and 1) negative treatment by teacher. A nominal scale was used with a 4 corresponding to the first category: teacher offers or gives help; 3 was associated with the answer that the teacher helps if student requests; a 2 equaled similar treatment for all students; and a 1 corresponded to negative treatment by the teacher.
4.4.6 Inter-rater Verification of Student Questionnaire Questions 37 and 38

In order to verify the coding procedure for Questions 37 and 38 an inter-rater was employed. The inter-rater was a Master’s student at UU who read both French and English fluently. The process took approximately 25 minutes where the inter-rater read the response to Question 37 and 38 for a randomly selected number of students, compared it to the scale created by the researcher and announced the score that would be accorded if the inter-rater were coding the responses. At this point, the researcher would reveal what had been coded and if there were differences, a discussion would ensue. Not one discussion occurred for the students’ responses for student answers were succinct, and extremely focused. This fact made for responses which fit easily into one of the four categories. Thirty different questionnaires, at various levels, were read without the researcher and the inter-rater according a different score. Therefore, the task of verification was easily accomplished and the inter-rater and researcher had 100% agreement on all responses to those two questions for a sample of thirty questionnaires.

Following the coding and verification of the responses to Questions 37 and 38 into a nominal scale and the transcription of each student’s responses into the Excel spread sheets; the data was verified. The large number of responses made complete re-verification of the hard data almost impossible. Therefore, when transcribing, at the end of every page of the questionnaire, the data was surveyed and corrections were made on the spot. At the end of the transcription process, and using the filter on the Excel program, transcription errors were corrected. The student data was then sent electronically at the beginning of March 2008 to the statistician who was hired to carry out the descriptive analysis.
4.5 Announcement of Instruments for Phase II Qualitative Data Collection

As this study is sequential in nature the instruments for the second phase of the study are derived from the findings from Phase I; therefore, their description will be found in Chapter V.
CHAPTER V
ANALYSIS OF DATA AND RESULTS OF PHASE I
QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

This study was mixed methods in nature with the findings from Phase I, the quantitative portion of the study, providing the base for Phase II, the qualitative portion. The following chapter will describe both the descriptive and the inferential analysis of the Phase I data and the results from the teacher and student questionnaires. First, the responses to the teacher and student questionnaires will be described. The interpretation of the inferential results will follow. Subsequently, the analytical approach and results of the questionnaires, the teacher and the student interviews, will be described and interpreted.

The second half of this chapter will focus on Phase II of the study which was the qualitative portion. It involved teacher and student interviews. Phase II participants, both teachers and students are described. The choice of interview topics, as a result of the findings from Phase I of the study, and their verification will then be discussed. The procedures for the qualitative portion of the study are next outlined. The end of the chapter focuses on the results and interpretations of the descriptive and inferentially analysis of Phase II and concludes with a summary of major findings of both Phase I and II of the study.

5.1 Descriptive Data Analysis of Teacher Questionnaires

The descriptive analysis of the teacher’s responses to the teacher questionnaire was completed in March 2008. The following section is a summary of the teachers’ responses to all questions on the teacher questionnaire. The frequency data is described in terms of either percentages or the actual number of respondents.
5.1.1 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 1

Question 1 asked teachers to indicate the number of times they had taught each of the eight levels of English courses which are offered at LS. All fifteen teachers responded to this question and results showed that 80% or twelve of the teachers had never taught the lowest course level and 86% or 13 teachers had never taught the highest. The remaining six course levels showed less divergence: the second lowest level was more evenly represented as only 27% or four teachers had never taught the level, six teachers or 40% had taught it once or twice and 33% or five teachers had experienced the level 3 times or more. The next three course levels, the third, fourth and fifth, are similar in the information they exposed. In response to the question, for all three levels, 60% or nine teachers had taught those levels three times or more. The other six or 40% of teachers were equally split with three having never taught the third course level and three having taught it once or twice. The other six, or 40% of teachers, (in terms of the fourth and fifth course levels) responded that two (13%) had never taught either of the courses and four teachers or 27% had one or two experiences teaching those courses. Responses from teachers, in terms of the number of times they had taught the sixth course level showed equal distribution: five or 33% had never taught the course, the same number had taught the course once or twice and the other five or 33% had experienced teaching the course 3 times or more. Teachers responded to the question saying that seven or 46% had no experience with the seventh of the eight courses offered, and five or 33% had only taught it once or twice. Only three or 20% had three or more experiences.

In general, the majority of teachers not only have most of their experience at the fourth and fifth course levels, most have taught these levels three or more times. Results from the first question show that the experience of the teachers with regard to the various course levels mirrors the distribution of students in courses which are offered at the the language school during any given 15 week session. In any session, the majority of students fall into the fourth and fifth course levels. This is because many programs at UU require students to complete either of those two course levels to graduate. Therefore, the majority of teacher experience is centred on those two levels for they are the courses most often in
demand. For this same reason, there is less teacher experience at the lowest levels, for few students score into the lower course levels (under 300 points on the institutional TOEIC), nor do the majority of students wish to take courses which are above their second language requirement (the three highest course levels).

5.1.2 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 2-4

Questions 2-4 asked teachers about their knowledge of the proficiency test, the institutional TOEIC. Question 2 asked if they had ever seen or heard a copy of the placement test and 6 or 40% had not. Although only six teachers said they had had contact with a copy of the TOEIC, seven teachers responded to Question 3, which asked about the type of questions found on the TOEIC. We can suppose a teacher responded from what he/she had heard about the TOEIC. In any case, of the seven teachers who responded to the question, all said the TOEIC contained multiple-choice questions, which is the correct answer. However, three of the seven teachers incorrectly said it also contained fill-in-the-blank questions and one teacher of the seven, along with answering multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank questions, added the TOEIC had questions requiring short paragraph length responses, which it does not have. Therefore, answers to this question show that all teachers who answered knew the TOEIC has a multiple-choice format, but three did not know it contained only multiple-choice questions. Question 4 asked teachers to indicate what skill areas were evaluated in the TOEIC test. Six teachers knew it evaluated reading comprehension; five knew listening was also evaluated; however, only four of the teachers knew it contained both. One teacher erroneously believed the TOEIC evaluated writing.

Questions 2-4, inquired into the knowledge teachers had about the institutional TOEIC. Results from this section showed only seven of fifteen teachers have any knowledge of the TOEIC and the knowledge they have, or think they have, is sometimes erroneous. Only three teachers answered all three questions correctly showing the majority of teachers have very little knowledge of the structure and content of the TOEIC, for these teachers are
not aware of the type of test, or the types of questions on the TOEIC, nor do they know the skill areas which are explicitly evaluated.

5.1.3 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 5-6

Questions 5-6 asked about departmental requirements regarding second language learning. The questions asked the teachers about their knowledge of such requirements. Only nine teachers responded out of the fifteen. The loss of six respondents could perhaps be linked to the word “aware” which may not have been clear to the six who chose not to respond. Of the nine that answered, eight teachers said they were aware, but one teacher was not. A question that asked teachers to identify the correct course requirement for a number of programs then followed. The programs of Administration, Communications, Pharmacy, and Engineering were chosen for they all vary in their requirements and are some of the most popular programs represented at the middle course levels in English classes at LS. Of the seven teachers who responded, six were correct in saying that the fifth course level is the requirement for Administration students. Only six teachers responded to the question of the Communications requirement and only four correctly identified that the minimum is the fourth course level. The same results were found for the question of the second language requirement in Pharmacy; only four teachers correctly indicated that the fourth course level was the requirement. The last section of this question referred to the requirement of engineering students. Their requirement is one course at any level with the minimum course level being the fourth course level, therefore two answers were accepted for this question and four teachers were correct in identifying the requirement. Overall, only three teachers were able to correctly identify the second language requirements of all four programs.

Questions 5-6 showed that this sample of teachers does not know the program requirements for some of the largest programs at UU. As departments need not communicate with LS before changing level requirements, and as requirement change takes place without notification from departments, it would seem difficult for teachers to keep
abreast of the requirements for more than 50 programs, which were represented in classes in Fall 2007.

5.1.4 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 7-10

Questions 7-10 asked teachers to indicate whether they evaluate students after the initial placement into course levels using the TOEIC scores. Thirteen of the fifteen teachers answered Question 7 and in terms of responses, twelve answered that yes, they do re-evaluate the students. The follow-up question, Question 8, asked if the teachers used activities to evaluate. Again, thirteen answered and twelve of them responded that they did re-evaluate, one did not. Question 9 asked what types of activities the teacher chose to use in the re-evaluation process. Teachers were allowed to choose more than one type of activity from among a number of listed choices. As one teacher indicated more than one type of activity, there are more than just twelve responses. Three teachers indicated they used only a writing activity, nine teachers re-evaluated using a writing, a speaking and a grammar activity, one of those previous nine teachers also included a reading activity, and another four of the twelve teachers used a writing and a speaking activity. The last question of this section, Question 10, asked if teachers used certain other factors, besides their own re-evaluation activities, to re-evaluate students after placement using the TOEIC scores. Twelve teachers answered the three subsections to this question, and no one answered using the “Other” option. Results were extremely diverse, especially in the first subsection of this question, which asked if teachers re-evaluated the student considering the factor of completion of other English courses. The teachers’ responses were almost equally split between the four listed choices: two teachers answered “never”, four answered “sometimes”, three responded “often” and three teachers answered “always”. The other two subsections of Question 10 were: 1) the consideration of other English experience and 2) student claims of misplacement. Twelve teachers answered both of these subsections. Teacher response for the first of these two subsections showed approximately eight teachers, or 67%, answered that they considered prior English experience “sometimes”. The other four teachers were equally split into the categories of “never” or “often”. These results are similar in the next question, Question 11, in which seven, or 58%, of teachers “sometimes” consider student
claims of misplacement and five teachers or 42% responded that they “never” consider this factor.

The results of this section show that teachers often re-evaluate students; and although their methods vary, almost all teachers use a writing activity. This can be explained by various factors. The first is that a writing activity is strongly suggested to teachers as a re-evaluation activity by the pedagogical advisor. Secondly, a writing activity was not part of the in-house placement test in place before the adoption of the TOEIC (because the in-house did not contain a writing portion) and this tradition has been maintained. It must be noted that although most teachers ask students to write, there are no standard requirements for the writing task in terms of style, length of text, time allotted for writing or the topic. Most importantly, there are no procedures in place explaining how to evaluate the writing. However, there is a bank of student writing that can be consulted and categorized into weak, average and strong, if teachers choose to seek it out. Therefore, each teacher individually makes decisions about the writing task, and evaluates those texts without any standard guidelines.

In general, the questionnaire showed that not only do teachers re-evaluate the writing skills of students they also do a speaking activity. Once again, the pedagogical advisor suggests a speaking activity be part of the re-evaluation process, to combat the institutional TOEIC’s lack of evaluation in this area. However, there are no standard guidelines given for the task in terms of length of activity, particular type of activity, or most importantly, the evaluation procedures. It is interesting to note that it is in the two areas (writing and speaking) that the institutional TOEIC does not explicitly evaluate, that teachers choose to use for re-evaluation (as suggested by the pedagogical advisor). Nevertheless, without rigid standards or guidelines to follow, there is room for a great deal of latitude in activities from teacher to teacher and in the manner that the activities are evaluated.
5.1.5 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 11-16

Questions 11-16 asked about the results of the re-evaluation process carried out by the teachers. All results are shown in Table II. Question 11 asked if teachers used the re-evaluation process to identify those students needing to change level. Question 12 investigated if this process helped teachers to identify misplaced students. The results of the questionnaire showed that of the fourteen teachers who answered the question, 100% said the re-evaluation process is used to identify misplaced students. In regards to the twelfth question, which asked if the re-evaluation process results in identifying the misplaced student, again, fourteen teachers answered. All but one said that the re-evaluation process results in identifying the misplaced. Question 13 asked the teachers to identify the number of misplaced students they experience in a regular course with twenty-five students. According to the fifteen teachers that responded to that question, there is generally misplacement in groups of twenty-five students. Eight teachers stated that they typically identify 1-2 misplaced students per twenty-five students; the remaining seven teachers identified 3-4 students as misplaced out of a group of 25. Question 14 asked if these misplaced students generally needed to move to a higher or lower level course. All fifteen teachers answered this question. Four teachers answered that the majority of moves were typically to higher levels, but ten teachers said the moves were typically toward the lower levels. Although certain students are identified as being misplaced, and the teacher discusses this fact with them, not all students agree to move and change level. Therefore, the last two questions in this section asked teachers to identify the number of students who move to higher levels after having been identified as misplaced and also the number who move to lower levels. All fifteen teachers answered Question 15 and thirteen teachers, or 87%, indicated 1-2 students would move to a higher level and 2 teachers indicated that no students would move. Question 16 is the last in this section. It asked how many of the students who were identified as misplaced would move to lower levels. All fifteen teachers answered. Twelve teachers or 80% said 1-2 students would move, two teachers said none would move and one said 3-4 students would move. These results are found in Table II, which detail the number of
teachers who suggested student moves toward a higher or a lower level, followed by the actual number of students who would move in any given session.

Table II
Number of Teacher Suggested Student Moves and Actual Student Moves to Higher or Lower Course Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Number of Moves Suggested</th>
<th>Number of Moves Actual</th>
<th>Direction of Moves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to have a clearer picture of the responses to Questions 13-16, and using the filter feature on the Excel spread sheet, each teacher's response to those three questions was examined separately. The results are that three teachers said that through re-evaluation they normally identify 1-2 students who need to go to a higher level and those students do in fact move to a higher level. One teacher normally identifies 3-4 students who need to go up, but only 1-2 will actually go. Information from those same questions also showed that ten teachers most often identify misplaced students who need to go down to a lower level. Four of the ten teachers identified 1-2 students who need to go down and in fact, teachers stated that 1-2 will go down. Five teachers identified 3-4 students who need to go down, but only 1-2 will go and one teacher identified 3-4 students who need to go down and the same number of students will in fact go down.

The preceding section inquired into the re-evaluation process and number of students identified as misplaced who change course levels after being identified as needing to change to a higher or lower level. Results from the questionnaire show that teachers vary in the
numbers of students they identify as needing to be moved, but all teachers identify 1-4 students, per twenty-five, who are identified as misplaced and need to be moved. This means that there is a huge amount of identifying and moving, or attempting to move, students. The percentage of moves, only on teacher impetus, is somewhere between 4-16%. A second comment from these results is that there is a larger percentage, 70%, of teachers who typically identify students who they believe need to move to lower levels, and the other 30% of teachers say they typically make moves toward higher course levels.

5.1.6 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 17

Question 17 asked teachers to offer reasons why students stay in classes after being identified as misplaced and needing to move to a lower course level. The findings are found in Table III. It indicates the frequency at which teachers reported that the listed factors influence students to not change course level after being advised to do so. This sample of teachers showed a wide variety of responses to this question. Fourteen of the fifteen teachers answered all the subsections of this question. In response to the possibility that students, who are identified as misplaced, stay in courses and do not move due to scheduling conflicts, six teachers responded “never” and eight responded “sometimes”. Three teachers responded that the lack of space in another course level was “never” responsible for the misplaced student staying and eleven said it was “sometimes” responsible. Eleven teachers answered that the student’s desire to stay in the course was “sometimes” responsible for the student not moving. Two other teachers said that students “often” remain because they do not wish to move and one teacher said it was “always” responsible. As far as possible responses of 1) time requirements, and 2) too late in the semester to move, seven teachers answered that these factors were “never” a reason for a student to not move, but five teachers said it “sometimes” played a role, and two said it was “often” a factor. The fact that students had already completed the previous course level was “never” a factor in the student not changing level for two teachers; it was “sometimes” a factor for five teachers, and “often” a factor for six teachers. Only one teacher answered that it was “always” a factor. The last in this series of questions asked about the influence of the student’s second
language requirements as a reason for students not changing course level. Four teachers said it “never” played a role in the student not moving, four others said it was “sometimes” a factor, whereas the remaining six teachers were divided. Three responded that it was “often” a factor and the other three answered that it was “always” a reason why students stay.

Table III
According to Teachers, the Frequency that Certain Factors Influence Students to Not Change Course Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling Conflicts</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Level Requirement</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too Late in the Semester to Move</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No room in Another Class</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion the Previous Course</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wished to Stay in the Course</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Dashes indicate lack of response in those categories.

Results to Question 17 showed a variety of teacher perceptions as to why students who are identified as misplaced, stay in the initial class. Although there is variation on this question in terms of the frequency of the factors, which were listed, there is consensus on the factors, which are responsible for a misplaced student not moving. In general, the majority of teachers who answered this question cited the facts that 1) students have “sometimes” or “often” already completed the previous level and 2) students “sometimes” or “often” wanted to stay in the course. According to the teachers, although there was greater variation in responses, students “never” to “always” stayed due to student’s departmental requirements. Administrative constraints (scheduling problems, no room in other classes and too late in the semester to move) were, in general, “sometimes” reasons why students do not change levels.
5.1.7 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 18 and 19

Question 18 asked teachers if students, who are identified as needing to move to a lower level, but do not move, require extra help in the classroom and Question 19 asked if they require extra help outside the classroom. For both questions, all fifteen teachers responded and ten of them said students require help both inside and outside the classroom, two said they needed help in the class, but not out of the class, and one said they needed neither.

Teacher responses to these two questions show similarity, with the majority of teachers responding that the misplaced student, who does not move course level, is in need of extra support in and out of the classroom. One teacher found that these students needed neither type of help, which deviates greatly from the others.

5.1.8 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 20, Subsections 20.1, 20.2, 20.3, and 20.4

Question 20 had four subsections (20.1, 20.2, 20.3 and 20.4), each subsection (created by combining the eight course levels of LS to make four) asked teachers to identify the frequency at which misplaced students need extra help in the major skill areas (reading, grammar, listening, writing, speaking and pronunciation). A table with the teach response for each subsection will precede its description.
Table IV

Frequency at which Misplaced Students at the Basic Level (Basic I and II) Need Extra Help in the Major Skill Areas According to Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Dashes indicate a lack of response in those categories.

Subsection 20.1, asked the frequency at which extra help is needed by the misplaced student at the combined course levels of the first two course levels within the skill areas of reading, grammar, listening, writing, speaking and pronunciation. Four teachers had never taught at this level, therefore, only eleven teachers answered this subsection. All eleven teachers stated that students who are misplaced at the Basic level require “very little”, “some” or “a lot” of help in all areas. A certain amount of extra help is necessary. Eight teachers responded that students require “some” help and three teachers stated students need “very little” in reading. In terms of grammar, six teachers said students need “some” help with four saying they needed “a lot” of help and one responding “very little”. In terms of listening, eight teachers said students needed “some” help, two said “a lot” of help, and one said “very little”. In terms of writing, eight teachers said students required “a lot” of help and three said “some” help. In the category of speaking, seven teachers said students needed “a lot” of help, and four said “some” help was needed. In the last category, pronunciation, seven teachers said students need “some” help and four of them said they needed “a lot” of help.
### Table V

**Frequency at which Misplaced Students at the Intermediate Level (Intermediate I and II) Need Extra Help in the Major Skill Areas According to Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Dashes indicate a lack of response in those categories.*

In subsection 20.2, teachers were asked if they had experience with the combined level of Intermediate which includes the third and fourth course levels. Thirteen of the fifteen teachers had taught the levels and also identified the amount of help misplaced students at this level require in the skill areas. In terms of reading, eleven of the five teachers said that students need “very little” and six said “some” help, two teachers said that students need “none” or no help in this area. In the area of grammar responses are most striking; eight teachers said students need “some” and five said they need “a lot” of help. Listening is the most diversified category as two teachers believed students need no extra help or “none”, three reported that they need “very little” help; six said they need “some” help and two said they need “a lot” of help. In the area of writing, eight teachers responded that most misplaced students need “a lot” of extra help and four teachers thought they need “some” help, one teacher answered that those students need “none”. Ten teachers said the misplaced students require “some” help with speaking and two said “a lot”. Lastly, in terms of pronunciation, nine teachers said students need “some” help and two teachers answered “a lot”.

134
Table VI
Frequency at which Misplaced Students at the Advanced I Level (Advanced I and II) Need Extra Help in the Major Skill Areas According to Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Dashes indicate a lack of response in those categories.

Subsection 20.3 asked teachers about their experience in teaching Advanced I (a combination of the fifth and sixth course levels). Two teachers indicated they had never taught those course levels; so thirteen teachers answered the subset of questions. In terms of reading, six teachers said misplaced students need “very little” extra help in this area, whereas five teachers said those students need “some” help and two teachers said students need “none” (no extra help) in this area. Grammar was the area where most teachers agreed, nine said students need “some” help and four said they needed “a lot” of help. In the area of listening, three teachers reported that misplaced students need “none” (no extra help) in this area; whereas two teachers said they need “very little”, seven teachers said they need “some” help and one said they need “a lot” of extra help. The category of writing has results similar to grammar where the majority, six teachers, felt students need “a lot” or “some” extra help; only one teacher thought they required “none”. In speaking, two teachers thought students need “none” or “very little” extra help, seven believed students need “some”, and two teachers thought they needed “a lot” of extra help. Pronunciation was also very diverse, one teacher thought students needed no extra help or “none” and another thought they need “a lot”. Eight responded that they need “some” and three said they believed students needed “very little” extra help in this area.
Table VII
Frequency at which Misplaced Students at the Advanced II Level (Advanced III and IV) Need Extra Help in the Major Skill Areas According to Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Dashes indicate a lack of response in those categories.

Lastly, in Subsection 20.4, for the combined course level of Advanced II (the two highest course levels), seven of the fifteen teachers had never taught at this level. Therefore, only eight teacher responses were recorded in this subset of questions. In terms of reading, four teachers said misplaced students at this level need no extra help (“none”), three said they need “very little” help and one said they needed “some” help. Eight teachers responded that misplaced students need “very little” (three teachers) or “some” (five teachers) help in grammar. Results for listening showed five teachers said misplaced students need no extra help (“none”) and three needed “very little” help. Six teachers stated that misplaced students need “some” extra help; one teacher said those students need “very little” and one answered “a lot” of help in writing. In the area of pronunciation, three teachers said misplaced students need no extra help (“none”) and three responded “very little” help and two teachers said “some” help was needed. The last question in this subsection asked teachers to state the amount of extra help a misplaced student required in terms of oral speaking. Six teachers said these students require “very little”, and one said they need “none” and another said “some”. 
In summary, the Basic level does not conform to the pattern set by the other three levels, so it will be summarized first. At the Basic level, most teachers said writing and speaking required the largest amounts of extra help. This was followed by pronunciation and grammar explanation. The two receptive skills of listening and reading were last. For the other three levels, writing and grammar were the skill areas described by teachers as requiring the largest amount of extra help. The areas of speaking and pronunciation needed less help and the receptive skills of listening and reading needed the least. For all four levels, the productive skill areas were believed to need more extra help than the receptive.

Although the number of teachers who responded to all four subsections varied, it was noted that the majority of responses were answered only using two of the four listed choices and the two choices were generally adjacent. For example, in Subsection 20.4 under grammar explanation, the eight respondents answered either “some” or “very little”. However, for Subsections 20.2 Intermediate (third and fourth course levels) and 20.3 Advanced I (fifth and sixth course levels) under help with listening, this was not the case. The respondents answered using all four of the listed choices, from “a lot” to “none”.

5.1.9 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 21 and 22

Question 21 of the teacher questionnaire asked if the extra help given to a misplaced student raises the student to the proficiency level required to pass the course. All fifteen teachers answered the question, ten of them said “yes” and five said “no”. The following question, Question 22, asked teachers to indicate the number of misplaced students who do not succeed in having 60% at the end of the course. All fifteen teachers responded and twelve or 80% said 1-2 students would fail to have 60%. The other three teachers said no students would fail.
5.1.10 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 23

Question 23 on the questionnaire asked what aspect or aspects of the language are most responsible for the failure of the misplaced students to obtain 60%. Responses from thirteen of the fourteen teachers who answered said writing or grammar was responsible and twelve said both writing and grammar were responsible for a failing grade. In addition to writing and grammar, two teachers felt reading was also responsible, one teacher said listening, two teachers said pronunciation was responsible, and six said speaking was responsible for a failing grade.

The responses to the preceding question seem to confirm the results of Question 20. Writing and grammar are most often responsible for the misplaced student's failure, according to this group of teachers.

5.1.11 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 24

Table VIII
Frequency of Factors Used by Teachers When Considering to Grant a Passing Grade to a Student Who Does Not Succeed in Obtaining a 60% in the Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Improvement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Extra Help Sought</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student's Academic Situation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences of Failure for Student</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Ability</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Dashes indicate a lack of response in those categories.
Question 24 asks which factors the teachers consider when deciding to grant a passing grade to a student who does not succeed in obtaining a 60% in the course. All teachers answered and were quite diverse in their responses. In terms of the amount of improvement made, eight of the fifteen teachers said they considered student improvement “some” of the time, four teachers said they considered improvement “none” and three said “a lot”. Three teachers considered the fact that students sought extra help as a factor in deciding to pass a student “none” of the time, five teachers responded “very little” and seven answered “some”. Teachers considered the student’s academic situation (program requirement, course required for graduation) “none” of the time (four teachers), “very little” of the time (four teachers), “some” of the time (six teachers) and “a lot” of the time (one teacher). The consequences of failure for the student (extra course to take, extra money to take the course again, and lowering of grade point average) was taken into consideration by eight teachers “none” of the time, “very little” by four teachers; and three teachers said “some” of the time. Asked if teachers considered student attendance in the course as a factor in granting a passing grade, five teachers said “none”, one teacher said “very little”, seven said, “some”, and two said “a lot”. In terms of the factor of active participation, five teachers said they considered it “none” of the time, three said “very little”, four teachers said “some” and three said “a lot” of time. The last question, the student’s overall ability was considered “very little” by two teachers, “some” by eight teachers and “a lot” by five teachers.

The results of Question 24 show that thirteen teachers use the factor of student’s overall ability “some” or “a lot” of the time when deciding to grant a passing grade to a student who does not obtain 60% in the course. The second factor that eleven teachers considered “some” or “a lot” of the time; when granting a passing grade was the amount of improvement. The third factor that nine teachers considered was attendance.

5.1.12 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 25 and 26

Question 25 was an open question, which asked teachers to describe the typical behaviour of the misplaced students in their classes. Three of the twelve teachers who
answered this question responded by saying the behaviour was very negative. Four of the twelve teachers responded by saying the behaviour was negative. Another three teachers responded that behaviour of the misplaced was no different from any other student. Lastly, two teachers described student behaviour as positive or mentioned that these misplaced students felt the class was a challenge. The responses were diverse, with slightly more teachers seeing the misplaced student’s behaviour as negative or very negative.

Question 26 was another open question and asked teachers to describe their own behaviour toward a misplaced student. Eleven teachers answered this question. One teacher described teacher behaviour toward the misplaced as negative, two teachers described their behaviour toward misplaced students as neutral, four teachers described behaviour as the teacher giving extra support if the student requested and one teacher described helping if asked by the student, but treating the correctly placed and the misplaced in a similar manner. The four responses to the question showed that the four teachers described their behaviour toward misplaced students as a teacher offering to help. Three teachers found their own behaviour toward the misplaced did not vary or could be considered negative compared to their behaviour toward the correctly placed. However, the majority, eight teachers, described their behaviour toward the misplaced as offering or giving extra help whether the student requested the help or not.

5.1.13 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 27-32

The last six questions on the teacher questionnaire were demographical in nature. Question 27 asked the teachers to indicate their gender. All fifteen teachers answered and the results showed that nine respondents were male and six were female. The next question (Question 28) asked teachers to identify their first language, thirteen of the fifteen teachers answered that it was English, one said Portuguese and another answered Persian. The next question (Question 29) asked teachers to indicate their age. All fifteen teachers answered this question, which showed that four teachers were between 25-35 years old, six were from 36-45 years old, four were between 46-60 years old, and one was older than 60 years old.
The next question (Question 30) asked about the highest educational degree the teacher had obtained. Seven teachers had Bachelor's degrees, seven had Master's degrees, and one had a Doctorate.

This demographic information, when summarized, creates a picture of the average teacher of English at LS who responded to this questionnaire as being male, having English as a first language, and being between 36-45 years old with either a Master's/Doctorate or a Bachelor's degree. This sample of teachers at LS mirrors the entire group of LS teachers except in the area of gender where females are the majority.

5.1.14 Teacher Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 31 and 32

The last two questions, Questions 31 and 32, in the demographic information section of the questionnaire asked about teaching experience. Knowing that many part-time teachers work at other institutions, not only the LS, teachers were asked about their teaching experience at secondary schools or colleges (post-secondary educational institutions which have English second language requirements). The teaching experience in institutions other than LS was calculated in years. At LS, experience is measured in points of seniority with each forty-five-hour course equalling one point of seniority for the teacher.

When the scores of these two questions in this section were combined, the total teaching experience of the teachers who answered the questionnaires was described. All fifteen teachers answered these two questions. Two teachers had 1-4 years of outside teaching experience and 0-20 points of seniority. There were also two teachers with 1-4 years of outside experience and either 41-60 or 61-80 points of seniority at LS. There was one teacher, who had 5-9 years of outside experience and 21-40 points of experience at LS. There were three teachers who had 5-9 years of outside experience one of which had 60-80 points of seniority and the other two with 81 points of seniority or more. There was one teacher with 10-14 years of outside experience and 0-20 points of seniority at LS, whereas three teachers had 10-14 years of outside experience with 21-40 points of seniority. One
teacher had 15-20 years at other institutions and 21-40 points of seniority at the language school. Lastly, one teacher had 20 years of outside experience and 81 or more points of seniority. In conclusion, from this sample of teachers at LS, teaching experience was varied in terms of the amount (from 1 to more than 20 years) and the type of teaching experience (high school, college and the language school).

The description of the responses of the teacher questionnaire has been completed. Upon the conversion of the answers of the teacher questionnaire into frequency data and the completion of the descriptive analysis, the next section of the study will contain the inferential data analysis of the answers of the teacher questionnaire.

5.2 Statistical Data Analysis of Teacher Questionnaire

The answers from the teacher questionnaire were in the form of nominal data, with each answer corresponding to a pre-determined value. These values were then added together to give frequencies, expressed as percentages. They were the basis of the inferential analysis. The complete description of this analysis is found in the following section.

The answers of the teacher questionnaire, in terms of frequencies, allowed for a rich description of placement, re-evaluation practices, and misplacement according to this group of teachers. In order to verify if, within the teacher sample, there was significant variation in the answers to the questions on the teacher questionnaire, the sample of teachers was divided into two groups. Each group of teachers’ answers to the questions of the questionnaire were the focus of the inferential analysis.

In order to form two groups of teachers from the sample, a more experienced group was identified as differing from a less experienced group by using answers to Question 32, which asked about the teaching experience of respondents at the language school, in terms of points of seniority (one point equals one forty-five hour course has been taught). There
were five possible answers to this question, which were: 1) 0-20 points; 2) 21-40 points; 3) 41-60 points; 4) 61-80 points; and 5) 81+ points of seniority. To transform the five levels of teaching experience into two groups, more experienced and less experienced, the numeral values, corresponding to points of seniority, were added together. The first two values of 1 and 2 (0-20 and 21-40 points) were combined and the last three values 3, 4, and 5 (41-60, 61-80 points and 81+ points of seniority) were combined. This made for two groups of teachers: the less experienced with 0-40 points of seniority and the more experienced with 41-81+ points of seniority. In order to verify the difference between the two groups, in terms of their responses to the questions in the teacher questionnaire, the inferential test, a test to investigate relationships between variables was required.

The most common test to verify the probability of a relationship is Chi-square. Two assumptions underlying this test are having both frequency and independent data; both of these criteria are met by this study's data. Chi-square also requires that the statistical table created by the variables, must be larger than 2X2 (two variables by two variables) and there must be a large sample size. The fact the teachers only numbered fifteen means there is a small sample size. In addition, many cross-tabular tables have only two levels of variables for teacher's experience (less and more) and two levels of answers (yes and no). This means that many cells have a value of 5 or less which indicates that Chi-square may be considered invalid due to failure to meet all four assumptions underlying Chi-square. Therefore, Fisher's Exact test was chosen to verify probability as this test does not require cell counts of greater than 5 and can support tables with only two levels of variables.

When probability testing is carried out on a large quantity of variables at the same time, there is the possibility that the result could be Type I error. To reduce such events, very conservative significance levels can be chosen as suggested by the Bonferroni method. However, in an evaluative study such as this, very conservative significance level may limit significant variables too drastically. Bendel and Afifi (1977) suggest choosing very liberal significant levels (p = 0.025) at this stage of an investigation, so no findings are lost. However, for this study, not wishing to be overly conservation or liberal, the significant
level of $p = 0.05$ was chosen with the analysis of strength of association used to combat Type I error.

The null hypothesis for this study is that there is no relationship between the variables of more/less experience of teachers and the answers to the questions of the questionnaire. In other words, there is no difference between the answers on the questionnaire for the group of more experienced teachers compared to the answers from the group of less experienced teachers. If the two groups' answers to the questions from the questionnaire differ significantly from one another, it may mean that the variables, which could identify difference between the more and less experienced groups, can be isolated. Table IX shows the results of the Fisher's Exact test.
Table IX
Fisher's Exact Test to Measure Relationships Between Variables and the Responses of the More and Less Experienced Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Table Probability (P)</th>
<th>Pr&lt;=P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 1A ANL 19456</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 1A ANL 19457</td>
<td>6.0E-03</td>
<td>0.030*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 1A ANL 19458</td>
<td>7.6E-02</td>
<td>0.471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 1A ANL 19459</td>
<td>5.0E-02</td>
<td>0.154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 1A ANL 19460</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 1A ANL 19461</td>
<td>2.5E-02</td>
<td>0.201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 1A ANL 19444</td>
<td>2.1E-02</td>
<td>0.147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 1A ANL 22771</td>
<td>0.400</td>
<td>0.505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 2 Seen or Heard TOEIC</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 5 Awareness of Program Requirements</td>
<td>0.400</td>
<td>0.444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6 Correct Level Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Table Probability (P)</th>
<th>Pr&lt;=P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 6A Sciences d'Administration (Administration)</td>
<td>0.900</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 6B Communication (Communication)</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 6C Pharmacie (Pharmacy)</td>
<td>0.400</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 6D Science et Génie (Engineering Science)</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 7 Re-evaluation</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 8 Use of Activities</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q10 Factors Used in Re-evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Table Probability (P)</th>
<th>Pr&lt;=P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 10A Consideration of Other English Courses</td>
<td>0.243</td>
<td>0.567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 10B Consideration of Other English Experience</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 10C Student Claims of Misplacement</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 11 Use of evaluation Process</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 12 Identification of Misplaced</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 13 Number of Student Identified as Needing to Change Level</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 14 Type of Level Changes</td>
<td>0.369</td>
<td>0.604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 15 Number of Student who Move to Higher Levels</td>
<td>0.342</td>
<td>0.485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 16 Number of Student who Move to Lower Levels</td>
<td>0.316</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q17 Reasons for Not Changing Course Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Table Probability (P)</th>
<th>Pr&lt;=P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 17A Scheduling Conflicts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 17B Student's Departmental Level Requirement</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.025*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 17C Too Late to Move</td>
<td>0.527</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 17D No Room in Other Course</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 17E Student Has Completed Previous Course Level</td>
<td>0.407</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 17F Student Wished to Stay</td>
<td>0.461</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 18 Student Require Extra Help in Class</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.525</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q 19 Student Require Extra Help outside Class

Q 20 Amount of Help Required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic (ANL 19456 and 19457)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.1A Reading</td>
<td>0.509</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.1B Grammar Explanation</td>
<td>0.727</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.1C Listening</td>
<td>0.272</td>
<td>0.272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.1D Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.1E Speaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.1F Pronunciation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intermediate (ANL 14958 and 14959)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.2A Reading</td>
<td>0.407</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.2B Grammar Explanation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.2C Listening</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.031*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.2D Writing</td>
<td>0.384</td>
<td>0.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.2E Speaking</td>
<td>0.384</td>
<td>0.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.2F Pronunciation</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>0.128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advanced I (ANL 14960 and 14961)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.3A Reading</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.3B Grammar Explanation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.3C Listening</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.031*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.3D Writing</td>
<td>0.384</td>
<td>0.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.3E Speaking</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.3F Pronunciation</td>
<td>0.391</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advanced II (ANL 19554 and 22771)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.4A Reading</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.4B Grammar Explanation</td>
<td>0.535</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.4C Listening</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.4D Writing</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.4E Speaking</td>
<td>0.535</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.4F Pronunciation</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q 21 Extra support Raises Student to a Pass Level 4.5E-02 0.089
Q 22 Frequency of Students Who Fail the Course 0.200 0.229

Q 24 Reasons for Granting Passing Grades

| Q 24A Amount of Improvement       | 0.395 | 1.000 |
| Q 24B Amount of Extra Help Sought | 0.391 | 1.000 |
| Q 24C Student’s Academic Situation | 0.195 | 0.314 |
| Q 24D Consequences of Failure on Student | 0.474 | 1.000 |
| Q 24E Attendance in Course       | 0.377 | 1.000 |
| Q 24F Active Participation       | 0.293 | 0.608 |
| Q 24G Student’s Overall Ability  | 0.142 | 0.142 |
| Q 25 Description of Misplaced Student | 0.378 | 1.000 |
| Q 26 Teacher Behavior Toward Misplaced Student | 0.545 | 1.000 |

*p =<0.05, two-tailed. Note: Dashes indicate Probability was not calculated due to cell counts of equal value.
Table IX has three columns. The first identifies the question from the teacher questionnaire. The second column lists the statistic used to measure the relationship. The last column lists the two-tailed probability factor, which has a significance level of 0.05. On questions where the p value is less than 0.05, an asterisk follows the value. Fisher Exact tests were not run on variables: Question 3 (TOEIC Test Questions), 4 (Skill Areas Evaluated on TOEIC), 9 (Types of Re-evaluation Activities Used) and 23 (Reasons for a Failing Grade) as all these questions allow for more than one possible answer and probability cannot be calculated if the respondents' answers fall in more than one category. When the two groups of respondents' answers to a particular question were equal, the analysis could not be carried out. In this situation, dashes indicate the missing data in the table.

Variables with a p value of less than 0.05 are followed by an asterisk (*). Significance of the p value allows that the null hypothesis is rejected; therefore, there is significant difference on the four variables between the more experienced and the less experienced groups of teachers on Questions 1B (Experience with Basic II (the second course level) \( p = 0.030 \)); 17 B (Reasons Why Misplaced Students Do Not Move-Departmental Requirement) \( p = 0.025 \); 20.2C (Amount of Extra Help in Listening for Intermediate Level which includes the third and fourth course levels) \( p = 0.031 \); and 20.3C (Amount of Extra Help in Listening for Advanced I Level which includes the fifth and sixth course levels) \( p = 0.031 \).

The results of Fisher's Exact test showed that the null hypothesis of no strength of association is rejected with the p value of less than 0.05 on the four variables. The hypothesis can be rejected for the variable, Question 1B (Experience with Basic II (second course level)); in other words, the more experienced teachers have given that particular course more times than the less experienced teachers. Secondly, more experienced teachers differ from less experienced teachers on reporting that one of the "Reasons Why Misplaced Students Do Not Move" is due to departmental requirement. Lastly, for both Question 20.2C (Extra Help in Listening for Intermediate, third and fourth course levels) and 20.3 C (Extra
Help in Listening for Advanced I, fifth and sixth course levels) there is an association between these two variables and the amount of teaching experience. More experienced teachers reported that students required less extra help in listening than the inexperienced teachers did for both of these combined levels.

The results of Fisher’s Exact test identified an association between the three variables of 1) teacher experience at the Basic II (second course level), 2) frequency of departmental requirement being a reason why the misplaced student does not change level, and 3) extra help in listening at the Intermediate and Advanced I levels and the groups of more and less experienced teachers. As the level of significant was quite liberal and to outset any Type I error, a second type of analysis to verify the strength of the association between the four variables, Cramer V values were used. Results are shown in Table X.

Table X
Results of Cramer V to Test Strength of Association on Variables with Unbalanced Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 1B Experience with Basic II (ANL 19457)</td>
<td>0.707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 17 Reasons to not change course level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 B Departmental Requirement</td>
<td>0.708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20 Type of Extra Help Required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.2 Listening</td>
<td>-0.675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 20.3 Listening</td>
<td>-0.675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0 \leq V \leq 1$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of Cramer V show values that vary from 0-1, with a value of 0 representing a non-acceptable relationship, and 1 representing a perfect relationship. Questions 20.2 and 20.3 with negative values are considered very weak ($P = -0.675$) and are unacceptable. The next values for Questions 1 B and 17 B are deemed strong ($P = 0.707$ and
0.708) and show an acceptable relationship. This means that there is a strong association between teacher experience and the amount of teaching experience at the Basic II level and teacher experience and the frequency that they believe departmental requirements are a reason a misplaced student does not change course level.

Teacher experience has been shown to be strongly associated with the variables of teaching experience at the Basic II (second course) level and with the teacher’s opinion that departmental requirements keep students from changing course level. Teacher experience was further explored in terms of its relationship to the variable of the number of student failures.

Another type of information, which was gathered from teachers, although it was not a question on the teacher questionnaire, was the number of failures in each of their classes in Fall 2007. Failures were identified as any student enrolled in an English course that received a mark of E (student had accumulated less than 60% at the end of the semester). The number of failures were correlated to the teacher in order to verify if teacher experience was related the number of failures.

The information, gathered from the same sample of fifteen teachers, was simply the number of students who received E’s in English second language classes at LS in Fall 2007. There was no distinction made between the failure of the students who stopped coming to class before the end of the course and those who continued to the end, wrote final examinations, and then failed the course. There was no identification of which student in the class received an E and there was no pairing of data from the student questionnaire to this information. Without knowing the exact number of students in each class, the average of 23 students per class was used, as this is the average class size for English second language classes at LS. The total number of failures from each class was added together to have a total number of failures for each course level.
In order to verify a relationship between the number of failures in a class and teachers, the sample of teachers was divided into groups based on their responses to three questions. To identify the more experienced teachers from the less experienced, the answers to Questions 30 (highest educational level completed), Question 31 (teaching experience outside the language school) and Question 32 (seniority inside LS) were used. Question 30 had three possible answers Bachelor’s, Master’s or Doctorate. The response of Bachelor’s was given a value of 1 and the responses of Master’s and Doctorate were added together and given a value of 2, in order to have only two levels of variables. There were five possible answers to Questions 31: 1 equalled 1-4 years; 2 equalled 5-9 years; 3 equalled 10-14 years; 4 equalled 15-20 years and 5 equalled 20+ years of teaching experience. Possible answers to Question 32 were: 1 which equalled 0-20 points; 2 equalled 21-40 points; 3 equalled 41-60 points; 4 equalled 61-80 points and 5 equalled 81+ points of teaching seniority at LS.

The independent variables for this investigation were 1) course level, 2) the education of teacher, and 3) the experience of the teacher. The dependent variable was the number of failures in each class. As the number of failures was count data, a particular analysis of regression, a Poisson regression, was used to test the possible relationship between the variables. Results are found in Table XI.
Table XI
Effect of Educational Level and More or Less Teaching Experience on Number of Student Failures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Chi-square Statistic</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Level</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q30-2 Teacher Education. (Masters /Doctorate)</td>
<td>8.80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.003*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q31 Outside Language School Experience (1-9 years)</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q31-2 Outside Language School Experience (10-20+ years)</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q32 Language School Seniority (0-40 points)</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q32-2 Language School seniority (41 –81+ points)</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p = <0.05

In Table XI, starting at the left, the first column lists the question number from the teacher questionnaire, for example Question 30, which identifies the less experienced teachers and 30-2, which identifies the more experienced teachers. The second column is the numeral value of the chi-square statistic used to test the relationship between the variable and the group. The third column identifies the degrees of freedom for each question. Lastly, the fourth column, the p value, is the level of significance of the regression test, for this study the level of significance is 0.05. An asterisk follows variables, which have a p value of less than 0.05.

A significant relationship between the numbers of failures and the variable of teacher education was found. In order to focus on the more significant relationships, only the variables with a threshold of 20% (Question 30-2 and 32-2) were kept. The Poisson test was carried out for those two variables. The results of this procedure are shown in Table XII.
Table XII
Poisson Regression for Variables of Education and Number of Student Failures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Chi-square Statistic</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q30-2 Teacher Education (Master’s /Doctorate)</td>
<td>7.46</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.006*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q32-2 Language School Seniority (41–81+ points)</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p = <0.05

The results showed significance on the variable of teacher education with p= 0.006. There is an association between the education of the teacher and the number of failures that occur. The results show there are more failures in classes with a teacher whose highest educational level is a Bachelor’s degree than in classes with a teacher who has a Master’s or a Doctoral degree.

In summary, the teacher data was quantitatively analysed to investigate probabilities. The first finding was that there was significant difference between the group of teachers that are more experienced and the number of times they had given the second course level. The strength of the association between these two variables showed a strong relationship, for the two groups responded very differently. Whereas a larger number of the less experienced teachers of this sample had had some experience with the second course level, fewer of the more experienced group of teachers had given the course, but they had given it more times. Secondly, significance was found between the variables of teacher experience and the frequency that teachers indicated students who were identified as misplaced do not change course levels after being advised to do so by the teacher because of departmental language requirements. Again, the association between these variables showed great strength which means that more experienced teachers responded that departmental requirements keep
students in classes "often" and "always" after being identified as misplaced, whereas the less experienced teachers responded this factor is responsible for refusal to move "never" or "sometimes". Teacher opinions about refusals to move are therefore very much related to teacher experience. The third finding was that teacher experience is related to the opinion about the amount of extra listening help students in Intermediate and Advanced I groups need. However, these two variables did not show strength of association. Lastly, results of analysis of regression showed there are fewer failures in classes with a teacher whose highest educational level is a Master's or a Doctoral degree compared to those teachers holding a Bachelor's degree.

The results of the descriptive and the inferential analysis of the teacher questionnaires have been outlined. These results will form the basis of the topics which will be used in the interviews in the qualitative portion or phase two of the study. The second section of this quantitative portion of the study involves the student questionnaires. The descriptive analysis of the student questionnaires will be the first data to be presented.

5.3 Descriptive Data Analysis of Student Questionnaire

The following section will describe both the descriptive and inferential analysis of the data collected from the student questionnaire.

The descriptive analysis of the students' responses to the student questionnaire was completed in April 2008. The following section is a summary of the results, in percentages, of the analyses of the students' responses to all questions in the student questionnaire.

Student questionnaires were answered by at least seven students from 37 (75.5%) of the 49 English classes at LS in the Fall 2007 session. Completed student questionnaires represented all eight course levels at the language school. Descriptive analysis showed that eleven students who answered the questionnaire were in the lowest course level offered that session; 80 students, from four sections, came from Basic II (the second course level); 154
students, from eight sections, were in Intermediate I (the third course level); 65 students, from three sections, were in Intermediate II (the fourth course level); 166 students, from nine sections, were enrolled in Advanced I (the fifth course level); 92 students, from five sections, who answered the questionnaire were in Advanced II (the sixth course level); 74 students, from five sections, were in Advanced III (the seventh course level) and 35 students were from the two Advanced IV (the highest course level) classes. In total, 677 students from eight course levels and thirty-seven sections answered the questionnaire.

The small number of respondents in the lowest and the highest levels mirrors the actual numbers of students in those classes. There was only one class of the lowest level, and only two classes of the highest. For the rest of the respondents, questionnaire completion rates mirror the number of classes at those levels, except for the fourth course level, which was under-represented. The low number of respondents, compared to the number of classes at this level, is most likely related to the fact that two teachers, who each had two classes at this level, fell ill during the session and their classes were taken over by other teachers. The replacement teachers were largely unable to have students complete the questionnaires. In addition, there were two new teachers at this level, neither of whom submitted completed questionnaires. In any case, those four teachers, with six classes among them, all with no or very low questionnaire completion rates make it appear that the fourth level does not have many students, which is not the case. Along with the course directly below and above, it is one of the levels with typically the largest number of sections and students.

Both whole and partial classes answered the questionnaire; therefore, some classes were represented by as few as seven students and other classes by as many as twenty-six. Overall, there was an average of eighteen students per class that answered the questionnaire. There is an overall average of twenty-three students per class in English classes at LS; therefore, in terms of response rates there is an average loss of five students per class. This loss seems very minor as participation was voluntary, but it does not reduce the fact that one course level is under-represented. Such high participation rates in most levels are certainly related to the commitment of the teachers who had the interest in the study and took the time
to present the questionnaire to the students. The fact that students could not leave the classroom with the questionnaire and that it was a very easy and quick to complete could also help to account for such high completion rates.

5.3.1 Student Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 1-4

The first series of questions on the student questionnaire were demographic in nature. Question 1 asked students to identify their gender. All 667 students answered this question, which showed that 447, or 66%, of respondents were female and 34% or 230 were male. These findings vary slightly from the normal university population, which is closer to 55% female and 45% male.

The second question in this series, Question 2, asked respondents to indicate their age. All 677 students answered this question and 58% of them indicated they were in the 21-24 year age range; 18% were in the 25-29 year age range; 14% were in the age range of 18-20 years and 8% were in the 30+-year age range. These answers mirror the general university population as the majority of students started school at age five or six and have completed twelve years of elementary and secondary school and two or three years of college which makes them 20-21 years of age when they arrive at university. However, it is rare that students take their language requirement their first semester (the study was carried out in autumn) as they must first take the institutional TOEIC. Therefore, the majority of students in language classes in autumn 2007 at LS ranged from 21-24 years of age.

Once again, all 677 students answered Question 3, which asked them to identify their first language. The vast majority, 89%, had French as a first language, which was expected as students at UU are mainly French speaking. Within the other 11% of respondents, twenty languages were represented; 2% of the respondents identified Arabic as their first language. The third largest group were first language speakers of Spanish who represented 2% of the total student population. The fourth rated language, which 1% of the respondents spoke as a first language, was Swahili. Speakers of Arabic and Swahili are from areas of Africa where
French is often the language used in educational institutions. Therefore, speakers from those areas choose to come to UU for graduate studies. Spanish speakers are quite readily found in the area, as the province has targeted Spanish speakers for immigration; therefore, they are also well-represented on the university campus, and in English second language classes at LS. The rest of the respondents' answers were extremely varied, with each of the languages composing less than 1% of total respondents. The first languages of the remaining 5% of respondents were: Portuguese: 5 speakers or 0.7%; Romanian and Wolof: 4 speakers or 0.5%; English: 3 speakers or 0.4%; Berbera, Chinese, Kirundi, German Bulgarian: 2 speakers or 0.3% each; and Bombara, Dioula, Cambodian, Khmer, Vietnamese, Russian, Serbian and Farsi: 1 speaker or 0.1% each. Speakers of these languages are present in English second language classes due to the fact that UU attracts students whose countries of origin have French as the official language for higher education or immigrants who come from French-speaking countries. Even though there are twenty-one languages represented in the English classes, the vast majority of students and respondents are speakers of French as a first language.

Question 4, was related to the preceding question, it asked students to indicate their second language. Of the 667 students who answered the questionnaire, 10 students did not answer this particular question. This loss is perhaps due to confusion over how to order languages when you speak more than two, or students may have possibly felt that their linguistic knowledge is such that they feel they do not have enough mastery to declare a second language. Analysis showed that 87% indicated that English was their second language. The second most popular second language was French at 9%. The remaining 2% of respondents were extremely diverse: Spanish (1%); Arabic (0.9%); German (0.6) and Vietnamese (0.1%) were all listed as second languages. In general, this population of students have French as a first language and English as a second.

The first four demographically based questions showed that 66% of this questionnaire's respondents were female and 34% were male, the average age of the respondents was from 21 to 24 years of age. There were twenty-one first languages
represented in the English classes; however, the vast majority of respondents, 92%, are speakers of French as a first language. Six second languages were identified with over 87% of respondents indicating English was their second language.

5.3.2 Student Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 5-7

The following section described of three questions, Questions 5, 6 and 7 which all pertain to the respondent’s previous educational experience in English. Question 5, 6 and 7 all had 670 respondents; seven respondents did not answer any of the three questions. The other four respondents answered one or two of the questions, but not all three. It would seem that the questions were clear, but respondents did not want to answer “no” if any part of the information was correct or “yes” if only a part of the information was true. Therefore, when respondents could not respond with 100% agreement, they may have chosen to not answer or to have written a note to the researcher. For example, one respondent answered 99, but handwrote that he had completed four years, not five, of secondary school English.

Of the respondents, 76% had completed three years of elementary school English and 23% had not. Question 6 asked about study in English at the secondary school level; 84% respondents said that they had completed five years of secondary school English, while 15% had not. The last question in the series, Question 7, asked if the respondents had completed their two mandatory English courses at college. 80% answered “yes” and 19% answered “no”. In conclusion, the majority of respondents have completed all three levels of their English education as offered by the public school system. The other 20% of respondents stated that they did not complete the number of prescribed years of English at those educational levels. This could mean that 1) those respondents are older than the general sample population and started English later in elementary school or 2) had only to complete four rather than five years of secondary school English or 3) English at college was not a requirement at the time they were doing their studies. This 20% of respondents could also be composed of foreign students who do not have a similar school system and have not studied
English at the same educational levels or for the same duration. This series of questions gives a clear picture of the respondents’ previous experience in English.

5.3.3 Student Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 8-9

Questions 8 and 9 are similar in structure as they ask respondents to indicate their strongest skill area and their weakest skill area in English. Only three of the 677 respondents did not answer these two questions. However, eighteen respondents for Question 8 and nineteen for Question 9 chose more than one answer in each of the two questions, which clearly asked them to choose only one response. Re-formulation of the question would probably not have made the question any clearer, as it was short and simple. In light of the fact that respondents were only supposed to choose, not enumerate, one of the four listed choices, there was no way to distinguish which answer was their first choice. Therefore, respondents who gave more than one answer to a question were placed into only one of the categories they chose, usually the one that contained the most respondents. For example, for Question 8, all respondents who answered with more than one response all included the answer “Compréhension écrite”, Written comprehension, as one of their choices; therefore, all those respondents were placed into that category. With Question 9, all respondents who answered with more than one answer all responded “Production orale” Oral production; therefore, all those respondents were placed in that category.

The results to Question 8 revealed that 54% of respondents indicated that “Compréhension écrite”, Written comprehension (reading), was their strongest skill in English. Far behind was “Compréhension orale”, Oral Comprehension (listening), at 29%, “Production écrite”, Written production (writing), at 10% and “Production orale”, Oral Production, speaking, at 6%. Responses for Question 9 showed that, once again, 54%, or the majority, answered that “Production orale, Oral Production, (speaking), was their weakest skill area. Again, “Production écrite”, Written production (writing), was the weakest skill of 29% of respondents. The last two choices accounted for 13%, “Compréhension orale” Oral Comprehension (listening), and 3% “Compréhension écrite”, Written comprehension
Responses to these two questions very clearly showed that over 50% of respondents believe that their strongest skill is reading and their weakest is speaking. In other words, the receptive skills were considered stronger than the productive skills by student respondents.

5.3.4 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 10

Question 10 had eleven subsections and asked respondents to indicate in which activities they regularly engage in English. Of the 677 respondents, nine respondents did not respond to Question 10B; seven respondents did not answer Question 10E and 10H; and all other questions had six respondents who did not answer. As less than 2% of respondents failed to answer this question, the question appears to have been clear for respondents. In order to simplify the results of this section, responses with values of 1 “jamais” (never) or 2 “à l’occasion” (sometimes) were dealt with as a unit, as were the values 3 “souvent” (often) and 4 “toujours” (always).

Results showed that subsections F and G had the highest percentage of “often” or “always” answers. In subsection F, 45% of respondents indicated that they “always” listened to music in English and 46% said they “often” listen to music in English. Subsection G shows that the activity of watching television or films was carried out “always” by 10%, “often” by 39% and “sometimes” by 46% of respondents. The fourth most popular activity, which is associated with the two most popular, is reading books or magazines (Question 10A). The results showed that 2% of respondents responded “always”, 19% responded “often”, 64% said “sometimes” and 13% said “never” to the frequency of reading in English. These three activities are by far the most popular activities carried out by the respondents; most likely due to the proliferation of American music, television, films, and magazines/books and the limited amount of these types of entertainment in languages other than English.
Question 10B, which asked about the frequency of reading textbooks or articles in English, was the third most popular activity listed. Results showed that respondents answered that they read in English, as part of their studies, “always” at 5%, “often” at 33% and “sometimes” at 50% and “never” at 9%. This can be explained by the fact that many programs use English materials as either required or supplemental reading due to the inexistence of French material or the high price of French or translated materials. Therefore, many students need to read in English in order to succeed in their program areas. The variation in response to this question may be related to the program in which they study; for example, few books in Archaeology are available in French, whereas almost all books for Social Work are written in French.

Answers to Question 10H, speaking with clients, revealed that 1% of respondents said they “always” speak in English with clients, whereas 10% reported that they “often” do. The largest number of respondents, 55%, answered that they use English in speaking with clients “sometimes” and 34% said they “never” do. The type of employment of the respondent may explain this variation, for work in tourism would have more opportunities to speak in English than would a salesperson for a small local shop. A second factor is the number of hours per week spent at work; a part-time versus a full-time employee would not have the same hours of contact.

For Question 10, the most popular activities in English for this population was 1) listen to music, 2) watch television or films, 3) read text books or articles (scientific), 4) read books or magazines, and 5) speak with clients. The following paragraph considers those activities in which the respondents did not engage actively.

Responses to Question 10 showed that the activity the least engaged was speaking with colleagues at work (Question 10I). 10% said they “never” speak with colleagues at work and 25% said they “sometimes” do. Only 3% said they “often” and 0.4% said they “always” speak with colleagues. These findings reflect the fact that most workplaces surrounding UU are French-speaking with little need to speak in English. Question 10E,
writing reports, is the second least carried out activity with 64% reporting that they “never” write reports in English, while 31% said that they “sometimes” do. No respondents gave the “always” answer and only 3% said they “often” write reports in English. As this question pertained mostly to academic university work, and UU is a French-speaking university, it is not surprising that students do little of their written work in English. The third and fourth least popular activities were Questions 10D and C, chatting on the Internet in English and writing e-mails. 60% of respondents said that they “never” and 32% reported that they “sometimes” chat on line in English. Only 6% said that they “often” chat and 1% said they “always” chat in English. For Question 10C, writing e-mails, respondents answered that they write e-mails “never” at 46% and “sometimes” at 44%. They also answered that respondents write e-mails in English “always” 1% and “often” at 7%. In both of these Questions, 10D and C, it is revealed that writing in English in these forms is not very popular. The last of the listed choices, Question 10J, which is speaking with friends or family in English, showed that 70% of respondents “never” and 25% “sometimes”, carry out this activity, while 3% “often” and 0.4% “always” do. Speaking in this situation is not a common activity.

Question 10 had ten listed subsections with an “Other” category (Question 10K) where respondents could add an option, which was not already listed. Twenty-one respondents added Travel in the “Other” category. Of these twenty-one respondents, ten or 47% said they “sometimes” travel in English, and eight or 38% said they “often” do. Two respondents, or 9%, said they “never” travel in English, but one or 4% said he “always” travels in English.

Question 10 supplied information as to the type and popularity of activities carried out by the respondents in English. In general, the more passive activities of listening, watching, or reading were more popular; whereas the productive skills of speaking and writing were among the least popular. The exception to this is Question 10H, speaking with clients, which was among the more popular, yet is a speaking activity.
5.3.5 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 11-14

The following four questions, Questions 11, 12, 13, and 14, inquired into the respondent’s academic situation. Question 11 asked respondents to indicate their current university degree level. Of the 677 respondents, four did not answer the question: 94% of those who answered were registered at the Bachelor’s level, with 4% at the Master’s and 1% at the Doctorate level. One respondent added that he was at a Post-Doctorate level. Therefore, it is clear that the vast majority of students studying English at the language school are enrolled in a Bachelor’s program.

Question 12 asked respondents to identify their program of study from among the list of possibilities and to add their program in the “Other” category if it was not already listed. Twelve respondents of the 677 did not answer this question, perhaps as they were not in a program, but were only taking one course for their own interest. Of the 665 respondents who did answer, they came from 59 different programs. Those programs were: Actuarial Sciences, Administration, Agricultural Economics, Agronomy, Anthropology, Archaeology, Architecture, Art History, Arts (Plastic), Biochemistry, Biology, Chemistry, Communications, Computer Science, Consumer Affairs, Economics, Engineering, Ergonomics, Ethnology, Food Technology, Forestry, French, Geography, Geology, Graphic Design, Guidance Counselling, History, Industrial Relations, International Relations, Kinesiology, Languages, Law, Linguistics, Literature, Mathematics, Medicine, Microbiology, Micro program, Music, Nursing, Nutritional Science, Pharmacy, Philosophy, Physical Education, Physics, Physiotherapy, Political Science, Psychology, Social Work, Sociology, Spanish, Sports Medicine, Statistics, Surveying, Teaching, Theatre, Visual Arts and “Etudes Libres” (for students who are taking courses outside of a program, or are waiting to be accepted in a program). The programs to which the respondents belonged in the greatest numbers were: Administration with 100 respondents, Political Science with 53; Industrial Relations and Communications both with 47; Engineering with 43; Agronomy with 29; Psychology with 27; Nursing with 29; and Teaching with 20 respondents. The other
programs all have less than fifteen respondents. In order to deal with the number of program identified by few respondents, the fifty-nine programs were placed into one of four categories.

The four categories of programs were: Administration, "Etudes Libres" (for students who are taking courses outside of a program, or are waiting to be accepted in a program), Humanities, and Sciences. Descriptive analysis showed that 51% of respondents came from programs in the Humanities, 29% from the Sciences, 16% from Administration, and 1% from "Etudes Libres".

The following question in this series, Question 13, was answered by 676 respondents, or all but one. The question required respondents to identify their current course level. The one person who did not respond could not perhaps identify (did not know or was not sure) the course number as the question is clear and all possibilities are listed. The results show that the largest number of respondents came from the fifth course level with 22.6%, and the third course level with 22%. The next largest group of respondents were registered in the sixth level with 14% and the fourth level with 10%. The second course level made up 12% of the respondents with the seventh level making up 10%. The two smallest levels represented were the highest with 5% and the lowest with 1%. Respondents in this sample population do not truly follow the normal distribution of students into course levels. The language school would typically see the largest number of students at the third, fourth and fifth course levels. The failure of this sample to reflect that distribution can be related to teacher involvement for it was the teacher who distributed the questionnaires to students. As was stated earlier, there was a lack of representation at the fourth course level due to two teachers falling ill and two other teachers being new to the level resulting in six courses at that level who did not complete questionnaires. All other course levels reflect the normal distribution of students at the language school.

Question 14 asked respondents to identify their program’s course requirement. Only 613 respondents answered this question, sixty-four did not. The large number of missing
data for this question could be related to one of two factors: 1) the particular requirement was not listed and no “Other” option was given and 2) the fact that certain programs do not have language requirements and no “Other” option was given. The first difficulty, not having listed the necessary requirement, occurred due to the fact that certain programs raised their requirement, without notification, just prior to the distribution of the questionnaire; therefore, the sixth course level, which had never been a requirement, became one just weeks before the questionnaire arrived and an adjustment to this question was not able to be made. The second reason for such loss of respondents on this question has to do with the absence of a “No requirement” option for certain programs do not have a requirement. In any case, if the “Other” option had been available, it would have perhaps solved the problem of respondents who needed the sixth course level listed and those who needed to state a “No requirement” choice. However, respondents may not have known their requirement and for this reason may not have answered the question. Again, the “Other” option might have allowed them to state that they did not know the requirement. The failure to have foreseen the necessity of the “Other” option most likely resulted in loss of information on this question.

For the respondents who did answer Question 14, the analysis showed that 45% had the fourth course level as a program requirement, 32% had the fifth course level, 11% had one course at any level to complete, 5% had a number of courses at any level to complete, and 1% added their own option of “No requirement”. All these are truly requirements that correspond to various program requirements. However, the first choice of the third course level is not a requirement for any level, yet 1% chose it. Those eleven respondents might have confused the course level with another or might have just guessed because they did not know their program’s requirement. Overall, the majority of respondents who answered this question seemed aware of it.
5.3.6 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 15-22

The next series of questions, Questions 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22, all refer to the institutional version of the TOEIC test and the test-taking experience. Question 15 asked respondents to indicate whether they had had the experience of taking the TOEIC. Two of the 677 respondents did not answer this question. Of the 675 who did, 97% said they had taken the TOEIC and 2% had not. This is interesting information as a TOEIC score is the only score used to garner placement in an English course according to LS. It is unclear whether certain students can have access to an English course using the score of another test or if the respondents were confused and they had actually taken the TOEIC, but had not recognized the experience as such. If students had not taken the TOEIC, but enrolled in an English course, it would be interesting to know what the basis of their entry was. However, the vast majority of the respondents had taken the TOEIC. The next question, Question 16, related to the preceding question. It asked if the TOEIC test had been taken at UU. Nineteen of the 677 respondents did not answer, which corresponds to those who had not ever taken the TOEIC. Of those respondents who were able to comment, a slight majority, 46%, answered that the recording was “satisfactory” and a smaller number, 39% found the recording was “unsatisfactory”. A proportion of 9% “did not remember” enough of the recording to comment and 4% found it “excellent”. Variation in answers to this question may be related to the particular date those respondents took the test, as there are various tests every semester at UU. Depending on the date the respondents took the test, the sound quality may have varied, and the position of respondents in the room, along with the room size and shape itself, could have accounted for the variation in response to this
question. However, only 50% of all test-takers rated the sound quality as satisfactory or better.

Question 18 asked the extent to which certain listed factors bothered the test-takers during the taking of the TOEIC. Results are shown in Table XIII. Of the 677 respondents, twenty-one to thirty-one respondents did not answer a subsection or subsections of this question. Eighteen respondents said they had not taken the TOEIC; therefore, they could not answer this question. The remaining three to thirteen respondents, who did not answer, could have felt that nothing bothered them enough to comment, but neither did they complete the question by marking “Not at all”.

Table XIII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>A lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speed of Test</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise in Room</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content of TOEIC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Situation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Dashes indicate a lack of response in that category.

Question 18 had six listed subsections and one “Other” category. The factor which bothered the respondents the most, indicated by 31%, was the length of test (18B) which bothered them “a lot” and 30% said the length bothered them “a little”. For that same question, 15% reported that the length of test bothered them “very little” and 22% said it did “not” bother them “at all”. The next factor which most bothered most respondents was Question 18D, which asked the extent to which the quality of the recording bothered them. 22% said the quality of the recording bothered them “a lot”, 25% answered “a little”, 27%
answered "very little" and 23% answered "not at all". The third most annoying factor was Question 18F, the stress associated with the test. 13% answered that the stress bothered these respondents "a lot"; it bothered 27% of respondents "a little"; it bothered 26% "very little", and 32% "not at all". Respondents answered that subsection A in this question was the fourth most bothersome. Question 18A asked to what extent the movement of people in the room bothered the respondents. The answers showed that only 4% were bothered "a lot", 22% were bothered "a little", 30% were bothered "very little" and 42% said "not at all". The fifth most bothersome factor was listed under subsection C, which was the multiple-choice format of test. 6% answered that they were bothered "a lot" by the test format, 22% said it bothered them "a little", 25% said it bothered "very little" and 45% "not at all". The factor which bothered the respondents the least of all was the room where the test took place. 2% said it was bothersome "a lot", 9% answered "a little", 19% said "very little" and the majority 68% said "not at all".

Question 18 had an "Other" option (18G), which 106 respondents or 15% of the sample chose to answer. Those 106 respondents either wrote that 1) the speed of the test; or 2) the noise of others in the testing room; or 3) the content of TOEIC; or 4) their own personal situations (tired or sick) bothered their concentration during the test. Of these four factors the most significant was the first, the speed of the test. Thirty-eight or 35% of the 106 respondents said that the speed bothered them "a lot", ten respondents said it bothered them "a little", three said it bothered them "very little" and nine said it bothered their concentration "not at all". However, they still wrote that the speed of the test was a factor to be considered and they added it themselves to the "Other" category. The second most bothersome factor was the noise in the testing room. It was added by thirty-two of the 106 respondents in the subsection, twenty two said that the noise bothered them "a lot"; seven said "a little" and one said "very little". The third most bothersome disturbance was the content of the TOEIC, which was written by nine of the 106 respondents. Six found that the content of the test bothered them "a lot" and three said "a little". The last response chosen by the respondents to place in the "Other" category was their own personal situations (illness or fatigue). Three respondents said these conditions disturbed their concentration "a lot" and two said it bothered them "a little". Although there are fewer respondents, 106
compared to over 640 for other subsections, subsection G, the fact that sixty respondents used the “Other” option and wrote that the same factor, the speed of test, bothered them, and that over 35% of respondents or thirty eight said this factor bothered them “a lot”, is an extremely strong comment.

In summary, the speed of the test (Question 18G A) was the factor that the highest percentage of respondents added to this section; although it must be remembered that was a markedly smaller sample of the respondents. In the general population of respondents, the duration of the test was the factor that the majority said bothered their concentration the most, followed closely by the quality of the recording. These factors are similar for respondents said it is the conception or design of the TOEIC, not the conditions in which the test is given, that most disturbs them.

Question 19, in this same series of questions about the TOEIC, asks respondents to indicate the percentage of guessing they did during the TOEIC test. 649 of the 677 respondents answered this question. The twenty-six respondents who did not answer this question would again include the eighteen who had not taken the TOEIC. Therefore, ten did not answer the question, perhaps due to lack of question clarity or the fact that these respondents were not able to judge their percentage of guessing. The most popular response to this question, the amount of guessing, was 11-20% to which 30% of the respondents answered. 25% of respondents answered they guessed at frequencies between 21-30%, 15% guessed 31-40% of the time, 12% guessed from 0-10% of the time, 9% guessed about 41-50% of the time and 6% reported guessing more than 50% of the time. Results show that guessing during the TOEIC testing is prevalent and that over 50% of respondents say that among their responses, 11-30% is a guess. This figure raises questions about the accuracy of the TOEIC score to measure proficiency when such a higher number of test-takers are guessing.

The following question, 20, asked about the respondents’ experience with multiple-choice tests, which are similar in format to the TOEIC. Twenty-six respondents did not
answer, so 647 respondents answered this question. Again, eighteen could not answer the question, as they had not taken the TOEIC. The remaining eight respondents may not have answered because they could not remember or were not sure of their answer. Of the 647 respondents who did answer, 71% said they did not have this experience and 28% said they had taken similar tests. The following question, Question 21, asked respondents who answered, “Yes” to Question 20 to state how many tests of a similar format they had taken. Only the 184 respondents who answered “Yes” to the preceding question should have answered Question 21. However, 236 respondents answered. After Question 20, the directions tell respondents to skip to Question 22, if they answered “No” to the preceding question. Obviously, these directions were not clear enough, for 52 respondents answered who should not have. Using the filter option on the Excel spreadsheet, these respondents’ answers were removed from the sample for this question. The responses to Question 21 are in large majority (89%) indicating that respondents have only taken 1-2 multiple choice tests, similar in format to the TOEIC. The other choices: 3-4 similar tests (5%), 5-6 tests (2%) and 7+ tests (2%) are very far from the first choice of respondents which described having experience with 1-2 tests of similar format. Even by eliminating respondents identified as not having the necessary experience to answer the question, those respondents did not change the fact that the respondents have little experience taking tests with multiple-choice formats like the TOEIC. Therefore, during the taking of the TOEIC most respondents had the dual task of responding to both the test’s content and dealing with its structure, with which they were inexperienced.

Question 22 is the last in this series on the TOEIC. Respondents were asked to indicate where their score from the TOEIC test placed them. 640 respondents answered, thirty-seven did not. Again, the original eighteen who did not take the TOEIC did not answer. The nineteen, that could have answered, but did not, may not have remembered or may not have been able to recognize their level from those listed. Of the 640 who did answer, the majority or 25% said their TOEIC score placed them in the third course level. 17% said the TOEIC score placed them in either the second or fourth course level; 13% indicated it placed them into the fifth level and the same percentage, 13%, said it placed them in the sixth; 7% were placed into the seventh; 5% were placed using the TOEIC scores
into the lowest course level and 3% were put into the highest level after taking the TOEIC. The overview of this question shows that the use of the TOEIC scores resulted in the majority of students being placed into the lower to middle course levels, but not the lowest, nor the higher levels.

5.3.7 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 23-26

The next four questions, Questions 23, 24 25 and 26, form a series inquiring into the placement of respondents into course levels and then into classrooms. Question 23 asked respondents to say whether they agreed with the course level which the TOEIC indicated they needed to be placed. There were nine respondents who did not answer. Such loss of respondents may be due to failure of the respondents to have an opinion on placement. Of the 668 respondents who answered, 69% agreed with their placement into a particular course level and 30% did not. Respondents who said “Yes” to the question were asked to skip the following question and advance to Question 25.

Question 24 asked respondents who answered that they disagreed with placement (had responded “No” to Question 23) to indicate if they believed they should have been placed in a higher or lower course level. 201 respondents answered “No” to Question 23 therefore, 201 respondents were expected to answer Question 24. However, 215 answered Question 24. The fourteen extra respondents might not have read the directions correctly and they answered the question, although they should not have. For the 215 respondents who answered Question 24, 70% felt they should have been placed in a higher course level and 29% felt they should have been placed at a lower course level.

The last question in this series, Question 25 asked all 677 respondents to indicate whether the teacher in the first class of their English course had spoken to them about changing levels. Of the 677 respondents, 662 answered; the loss of 15 respondents may be simply due to a failure of respondents to remember such details or the fact that students who miss the first class of a course are typically not re-evaluated for course level changes. Of the
total number of respondents who answered this question, 662 or 72% said the teacher had not spoken to them about moving and 27% said the teacher had approached them about moving. Of those respondents who answered “No” (72%) to the question, they were to skip the following question, Question 26. Those respondents who answered “Yes” (27%) answered the following question.

180 respondents answered “Yes” to the preceding question; therefore, a maximum of 180 respondents should have answered Question 26. In fact, 171 respondents answered this question; which is a loss of nine respondents (not considered a huge loss). The 171 respondents were asked if they changed course level after having spoken with the teacher. 26% said they had changed course level and 73%, or 126 respondents, said that after consultation with the teacher they had not changed course level. It is these 126 respondents, who are considered misplaced and are the focus of the second portion of the questionnaire.

5.3.8 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 27

The second portion of the questionnaire targeted only the “misplaced” students, as determined by the three preceding questions 1) if the student considered himself misplaced, 2) if the teacher, through re-evaluation practices, considered him misplaced and had offered a course level change and 3) if the student refused the change. The total number of the group of misplaced respondents was 126. The first question in this section is Question 27 which had ten subsections and an “Other” option. The highest numbers of respondents are found on subsections 27A and B; the number of respondents drops in the subsequent subsections. Question 27 asked respondents to identify the reasons why they did not change level after the teacher approached them. Results are shown in Table XIV.
Table XIV
Frequency (in Percentage) of Factors used by Misplaced Students in Deciding to not Change Course Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>A lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling Problems</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Want to Add Extra Courses</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too Late in the Session to Change</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of Previous Course Level</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Place in Another Course</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanted to Stay in the Course</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had Friends in the Class</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt Comfortable with Group or Teacher</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Certain Other Level was Appropriate</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had Already Bought the Course Materials</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subsection F, in Question 27, was answered by 116 misplaced respondents, 51% of them answered that “their desire to stay in the course” was “a lot” of the reason they did not change their level and 24% said the fact they wanted to stay in the course influenced their decision not to move “a little”. 3% answered that wanting to stay in the course influenced their decision to stay “very little” and 20% said “not at all”. The second most popular factor for staying in the course was the factors in subsection H, “feeling at ease in the group or with the teacher”. This factor influenced the 116 respondents, “a lot” for 42%; “a little” for 33%; “very little” for 2%; and “not at all” for 21%, to not change levels. The third factor that influenced respondents was the fact that respondents were not sure that “the teacher-suggested level was appropriate” (Subsection I). 116 respondents answered this subsection and 35% of them said the uncertainty of the appropriateness of the suggested course level influenced their desire to change level “a lot”; “a little” for 24%, “very little” for 14% and “not at all” for 25%. The fourth factor that most respondents gave as the reason for their not
changing course level after it was suggested, was having “already bought the books” for that particular course (Subsection J). 115 respondents answered this subsection and 19% said this factor influenced them “a lot”; 14% said it influenced them “a little” and 4% said “very little” and 61% said it was a factor “not at all”. The next factor, Subsection A, asked respondents to indicate the extent to which scheduling problems influenced their decision to not change their course level. 118 respondents answered and 16% of them said it had “a lot” of influence, while 10% said it had “a little”, 6% said “very little” and 66% said it had no influence, “not at all”. The sixth factor that influenced respondents in deciding not to change levels was Subsection B, “not wanting to add courses”. 120 respondents answered; 14% indicated that not wanting to add courses had “a lot” of influence; 5% said “a little”; 3% said “very little”; and 76% said “not at all”. The seventh factor, which respondents identified as influencing their decision to not change course level was Subsection C, the fact that it was “too late in the semester to move”. 116 respondents answered this question and 8% said it being too late to move influenced them “a lot”; 6% said it influenced “a little”; 8% indicated it influenced them “very little”; and 76% said “not at all”. The eighth factor identified as influencing the respondents in not changing course level was Subsection G, the fact of “having friends in the course”. 115 respondents answered this subsection and 1% said this factor influenced them “a lot”; 12% said it influenced “a little”; 2% indicated it influenced “very little”; and 83% said “not at all”. Subsection D, having “already completed the preceding course level”, was the ninth factor identified as influencing the respondent to not change level. 8% of 115 respondents answered that that factor influenced them “a lot”, 4% said “a little”; 0.8% reported “very little” and 86% said “not at all”. The last factor, there being “no place available in another course level”, (Subsection E), was answered by 115 respondents who reported that this factor influenced 3% of them “a lot”; 0.8% “a little”; 3% “very little” and 92% “not at all”. No respondents added a factor in the “Other” option.

In summary, Question 27 revealed that the over 50% of the misplaced group of respondents, who were identified as needing to change level and did not, indicated that the following factors influenced their decision “a lot”. The first reason given was a desire to stay in the course; the second was feeling at ease with the group or the teacher; and last, the fact of not being certain that the level suggested by the teacher was the right level. It was
surprising that the factors of, having already completed the previous course level or there being no place in another course was not higher in frequency. This issue will be investigated during the qualitative or second phase of the study as it was an unexpected finding.

5.3.9 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 28

Question 28 asked the group of misplaced respondents to identify their degree of difficulty with English in the various skill areas. There were six subsections and an “Other” option. 126 respondents could have answered this question; however, the number of respondents varies from 119-121 depending on the subsection. In subsection E, 120 respondents answered. 35% of respondents identified grammatical knowledge as the skill area in which they had “a lot” of difficulty; 42% said grammatical knowledge accounted for “a little” of their difficulty, 17% answered it accounted for “very little”, and 4% said “not at all”. The second greatest difficulty that the 121 respondents who answered the question cited was in the skill area of speaking. 30% answered that speaking accounted for “a lot” of their difficulty, 47% said it accounted for “a little”, 14% answered “very little”, and 7% said “not at all”. Pronunciation was third most popular response to the question. 121 respondents said that pronunciation accounted for “a lot” of their difficulty, 39% responded with “a little”, 24% answered “very little” and 5% said “not at all”. 119 respondents answered subsection C, and said writing was responsible for their difficulty in English. 26% answered “a lot”, 42% said “a little”, 20% said “very little” and 10% answered “not at all”. Listening was the fifth factor responsible for difficulties in English according to the 120 respondents who answered this subsection. 22% of respondents answered that listening gave them “a lot” of difficulty, 24% responded that it gave them “a little”, difficulty, 30% answered “very little” and 22% responded “not at all”. According to the 119 respondents who answered this subsection, they found the least amount of difficulty in English in their reading. 2% said they had “a lot” of difficulty reading, 36% said they had “a little”, 32% said “very little” and 23% said “not at all”. There were no answers added in the “Other” category.
Respondents to Question 28 cited grammatical knowledge and speaking as being the areas where they had the greatest difficulty, with pronunciation and writing being close behind. The two areas which were found to be less problematic for the students identified as misplaced were listening and reading. For this group of respondents, there is more difficulty with the productive skills of English than the receptive skills.

5.3.10 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 29 and 30

The following question, Question 29, asked the respondents who were identified as misplaced to indicate whether they needed support outside of the classroom. 119 respondents answered the question with 65% answering that they did not and 34%, or 41 respondents, answering that they did. Only those 41 respondents were then directed to Question 30 which asked them to indicate in what skill areas they needed extra support.

Question 30 has six subsections and one “Other” option. The skill areas listed are the same as those found in Question 28. The answers to the two questions are also similar. The most common skill area for the 41 misplaced respondents to need extra support was in writing (subsection C). 46% said they had needed “a lot” of extra support in this skill area, 36% indicated they had needed “a little”, 14% said “very little” and only 2% said “not at all”. In subsection E, 41 respondents answered. 51% of respondents identified grammatical knowledge as the second skill area in which they needed “a lot” of extra help; 29% said grammatical knowledge accounted for “a little” of their need for extra help and 17% answered it accounted for “very little” of their need for extra help, and 2% (“not at all”) said they did not need extra help in this area. The 41 respondents cited speaking (subsection D) as the third most common area in which to seek extra help. 53% answered that speaking accounted for “a lot” of their extra help, 19% said it accounted for “a little”, 14% answered “very little”, 12% said “not at all”. Pronunciation (subsection F) was the fourth most popular response to the question of which skill area needed extra help. Forty-one respondents said that pronunciation accounted for “a lot” (39%) of their extra help; 29% responded that they needed “a little” extra help in this area; 17% answered “very little” and 14% said “not at all”
(they needed no extra support in this area). Forty-one respondents answered subsection B, and said speaking was the area in which they needed extra help in English. 26% said “a lot”, 17% said “a little”, 29% said “very little” and 26% answered “not at all”. According to the 41 respondents who answered Subsection A, they answered that they needed the least amount of extra help in English in their reading. 14% said they had needed “a lot” of extra help in reading, 24% said they had needed “a little”, 31% said “very little” and 29% said they did not need help (“not at all”). There were no answers added in the “Other” category.

The forty-one respondents who were considered misplaced and answered that writing and grammatical knowledge as the areas in which they needed the greatest amount of extra support with speaking and pronunciation being close behind. The two areas, which were found to be less problematic and needed less extra support were listening and reading. In conclusion, the receptive skill areas needed less extra support than the productive skills for these misplaced students.

5.3.11 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 31

Question 31 asked the 126 misplaced respondents to indicate to what extent they did certain activities in English. 119 of the group of respondents who were identified as misplaced answered the ten subsections. There was an “Other” category; however, no one completed this subsection. The most popular activity that the majority of the respondents cited was (Subsection C) work on course material. 47% of respondents answered that they worked on course material “a lot”, 36% said “a little”, 10% said “very little”; and 4% said “not at all”. The second most popular activity was doing extra work outside course work, including watching television, listening to the radio, and reading (Subsection D). 32% respondents answered that they did these types of activities “a lot”, 42% said “a little”, 17% said, “very little”, and 7% said “not at all”. Looking for help from family, friends or classmates (Subsection I) was the third most popular activity in English that these respondents did. 21% said they did this “a lot”, 26% said “a little”, 15% answered, “very little”, and 36% answered that they did not do this (“not at all”). Asking for further
explanation or getting extra support from the teacher (Subsection G) was the fourth most popular activity that the misplaced respondents did. 10% answered that they asked for extra help from the teacher “a lot” while 36% said “a little”, 30% said, “very little”, and 23% said “not at all”. Subsection E, doing extra exercises related to course material was the fifth most common activity and was carried out by the 119 misplaced respondents. 10% answered that they did this activity “a lot”, 31% said “a little”, 25% indicated “very little” and 32% answered “not at all”. The sixth most popular activity was Subsection F, which asked about doing extra writing homework (paragraphs, essays, reports). Only 9% said they did this type of activity “a lot”, while 20% indicated they did this “a little”, 22% said “very little”, and 47% said they did this “not at all”. Subsection A, speaking to the teacher about difficulties in English, was the next popular activity. Only 5% did this “a lot”, 22% did it “a little”, 33% indicated they did this “very little” and 37% said they did it “not at all”. The eighth most popular activity was having a partner with whom to practice speaking. 11% of respondents answered that they spoke with a partner “a lot”, 15% responded “a little”, 17% said “very little” and 55% said “not at all”. Doing extra laboratory work, Subsection J, was the ninth most popular activity for the respondents. Only 5% said that they did this activity “a lot”, 10% said “a little”, 15% said “very little”, and “not at all” was the response for 68% of respondents. The last choice of respondents for an activity in English was Subsection B, meeting the teacher for individual help. Of the 119 respondents, 2% did this “a lot”, 3% did this “a little”, 5% of respondents did this “very little”, and 89% responded that they did this “not at all”.

When those respondents who were identified as misplaced were asked to indicate to what extent they engaged in certain activities in English, 119 of the 126 responded. The majority worked on course material and did extra work; for example, listening to the radio, watching television and reading. The other choices were much lower in terms of their popularity. The majority of the misplaced group of students reported that they were involved in activities in English which would help them pass the course; for example, working on course materials. The other activities in which they engaged (interacting with electronic media and reading) were all receptive skills.
5.3.12 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 32

Question 32 asked the misplaced respondents to indicate if they had ever considered dropping their current English course. 119 respondents answered. Among them, 20% said they had and 79% said they had not.

5.3.13 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Question 33

The following question, Question 33, asked the respondents to indicate to what extent the factors that were listed kept them from dropping the course. 126 respondents could answer these eight subsection questions. There was one “Other” category, which was used by six respondents.

The factor that the majority of respondents cited as being the most influential in their staying and not dropping the course was subsection G, the idea that it is better to stay in the course and improve. 110 respondents answered this subsection and 61% answered that this factor influenced them “a lot”, 17% said it influenced “a little”, 6% said “very little” and 14% said “not at all”. The second factor that was most influential was Subsection H, the idea of dropping the course was not a solution. Again, 110 respondents answered this subsection in which 55% indicated that this factor influenced them “a lot”, while 12% said it was “a little” influential, 6% said it influenced “very little” and 25% said “not at all”. The third most influential factor, answered by 112 respondents, was the fact that dropping the course would mean delaying graduation. 40% of respondents answered that this factor influenced them “a lot”, 9% said “a little”, 7% said “very little”, and 42% said “not at all”. Hoping that the marks would improve was the fourth most popular reason for not dropping the course. 112 respondents answered the question with 28% of them saying this factor influenced them “a lot”, 20% said it influenced “a little”, 5% said “very little” and 45% said “not at all”. Subsection C, the costs related to re-taking the course, was the fifth most popular response to the question. 112 respondents answered and indicated that this factor influenced 23% in their decision to remain in the course “a lot”, it was “a little” influential for 9%, “very little”
for 4% and “not at all” influential for 62%. The sixth most popular reason for not dropping the course was the loss of full-time student status (Subsection B). 13% of the 112 respondents identified this factor as being influential “a lot”; 6% said it was “a little” influential; 4% said it was influential to a “very little” extent; and 75% said it was “not at all” influential in the decision to stay in the course. The seventh most influential factor was Subsection F, the fact that it was too late to drop the course without penalty. 9% of the 111 respondents who answered this question indicated that this factor influenced the respondents “a lot”, 8% answered “a little”, 7% said “very little”, and 75% said it was “not at all” influential. The least influential of the listed factors was Subsection D, the embarrassment associated with dropping a course. Of the 112 respondents who answered, 8% said it was a factor “a lot”, and 8% said it was factor “a little”, 9% said it was a factor with “very little” influence and 72% said it was “not at all” a factor. Six respondents wrote another factor in the “Other” category that being the need to learn English for work or life. Of the six respondents, five said this factor influenced their decision “a lot” to not drop the course and one said it did “not at all” influence his decision.

In general, Question 33, answered by the majority of the group of respondents who were identified as misplaced revealed that the two main reasons they stayed, rather than drop the English class were, 1) the idea that it is better to stay and improve than drop the course and 2) the belief that dropping the course is not a solution. It must be made clear that the teacher had identified these respondents as misplaced and had suggested a course level change. Therefore, either the student alone or the teacher and student together had made the conscious decision that the student would stay in the course. In the mind of the students considered misplaced there might have been hope that their grades would improve, perhaps through their hard work. Therefore, the group of the misplaced are most likely very determined and willing to stay and work as they had had made that decision at the onset of the course. To a lesser extent, the fear of the negative consequences of a failure was a deterrent to dropping the course.
5.3.14 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 34-36

Question 34 asked respondents to indicate whether they thought they would have the 60% required to pass the course they were currently taking. 121, of the 126 possible respondents, answered. 80% thought they would pass, 17% were “not sure” and 2% said they did not believe they would pass. Again, as this group of misplaced students have made the decision to stay in the course, they are most likely doing the work necessary to pass.

Question 35 asked respondents to indicate the extent to which certain listed factors should be considered when granting a passing grade to a student identified as misplaced and who has not managed to accumulate the passing grade. There are eight subsections to this question with an “Other” category.

The factor that 70% of the 116 respondents said should be taken into consideration “a lot” was the progress accomplished by the misplaced student (Subsection A). 23% of the 116 respondents said it should be taken into consideration “a little”, 5% said “very little”, and 0.8% said “not at all”. The second most important factor to take into consideration was the quantity of work accomplished by the student. 61% of the 116 respondents said it needed to be considered “a lot”, 31% said “a little”, 6% said “very little” and 0.8% said “not at all”. Subsection F, attendance in class, was identified by 62% of the 117 respondents as being the third most important factor to be considered when granting a passing grade. 29% thought it should be considered “a little”, 3% said “very little”, and 5% said “not at all”. The fourth most important factor to be taken into consideration by the 117 respondents was the global abilities of the student, Subsection H. 52% said it needed “a lot” of consideration, 38% said “a little”, 5% said “very little” and 1% said “not at all”. The fifth factor identified by the 117 respondents indicated that 51% thought that participation in class deserved ” a lot” of consideration, 38% said “a little”, 5% said “very little” and 4% said “not at all”. The next most important factor for consideration was the quantity of extra help the student sought outside class, Subsection C. 116 respondents answered and 37% said it should be taken into consideration “a lot”, 35% said “a little”, 16% said “very little” and 10% said “not at all”.

180
Subsection D, the academic situation of the student in terms of their program's course requirement or the fact that no further course was required was the seventh most important factor to be taken into consideration. 117 respondents answered and 35% responded that this factor should be considered "a lot", 28% indicated "a little", 14% responded "very little" and 21% said "not at all". The last factor to be identified by 117 respondents was Subsection E, consequences to the student (time lost, costs incurred, lowering of academic grade point average). 21% of respondents indicated that this factor should be taken into consideration "a lot", 26% said it should be considered "a little", 19% said "very little" and 32% said "not at all". There were no "Other" answers written by the respondents.

This question, Question 35, showed very high agreement between respondents. Over 89% of the misplaced respondents believed that the five following factors: amount of progress made, quantity of work accomplished, attendance in the course, global abilities of the student and participation in the course should be taken into consideration "a lot" or "a little". In other words, respondents felt that being a good student by being present or participating or showing improving, or working hard or taking into consideration overall abilities were factors that could potentially result in teachers granting a passing grade to a student considered misplaced. It is surprising that the fact of being present in course was as good a reason to grant a passing grade as the amount of progress made, according to the group of respondents identified as misplaced.

Question 36 asked respondents if a misplaced student who did not manage to accumulate the required pass mark of 60% should be granted a passing grade for at least one of the preceding reasons. 117 respondents answered and 75% responded "Yes", 24% responded "No". As these particular students are in a possibly failing situation, it is no wonder they would prefer to see a passing rather than a failing grade.
5.3.15 Questionnaire Descriptive Data for Questions 37-38

Question 37 was one of the two open questions which asked the misplaced group of students to describe how it felt to be a weak student in an English class. Only 79 of the 126 misplaced group of respondents answered this question. The loss of fifty respondents can be related to a number of respondents who answered the question by writing that they were misplaced, but were strong rather than weak, and therefore did not have anything to describe. In hindsight, this question could have been divided into two parts asking for a description by both the strong and the weak. In this way, the fifty responses would not have been lost.

Of the 79 respondents who did answer, 30% described the experience of being a weak student as a very negative experience (two negative adjectives), 49% described the experience as negative (one negative adjective) and 5% said there was no difference for they felt they were treated the same as the other students in the class. 15% described the experience of being a weak student as a positive experience. In general, for the vast majority of misplaced students, their feelings of misplacement are ones of feeling stupid, slow, embarrassed, isolated and belittled.

The last question, 38, was an open question. It asked all of the 677 respondents to describe how the teacher treats a weak student in an English class. Of the 677 possible respondents, 552 or 81% answered. Respondents themselves who stated that they could not answer the question from drawing on their personal experience explained the loss of nearly 20% of respondents. 64% of respondents described the teacher as offering to help and give extra help or support to the weaker students. 17% described the teacher as giving all students the same treatment; these respondents did not notice a difference between themselves and the average student. 8% of the 552 respondents described the teacher as looking to the student to realise their need and then seek help or extra support. 5% of the respondents said they experienced negative treatment from the teacher. 3% of the respondents raised the idea
that the teacher should have changed the course level of the weaker students and others asked about the validity of the placement tool, the TOEIC. The majority of respondents, who were from both the misplaced and correctly placed groups of students, reported that teachers offered help to the misplaced students. Neither group reported any difference in treatment.

The last two open questions revealed that the majority of misplaced students felt their experience of being a weak student was negative or very negative. 64% of the 552 respondents of this question described the teacher as offering to give extra help or support to the weaker students and 17% described the teacher as giving equal treatment to both the weak and the average student in the English classes. It would seem that it is the misplaced group of respondents whose feelings of inadequacy bring about the negative feelings rather than the teacher’s behaviour. Beyond offering help outside of class, it does not appear that teachers actually do anything, negatively or positively, to help the misplaced in class.

Wanting to know how many students were actually in the initial course to which their TOEIC scores had indicated they needed to be placed, details about the movement of students through the course levels at the language school, was investigated. The answers to Question 13, current course level, were paired with the answers to Question 22, initial placement using the TOEIC scores. This information is shown in Table XV. 640 respondents, including the groups of the misplaced and correctly placed respondents, answered both Questions 13 and 22.
Table XV
Percentage of Students Whose Initial Course Level Placement Is the Same as the Current Course Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XV shows the percentage of students who, in Fall 2007, were enrolled in the same course level as was indicated by their TOEIC score. The eight courses are identified by their position in the course level structure of LS. There are three ways to be placed at a particular level 1) placement using the TOEIC scores, 2) placement by a teacher after re-evaluation and 3) completion, with at least a grade of D, of the previous course level. In other words, Table XV highlights the percentage of students who have scored into the course level with their TOEIC score and disregards the two other ways a student could be admitted into the course. The missing percentages are the number of students for each course level who have passed the previous level and whose TOEIC score placed them in higher or lower course levels and the teacher suggested a course level change. From the Table, it can be noted that all students in the lowest course level were placed there using TOEIC scores whereas only 24% of all students in the fourth course level have been placed using their TOEIC scores. In addition, misplacement is found to be highest at the two lowest levels which is where placement using TOEIC scores is the highest at 100% and 73% respectively.

In brief, the findings of the descriptive analysis of the student questionnaire focused on information from respondents in terms of: 1) demographic description of the respondents; 2) educational experience; 3) strengths and weaknesses in English; 4) activities in English; and 5) academic situation. Lastly, initial course level placement using the TOEIC scores and
actual or current course level were compared. Following the descriptive analysis of the student questionnaire data, the inferential analysis began. These findings will be presented in the next section.

5.4 Statistical Data Analysis of Student Questionnaire

The answers from the student questionnaire were in the form of nominal data, where each answer was given a value. These values were then added together to give frequencies, expressed as percentages, and were described in the preceding descriptive section. Along with the descriptive data, the questionnaire also allowed for the identification of the misplaced group of students and another group of well-placed or correctly placed respondents. It is the relationship between these two groups, which will be the focus of this next section. For this study, the independent variable has been identified as placement, divided into the two levels; one of misplaced and the other of correctly placed. It was the three questions from the student questionnaire which allowed for the identification of the misplaced respondents. The questions were 1) if the respondent felt he was misplaced, 2) if the teacher had identified him as misplaced and 3) the respondent had refused a course level change. When a respondent responded to the three questions affirmatively, he became identified as misplaced and categorized into the misplaced group of respondents. The dependent variables are the answers to the first twenty-four questions and Question 38 on the student questionnaire, which addressed all 677 respondents (the second half of the student questionnaire was not included at this stage of the analysis as only the misplaced group of respondents answered Question 25-37).

Seeking to inquire into relationships, having a large sample size (677 respondents), and having frequency and independent (each respondent’s answer fitting into only one level of a variable) data, the underlying assumptions of Chi-square were met. Chi-square testing allows the relationship between dependent and independent variables to reject a hypothesis in order for the relationship between the two to be analysed. Chi-square always uses a null hypothesis, which for this study was that there is no relationship between the variables of misplaced/correctly placed and the answers to the questions of the questionnaire which were
answered by both groups. In other words, there is no difference between the answers to the questions on the questionnaire for the misplaced group of respondents compared to the answers from the correctly placed group. If the two groups’ answers to the questions from the questionnaire differ significantly from one another, it may mean variables which could further identify misplaced group of respondents can be isolated. Results from Chi-square are found in Table XVI.
Table XVI
Chi-square to Measure Relationships Between the Responses of the Misplaced and Correctly Placed Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>value</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2 Age</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.05</td>
<td>0.028*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 First Language</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.80</td>
<td>0.038*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4 Second Language</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.62</td>
<td>0.002*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8 Strongest Skill Area</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9 Weakest Skill Area</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>0.681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 A Read Books</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 B Read Textbooks</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>0.471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 C Write E-mails</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 D Internet Chat</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>0.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 E Write Reports</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>0.543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 F Listen to Report</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>0.499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 G Watch TV, Films</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 H Speak with Clients</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.73</td>
<td>0.008*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 I Speak with Colleagues</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>0.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 J Speak with Friends, Family</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 K Travel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.62</td>
<td>0.013*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11 Degree Sought</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>0.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12 Current Program</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>0.621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 Current Course Level</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>42.12</td>
<td>0.0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14 Program Requirements</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>0.792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17 TOEIC Sound Quality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>0.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 Disturbances during TOEIC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 A Movement in Room</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>0.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 B Length of TOEIC</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>0.183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 C Multiple-choice Format</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.69</td>
<td>0.013*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 D Quality of Recording</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 E The Location of Examination</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.09</td>
<td>0.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 F Stress</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>0.360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 GA Speed of Test</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>0.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 GB Noise in Examination Room</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 GD Personal Conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19 Guessing on TOEIC</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.32</td>
<td>0.197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q21 TOEIC Experience</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q22 Agreement with TOEIC Placement</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.36</td>
<td>0.022*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q38 Description of Teacher Behavior towards Misplaced</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td>0.092</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<0.05
Table XVI, Chi-square, has four columns. Starting at the left, the first lists the Variable (question number and identifying title); the second identifies the degrees of freedom for each question. The third column is the numeral value of the chi-square statistic used to test the relationship between the variable and the group. Lastly, the fourth column, the p value, is the level of significance of the chi-square test, for this study the level of significance is 0.05. This level was chosen as it was neither too liberal nor too conservative. On the questions where the p value is less than 0.05, one asterisk follows the value. Significance of the p value allows the null hypothesis to be rejected; therefore, there is significant statistical difference between the answers of the misplaced and the correctly placed groups of respondents on: Questions 2 (Age); 3 (First Language); 4 (Second Language); 10H (Frequency of Speaking with Clients in English); 10K (Frequency of Travelling in English); 13 (Current Course Level); 18C (Disturbance of Respondent by Multiple-Choice Format of the TOEIC; and 22 (Placement using TOEIC Scores). In other words, the misplaced and the correctly placed, as groups, have been found to be different in their responses to the preceding variables in such a way that this difference is not expected to have arisen by chance, but through true variation between groups.

One of the underlying assumptions for Chi-square for verifying relationships between variables is a large sample, which is not a limitation for this study. Another assumption is the necessity of having more than one degree of freedom. In questions with only two possible answers, or questions where all of the respondents' answers numbered two, chi-square may under-represent relationships; therefore, a Fisher's Exact Test is considered more accurate. For that reason Fisher's Exact Test was used for Questions 1, 5, 6, 7, 15, 16, 18GC, 20, 23, and 24. Results are shown in Table XVII.
Table XVII
Fisher’s Exact Test to Measure Relationships Between Variables and the Responses of the Misplaced and Correctly Placed Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Table Probability (P)</th>
<th>Pr&lt;=P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1 Sex</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 Elementary English Education</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.013*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 Secondary English Education</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.011*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 College English Education</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15 TOEIC Experience</td>
<td>0.198</td>
<td>0.772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q16 TOEIC Taken at Laval University</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18GC Content of TOEIC Disturbed Respondents</td>
<td>0.666</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q20 Experience with TOEIC-like Tests</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23 Agreement with Placement</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q24 Direction of Movement After Re-evaluation</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<=0.05, two-tailed. Note: Dashes indicate extremely small values in those categories.

Table XVII has three columns. The first column lists the variable, which is identified by the question number and a title, which identifies the original question that was asked in the questionnaire. The second column shows the probability value, which indicates the chances of getting a table as strong as the observed table or stronger. The last column lists the (two-sided) P-value, which is the probability of obtaining the observed result or a more extreme result. When this P-value is less than the chosen 0.05, the result is significant and an asterisk follows. Significance reports a difference between the two groups (misplaced and correctly placed) for those variables. Significance was found on the variables of: Q5 (Elementary English Education), Q6 (Secondary English Education), Q7 (College English Education) and Q23 (Agreement with Placement). Again, significance on the variable indicates that the two groups of the misplaced and correctly placed are different enough in their responses for those variables that there is a less than 5% chance that this variation is due to chance.
Significant differences between the two groups, the misplaced and correctly placed, using Chi-square analysis and Fisher's Exact Test were found on a number of variables. Those variables are: Q2 (Age), Q3 (First Language), Q4 (Second Language), Q5 (Elementary English Education), Q6 (Secondary English Education), Q7 (College English Education), Q10H (Frequency of Speaking with Clients in English); Q10K (Frequency of Travelling in English); Q13 (Current Course Level); Q18C (Disturbance of Respondent by Multiple-Choice Format of the TOEIC); and Q22 (Placement using TOEIC Scores) and Q23 (Agreement with Placement using TOEIC Scores).

Although a level of significance was found on the preceding variables, and an appropriate test was chosen according to sample size and the number of degrees of freedom, another problem arose when certain cells for certain variables were not filled or fell below the minimum level of 5 counts per cell. This meant that Chi-square analysis might not have been valid. This situation arose on Question 3 (First Language); Question 4 (Second Language); Question 10F (Listening to Music); Question 10I ( Speaking to Colleagues); Question 10J (Speaking with Friends or Family); Question 10K (Frequency of Travelling in English); Question 14 (Knowledge of Program Second Language Requirement); Question 18GA (Speed of TOEIC Test); Question 18GB (Noise in the Testing Room); Question Q18 GC (Content of TOEIC); Question 18GD (Personal Conditions during Testing); and Question 21 (Number of TOEIC Tests Taken). To eliminate the problem of empty cells, the possibility of combining cells was a possibility. This, however, was not desirable or possible for these particular questions. It was undesirable for Questions 3 and 4 (First and Second Language), Question 14, (Knowledge of Program Second Language Requirement), and Question 21 (Number of TOEIC Tests Taken); as the pertinent information would be lost by trying to combine nominal data. For example, combining all languages except French or all second language requirements order to run the Chi-square would most likely not have given significant results. Therefore, no Chi-square analysis between groups was run for Questions 3, 4, 14 and 21. For Questions 10 and 18, which had various subsections with missing cells, but ordinal data, a t-test was carried out, as the Chi-square was possibly invalid.
Although a Chi-square was not a valid test for all questions, it was valid and significance was found on Question 2 (Age); Question 5 (Elementary English Education); Question 6 (Secondary English Education); Question 7 (College English Education); Question 10 H (Speaking with Clients); Question 13 (Current Course Level); Question 18C (Multiple-choice Format, Disturbances during TOEIC); Question 22 (Placement using TOEIC Scores); and Question 23 (Agreement with Placement using TOEIC Scores). Having ascertained a relationship on the preceding variables for the groups of misplaced and correctly placed; it was necessary to measure the relationship’s strength. The strength of the relationships between the preceding variables was tested using either the Phi-Coefficient for balanced tables (2X2) or Cramer V (2x4 or 2X8) for unbalanced tables. Results of the Phi-Coefficient are shown in Table XVIII and results of Cramer V are shown in Table XIX.

Table XVIII

Results of Phi Coefficient to Test Strength of Association on Variables Chi-Square Found to be Significant with Balanced Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q5 Elementary English Education</td>
<td>0.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 Secondary English Education</td>
<td>0.101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 College English Education</td>
<td>0.152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23 Agreement with Placement</td>
<td>0.248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For both procedures, the p-values, which estimate the strength of association, vary from 0-1. A value of 0.10 to 0.30 represents a weak relationship with the upper levels being minimally acceptable, 0.31-0.60 is a moderate relationship which is considered acceptable and 0.61 value or higher represents a strong relationship and highly acceptable with the value of 1 represents a perfect relationship. The values in Table XVIII show that the association between the variables of: (Q5) Elementary English Education and (Q6) Secondary English Education is considered weak and not acceptable. However, the variable
(Q7) College English Education with a p-value of 1.52 is considered weak; but the relationship is minimally acceptable. The p-value for (Q23) Agreement with Placement using TOEIC Scores is however, close to being moderately strong and the relationship is acceptable.

Table XIX
Results of Cramer V to Test Strength of Association on Variables with Unbalanced Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2 Age</td>
<td>0.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 H Speaking with Clients</td>
<td>0.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 Current Course Level</td>
<td>0.257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 18 Disturbances during TOEIC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 C Multiple-choice Format,</td>
<td>0.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q22 TOEIC Placement</td>
<td>0.162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0≤V≤1

The results of Cramer V are shown in Table XIX. The values, which estimate the strength of association, vary from 0-1, with a value of 0 representing a non-acceptable relationship, and 1 representing a perfect relationship. Questions 2 (Age), 10H (Speaking with Clients), 18C (Multiple-choice Format), and 22 (TOEIC Placement) are considered weak and only minimally acceptable. The last value for Question 13 (Current Course Level), at 0.257, and is moderately strong and shows an acceptable relationship.

Results of the strength of association showed that the relationships between the groups of the misplaced and correctly placed was weak and only minimally acceptable on all variables except Questions 13 (Current Course Level) and 22 (Initial Placement by TOEIC). This means that significant differences between groups on certain variables were found, but a strong relationship was not found on any variable.
Question 10, subsection H and Question 18, subsection C were both significant and therefore the null hypothesis was rejected; however, the strength of associations was weak, but moderately acceptable. Chi-square reported relationships with three of the twenty-one subsections, but small sample sizes on five of them limited interpretation. In order to evaluate those two questions, a comparison of means rather than frequencies was considered. Before choosing a means test, the underlying assumption of normal distribution with equal variance needed to be met. The results of the mean and standard deviation analysis for Questions 10 (Frequency of English Activities) and 18 (Disturbances during TOEIC Testing) are found in Table XX.

### Table XX

**Results of Means and Standard Deviation for Variables of Frequency of English Activities and Disturbances during TOEIC Testing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Placement</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>Correctly</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>1.962</td>
<td>0.372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>Misplaced</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>1.973</td>
<td>0.381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>-0.012</td>
<td>0.375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18</td>
<td>Correctly</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>2.107</td>
<td>0.600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18</td>
<td>Misplaced</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>2.235</td>
<td>0.594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18</td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>-0.128</td>
<td>0.598</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The assumption of normal distribution has been met, for the difference in means and the standard deviation for the two groups, of the misplaced and correctly placed, is not significant. A second and third assumption underlying a means test is that data is in scores and independent. With these three underlying assumptions, a t-test was administered to verify if a relationship between these two variables was significant for the two groups of the misplaced and correctly placed. The results of the t-test are in Table XXI.
Table XXI

Results of the T-test for Differences between Misplaced and Correctly Placed Students on Variables of Frequency of English Activities and Disturbances during TOEIC Testing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Pr&gt;t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>Pooled</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
<td>0.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18</td>
<td>Pooled</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>-2.37</td>
<td>0.184</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<=0.005

The t-values are greater than the p value of 0.005; therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, the two groups of misplaced and correctly placed are not significantly different in their answers to Questions 10 (Frequency of English Activities) and 18 (Disturbances during TOEIC Testing).

The results of the Chi-square have identified an association between the variable of Current Course level (Question 13) and the groups of the misplaced and the correctly placed. In other words, there is a significant relationship between the current course level of the respondents and the variable of misplaced and correctly placed. The Fisher's Exact Test identified a relationship between College English Education (Question 7) and Agreement with Initial Placement (Question 23). Strength of association analysis identified a moderate association between the variables of the groups of the misplacement and the correctly placed on Questions 13 (Current Course Level), Question 22 (Placement using TOEIC Scores) and 23 (Agreement with Placement using TOEIC Scores). As there was no strong association between the variables, which were significant, further investigation was attempted to show which variable was most responsible for misplacement.

The test used to measure the amount of variation between variables is multiple regression. As correlation is the basis of multiple regression, the correlation values were verified. The N size was large enough and there was standard deviation and normal
distribution; however, as the data of the study was not truly continuous, special procedures were used and an odds ratio was chosen to estimate the variable most responsible for identifying the group of the misplaced. Using minimum Chi-square, significance was found on Questions 7 (College English Education), 13 (Current Course Level) and 23 (Agreement with Initial Placement), these three variables were then tested. The results are found in Table XXII.

Table XXII
Results of Odds Ratio Estimates for Three Significant Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Point Estimate</th>
<th>95% Wald Confidence Limits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 7 1 vs. 2</td>
<td>2.094*</td>
<td>1.303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 1 vs. 8</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 2 vs. 8</td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 3 vs. 8</td>
<td>0.305</td>
<td>0.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 4 vs. 8</td>
<td>0.431</td>
<td>0.088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 5 vs. 8</td>
<td>0.192</td>
<td>0.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 6 vs. 8</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>0.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 7 vs. 8</td>
<td>0.510</td>
<td>0.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23 1 vs. 2</td>
<td>3.803*</td>
<td>2.553</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p =<1

The results of the odds ratio estimates show no significant association between variables when confidence limits contain 1. Confidence limits reported here are either above or below the value of 1; therefore, all variables are considered significant. The greater the value of the point estimates, the higher the association; therefore, Question 23, (Agreement with Initial Placement), is highly associated with the variables of misplacement and correct placement with a point estimate of 3.80. Question 7, (College English Education), is also highly associated with a point estimate level of 2.09. Question 13, (Current Course Level) is divided into seven levels representing the eight course levels of the language school. It has much lower point estimates, all well under 1. The course level with the lowest estimate is:
Q13 1 vs. 8 (the lowest course level vs. the eighth) at 0.011, followed by Q13 2 vs. 8 (the second vs. the eighth) with 0.144 and Q13 6 vs. 8, (the sixth vs. the eighth) at 0.148, the next is Q 13 5 vs. 8 (the fifth vs. the eighth) at 0.19. The last three estimates are Q13 3 vs. 8 (the third vs. the eighth) at 0.30, followed by Q13 4 vs. 8 (the fourth vs. the eighth) at 0.43 and the last is Q13 7 vs. 8 (the seventh vs. the eighth) at 0.51.

The results of the Odds Ratio Estimates show that the greatest chances of being considered correctly placed are for those who were in (Q23) Agreement with the TOEIC Placement. The second variable which predicts that the student will be grouped as correctly placed as having (Q7) College English Education. The last variable, which suggests that students will be correctly placed, is their (Q13) Current Course Level. The greatest chances of being correctly placed are found with students currently in the seventh course level followed by the fourth, followed by the third. The chances of being correctly placed in the following three levels are slight the fifth, sixth and second course levels. A student who is placed in the lowest course level has the greatest chances to be identified as misplaced.

Descriptive and inferential analyses carried out on the student questionnaire reported three significant findings. First, Question 23 (Agreement with Placement using TOEIC Scores) is the variable most responsible for misplacement. If the misplaced group of respondents disagree with their placement using the TOEIC scores, they will be considered misplaced. Question 7 (College English Education) is the second variable most responsible for misplacement. Failure to have experience with English courses at college is the second largest variable, which results in a respondent being placed in the misplaced group. Lastly, Question 13 (Current Course Level) is the third variable resulting in being identified as misplaced. As this variable is divided into the various course levels, there are subsections. If a student is currently in one of the two lowest course levels, he has the greatest chance to be misplaced, much more than a student in the highest course level does. If a student is currently in the fifth or sixth course level, he has a greater chance of being identified as misplaced than a student in the highest course level. If a student is currently in the third or fourth course level, he has a lower chance of being considered misplaced and a student in
the seventh level has a greater chance of being correctly placed than a student in the highest level. In general, a student without college English who is in the lowest or the fifth course level has the greatest chance of being considered misplaced.

The preceding section focused on the descriptive and inferential analysis of the responses from the teacher and student questionnaires and the results of the analyses were reported. In the next section, those same findings from the teacher and student questionnaires will be interpreted.

5.5 Interpretation of Teacher Questionnaire Results

The findings from the teacher and student questionnaires will be analysed in the following section. Teacher questionnaire interpretations will be presented first, with the student questionnaire interpretations following. The discussion will be divided using the topics which were investigated in the questionnaire. Lastly, the major findings from both teacher and student questionnaires will be reported as they led to the choice of topic areas for Phase II, the qualitative or interview portion, of the study.

5.5.1 Section One

Interpretation of Teacher Knowledge of the TOEIC

The first section of the teacher questionnaire focused on teaching experience by course level, knowledge of the TOEIC and second language departmental requirements.

The first finding was that the majority of both groups of the more and the less experienced teachers had taught the third, fourth and fifth course levels the highest number of times. A lesser number from both groups of teachers, the more and the less experienced, had taught the second, sixth and seventh course levels a number of times. However, the inferential analysis showed a strong relationship between the two groups of teachers and the
number of times they had taught the second course level. Fewer teachers in the more experienced group had taught that course three times or more, whereas more teachers in the less experienced group had taught the course once or twice.

The first of these findings is entirely understandable because the majority of students test into one of the three middle course levels (third, fourth or fifth); therefore, these levels have the highest number of sections, which require the highest numbers of teachers. As the number of students testing into certain course levels decreases, there are fewer sections and consequently, fewer teachers. The second finding is explained by the fact that the second course level has fewer sections than the middle level courses, but it still has five or six. After the full-time teacher responsible for that particular level is offered his two sections of this course, the other sections fill up slowly and are usually offered to those teachers near the end of seniority list, so many of the less experienced teachers teach this second course level. The finding of significance difference was not found between the two groups of teachers at the lowest or the highest course level because most teachers have never taught either course as enrolment is usually very low. It does not occur with Advanced III because the full-time teacher responsible for that level takes the majority of those courses.

The second finding from this section of the teacher questionnaire was that as a whole these teachers have not had a great deal of contact with a TOEIC test; therefore, they do they know what is and is not evaluated on the test, nor do they know the method of evaluation. Only three of the sample of fifteen teachers knew that the TOEIC formally evaluated reading and listening in a multiple-choice format. Some teachers thought it evaluated only one of those skills and another teacher thought writing was evaluated. Some teachers also thought that students responded to some questions by writing a short (four or five line) answer. It was an expected finding that teachers would not know a lot about the TOEIC, because the placement testing process at the language school involves little teacher participation. Teachers, by and large, do not know that the TOEIC does not formally evaluate writing and speaking, only reading and listening, and that placement is based on only those two receptive skills.
The last finding involved the teachers' knowledge of second language requirements. A minority of teachers did not know there were second language requirements which the students had to complete. Those who did know were not able to correctly identify the requirement for some of the most popular university programs. Only three out of the sample of fifteen teachers were able to correctly identify the requirement for the four programs listed. Although it was expected that not all teachers would know all requirements for all programs (for departments alone, without consultation with the language school, set requirements and change them at will) six teachers did not even know there were requirements. It was an unexpected finding that teachers were not aware that requirements exist, for students quite readily and openly discuss them. It is difficult to understand how a teacher could have such little awareness of the students' academic situations.

The first section of the teacher questionnaire highlighted the fact that the groups of the less experienced and the more experienced teachers have taught as often at the popular middle course levels, but the less experienced have taught less often at the lower and higher levels. It is the more experienced teachers who have given the courses at the lowest and the higher course levels most often. In fact, there was significant difference between the less and more experienced teachers and teaching experience at the second course level. In addition, overall knowledge of factors affecting students, such as the placement practices and knowledge of the students' second language requirements at the language school were limited to a few teachers.

As a result of these findings and in order to gather more details, the teacher interviews needed to include a variety of teachers who had had experience at the second course level, different amounts and types of experience, and educational backgrounds. However, for the other two findings, as to why teachers had little knowledge of the TOEIC or of departmental language requirements, these were deemed potentially sensitive, especially as probing into these areas could be seen as trying to blame teachers for their lack of knowledge. However,
knowing that teachers were ignorant of many details, the effects of such lack of knowledge was an important part of the teacher interviews.

5.5.2 Section Two

Interpretation of Teacher's Re-Evaluation Procedures

The second section of the teacher questionnaire concerned the re-evaluation process that is supposed to take place during the first class of every course at the language school. It was expected that most teachers would report that they re-evaluated, and most did. It was also expected that most teachers used this process to verify placement using the TOEIC scores and most did. There was no difference found between the more experienced versus the less experienced teachers on either of these questions. However, one teacher responded negatively to both questions. It was not determined through the questionnaire whether this teacher did not know he had to re-evaluate, which is hard to believe for the pedagogical advisor requests re-evaluation be done, or simply refused to comply. In any case, the majority of teachers do re-evaluate and do so with one or a combination of the productive skills of writing and speaking. It was expected that these re-evaluation activities would be centered on the productive skills because the pedagogical advisor suggests it and they are not evaluated by the TOEIC, lastly, they tend to be the weaker areas of the typical LS student.

A second finding of this second section investigated what other factors besides their re-evaluation practices, teachers used to verify placement. The answers were diverse, which was not surprising; however, there was no significant difference between the two groups of teachers. This may be because the language school has no policy on what factors can be used to justify placement using the TOEIC scores; therefore, all teachers are left to decide for themselves what keeps a student at a particular level and what can be the basis of a suggestion to move. Teachers can use any criteria to suggest or refuse a move because there is no formal procedure in this process. Lack of policy in this area gives individual teachers a great deal of power while being potentially quite unfair to students.
In terms of re-evaluation after placement using the TOEIC scores, all teachers use the re-evaluation process to identify students who require a course level change and the majority of teachers do identify such students. Again, the pedagogical advisor requests the re-evaluation process be done and teachers are expected, but not required, to do so. Therefore, it is not unexpected that re-evaluation occurs. After re-evaluation teachers identify 1-4 students per twenty-five who are identified as being misplaced and needing to be moved. The number of students identified as being misplaced varies according to the teacher, however, correlation between the number of misplaced students and teacher experience was not significant. Variation among teachers is quite understandable as there is no policy on a minimum or maximum number of suggested moves allowed, so teachers are free to decide on the number of moves they suggest. 70% of students, who are identified as needing a course level change, need to move to lower levels, and the other 30% are identified as needing to move toward a higher level. Again, the type of move suggested, either to a higher or a lower course level depends on the individual teacher. Teaching experience was not found to correlate with course change direction. The fact that more of the moves are toward the lower levels indicates that the TOEIC scores inflate the student’s real abilities. This is most likely because the TOEIC only formally evaluates the two receptive skills. Students, during classroom re-evaluation, when asked to actually produce the language, appear weak in the two areas that the TOEIC does not formally measure. Teachers may also focus more on the students who appear weak for the level because of that student’s chance for failure. All teachers reported that 1-2 students would actually change course level; this variable did not show significant difference with the amount of teaching experience. This means that for some teachers 100% of the students, identified as misplaced, will follow their suggestion and change the course level and for other teachers approximately 50% will. The reason for the student deciding to stay is a personal one, and he makes that decision for himself, for no student can be forced to change course level and no teacher can refuse to keep a student at any level.
The second section of the teacher questionnaire was expected to investigate the re-evaluation process at the language school. It highlighted the amount of diversity that exists between the teachers’ behaviours in this area, although no significant difference was found between the more versus the less experienced teachers. Teachers operate with only the most basic of guidelines and are not required to explain or justify the factors they use in determining course level change suggestions. Therefore, each individual teacher’s prior teaching experience and own opinions are the guiding forces. However, a writing activity is what most teachers use to re-evaluate and it helps to identify the misplaced group of students. According to teachers, up to four students per twenty-five are asked to move both to lower and higher course levels. As the TOEIC does not formally evaluate a student’s writing, activities that involve writing are used to re-evaluate the initial course levels which were assigned using the TOEIC scores. More often a student’s writing determines that he is weaker than the initial course level proficiency so he is asked to move down a course level, but in some cases the student is asked to move up. It cannot be said that the TOEIC scores are insufficient for judging student proficiency: it can only be said that the TOEIC score, student writing ability and course level proficiency are certainly not a perfect fit. It is not that the TOEIC score in itself is unrepresentative of student ability; but rather, it is the correlation between that score of receptive skills, the ability of the unevaluated productive skills and the requirements of a particular course level, which may be mismatched.

The findings from the second section of the teacher’s questionnaire revealed much variation between teachers in terms of the effects of the re-evaluation process and the numbers of moves suggested. Although most teachers stated that they re-evaluated using writing and speaking activities, the interview topics will delve into the reasons behind these choices. Secondly, most teachers suggest a certain number of student moves, whether to higher or lower course levels, and this decision-making process is also further investigated in the teacher interviews.
5.5.3 Section Three
Interpretation of Teacher Opinions and Feelings of Misplacement

The third section of the teacher questionnaire focused on the opinions and feelings of misplacement as experienced by the teachers. Through re-evaluation, a number of students are identified as misplaced and asked to move to a different course level. Many comply, but others do not. Teachers were very diverse in their answers as to why students do not move. At the top of the list was because the student had already completed the previous course. Even if a student is found to be too weak for the level, he cannot go to a lower level if he has already completed that level. He may be weaker than the student who tested into that level because there is between a 75 to a 300 point spread between course levels and some test-takers will score at the top of the level and others will score at the bottom. In addition, ETS the company which produces the TOEIC states that to increase the test score by 50 points, 100 hours of course time is needed. Thirdly, students wanted to stay in the course where they were initially placed. Once a student has been assigned a seat in a classroom, met the teacher, and talked to the other students, he wants to stay and does not want to start again in another class. Two other reasons for staying that were reported in the questionnaire were level requirement and administrative reasons. Level requirements showed significant difference and strength of association between the groups of the more versus the less experienced teachers. The more experienced group stated that level requirement was often a reason students stay when told a change of level would be better. Many of the less experienced teachers said this was never a reason. It must be remembered that many teachers did not know students had second language requirements; therefore, it is not surprising they do not think this fact plays a role in a student refusing a move. It is surprising that this information is not known and furthermore means that some teachers are unaware of the academic situation of many of their students. Lastly, administrative constraints were given as reasons why students do not move, but they did not show significant difference between groups of teachers. They seem to be the least important reason why students stay in the initial course level.
If the misplaced do not move, teachers said that most students require help both inside and outside the classroom. It is clear that if a student is declared weaker than the others in the class, he would probably need help. Teachers reported that the type of help students most required, regardless of course level, was always in the productive skills. Writing, speaking, pronunciation and grammar were the first four areas with which the students needed help in all course levels. The areas that need the least amount of help, according to teachers, were listening and reading. These findings were expected. The typical LS student has had more formal instruction of the receptive skills and it is those same skills that the TOEIC formally evaluates. Therefore, the TOEIC score reflects the students' proficiency in those two skill areas, which are their strongest. However, the productive skills are less formally instructed and not formally evaluated by the TOEIC. In addition, LS classrooms include evaluation of all four skills, so students need to prepare for all skill areas and often require help. Although both groups of teachers, the more and the less experienced, were similar in their opinion of the type of help required, they were significantly different in the amount of listening help they believed was needed at two levels; however, the strength of the association was at an unacceptable level. More experienced teachers stated that the Intermediate (third and fourth) and Advanced I (fifth and sixth) level groups needed little help in listening, whereas the group of less experienced teachers thought both of these levels needed some help. It was an unexpected finding that teachers would be so diverse in their opinions about listening help and that teaching experience would be involved. This difference between groups in terms of the need for extra listening help may be because the more experienced group of teachers know the effort and time involved in improving listening and deem it unimportant in terms of passing the course. The less experienced teachers may see the general weaknesses in listening, not only in terms of passing the course, and believe those students need some help.

It is important to state that the majority of teachers have not taught the other four course levels at the language school so few teachers were able to give information for the misplaced students in the Basic (two lowest) and Advanced II (two highest) course levels. Hence, it is unclear if the trend in the area of extra listening help found in the other two
groups would continue to those other four levels. In addition, although significant, there was no strength of association for the groups of Intermediate and Advanced I. More data would be required to know if these findings carry weight. However, it is an area where further investigation is warranted.

Eighty percent of teachers said 1-2 of the identified misplaced students would typically fail to have 60% at the end of the course, due to writing and grammar knowledge. Both of these findings are unsurprising as 1 to 2 failures per twenty-five students is within the normal range of standard deviation. Secondly, the TOEIC does not formally evaluate writing and does not ask test-takers to manipulate grammar, but only to recognize correct usage. Therefore, it is highly likely that students weak in those areas would fail a four-skills course. None of these questions showed significant difference between groups of teachers.

Teachers were not asked if the occasion of granting a passing grade to a student who had been identified as being misplaced ever arose, for it does; however, they were asked the reasons they use to justify such an action. Again, this question did not show significant difference between groups of teachers. 86% percent of teachers use the factor of a student’s overall ability to “some” extent when granting a passing grade. This is an expected finding; for the majority of students, especially at the lower levels, have a requirement to meet; therefore, if the teacher believes that the student can continue to the next course, or if that particular course completes the requirement, the teacher may decide to pass the student. This practice in itself is not unheard of; however, there is no standard measure of what level of overall ability is required. Teachers also reported using the measures of improvement and attendance to grant passing grades, both of which are totally the teacher’s personal decision.

The two groups, the more and the less experienced teachers, did not differ significantly in their descriptions of the misplaced students they identified in their classes. Eleven of the fifteen teachers saw a misplaced student as exhibiting negative behaviour and seven of those eleven teachers described the behaviour as very negative. This finding, that the misplaced student’s behaviour was considered negative, was expected, but the number
who saw it as very negative was surprising. Students who are too strong for a particular level are sometimes harder to motivate and can become more unruly in the classroom, which can be considered negative behaviour. The weaker student demands more teacher help outside of class, and perhaps inside as well, so obviously teachers would see this behaviour as negative. One or two of these types of misplaced students would not seem to have too much of a negative effect, but remembering that some levels have only 24% of students who have been placed there by their TOEIC score, the findings of very negative behaviour are perhaps explained. It is easy to imagine how negative the misplaced students’ behaviour can be on a class when this group represents 18 of the 25 students. In fact, the misplaced students set the tone of the level, for they are the majority, to the detriment of those few students who tested into the level and the teacher with his pre-determined textbooks, content, objectives and evaluation. The belief may be that the misplaced, being the majority of the students, are at the correct level and the other students and the teacher are the misplaced (students are too high for the level) and the misinformed (teacher is unsure of the correct level of the course). These feelings can create an unhealthy classroom atmosphere, which the teacher can lay at the feet of the groups of the misplaced.

When teachers were asked how they treated the groups of the misplaced students, they responded that they offered extra help whether the student requested the help or not. The response was expected, most teachers offer help, and it seems to be the very minimum a teacher can offer. However, in many situations a student is faced with needing to complete a certain course level, whether or not he is proficient enough to do so. Many times the teacher’s request for a change of level is denied, because of the student’s need to complete a certain course level requirement. There are also course objectives, which cannot be ignored. Therefore, the only choice left is for the teacher and the student to work harder to make the two aspects, student proficiency, and course objectives, come together. It is a minimal solution, but there are few other options.

The fact that the more and less experienced teachers were significantly different (and showed strength of association) in their belief that students who are considered misplaced
refuse to change level due to course level requirements resulted in further investigation of this fact in the interview portion of the study. Teachers also needed to further elaborate on the strengths and weaknesses of their students' skill areas, especially in terms of listening, which was found to be significant, but showed no strength of association. Granting passing grades and the behaviour of the misplaced were both topics incorporated into teacher interview questions as part of Phase II.

5.5.4 Section Four

Interpretation of Teacher Demographic Information

The last section of the teacher questionnaire contained the demographic information of the teachers. The findings were unsurprising. The sample of fifteen teachers who answered the teacher questionnaire for this study were 60% male, 86% had English as a first language and the majority had French as a second. Teachers fairly equally represented the ranges of age from 25-60 years old with a slight majority falling between the ages of 36 to 45 years of age. In terms of education, teachers were quite equally split with seven teachers having Bachelor's degrees, and seven having a Master's degree, and one having a Doctorate.

One very unexpected finding, related to the demographic information, was the number of student failures which differed between the groups of teachers who had only a Bachelor's degree compared to the group of teachers who had a Master's or Doctorate degree. Results of regression analysis showed there were significantly fewer failures in classes with a teacher whose highest educational level is a Master's or a Doctorate degree.

In order to reflect the diversity of the sample of teachers who answered the questionnaire, and include both Bachelor's and Master's/Doctoral groups, teacher interviewees that covered the range of demographic categories and educational backgrounds were chosen for interviews. Particular attention was paid to differences between responses from the Bachelor's and the Master's/Doctoral groups in the qualitative or interview phase of the study.
The preceding section corresponded to the interpretation of results of the teacher’s questionnaire. Teacher knowledge and opinions about the TOEIC, re-evaluation and student misplacement were interpreted. From these findings, the interview topics for the second phase of the study were drawn. These topics then became the questions which were focused on during the teacher interviews in Phase II of the study.

5.6 Interpretation of Student Questionnaire Results

The next section of the chapter will focus on the interpretation of the results from the analysis of the student questionnaires. Results from individual questions will be combined into five topic areas. Conclusions of the findings of each topic area, come at the end of the section, and were used as the basis for questions in the student interviews for Phase II of the study.

5.6.1 Section One

Interpretation of Student Demographic Information

The student questionnaire had five sections. The first included the respondents’ demographic information, which found that 66% of the student questionnaire’s respondents were female and 34% were male. It was expected that the male-female ratio would have been closer to perhaps a 55-45% split which is closer to the general university population, but classes at LS have always tended to have more females than males at all levels. The majority of respondents answered that they were registered at the Bachelor’s level with 51% of respondents coming from programs in the Humanities, 29% from the Sciences, and 16% from Administration. This could explain the higher percentage of females, for the Humanities traditionally have more females than males and have some of the highest second language departmental level requirements.
The questionnaire reported that the average student's age was from 21 to 24 years of age. The age of the typical LS student who begins school at age five, does seven years of elementary school and finishes secondary school after five years, goes to college for two-three years and then continues to university is a predictable twenty or twenty one. As the majority of students take their language requirement near the end of their degree, most students are between twenty-one and twenty-four years old when they are in English classes. However, this educational path is not the same for the mature students or foreign students, both of whom tend to be older when they arrive at university. This fact helps to explain why the variable of age was significantly different between the groups of misplaced and correctly placed, with the misplaced group being older than the correctly placed. Unfortunately, the strength of association was weak and so it cannot be stated that age is the most important factor, which identifies misplacement, but it does play an important role.

From the questionnaire, there were twenty-one first languages represented in the English classes; however, 92% were speakers of French as a first language. Students reported speaking one of six different second languages, but 87% of respondents indicated English was their second language. These findings were expected for the typical LS student speaks French as a first and English as a second language and the vast majority of English students at the language school are from the province. This is not the case for the majority of foreign students. They often speak French as a second language and English as a third or even fourth. Once again, there was significant difference between the groups of misplaced and correctly placed respondents in terms of their first and second languages. Unfortunately, neither question could be analysed for its strength of association due to a small sample size; however, this finding does contribute to the portrait of the misplaced groups because both first and second languages were found to be variables that helped to differentiate the groups of misplaced from the correctly placed.

Questions pertaining to educational experience showed that approximately 80% of students have completed the province’s language requirement at the elementary, secondary and college level. The 20% who do not have the same English experience as the average LS student of 2007, are for the most part either mature or foreign students; however, a few may
be students who simply followed a slightly different path in their English education. Older students deviate from the normal English student at the language school because they do not have the same number of years of English instruction. This can be because they were students before English became mandatory at all educational levels. For many older students have completed college, but completed it before English was made mandatory in the province early 1990's. For the foreign student, he might not have had the same amount of English at the same institutions or he may never have had exposure to English.

The distinction between previous English education at all three educational levels and student misplacement is a very important one as significant difference between the misplaced and correctly placed for the variable of education was found. Although the strength of association was weak, for correlation between elementary and secondary education and misplacement, the relationship between previous college level English language experience and misplacement was minimally acceptable. The misplaced, as a group, had significantly more chance of having not completed collegial English courses than the students in the correctly placed group. The findings seem to support the fact that the students who did not follow the typical educational path of English instruction tend to be the misplaced. Once again, this description fits the foreign and mature students.

Further investigation into the variable of previous college English experience was carried out and the findings showed that the lack of previous college English experience was the leading factor in determining who would be considered misplaced. In other words, if a student had done English in college, he had less chance to be identified as misplaced. If he had not done collegial English courses, the chances of being considered misplaced were higher. It is the mature and foreign students who have had less college experience than the average LS student; therefore, it is the older students, with a first language other than French and a second language other than English, without college experience that are the misplaced group. This description corresponds to the mature and foreign students.
The next series of findings showed that over 50% of respondents believe that their strongest skill is reading, followed by listening (29%) and the weakest area is speaking (51%), followed by writing (29%). These findings were completely expected and were the same for the misplaced and the correctly placed groups. The students report strength in receptive skills, for those skills are introduced early in English classrooms, but weakness in the productive skills, which are introduced later and are more difficult to master.

The activities that were reported as being the most engaged in by students were the receptive skills, while the least engaged in activities were the productive skills. This can be explained by the fact that the receptive skills are more approachable and are often solitary pursuits, which are more easily practiced outside the classroom. The productive skills are more difficult to practice, as speaking requires a partner and writing involves a reader. Although seemingly easily explained, there was significant difference found on a number of activities between the two groups of the misplaced and correctly placed students involving speaking. Significance on one subsection, “Speaking with clients”, was found, but the association was weak. This finding may be supported by the fact that the misplaced group tended to be mature students who may also be in the workplace and therefore do more speaking than full-time students. For all the other subsections however, the diversity of answers with very small sample sizes meant that relationships were weak and when responses were combined to gather strength, significance was not found. Regardless of the findings of insignificance, it was unexpected and interesting to see that activities engaged in by students which involved speaking could possibly be related to misplacement.

Asked to identify their second language requirement in terms of course level at LS, the majority of respondents were aware of their program’s second language requirement, which was the expected finding. This contrasts with the findings from the teacher questionnaire which showed that many teachers did not know that students had second language requirements. If they did know, only a few could correctly identify them. There was no difference found between groups of students on this variable.
The course levels with the heaviest concentrations of students are usually the third, fourth and fifth level courses. However, the results of the questionnaire reported that 22% of respondents were enrolled in the fifth course level and 22% from the third course level and only 10% from the fifth. Therefore, that level is under-represented in terms of respondents compared to the number of actual students of that level. This is due to a lack of teachers of fourth level courses who had students complete the questionnaire.

Significant difference and strength of association were found and showed that there was a moderately strong relationship between current course level and misplacement between the misplaced and the correctly placed groups of respondents. After the findings of regression analysis showed that not having college English instruction was the first factor responsible for misplacement, the second factor found was the current course level. Results pinpointed the fact that misplacement has a greater chance of occurring with students who were in the two lowest courses and the fifth and the sixth course levels as compared to the middle levels of the third and fourth levels or the two highest levels.

The findings that misplacement occurs most often with the students of the two lowest levels seems to fit with the description created of the misplaced group. Students at these levels are very often identified as part of the misplaced group. They are mature or foreign students, without college English instruction, older than the average student, and with a first and second language other than French and English.

The fact that misplacement is found to occur most often with students who were in the fifth and sixth course levels can be explained by consulting the findings of the student’s initial course placement compared to his current course level. The analysis was able to identify how many students in a particular level had been placed there using their TOEIC score versus how many had changed level or had completed the previous course level and had then moved up into the level. The majority of students test into the third course level and then take a number of other course levels in order to complete their second language requirement. It is due to this movement that misplacement most likely occurs. ETS, the
producer of the TOEIC, on its website states that for every 50 points of increase in TOEIC scores, 100 hours of instruction is required. Considering the fact that there are only eight course levels at LS, 990 points of the TOEIC, and that a course offers a maximum of contact 45 hours, before subtracting hours for evaluation and holidays. It is not possible for a student to climb in proficiency from the second to the sixth course level by only taking courses at LS and not feel that they are misplaced at some point.

Misplacement occurs less often at the third or fourth and the seventh or eighth course levels. Most likely, for the Intermediate group of courses, misplacement is less prevalent because the large numbers of students who are initially placed in this level using the TOEIC score are not usually mature or foreign students. The fourth course level is under-represented due to small sample size, and may have shown different results had the sample been larger. Misplacement is less likely to occur at the seventh and eighth course levels as students test into those levels and they have not climbed from course to course. This is because those two course levels are requirements for only a very few programs. Secondly, very few mature or foreign students are found at those levels.

The major findings of this demographic section of the student questionnaire are that the misplaced groups tend to be composed of foreign or mature students, without college English experience, with a first and second language other than French and English, whose TOEIC score placed them in either one of the two lowest level courses. A second finding from this section is the identification of the particular strengths and weaknesses in the skill areas of the misplaced. In order to investigate these issues further, interviewees who were identified as misplaced, older, foreign, spoke first and second languages other than English and French and placed into the lowest level courses, were targeted for interviews in Phase II of the study.
5.6.2 Section Two

Interpretation of Student Experience with the TOEIC

The topic of the second section of the student questionnaire involved the TOEIC and the student’s experience of taking it. From the results, it emerged that 97% of respondents said they had taken the TOEIC, and 96% had taken it at UU. 46% of students reported that the tape recording used during the testing was “satisfactory” and 39% found the recording was “unsatisfactory”; there was no difference between the two groups of students. As the TOEIC recording is broadcast to the entire test-taking group as a whole, and not to individuals through earphones; the quality of the recording varies. If the sound emanates from the back of the room and the student is sitting at the back, the sound quality is most likely to be reported as satisfactory. If, on the other hand, the sound originates from the back of the room and the student is at the front, the quality is likely not as good. In either case, sound quality would be improved by earphones and not by being lucky enough to sit in the right place in the testing room.

Students were asked about the other disturbances, besides sound quality, they found bothersome. The speed of the test was a factor that disturbed the highest percentage of respondents. However, only a few respondents actually reported this factor as bothersome because only certain respondents added this factor to the “Other” category. The small sample limited the investigation of finding a significant relationship between the two groups of students for this factor. In response to such findings, it was found that speed is a factor specifically used in tests, such as the TOEIC, to help evaluate and determine proficiency. The faster the language is able to be processed by the test-taker, and the quicker he can answer, the more chances he has of answering all questions and being correct. As a result, the more proficient he is deemed to be. However, the speed, even between questions, was mentioned as disturbing, because it forces test-takers to follow the rhythm of the TOEIC rather than allowing test-takers to seek their own speed. The finding was unexpected for the speed of the test factor was not a listed response. Had it been listed, perhaps many others...
would have answered the question in the same way, for a large number added it without prompting.

The largest number of respondents answered that the duration of the test was most bothersome. It is a fact that the TOEIC is a test that requires a high level of concentration, especially for students at the lower proficiencies, because the test is timed and requires test-takers to work quickly. Secondly, the listening portion must be done in a room with up to 75 test-takers and without earphones, which requires the test-taker to block out normal room noise. In addition, test-takers know that the TOEIC score will have serious consequences in terms of the completion of their course level requirement. Under those conditions, it is understandable that test-takers find it difficult to maintain their concentration for the two-hour TOEIC test. Although the majority of students stated that the duration of the test was the most bothersome, it was not found to be significantly different between the two groups of students.

One factor, that was found to be significantly different between the groups of the misplaced and the correctly placed, was the disturbance of the multiple-choice format of the test. The misplaced group indicated that they were bothered by the format whereas the correctly placed were not so bothered. The strength of association between test format and misplacement did not show more than a weak association. Sample size was not a limitation. Anticipating such a finding, student experience with multiple-choice formats revealed that 71% of respondents did not have any experience with such a test format and 28% had taken similar type tests. Of those who had experience with such tests, 89% indicated 1-2 experiences with multiple-choice tests, which are similar in format to the TOEIC. There was no difference in experience for either of the two groups of students, nor was the TOEIC experience responsible for variation between groups. As significance was found between the two variables of the two groups of students and the multiple-choice format of the test being bothersome, it was expected that student experience with such tests would vary. This was not the case.
Guessing while taking the TOEIC was found to be prevalent for 11-30% of all answers is a guess according to student respondents. This amount of guessing was found across all levels and for both groups of students. It was originally believed that guessing may be a strategy employed more often at the lower proficiency levels, rather than at the higher levels, but this was not the case. The question was also asked in order to verify if a higher percentage of guessing resulted in a higher level of misplacement. This finding was not confirmed. For the two groups of students did not vary significantly in the amount of guessing. This may be because the question perhaps was not clear enough in using the word guessing. Possibly there should have been a distinction between a “have absolutely no idea, did not even understand the question” and an educated guess which was pieced together from various clues, with the test-taker only being unsure of his answer. This question did not show truly interesting results, but could still provide more information about misplacement and guessing if it were reworked.

The first major finding of the second section of the student questionnaire was that the TOEIC test-taking experience was similar for the vast majority of test-takers. Second, the speed of the TOEIC, its duration, and multiple choice format were disturbing for both the misplaced and the correctly placed groups of respondents. However, due to the small, but vocal sample of respondents who wrote their own annoyances with the TOEIC, as they were not listed answers, the overall structure of the TOEIC was included as a topic for the second phase, interview section, of the study.

5.6.3 Section Three

Interpretation of Student Consequences of Placement

In terms of placement, the TOEIC scores were found to result in the placement of the majority of students into the lower to middle course levels at LS, but not the lowest or highest levels. The typical LS student has had many years of formal English instruction and therefore does not tend to place into the two lowest levels; however, his language experience from formal instruction does not allow him to place into the highest levels. 25% of all
students tested into the third course level, 18% into the second course level, and 12% into the fourth course level. The sample size of students from the fourth course level represented a much smaller number than were actually enrolled in course in Fall 2007; as there would usually be a larger number of students who would test into that course level. However, the other courses represent the normal population spread.

The second finding is that misplacement is reported as being higher at the lower course levels and lower at the higher course levels. It was shown that initial placement using the TOEIC scores was significantly different for the misplaced versus the correctly placed groups of respondents. 50% of students who tested into the lowest course level and 28% of the second course level considered themselves misplaced; however, only 19% of the seventh course level and 16% of the highest course level students considered themselves misplaced. As already discussed, the students who tend to fall into the two lowest course levels tend to be mature and/or foreign students, who have not had college level English, and who are described as being older than the average age, and having first and second languages other than French and English. There are fewer mature and foreign students at the upper levels and fewer of them are considered misplaced.

From this section of the student questionnaire, it was found that misplacement most often occurs at the lower course levels. This finding, along with the other demographical information, helps to describe the typical misplaced student. For that reason, in the interview portion of the study, great effort was made to attempt to target students from these course levels for further focus.

5.6.4 Section Four

Interpretation of Student’s Self-Identification as Being Misplaced

It is the student himself who determined and decided that he was misplaced, based on his own criteria. It was not the purpose of this series of questions to isolate or define the term misplacement, nor to have the students justify their judgement of being misplaced.
Therefore, 69% of the students agreed with their initial score and placement in a particular course level, and 30% did not. Of those who considered themselves misplaced, 70%, believed they should have been placed into a higher course level, only 30% felt they had placed in too high a course level and needed to change for a lower course level. These findings were not echoed by the teacher questionnaire responses. It was surprising that so many students thought that they were under-evaluated; for teachers reported very few moves toward the higher levels. Most teachers, as taken from the teacher questionnaire, reported that the misplaced students were most often identified as needing to go to a lower level. This difference between teachers, students, and the direction of suggested level changes may be explained by the influence of course requirements. Possibly, the student focuses on the course level he must complete and naturally wishes his TOEIC score to be above that level, because then he does not have to complete more courses. When it is not the case, the student is most likely disappointed and feels that he was misplaced.

Although students were not asked to justify why they considered themselves misplaced, 30% were identified by both themselves and classroom teacher as needing to be moved, 26% had changed course level and 73% had not.

It was this 73% of students who identified themselves as misplaced, were also identified by the classroom teacher as misplaced and thirdly, did not change level when it was suggested that became identified as the misplaced group of respondents. This amounted to 126 students from the total sample of 766. It was expected that there would be misplacement. However, the amount of misplacement, identified by both the teacher and the student, was larger than expected. Students indicated approximately 16% of all students who answered the questionnaire were considered by both the student and the teacher as misplaced and unable or unwilling to change course level. This percentage of students is higher than that confirmed by the teacher questionnaire which reported that up to four students per twenty-five, or up to 16%, are considered misplaced. However teachers indicated that on average two of those students identified as misplaced will change course level. This leaves two students per class, according to teachers, or four students according to
students, who are identified by both teacher and student as needing to change levels, but remain in the course. Regardless of the numbers, misplacement, from 8-16%, as identified by students and teachers, exists at every course level.

Both groups of students, those who were identified as misplaced (as determined by themselves and the teacher and having refused a course level change) and those who were identified as correctly placed, (determined by answering negatively to considering themselves misplaced, or being identified as such by the teacher or either agreeing to change course level or not being asked to move) were included in the interview process in Phase II in order to obtain further information from them on the topics arising from the major findings of the questionnaire.

5.6.5 Section Five
Interpretation of Student Experience of Misplacement

50% of the misplaced students indicated that 1) a desire to stay in the course; 2) a feeling at ease with the group or the teacher or 3) not being certain that the level suggested by the teacher was correct were the main reasons why they stayed in courses when it was suggested that they change course levels. It was expected that administrative limitations would be the most common reason for not changing course level, but it was not the case. Students, it would seem, want to stay in the original class that they attend, regardless of other factors. In fact, they wish to cling to the initial placement so much so that they doubt the appropriateness of the teacher suggested level, which was the third most popular reason for not changing level. In other words, students trust in the placement using the TOEIC score and have a tendency to stay where initially placed, regardless of other factors. It does not appear that re-evaluating a student is an appropriate strategy to avoid misplacement; for once a student has already attended a course he will tend to not want to move.

Grammatical knowledge and speaking were the areas where the group of misplaced respondents indicated the greatest difficulty, with pronunciation and writing being close
behind. The two areas, which were less problematic for the misplaced group of respondents, were listening and reading. After indicating that they required extra help, the misplaced group said they would seek extra support in the areas of writing and grammar with speaking and pronunciation close behind. Listening and reading were areas in which they needed the least help. These findings, again unsurprisingly, support the divide that exists between the receptive and productive skills. The correctly placed group of respondents and the group of misplaced respondents are not different in this area. They are all weakest in their ability to speak and write, which involve both grammar and pronunciation.

When the misplaced group were asked to indicate to what extent they engaged in certain activities in English, the majority reported that they worked on course material, and also listened to the radio, watched television and read. It was expected that the misplaced students would necessarily engage in activities that would help them pass the course, because they had been identified as needing to change level and move to lower course levels. However, outside of course work and some solitary activities carried out in English, few students did extra exercises or went to the language laboratory or saw the teacher for help. This is very interesting for the teachers reported telling the misplaced group of students to come for help, yet very few actually make use of this resource. Most students report difficulty in speaking and writing, yet they do not report finding a partner with whom to speak or writing extra assignments for the teacher to correct. In fact, beyond their homework, the misplaced group engaged little in extra activities which could help them pass the course.

80% of the misplaced students never considered dropping their English course, but 20% had. The majority reported that they stayed due to the idea that it is better to stay and improve than drop the course. They also stated that dropping the course was not a solution for them. Although this may appear to be a mature response to the problem of misplacement, this reaction seems to be extremely passive when added to the fact that the majority of students engage little in activities which could potentially help them pass the course level.
It is surprising, but not unexpected, that 80% of the misplaced group of respondents thought they would pass the current course, but they did not engage in activities. They certainly did not seek extra help. However, over 89% of the misplaced group of respondents believed that the amount of progress made; the quantity of work accomplished; the attendance in the course; the global abilities of the student; and the participation in the course should be taken into consideration by the teacher when deciding to give a passing grade to a failing misplaced student. 75% of misplaced students believed that any one of the preceding factors was sufficient reason for a teacher to grant a passing grade. Misplaced students, in general, believe that most any reason can be satisfactorily employed in deciding to grant a passing grade.

Lastly, the misplaced group of respondents felt their experience of being a weak student was negative or very negative. It was expected that being weaker than the average of the class was not a desirable situation, nor conducive to learning. When asked about treatment by the teacher, misplaced students reported that the teacher offered to give extra help or support to the weaker students, but gave equal treatment to both the weak and the average student inside the English classes. Teachers reported offering help to the misplaced, but giving no special treatment. Briefly, the misplaced group were given no extra help in class, which they may have needed, but they were offered help outside of class, which they passively accepted, yet few of them actually used. Therefore, the teacher passively offered help, which he knew few students would actually use. Both teachers and students agreed that misplacement is a negative or very negative experience.

To recapitulate, students who are identified by teachers as needing to change course level refused to move because they simply wanted to stay in the first course in which they were placed. Having been identified as needing to change level, but refusing, the normally weak student (for teachers report most misplaced students need to go to lower levels) stated that his linguistic weaknesses were in the productive skill areas; however, he did not engage in activities to improve that situation, he did not even get help from the teacher. The misplaced student stayed in the course and hoped to improve. Through he did little work on
his own he believed he would pass the course. In addition, if he did not have the required 60% at the end of the course, he believed that any one of a number of reasons was good enough for the teacher to grant a passing grade. Teachers were not of the same opinion; they felt that overall ability was the main reason for granting a passing grade. It would appear that the misplaced were quite passive, accepted their situation, and required little from the teacher other than a 60% at the end of the course.

From this section of information, the misplaced students who answered the questionnaire shared their opinions on a number of topics such as: the failure of the misplaced to move; the linguistic weaknesses of the misplaced; the linguistic activities in which the misplaced engage; the amount and type of extra help the misplaced seek; consideration of dropping the course; and teacher granting of passing grades. However, the correctly placed student respondents were not asked those same questions. For that reason, during the second phase of the study, during the interview process, these topics will be revisited in order to have both more in-depth information from the misplaced group and to have the opinion of correctly placed group of respondents on those aforementioned topics.

5.7 Major Findings of the Interpretation of the Results of Teacher and Student Questionnaires

The following section will summarize the major findings of the results of the teacher and student questionnaires. The major findings of each questionnaire will be highlighted and then followed by a short description of the topics deemed to be of importance and worthy of further investigation in the second phase of the study.

5.7.1 Major Findings from the Interpretation of the Teacher Questionnaire

From the interpretations of the results of the teacher questionnaire, the first finding was that teachers with more versus less teaching experience differed significantly in terms of
the number of times they had taught the second course level. A larger number of less experienced teachers had taught this course fewer times than a smaller number of more experienced teachers had. Secondly, teachers had little knowledge of the TOEIC or departmental language requirements, in fact teachers with less experience were found to vary significantly from the group of more experienced in their belief that misplaced group of students seldom stay in classes when a move is suggested, due to department second language requirements. The more experienced teachers believed this was a common occurrence. A third finding was the amount of similarity between teachers in their re-evaluation process, but variation in the number and direction of suggested moves; however, no difference between groups of teachers was found for this variable. Fourthly, according to teachers, a misplaced student’s need for outside help for two course level groupings differed significantly in the skill area of listening. The less experienced teachers believed the Basic and Intermediate groups of students (the third, fourth, fifth and sixth) needed extra help in listening, whereas the more experienced teachers did not. This finding did not show strength of association. Fifthly, the reasons for granting passing grades did not vary significantly between the two groups of teachers, nor did the description of the misplaced students’ behaviour in classes, which both groups described as negative. Lastly, the number of student failures per teacher was found to be significantly different between teachers with a Bachelor’s degree and those with a Master’s or Doctoral degree. Bachelor’s teachers failed significantly more students than the Master’s and Doctoral teachers did in Fall 2007.

5.7.2 Major Findings from the Interpretation of the Student Questionnaire

There are a number of significant findings from the student questionnaire, which were discussed in the previous interpretation section. The first was that the misplaced group of students differ significantly from the correctly placed group in terms of age, with the misplaced group being significantly older. The misplaced group also had a first language other than French and a second language other than English. On both of these points, the misplaced and the correctly placed groups differed significantly. The fourth significant finding was that previous English as a second language education at the elementary,
secondary and college level differed between the misplaced and the correctly placed groups. Two other significant findings were that the misplaced group spoke with clients more than the correctly placed group did, and that the multiple-choice format of the TOEIC disturbed the misplaced group significantly more than the correctly placed. However, none of the findings showed strength of association beyond weak and minimally acceptable association. Two significant findings from the analysis of multiple regression found that the misplaced group had greater chances of not having had college English education and being placed by their TOEIC scores in the two lowest course levels, followed by the fifth and sixth course levels.

Having completed the descriptive and inferential analysis of the teacher and student questionnaires, interpreted the findings, and concluded; the study now turns to the second phase. Interview topics for both teachers and students were drawn from the major findings of the teacher and student questionnaire and explored in Phase II of the study. The second phase of the study will be described in the following sections.

5.8 Instruments of Phase II Qualitative Data Collection

The last sections of this chapter will focus on the second phase of this research study, which is qualitative in nature. First, the topics which were identified as important from the questionnaire phase of the study and converted into interview questions will be described. Next, the procedures that were carried out both prior to and during data collection will be outlined. Following the data collection section, the transcription methods of the interviews will be described. Thirdly, the results of both the teacher and the student interview data will be reported. Lastly, a summary of the major findings from both phases, quantitative and qualitative, will be discussed.
5.8.1 Interview Design

This study had a mixed methods approach, with a sequential structure; therefore, the two phases of the study followed one another. The first phase, the quantitative stage, focused on teacher and student questionnaires. The second phase, the qualitative stage, used the findings from the questionnaires as the basis for the topics, which were turned into questions and explored in interviews with teachers and students. Copies of the teacher interview questions are found in Appendix K and the student interview questions are in Appendix L.

The interviews employed semi-structured questions. Semi-structured questions were felt to be a good choice owing to the amount of knowledge the researcher had already collected from the first phase of the study. With this background knowledge, the predetermined interview questions would allow for conformity between interviews. However, the open-ended questions would also allow the interviewee to elaborate on any question and allow the researcher to probe deeper when necessary.

5.8.2 Choice of Topics for Teacher and Student Interviews

The choice of topics, for teacher and student interviews, was derived from the major findings of the student and the teacher questionnaires. Although the actual questions used in the interviews differ for the teacher and student interviewees, the topics were similar. Each choice of topic is justified and described in the next section.

Teacher or Student Experience with English as a Second Language

Both teachers and students were asked to talk about themselves and their experience with English as a second language. This topic was chosen to be included in teacher interviews because: 1) teaching experience was significantly different at the second course
level and 2) the number of failures differed significantly when considering teachers' educational background. Student interviewees were also asked about previous English experience because: 1) college English experience was the factor that was most responsible for misplacement; and 2) significance difference was found between the misplaced and the correctly placed groups of respondents in terms of formal English instruction at elementary, secondary and college levels. Experience with English was chosen to be the first topic for the interviews because it allowed the interviewees to divulge their own personal background information to the extent they wished, which was hoped to put the interviewee at ease and set the tone of future questions.

**Teacher and Student Knowledge and Experience with the TOEIC**

Descriptive results from the teacher questionnaire showed that the majority of teachers had very little knowledge of the TOEIC. The misplaced group of students were significantly different than the correctly placed group in terms of the degree that the multiple-choice format and the speed of the test disturbed them. Therefore, interviews investigated the topic of the TOEIC in the aim of discovering why the placement tool is so unknown to teachers and how the students feel about the TOEIC and the test taking experience.

**Teacher and Student Experience of Changing, or not Changing Course Levels**

Further investigation was required in response to the important finding related to changing course level, such as the facts that 1) teachers vary in the number of students they identify as needing to move, but all teachers identify 1-4 students, per 25, who are identified as misplaced and need to be moved; 2) 70% of teachers typically identify students who they believe need to move to lower levels, and the other 30% of teachers typically make moves toward the higher levels; and 3) once these moves are suggested students often do not agree to move, for only 26% of students identified as needing to move did in fact move. In addition, the fact that the less experienced teachers were significantly different from the more experienced in their belief that the students who refuse to move do so because of their
program’s second language requirements, supplied vital insight into the teacher’s opinions about the misplaced group of students and level changes. Lastly, the desire to stay in the course, feeling at ease with the group or the teacher, and not being certain that the level suggested by the teacher was the right level were all reasons why the misplaced group of students did not change course level. These differing opinions between students and teachers resulted in interviews which included the topics of suggested course changes; the student’s need to move, but remaining in the initial course level, and the reasons for such decisions.

**Student Strengths, Weaknesses, Type of Extra Help in the Skill Areas**

One finding from the teacher questionnaire was that the misplaced students needed extra help in the productive skills. Another finding was that there was significant difference between the less and more experienced teachers in terms of the amount of extra help they believed the misplaced needed in the area of listening. A third finding was that the majority of students believed their strongest skill was reading and their weakest was speaking. From these findings, teachers and students, in interviews, were asked about the strengths, weaknesses, and type of extra help they believed the misplaced students need.

**Student Failures and Teachers Granting Passing Grades**

A finding, related to student failure and teachers granting passing grades, was that most teachers said 1-2 students (per 25) would fail to have a final grade of 60% and most would use the factor of the student’s overall ability when deciding to grant a passing grade. Secondly, the actual number of student failures differed significantly between Bachelor’s and Master’s/Doctoral teachers for there were fewer failures in classes with a teacher whose highest educational level was a Master’s or a Doctoral degree. From the student perspective, 70% think the factors of progress and the quantity of work accomplished should be considered most heavily when teachers decide to grant a passing grade. Due to the difference in opinion between the teachers and students in the granting of passing grades and
the significant difference between teachers in their number of student failures, both teacher and student interviews included these topics.

**Teacher and Student Feelings about Misplacement**

Overall, teachers described a misplaced student as exhibiting negative or very negative behaviour and described their own behaviour toward the misplaced as focusing on offering extra help, whether the student requested it or not. For the majority of the misplaced group of students, their experience of being a weak student was described as negative or very negative. Students described the teacher as offering to give extra help or support to the weaker students outside of class and giving equal treatment to the misplaced group of students inside the class. In order to delve further into the feelings of the misplaced students and the teachers who work with them, both teachers and students were asked about the topic of misplacement in interviews.

**Teacher and Student Final Comments**

At the end of the interviews, interviewees could make any comments or ask any questions on any topic they wished. This allowed for a quiet close to the interview and gave the interviewee final control so he could express himself on any of the topics previously raised or topics that the preceding questions failed to elicit.

**5.8.3 Verification of Teacher and Student Interview Questions**

The verification of the previously outlined interview topics and the questions which were created from them was carried out in late April by the advisors to the study. Through consultation, no topic was completely rejected; however, this process did result in a reduction of individual questions by creating groupings of questions. Probes were also
included in the case that the interviewee did not completely answer the question and needed to be further encouraged.

The fact that the student interviews needed to be conducted in French, the student interview questions also needed to be translated from English. A full-time lecturer at UU carried out this verification process. Through reading and consulting with the English version of the student interview questions, he verified the language to see that it was clear, grammatically correct and maintained the meaning of the original. He made only a few slight grammatical changes; no major changes were recommended. This work was then verified by one of the advisors of the study, who again made a few small grammatical changes.

5.8.4 Approbation of Written Communication

The interview portion of this phase of the study required three types of written communication, which were all addressed to teachers or students.

First, a letter of introduction was sent to the pedagogical advisor who then e-mailed this letter to all the teachers who were giving courses in the winter session 2008. This letter had the goal of soliciting teacher’s help by agreeing to a personal interview or identifying and contacting students for the interview process. The ethics committee of UU approved the letter and a copy is found in Appendix H.

The second form of communication was an announcement of recruitment, which was given to the solicited students. The announcement listed the name of the study, its goals, the task the solicited students would be asked to perform and the researcher’s contact information. This announcement was approved by the ethics committee at UU and is found in Appendix I.
The last piece of communication in the interview phase of the study was a consent form for both teacher and student interviewees. The consent form was a standard form set out by the ethics committee at UU, which had been modified for this study and approved. The consent form introduced the study, the task, the topics to be covered, the risks, and advantages to the interviewee, along with their rights as a participant. The two-page document had to be initialled by the interviewee at the bottom of the first page and had to be signed and dated on the last page. The researcher also had to sign and date the last page. A copy of this document is found in Appendix J.

Upon completion of the written communication, the solicitation of interviewees began.

5.9 Procedures of Phase II Qualitative Data Collection

The second phase of the study, the interview stage, began by soliciting the involvement of teachers for interviews and in identifying and contacting potential interviewees. After teacher and student interviewees had been recruited, the interview was conducted. A full description of these steps is found in the following section.

5.9.1 Teacher Interviewee Selection

Following the questionnaire completion and analysis portion of the study, all teachers who were teaching at LS in Winter 2008 were approached. A letter of introduction was sent to the pedagogical advisor, who in turn electronically mailed the letter to all of the staff members who were currently teaching that session. The letter requested their participation in the interview process of the study. A second point in the letter was to request their participation in the recruitment of a selected few of their students for interviews. A copy of the letter is found in Appendix H. A recruitment notice was also included with the teacher letter. This announcement was destined for the students already targeted as possibly
interviewees. It was to be handed out by the teacher. A copy of this announcement is found in Appendix I.

In response to the teacher letter, only one teacher responded that he was interested; therefore, he was included in the interview process. As no other teacher contacted the researcher to agree to an interview, the researched solicited teachers directly. By consulting the demographic information gathered in the teacher questionnaires, the researcher targeted those teachers who would best represent a theoretical sample of the LS teacher population. Three teachers were chosen for their demographic diversity and approached directly. All of these teachers willingly agreed to be interviewed. The pedagogical advisor was also approached directly and agreed readily.

Those teachers who were asked directly by the researcher were selected for their ability to reflect diversity in the amounts and types of teaching experience at the language school. This was important as significant association was found between teaching experience at the language school and the second course level and knowledge about why the misplaced student stays in a course level after having been identified as needing to change. Another important aspect was the educational level of the teachers as this was found to be significantly different in terms of student failure rates. Teachers were also chosen if they reflected variation in the factors of age, sex, and first language, in order to have as much of a theoretical sample of the teachers at LS as possible.

The four teachers who agreed to be interviewed represented both sexes, the four ranges of age, three different first languages and two different second languages, both Bachelor’s and Master’s levels of formal education, various years of teaching experience at various levels, (elementary, secondary, college, adult education), and varying seniority levels at LS.

The pedagogical advisor was also selected for an interview in order to have insight into the administrative processes of which teachers are not always cognizant. She also had a
clear overview of all the course levels and the entire teaching staff, along with contact with the student body on various issues.

In total, four teachers and the pedagogical advisor of the language school were selected and scheduled for interviews in April 2008. These interviewees are described in the Results and Interpretation of the Descriptive Data Analysis of Teacher Interview section under the heading, Topic One – Demographic Information.

**5.9.2 Student Interviewee Selection**

The interview portion of the study took place after the collection and analysis of the first phase. Since the original population of students who answered the questionnaire in Fall 2007 had finished their courses at the language school and the ethics committee had not allowed the identification of students from intact classes who answered questionnaires, a new set of students needed to be approached as potential interviewees. As the focus of the study is the impact of the TOEIC when its scores are used for placement purposes, and the statistical analysis found significance between the groups of the misplaced and the correctly placed; therefore, both groups of students were targeted for interviews.

In order to guarantee that some of the interviewees were identified as misplaced, the teachers were asked to target those students in their classes who seemed to be the misplaced student population. Teachers were told to solicit interviewees among those students who 1) were considered misplaced, whether stronger or weaker than the average of the class; or 2) had moved or had refused to move; or 3) had already raised questions about placement or the use of the TOEIC for placement. With those criteria, teachers were asked to select possible interviewees from their classes in Winter 2008. When the student was approached by the teacher, he or she was given a recruitment notice (Appendix I). If the student agreed to be interviewed, he gave his name and e-mail address to the teacher, who passed it on to the researcher. Twenty-five students did so.
It was the researcher, who contacted the twenty-five possible interviewees by e-mail. The e-mail thanked them for their interest, stated that the interviews would be held between April 26-29, 2008 at any time of the day that suited them, gave the location of the interview and told them to plan for an hour-long interview. As a response, they simply needed to e-mail their choice of time. The researcher confirmed each choice of time, having to adjust the time of only two students who wished for the same time period.

The dates, April 26-28, were chosen as it did not interfere with the final examination period of the winter session, or the new spring session and yet the total experience of the fifteen-week winter session was still fresh in their minds. However, the date constrictions also meant not all of the twenty-five students who were interested and had given their names were available for interviews on those days. In the end, thirteen students of the original twenty-five agreed to interviews and were given an interview time.

5.9.3 Description of Teacher and Student Interview Location

The four teachers, pedagogical advisor, and thirteen students arrived at the interviews on a day at the end of April 2008. The interviews were held in the researcher’s semi-private office at UU, which at this particular time of the year, between sessions, was very quiet.

The researcher’s office had been rearranged to facilitate the interview. On one table, there was a fruit basket located behind the interviewee. Another long, narrow table was put near the windows of the room with two cushioned chairs, one placed at one end, and another placed on the side. The interviewee was positioned at the end of the table and the interviewer on the side of the same table, so the table separated, but there was not a great distance between the two. It was hoped this would facilitate conversation. Beside the interviewer were two voice recorders. Both were placed at the end of the table and close to the interviewer in order to be easily operated. Two recording machines were used: a digital recorder was the primary instrument for its superior sound quality and ease of data transfer;
however, a tape recorder was used as a back-up in case of any problems with the first recorder.

During the interview process, the office door was kept shut and the lights were on. The windows were kept slightly opened, but it was neither hot nor cold. During the three days of interviews, there were only two interruptions, the telephone rang three times during one interview before the answering machine responded, and the cleaning lady opened the door during another interview. When she saw the tape recorder, the placement of the furniture in the room, and the seriousness of the conversation, she shut the door without saying a word and the interview continued.

5.9.4 Teacher and Student Interview Procedure

Upon arrival in the office, the researcher greeted the teachers and the pedagogical advisor for interviews. After a few minutes of friendly conversation, the teachers and the pedagogical advisor were asked to take a seat. Similarly, student interviewees had their coats taken and offered a place for their belongings, then some simple conversation about finding the office or the weather was instigated. When this was finished, they were asked to have a seat.

Once seated, the teachers, pedagogical advisor and students were then asked to read, initial the bottom of each page and complete a consent form by signing and dating the last page. The researcher had already signed her portion of the same document. A copy of the consent form can be found in Appendix J.

Next, the interviewees were told that the interview process was the second phase of the study and the first phase had been a questionnaire. The researcher stated the questionnaire's topics, described the respondents of the questionnaire, and explained that the results from this questionnaire would be referred to in the interview. Interviewees were told
that their answers were to be based on their own opinions and experiences and that there was no right and wrong answer. As the researcher was often interviewing in her second language, interviewees were told specifically to ask for clarification, if at any time they did not understand the question, especially if the difficulty was related to language. Interviewees were then asked if they had any questions, no one did. Finally, they were told the interview would be recorded, the recording machines were then started, and the interview began.

The researcher had a copy of interview questions for the teacher, including the pedagogical advisor, (Appendix K) and the student (Appendix L) on the table in front of her. She read the first question and then waited for the response. She rarely intervened verbally, but engaged completely in non-verbal cues of agreement (nodding) or clarification seeking (head tilting). If the response to a question was incomplete, in the researcher’s opinion, she asked one of the probes listed for that particular question. The interviewee spoke until he or she chose to stop and then the researcher asked another question. This continued until there were no longer any remaining questions.

When the questions were all answered, the recording machines were turned off and the interviewees were thanked for their time and openness. They were given back their belongings and offered a piece of fruit from a fruit basket, located on another table in the room. Goodbyes were said and interviewees were thanked for a final time.

When the thirteen student interviews and the five interviews with the teachers and pedagogical advisor were completed, the transcription process of the recordings began.

5.9.5 Data Transcription

Interviews were recorded using a cassette recorder; those cassettes have since been locked in the researcher’s filing cabinet. A digital recorder was also used to record interviews; it was these digital recordings, which were downloaded for transcription
purposes. Each interview, when transferred, was given a number and then identified as a teacher/pedagogical advisor or a student interview.

All of the interviews were listened to once in their entirety, while the researcher took notes. During a second listening, sections of each interview were identified as being the answer to the particular question and therefore this portion was transcribed. In order to aid the descriptive analyses of the interviews, all responses to particular answers were grouped together. Transcriptions were written exactly as they were spoken, there have been no changes. If the spoken words were grammatically incorrect, the correction follows in parentheses. No interviewee names were used; interviews were simply numbered and identified as teacher/pedagogical advisor or student.

Once the identification, grouping, and transcription of responses of the interviews were complete, the descriptive analyses were carried out.

5.10 Results and Interpretation of the Descriptive Data Analysis of Teacher Interviews

As the second portion of the study was qualitative, the interview data was described. Following the description of the demographic information of each interviewee, each question of the interview was discussed and interpreted. Teacher/pedagogical advisor and students responses to interview questions were described separately. The following two sections focus on the teacher interview results, followed by the students'.

5.10.1 Results and Interpretation for Topic One

Demographic Information of Teacher and Pedagogical Advisor Interviewees

Both descriptive and statistical findings from the teacher questionnaire were the basis for selecting teachers for teacher interviews. The sample of teachers who answered the questionnaire were quite diverse in teaching experience, both inside and outside of the language school, experience with the various course levels, and also in terms of sex, age,
first and second spoken languages and level of education. Diversity was considered when soliciting and selecting participants, as a theoretical sampling of the teacher population was required, for the qualitative portion of this study. Table XXIII outlines the demographic information and teaching experience of the teachers and pedagogical advisor who were interviewed.

**Table XXIII**  
**Description of Teacher Demographical Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>60+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First language</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second language</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Level</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Experience outside the Language School</td>
<td>20+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Experience inside the Language School</td>
<td>81+ points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic and Intermediate levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table XXIII, the demographic information shows that the teachers and pedagogical advisor represent both sexes; all age ranges; one first language other than English and French; both Bachelor’s and Master’s educational levels; a variety of years and
points of seniority and types of teaching experience. This group of interviewees offers a theoretical sampling of the teachers at LS.

In order to organize the amount of information collected through interviews, teachers/pedagogical advisor answers were categorized according to their educational level. This choice was made because failure rates showed significant difference between teacher education, and failures are the important part of the culmination of the relationship between the teacher and the identified misplaced student. Each individual teacher or pedagogical advisor was divided into one of two groups: interviewees with a Master’s degree or only a Bachelor’s degree. There are two interviewees in the Bachelor’s group and three in the Master’s. The following section will describe and interpret the findings from each topic from the teacher interviews.

5.10.2 Results and Interpretation for Topic Two

Teacher Comments of Experience with TOEIC

Interviewees were asked what they knew about the TOEIC; regardless of educational level, the teachers used the same adjective as the students: long. This is mostly second-hand information because only two interviewees (with Master’s) had actually seen or heard a copy of the TOEIC. These two interviewees were able to describe the TOEIC in general terms (skill areas evaluated), but they only bantered around terms such as: standardized test, international test, multiple-choice format without really discussing the concepts. One of the two mentioned the business content and the high level of concentration required from the test-takers. Of the other three interviewees, two of them, one with a Master’s and one with a Bachelor’s degree, tried to say what skill areas were evaluated, but had more questions than answers. The information gathered supports the teacher questionnaire findings that these teachers/pedagogical advisors did not have a great deal of knowledge about the TOEIC.

However, lack of knowledge did not stop the teacher interviewees from discussing the problems or difficulties associated with the use of the TOEIC scores for placement purposes.
at LS. Interviewees with Bachelor’s degrees placed the blame of misplacement squarely on the shoulders of the use of the TOEIC scores and stated that a change in test would reduce these types of problems. The other Bachelor’s level teacher mentioned that the TOEIC is not a placement test in design, added the fact that the re-evaluation activities that are done the first day of class are to compensate for the TOEIC’s lack of direct measurement in the areas of writing and speaking and that therefore, the TOEIC was a waste of money.

In the Master’s group of teachers, one mentioned the variation of abilities in the classrooms after placement using the TOEIC scores, and added that the multiple-choice format and guessing strategies tend to artificially increase scores. Another interviewee commented that placement using the TOEIC scores results in groups of students with a huge amount of variation in skill areas. The last comment was that good listening skills would inflate the student’s score beyond his abilities and this level of proficiency would not carry over into other skill areas, such as writing, and grammar knowledge.

In general, the interviewees did not know a lot about the specifics of the TOEIC, but they were easily able to comment on its perceived inadequacies. They were also able to speak, in detail, about how those inadequacies of the test manifest themselves in their English classrooms in the form of student misplacement, and non-homogeneous groups.

5.10.3 Results and Interpretation for Topic Three

Teacher Comments of Students’ Refusal to Move

Interviewees were asked to describe their experience with students who are identified as needing to move, but do not. All interviewees said for the most part, whether to a higher or a lower level, students move when it is suggested.

According to the pedagogical advisor, the discussion between teacher and student about moving or staying is a process where the teacher tries to offer a move and suggests a
move, but does not have the ultimate deciding power. If the student wants to stay, he has every right to stay. The teacher cannot force the move, but neither can the student decide to move without the teacher's approbation. If the student refuses to move down, and the teacher does not see that student's promise of doing extra work will be sufficient to ensure a passing grade, an agreement, which states that the student will accept a failure if it occurs, can be signed (this has only happened once to the researcher's knowledge). In the agreement, the student accepts the consequences of this refusal to move, which is normally the failure of the course, and cannot ask the teacher to go beyond normal support in helping the student. This is an extreme case, which rarely happens. In general, most students, when it is suggested, move, but some do not.

It appears that the teacher and the student negotiate moves. The teacher and the student can both suggest a move, the student can accept or refuse the move, but neither the student nor the teacher can force a move. It is difficult to comprehend who has the ultimate control in this game of moving or changing levels; however, most students follow the teacher's suggestion and move.

5.10.4 Results and Interpretation for Topic Four

Teacher Comments of Students' Ability in the Skill Areas

This topic will be divided into three subsections which relate to skill areas. At the beginning of the section, the skill of reading, which was identified as being the student respondents' strongest, will be interpreted. The weakest skill area, which was reported as being the skill of speaking, will then follow. The last part of the chapter will be devoted to the type of extra help required by the misplaced students.
5.10.4.1 Strongest Skill Area Is Reading

From the student questionnaire, students had indicated that reading was their strongest skill. Most teachers indicated that overall the students' receptive skills are the strongest. Teacher interviewees agreed with both statements, but with some limitations.

The Bachelor's group of teachers agreed that reading was the area in which students believed they were strongest. They cited three reasons for this 1) more exposure to reading in elementary, secondary and college and in course work at university; 2) the fact that reading is a receptive, or passive, skill which is easier to master than productive skills and 3) students are usually only asked to understand the surface meaning of a text. Teachers explained that students feel they can read enough to accomplish typical reading activities which ask readers to identify the main ideas or answer questions when the answers are found directly in the text. Therefore, students believe they have good reading skills. However, one teacher from this group and another from the Master's group both said that when the student needs to have more than a surface level understanding or when the language is more idiomatic or specialized, most students fall down.

Therefore, all teachers agreed that reading was the best of the four skills for most students, but not necessarily a skill they do well when asked to move beyond surface level comprehension. In general, teachers believe that reading is the best of all the skill areas, or reading is better than the other skills, but that students' reading level is not necessarily strong.

5.10.4.2 Weakest Skill Area Is Speaking

The majority of students in the student questionnaire felt that speaking was their weakest skill. In response to this statement, teachers agreed. One teacher interviewee with a Master's degree agreed and said that, when engaged in speaking, the student has to monitor
his accuracy, search for vocabulary and apply grammar rules. At the same time, he needs to create meaning. All of which are hard to accomplish at the same time. Another from the Bachelor’s group said that speaking is a productive skill, which is inherently harder than a receptive skill. Another from this group added the opinion that speaking is what most students really want to be able to do, so students focus on this need and see their limitations. They do not see the same limitations in writing, for instance, because they do not feel they will need to write in English to some extent.

However, one interviewee from each group (Bachelor’s and Master’s) made the distinction between the average LS student and the foreign students from France, North Africa, or South America, in terms of speaking ability. Both said that the typical LS student speaks more fluently, although less accurately, than the students of other nationalities at the same course level. However, over the fifteen-week semester, with a strong grammatical base present and given the opportunity, the speaking ability comes to the foreign students, and they produce the language not only fluently, but also highly accurately. However, the same level of grammatical improvement is not seen on the typical LS students, who begin the course being fluent and finish the course level fairly unchanged in this area.

The interviewees agreed with the students that reading, a receptive skill, was probably the strongest of the four skills for students. Secondly, speaking, a productive skill was the weakest. The institutional TOEIC formally evaluates the two receptive skills, reading and listening, and extrapolates from those two skills a proficiency level for the other two skills. Speaking and writing are not formally measured by the institutional version of the TOEIC. However, English classrooms at LS teach and evaluate the four skills with writing and speaking being large parts of the instruction and evaluation of the courses.
5.10.4.3 Extra Help with Writing, Speaking, Grammar, and Pronunciation

On questionnaires students said they most often need extra help in the area of writing, followed by speaking, grammar explanations, and pronunciation. Although the order varied slightly depending on the combined course level, in general the productive skills, which are not formally evaluated by the TOEIC, but evaluated in the course levels, require extra help. Interviewees from the Bachelor’s group of teachers agreed, but the Master’s group interviewees said that the lower course levels required help in all skill areas; both the receptive and productive, for these teachers see the weaknesses which exist in the four skill areas for the less proficient students.

In conclusion, teachers agreed that the productive skills, speaking and writing, are the weaker skill areas, with speaking being the weakest. For the typical LS student, this statement is true; however, it is even more so for the foreign students who have weaker fluency than the average LS student. Secondly, teachers believed that the receptive skills, reading and listening, are the stronger skill areas, with reading being the strongest of all. Teachers agreed that reading is better than the other skills, but not necessarily a strong area.

5.10.5 Results and Interpretation for Topic Five

Teacher Comments on Student’s Refusal to Change Course Levels

If a teacher suggests a move to a higher course level and the student refuses, according to teachers, the refusal is often due to fear on the part of the students. Although it was not found to be significant, being unsure that the suggested course level was the appropriate level was one of the factors that kept students in course levels, even when the teacher had suggested a change. Teachers said that students fear that a higher course will be too hard, or that they will have to work much harder in the higher level. A Master’s teacher reported the fact that only the title of the course; Basic, Intermediate, or Advanced, often has a negative effect on the students and their expectations of the course level. One teacher said
if the teacher is able to allay those fears about the suggested course level, then students would usually make the suggested move.

It is a different story when the suggested course level is lower than the student’s current level and the student refuses to change. One teacher from the Bachelor’s group mentioned scheduling problems as one of the reasons students refuse to move; however, no other teacher mentioned this factor. Two interviewees, one who was a more experienced teacher with a Master’s degree and the other who was a less experienced teacher with a Bachelor’s degree, commented that a student who is more concerned with meeting his program requirement than with having a more appropriate course level will refuse. The three other interviewees did not mention the level requirement and its effect. They did not suggest reasons for the refusal to move.

For a student, moving down a course level has serious consequences of more time and money is spent for an additional course, especially if that new course level does not complete his departmental language requirement. Interviewees from both groups, Master’s and Bachelor’s, said that students see a downward move as insulting and frustrating; therefore, they often refuse and promise to work hard if they can stay at that initial course level. In many cases, if they work hard, teachers said those students could indeed pass that particular course level.

However, it is not the case with a mature student, this group of students was specifically mentioned as differing from the general body of students. Two teachers, one with less teaching experience (Bachelor’s degree) and the other with more teaching experience (Master’s) and both with a great deal of experience at the second course level, focused particularly on the group of misplaced mature students. They both said that the mature student will not be concerned with the requirement and will want to find the best learning environment, so he will most often agree to move down, even when it extends the time required for him to get his language requirement. This is an important comment as it comes from those experienced second course level teachers who know that particular group
of students. This fact may help to explain why the more experienced teachers differed significantly in their opinion that the level requirement was a factor in misplaced students refusing to change level compared to the less experienced teachers. Those more experienced teachers may have been considering the two different populations of the misplaced: the mature student and the average student at LS.

5.10.5.1 Consideration of Dropping the Course

Even when the misplaced group of students are having difficulty in the course, 80% of respondents in the student questionnaire said they had not considered dropping the course and in the end expected to pass with at least 60%.

The Bachelor’s group of teachers said the students do not drop the course in the hopes that their marks will improve and because some students like the challenge. One said that the students feel that English courses have not been too difficult at secondary or college levels and as they have not yet failed, they believe they will not fail this course. It was also said that maybe students are hoping the teacher will give them the benefit of the doubt and grant a passing grade. Another teacher said it was due to program requirements; students are eternally hopeful because the alternative, dropping or failing the course, has serious consequences. Another comment was that the structure of the courses, for example, where homework counts in the final mark, offers hope.

The interviewees from the Master’s group answered this question by saying that students do not consider dropping the course because they believe in the placement system. This passive acceptance has students believing that the use of the TOEIC score for placement does not result in student misplacement, even when failure is imminent. Teachers reported that the student believes that the placement tool is a valid one and if the TOEIC scores were used to place him at a particular course level, then that is where he belongs. Regardless of the teacher’s opinion, the student chooses to believe in his TOEIC score, so he will stay in the course level in which he was placed. Another teacher commented that
Perhaps the student, who comes to feel more comfortable in the course as the session goes on, becomes convinced that he is not so bad and will pass the course; therefore, he stays and does not drop the course. The last interviewee in this group commented that course levels, which follow each other, are very similar in structure and content, so the student thinks that he will be able to get through one level with the knowledge from a previous course.

The two groups of teachers differ in their comments on the topic of students dropping the course. The Bachelor’s teachers did not focus on the student’s situation which brought the student to their classroom, or the fact that difficulty in the course could be the consequence of misplacement. Instead, they tend to believe that the student who fails to drop the course is too hopeful, not realistic or so driven by the language requirement that he does not consider dropping the course. The Master’s teachers do not focus on the student and his actions, but rather on the circumstances behind his misplacement. They try to understand how the use of the TOEIC score has affected the student and has possibly resulted in his misplacement.

This difference between the two groups of teachers continues into the number of student failures. Bachelor’s teachers failed significantly more students than the Master’s teachers in Fall 2007 as found on teacher questionnaire inferential analysis. The explanation may lie with the beliefs teachers have about misplaced students who do not drop the course, even when passing the course does not seem to be possible. The difference may be the vision the teacher has of the student. The Bachelor’s teacher focuses on the misplaced individual who has consciously made the wrong decision or failed to make the proper decision which is to have stayed in a failing situation. The Master’s teachers, however, focused on the TOEIC testing and placement using the TOEIC scores.

In conclusion, according to teacher interviewees, most students do not move down if doing so will have negative consequences (more time and money) on the completion of their program’s language requirement. However, the mature students will often be unconcerned with the added money and time, and instead will listen to the teacher and change course
level. When students refuse to change course level and then are in a failing situation in the class, Bachelor’s teachers think the student should have changed level and failure to do so is the fault of the student. Master’s teachers however, think perhaps the student should have changed level, but the student trusts the system and the use of the TOEIC scores and for this reason he does not consider dropping the course.

5.10.6 Results and Interpretation for Topic Six
Teachers Comments on Granting Students a Passing Grade

If the misplaced student does not have a 60% at the end of the course, should teachers grant a passing grade?

In response to this question, within the Bachelor’s group, one interviewee said when the final mark was very close to 60%, for example a 58-60%, this teacher would return to final examinations and see if enough points could be found to boost the mark over 60%. The second interviewee from this group commented that whether the student worked hard or not without 60% he would fail. It was suggested that changes such as: having more evaluations with greater weighting that come at the end of the course, would result in less students having borderline marks. It is in these borderline cases where the teacher feels the pressure to grant passing grades.

For this topic, the Master’s group of teachers differed greatly from the Bachelor’s. One interviewee spoke about giving the misplaced students more specialized explanations and extra work so they would not feel significantly weaker or stronger than the other students in the class. For this teacher, the course itself, for those misplaced students, would be slightly modified, so regardless of their real proficiency, they would feel successful in the level in which they were placed. Therefore, failure would not be an issue because they would be successful at their own level. Encouragement would be given; even if not deserved, as a way to keep those misplaced students happy and feeling successful. The other two teachers in this group spoke only in terms of competency. Both spoke of the need to have the final grade reflect proficiency, especially when the student needed to climb to
higher level courses in order to complete their program requirement. The real question, for one interviewee, was simply if the student could be successful at the next level, the grade in itself was unimportant. This teacher said that regardless of the mark tally, if the last evaluation showed the required competency, the student was granted the passing grade.

The opinions of the interviewees differed greatly on this question, with the Bachelor’s group concentrated on the final mark and the Master’s group focused on the idea of the student and his language competency. Again, these comments from the groups of teachers support the findings that the Master’s/Doctoral teachers fail fewer students than the Bachelor’s teachers fail.

In conclusion, Master’s teachers know that the use of TOEIC scores can result in misplacement for students and they feel that those misplaced students have not been treated well by the testing system. For that reason, the Master’s teachers seem to feel that misplacement is systemic, of which the student is a victim. They do not think the student is responsible for misplacement and should not suffer from it. They, therefore, do all they can to help, and support the student. Finally, they focus on the overall ability of the individual if the pass/fail decision occurs, and they do not focus on the grade tally.

The Bachelor’s teachers did not mention how misplacement occurs. Instead, they focused on the student as being an individual set apart from the problem of misplacement who did not read the signs of upcoming failure correctly and then did not make the proper decision to drop the course. Therefore, when the student fails to have the 60% needed to pass the course, Bachelor’s teachers point to the fact that he did not react to his misplacement correctly. Failure is the result. These reasons perhaps explain why the Master’s teachers failed significantly fewer students than the Bachelor’s teachers.
5.10.7 Results and Interpretation for Topic Seven

Teacher Comments on the Misplaced Student’s Behaviour

For this interview topic, the Bachelor’s group of teachers made the distinction between the misplaced student who is placed too high for the proficiency and the misplaced student who is placed too low for his proficiency.

For the Bachelor’s group of teachers, the misplaced student who should be at a higher course level intimidates the rest of the class, is often cocky toward both the teacher and other students and unwilling to participate in class. This type of student becomes a “know-it-all” and does not contribute positively to classroom atmosphere. Teachers with a Master’s degree did not mention this group of misplaced students at all.

For the misplaced student who should have been at a lower course level, the Bachelor’s group of teachers said that the weak students do not help themselves for they are often passive in class. Alternatively, if they are active and making progress, they are often disappointed by the marks, which do not reflect their effort. As a result, they often argue with the teacher over the marking system and their marks in particular. The Master’s group mentioned that these weaker students get quickly frustrated and this frustration turns to anger, which is carried into the class. The last comment to this statement was that these misplaced students are often very unhappy.

Interestingly, it is only the Bachelor’s group, who mentions the misplaced students as being too strong for the level. This may be because the Master’s group of teachers are able to offer a more individualized program for the misplaced, again because these teachers consider how misplacement occurs. The Bachelor’s group however, does not react to the student as though he is the victim of circumstances as the Master’s group does, but more as the designer of his own misery. However, for both groups of teachers, misplacement has negative results on the individuals who are affected by it.
5.10.8 Results and Interpretation for Topic Eight

Teacher Suggested Solutions to Misplacement

For both groups, the best solution to eliminate or decrease misplacement would be an improved placement test or better placement tools. The Bachelor’s group did not offer any solutions other than this. One teacher said listening and reading does not indicate their writing and speaking proficiency, pointing out the TOEIC’s limitations in this area. Another suggested that teachers do the formal evaluation and eliminate the use of the TOEIC, suggesting that the teacher could place students better than the current test. The other teacher mentioned the fact that grammar has to be evaluated on the placement test as it is the focus in the classroom. She suggested it accounted for 50-60% of course time and evaluation; therefore, grammar should be heavily evaluated on the placement test. She also discussed asking the students about their openness to changing levels during the first class and after placement using the TOEIC scores. She said that if a student indicated they would not be open to a change in course level, she would not re-evaluate him. Only if they indicated a desire to move, would she re-evaluate that student. She cited that re-evaluation takes time and effort and if the student is not willing to change course level, the exercise is worthless.

For the Master’s group, there was focus on the teachers themselves. One mentioned the need for more teacher support and communication. Two said that the teachers needed to act more as a team, especially in terms of policy about passing students who need to go to a higher-level course. Verification of the competency of these students and ensuring correct evaluation was seen as essential. One commented that it is the teacher’s responsibility to discuss problems with students directly and present the positive aspects of their proficiency. Another stated it is important to make the misplaced student feel better. Another interviewee spoke of having tutoring for weaker students, in order to alleviate the burden of the misplaced on the teacher. The third teacher of this group added that with so little contact time per course (45 hours) only a little progress in the language could be made. Added to the fact that it is difficult and time-consuming to identify the misplaced, his solution to
misplacement is to pretend to not see the differences between students and work with whomever is in front of him. This interviewee stated that he only moves those students who truly stand apart from the group. He then works with the rest because he felt that making many level changes could be interpreted as wanting to get rid of students in order to have a smaller class size, so he does not make level changes and prefers to keep everyone.

Interviewees in the Bachelor’s group called for placement practices to be improved. It seems that they felt that if the placement practices were changed, there would be less of a problem with misplacement. However, the Master’s group focused on the needs of the teacher who has to deal with misplacement and the test used for placement purposes, did not rate a mention.

5.10.9 Interpretations of the Major Findings from Teacher Interviews

The first major finding from the teacher interview was that this sample of teachers knew a fair amount about the perceived inadequacies of the TOEIC and was very comfortable giving their opinion of those inadequacies. Teachers also believed that using the TOEIC scores to place students at LS resulted in misplacement and non-homogeneous groups. All teachers were similar in their belief that the use of TOEIC scores for placement was the cause of these difficulties. It is difficult to know exactly how these teachers formed their opinion of the TOEIC for not one of the five had actually taken the test. They had only talked to other teachers and students, and some had consulted websites related to the TOEIC. Their completely negative view of the TOEIC could be the result of desiring to please the researcher or perhaps they simply needed a scapegoat for the frustration that misplacement causes classroom teachers.

The second finding was that these teachers are of the opinion that most students will change course level when it is suggested. However, when course changes result in delaying the completion of the student’s language requirement, both groups of teachers commented that only the mature students would agree to move. This perhaps explains the findings from
the teacher questionnaire in which the less and more experienced teachers differed in their belief that language requirements are the reason students refuse to move when it is suggested. The difference could be that some teachers in the questionnaire consider the typical student and others could have been thinking about the mature student. Alternatively, teachers could have thought only that the majority of the students move, so the requirement does not play a role, while other teachers may have thought that if the move is refused, the requirement was the reason.

Thirdly, all teachers agreed that the students' receptive abilities are superior to their productive abilities. In particular, reading skills are the students' strongest. Those same teachers said that the students' weakest skill was speaking, especially for the foreign students. If students required extra help in any skill area, teachers said it would be in the productive skill areas. These findings are unsurprising. As the typical LS students have all had similar backgrounds in their formal education of English second language which focused more heavily on the receptive skills, and as productive skills are harder to improve than the receptive, students are less proficient in the productive skill areas. In particular, reading is the strongest skill because it has the advantage of being able to be controlled by the reader who is able to take in the information from the written word at his own speed. Contrarily, the student does not control the speed of the oral message, because the message comes at the speaker's chosen speed. In addition, pronunciation can interfere in oral comprehension, which does not interfere in reading. Speaking is the weakest skill for the typical LS student for even though the spoken language in the English second language classroom is often English; the spoken language outside the English classroom is French, so there is little chance for contact and practice with the target language. For foreign students, they have often not had the spoken language as part of their formal education of English language classrooms nor contact with the language outside of the classroom either. For most foreign students English is a foreign language rather than a second. Therefore, if a student requires extra help, it is obvious it would be in one of the two productive skills.
For the last four findings from the teacher interviews, the Bachelor's and Master's/Doctoral teachers expressed very different opinions regarding reactions to and feelings about misplacement and the misplaced students.

In terms of dropping the English course, Master's teachers stated that students who were in difficulty and might possibly fail the course did not drop the course because they believed that the TOEIC test correctly evaluated them. Bachelor's teachers thought the misplaced students misjudged their failing situations in not considering dropping the course. The fifth finding was that the Bachelor's teachers focused on the student's final grade tally when deciding to grant a passing grade; however, the Master's teachers focused on the student's overall competency. The sixth finding, regarding the behaviour of the misplaced, was that Master's teachers described dealing with misplacement by focusing on how to help the individual misplaced student. The Bachelor's teachers focused on describing the misplaced student's negative behaviour. Lastly, the seventh finding, suggestions from teachers about misplacement, was that Master's teachers suggested that teachers need more help in coping with the misplaced, and Bachelor's teachers suggested that the replacement of the TOEIC as a placement tool would eliminate misplacement.

For all four findings, a difference in general outlook between groups of teachers was evident. Master's teachers believed that students did not drop the course when they found they were misplaced because they trusted the use of the TOEIC and its scores; consequently, teachers felt students thought they had been duly evaluated and the score result was to be trusted. Therefore, those misplaced students stayed in the course. After the students are in the classroom, and are found to be misplaced, the Master's teachers reported trying to focus on the individual's strongest skill areas and help that student. At the end of the course, Master's/Doctoral teachers do not concern themselves with the mark tally, but rather they judge the student's competency holistically and then determine whether that student will pass or fail; the few number of points the student has amassed can be overlooked. The sixth finding was that Master's teachers described focusing on the misplaced student as an individual who has been caught in a situation beyond his control. The Master's teachers
described misplacement as an unfortunate experience for students; therefore, they felt it was their job to attempt to help the student overcome the related difficulties. Lastly, to help teachers deal with misplacement, these teachers expressed a desire to have more help in dealing with those misplaced students. Overall, Master’s teachers described focusing on the individual students who needed their help which they gave willingly, and did not blame the student for his misplacement.

For the Bachelor’s teachers, the findings were quite different. In terms of the fourth finding, misplaced students not dropping the course, the Bachelor’s teachers tended to blame the misplaced students themselves, along with language requirements, for students not dropping the course, and the use of the TOEIC for creating the misplacement. These teachers believed that if the placement test were changed, most misplacement problems would disappear. Although these Bachelor’s teachers realize that it is the TOEIC and its scores which have caused the problem of misplacement, they believe that the misplaced student should realize the use of the TOEIC has resulted in misplacement. Consequently, they should realize their difficulty and drop the course. When the misplaced do not change course level, these teachers blame the course requirements as the reason why the students stay. Whereas the Master’s teachers focus on linguistic competency when granting passing grades, the Bachelor’s focus on the grade itself. If the misplaced student fails to have less than the required 60%, he fails the course; overall competency is not considered. A sixth finding was that the Bachelor’s teachers perceive the behaviour of misplaced students as largely negative. These teachers mentioned difficulties between the teacher and misplaced student (arguing about marks, and non-participation in class), but did not talk about the individual student and his linguistic difficulties. Lastly, when asked what could be changed about the current misplaced student’s situation, the Bachelor’s teachers focused on changing the placement test; their own behaviours toward the misplaced or the misplaced student’s needs did not enter the picture. The teachers expressed the opinion that a different placement test could change the fact of misplacement, but they did not mention their own role in changing the misplacement experience.
In conclusion, Bachelor’s and Master’s teachers agree on the findings of student proficiency, the belief that the use of the TOEIC does not do a good job placing students, and that most students move when it is suggested. However, they vary greatly in beliefs related to why the misplaced do not drop courses, when to grant passing grades, the misplaced student’s behaviour, and what could be changed to improve the misplacement situation. In the next section, those misplaced students along with a number of correctly placed students will be interviewed and the findings described.

5.11 Results and Interpretation of the Descriptive Data Analysis of Student Interviews

As the second portion of the study was qualitative, the interview data was descriptive in nature. Following the description of the demographic information of each student interviewee, each question of the interview will be described and interpreted.

5.11.1 Results and Interpretation for Topic One

Demographic Information of Student Interviewees

Students who had been identified as being misplaced by teachers through re-evaluation practices, moved a course level or refused to move, or had been in contact with the classroom teacher about placement, or had been misplaced by the TOEIC test, were solicited for student interviews. The sample of students who answered the student questionnaires was quite diverse in terms of: sex, age, first and second spoken languages, educational background in English, immersion and/or extended travel experiences, initial placement according to the TOEIC score, current placement and agreement with placement. That same diversity was sought in the interviewees so a theoretical sample of the misplaced and correctly placed students would be represented. However, there was no refusal of any student who agreed to be interviewed. Table XXIV shows the demographic information of students who were interviewed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Language</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Immersion in Quebec</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College English in Quebec</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary English</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initial Placement</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extended Travel</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Adviser</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Adviser</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third Adviser</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fourth Adviser</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fifth Adviser</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sixth Adviser</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seventh Adviser</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eighth Adviser</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ninth Adviser</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tenth Adviser</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in Table XXIV, the demographic information describes the students who were interviewed. They represented both sexes; all age ranges; first languages of French, Arabic and Tribal African; and second languages of English, French, German and Spanish. Students represented Bachelor’s and Master’s degree program levels, a variety of years of English instruction and contact with English as a second language at various locations, both in and outside classrooms. Results of their initial placement by the TOEIC scores, current course level and agreement about placement are diverse. However, there is one area which is not well represented. That area is course level, for there are no interviewees who initially placed into the lowest or the fourth course level. Although solicited, no interviewees from these levels agreed to be interviewed. Therefore, this sample of thirteen interviewees, except for course level, theoretically represented the students studying English at LS in Winter 2008.

It must be mentioned again that due to constraints by the ethics committee no student interviewee had completed a student questionnaire. Therefore, it cannot be certain that the experiences of the groups of students from the two semesters are similar.

In order to structure the interviews, the students were divided into one of two groups: the misplaced and the correctly placed. This grouping was done using the same three questions from Phase I (did the student consider himself misplaced, did the teacher, and had the student rejected a suggestion of a course level change). Both groups were then subdivided into: the average LS students, and the mature and foreign students. This division was done in order to keep the comments from interviewees with similar demographical situations together.
5.11.2 Results and Interpretation for Topic Two

Student Comments about Experience with the TOEIC

The thirteen interviewees were quite similar in their reactions to the topic of their TOEIC taking experience, and overall, the emotion was one of frustration.

Most interviewees, regardless of their placement using the TOEIC scores, commented on the length of the test, almost all said it was a long test and many talked about the fact that the test was high-stakes for them. For one correctly-placed, average LS student, the TOEIC test was extremely high-stakes. Not only did the score have repercussions at UU in terms of how many English courses she would need to take to complete her language requirement, it also had repercussions on another level. She had been accepted into a program at another university, but needed to complete her Bachelor’s degree first and if she scored too low on the TOEIC she would have to take a number of courses and risk losing her place at the other institution. Therefore, she tried to do her very best on the TOEIC to avoid taking many courses to complete her language requirement and delay her graduation date. In her case, she felt a great deal of stress in trying to score the highest she possibly could.

Another frustration, from the same group of correctly placed, average LS students, which had also been mentioned in questionnaire responses, was the speed of the test. One interviewee repeated three times that there was not enough time to work through the test. She made the statement that people who are quicker in making decisions and answering questions rather than slower, have the advantage and will, in turn, have better scores. This interviewee said that for people like herself, who normally take more time to read and decide on an answer regardless of the language or type of examination, they are disadvantaged by such a test. She felt that the lack of time for her to go slowly and work at her comfort level caused her to score lower than she should have. Only one correctly placed foreign student, who had taken the TOEIC twice, said the test was, for him, a good time to show off his knowledge. He said he was “cool” with the test and enjoyed taking it, but was conscious of
the others in the room who were working very hard. He said that he had time to look around the room, but he noticed most of the others did not.

For the one misplaced average LS student, not only did he not have time to look around he said that he did not have time to think during the exam because of the speed of the test. He said he put his head down at the beginning and did not look up until the end. When he finished, he had a headache and felt like the test had been a blur. Asked if he felt he could guess how well he had done on the test, he laughed and said he had absolutely no idea. Asked if he could attempt a guess at his test score or subsequent placement, he laughed again. Lastly, some misplaced average LS students spoke of leaving before the test was completed because they simply could not concentrate any longer. One spoke of being sick, another misplaced and mature student spoke of being distracted as she was leaving for vacation directly after the test.

For three other misplaced students, one who was a mature student, one who was a foreign student and one who was an average LS student, they all felt that they needed to learn English; it did not matter into what the level of course they scored or how many courses they need to take. They explained that they would do what was necessary to learn the language; even if their TOEIC scores placed them in the lowest level. They just felt that was where they would start their learning. They did not feel the weight of their program’s second language requirement.

For one misplaced, mature student, the part of the TOEIC where test-takers are asked to pair a picture to a description was very confusing. She mentioned that regardless of the language or the test situation, she found some tasks difficult to accomplish and her inability to perform in this situation was unrelated to language proficiency. Such ambiguity in the task and in certain questions, she felt, limited her ability to do well, in terms of scores, and hence she was frustrated with the TOEIC.
In summary, for most of the thirteen interviewees, the TOEIC was long; the teachers echoed this sentiment. Most interviewees mentioned this adjective, long, in particular. Many, in responding to this question regarding the TOEIC chose to focus on the limitations they encountered during the test: two mentioned personal conditions that limited their ability to perform and another described the ambiguity in test questions and two mentioned the speed of the test. These factors were mentioned, in both the student questionnaires and the interviews. The factors, which disturbed test-takers were similar; both groups of students mentioned personal reasons and the speed of the test, however neither showed significant correlation in the quantitative phase of the study. The multiple-choice format, which showed significant difference between the misplaced and the correctly placed group of respondents on the questionnaire, was not mentioned during the interviews. Lastly, the stress of the test was mentioned as a factor, which disturbed test-takers; however, it was not significantly different for the two groups of students. Such diversity in responses mirrors the findings from the questionnaire and cuts across the lines of the misplaced/correctly placed, and the average LS student and mature or foreign student. Many aspects of the TOEIC and its structure and content bother, for all types of reasons, all types of students.

5.11.2.1 Student Reactions to the TOEIC Scores

The TOEIC test scores are sent through the UU e-mail system and the message the student receives says that the scores from the TOEIC test show that proficiency of a certain course level has been acquired; therefore, the student should register in the next highest course level, one course level higher than the one they have been told that they have acquired. Both of those courses, the acquired and the one in which to register are listed; therefore, the message would say, for example, that the second course level has been acquired so registration of the third course level is necessary. After receiving this e-mail, the student then registers electronically for the required course.

In response to the above-mentioned method of communicating the TOEIC scores and the subsequent placement to students, two misplaced students, one who was an average LS
student and another who was a mature student, mentioned this e-mail message as confusing and the basis of some frustration. One interviewee commented on the fact that she was required to register for a level which she felt was too high, so she tried to register herself in a lower level, but the UU website blocked her from registering in any course other than that which was required. Another interviewee was confused with the message, unsure of what level had been acquired. She was also unsure that the course in which she needed to register was a higher level or a lower level course than what had been acquired. She was not sure what all this information meant.

Others felt the TOEIC score and subsequent placement was too low. Some felt disappointed in their score as it was too low to fulfill their program’s language requirement and they would be required to take a number of courses. One correctly placed average language school student took a version of the institutional TOEIC on three different occasions at UU. She did this in the hope she could avoid taking a course by scoring into a course level higher than her language requirement. Her hope of this happening was further augmented by the fact that she did the test three times and had scores, which were different enough to earn her a place in three different course levels. Her first test score placed her in the third course level, which meant she would have to do three courses to fulfill her requirement (completion of the fifth course level) so she tried again. The second time, her score placed her into the second course level. As she was extremely disappointed, she tried a third time and scored into the fifth course level. With this score, she only needed to take one course to have her requirement so she settled, but still maintained she should have scored higher; although, she said that the course she took was satisfactory for her level. For this interviewee, the score itself was not important, it was only where the TOEIC score placed her, in regards to her language requirement, that was important. In general, the score did not interest her, but the course level and how many courses she would need to complete her requirement did.

All the student interviewees have an initial reaction to the course level they are required to take after placement using the TOEIC scores. It is not really the score, for only
one interviewee (a correctly-placed foreign student) could state his actual scores (the only student who enjoyed taking the TOEIC); it is the name of the course that confounds many. For some correctly placed foreign students, the words Basic, Intermediate or Advanced, used to describe the courses, raised issues. For example, they felt that they were better than Basic or were not proficient enough to be called Advanced. Teachers mentioned the difficulty students have with the course titles and said if they could talk to the student and explain those course titles, then the students would feel more at ease with the placement. For others, it is the course level in relation to their program’s language requirement, which causes consternation. These interviewees see the time; money; and the number of courses which are needed to complete the requirements; therefore, they are unhappy. The only interviewees who seemed happy with where the TOEIC score placed them were in the two highest English course levels. For these three interviewees, two who were correctly placed and the one misplaced student who changed to a higher level course; they were taking English courses because they wished to and not for particular course requirements.

In terms of the misplaced students, most of them felt surprised, but happy, to be placed so high by their TOEIC score. One mature student even mentioned being sick during the test and wondered how she would have done had she been feeling well! She did however feel panicked about scoring so high. Two others, a mature student and an average LS student, felt their scores and placement were too high, but did not really know how the English classroom would be structured so they hesitated in making a strong judgement about their placement prior to their first class.

For the majority of students, whether misplaced or correctly placed, the TOEIC score in itself is not a point that the students raised. However, the use of the test score, for placement in a particular course level, is severely questioned. First, the transmission of the message, without any explanation of how that score was calculated or what proficiency in what skill areas were evaluated, was contentious. Secondly, the correlation between the TOEIC score, proficiency, and subsequent course level was mentioned by the students as unclear and unexplained. Nowhere is the student given a justification for his placement in a
particular course. Without explicit communication between the language school in terms of discussing the placement process and result, both groups of students, the misplaced and the correctly placed, are left feeling confused and somewhat frustrated. Frustration seems to be lessened if the student is not concerned with level requirements or if he scores into the higher levels, but it is exacerbated if the opposite is true.

After answering the question about their reaction to placement using their TOEIC scores, the misplaced students were asked if they, or their teacher, on the first day of classes suggested moving and changing level.

5.11.3 Results and Interpretation for Topic Three

Student Comments about Refusal to Move

At the beginning of every session at LS, students have the opportunity to see if their initial reaction to their placement using the TOEIC scores is maintained into the class. In general, these mostly misplaced student interviewees felt uncertain and unsure about their place in course level. During the first course, certain students were convinced that their scores were inflated, not reflecting their real ability in English; therefore, they felt weak for the course level. They then spoke to the teacher who either agreed or disagreed with the perceived misplacement.

In most cases, the misplaced students, who approached the teacher, wanted to move down, one wanted to move up, and it was the teacher who usually persuaded them to continue the level in which they were placed by their TOEIC score.

For some misplaced students, the reasons for staying in the initial course were due to the abilities that the teacher identified during the re-evaluation process. Based on this ability to either write or speak at a high level, the teacher suggested they not change course level. For others, although they felt weak for the level, they were considered too strong for a lower
course level. One misplaced, a mature student, spoke of being stuck between levels, with no clear indication of where she fit best. For others, the teacher explained it would be better to stay in the course and do the harder course work rather than to go down and do similar work for completion of a lower course level. The teacher explained to the student that for a little more work, a higher course level could be acquired. This is a convincing argument for those who need to fulfill program requirements, but not for a student who is unconcerned about requirements. In one case, the teacher wanted to move the misplaced, mature student up a level, as the current course level did not complete the level requirement for the student, and the higher level did, so he readily agreed.

In all these cases, these misplaced students listened to the teacher. The reasons they cited were that the teacher knew the particular level and the required proficiency. The misplaced foreign students listened to the teacher because they had recently arrived and did not feel comfortable questioning the teacher or the placement using the TOEIC scores. For others, although they felt that they had not been correctly evaluated through the placement process using the TOEIC scores, when they got in the class, they felt comfortable with the other students. As the teacher did not talk to them directly, they did not talk to the teacher and they continued in the course. However, one misplaced foreign student said she still believed throughout the course, that she was in the wrong level.

It would appear that the teacher plays a crucial role in assuring the appropriateness of student placement using the TOEIC scores. Because all students receive their TOEIC scores and the course level information through their e-mail account, there is no human contact with anyone at the language school. The students must simply accept the information and follow the registration directions, for there is no one with which to discuss, or question, the results of the placement testing process. They must keep their uncertainty to themselves, until they actually arrive at the first course and meet the teacher.

After the first class, if the class corresponds to the student’s perceived proficiency level, he most likely does not speak to the teacher about changing level and if the teacher
does not identify the student as being misplaced, all is fine. After the first class, if a student is still uncertain and speaks to the teacher about moving, and the teacher is able to reassure him that his level is correct, all is fine. In both cases, the student believes in the validity of the use of the TOEIC for placement purposes if the teacher confirms it.

On the other hand, during the first course, certain students were convinced that their score correctly reflected their ability, although they may have originally questioned it. If the teacher identified the student as needing to change level, sometimes the student did not agree or feel he was misplaced.

This was the case for one misplaced, average LS student who learned that the teacher suggested a move down to a lower course level. In his interview, he was very vocal about the fact that he had taken the TOEIC, whose scores had been used to place him in a particular course level; and in his opinion the placement using his TOEIC score was correct. He even remembered the e-mail which said he had attained the level below, so when the teacher wanted to move him down to that level he responded that he had already acquired it. He believed that the TOEIC score had determined that his level requirement (the fifth course level) had been met or acquired and his current course, in which he had registered (the sixth course level) was the only option. As he was taking the course by choice, he had no desire to move down and repeat material, which he felt he had already acquired. The interviewee was actually a little incensed that the teacher, in re-evaluating and speaking to him about moving down a level, assumed more knowledge in placing students than the TOEIC score. He asked why the TOEIC test was required if the teacher was more efficient in evaluating. In these cases, the teacher is in a particularly difficult position in trying to convince the student that the use of the TOEIC score is not believed to result in correction placement.

One other misplaced mature student did not feel comfortable with the initial placement by his TOEIC scores, nor the decision of the teacher regarding the refusal of a move down to a lower level. After the first class, the student spoke to the teacher about the possibility of moving down. The teacher tried to convince her that she was in the proper
level and was able to stay and do the required work to pass the course. She listened, returned the second week of classes, but again at the end of the course she spoke to the teacher about moving down. This time, she finally told the teacher she wanted to move regardless of his advice; it was then she was told it was too late to move. It was also too late for her to choose another course to replace the dropped English course. Therefore, as she said in the interview, she was “prise” (stuck). She had no choice but to stay in the course.

In summary, the TOEIC score is not always readily accepted as accurately representing student proficiency. As students have no explanation as to how the TOEIC score correlates to the course structure at LS, and there is no contact person to which they can ask questions, they wait until the first class to verify their placement with the teacher. This puts the teacher in the position of either supporting the TOEIC score and encouraging the student to remain in the course or refuting the test result and convincing the student that the teacher knows better. Regardless of the pressure on the teacher to support or refute the TOEIC score, the student himself must live with the consequences.

5.11.4 Results and Interpretation for Topic Four

Student Comments of Abilities in Skill Areas

For many of the mature students, reading was what they considered their best ability. Two students were currently in the work force, full-time, or had just left a job to return to school as mature students. For these students, they read a great deal in their jobs and/or for pleasure. Although they considered reading their strongest skill, one commented on the fact that after the course, she realized she had misunderstood a large part of what she read before the course. This supports the findings from the teacher interviewees, who said reading was the students’ best skill, not meaning that the students were necessarily good at reading. Another average LS student mentioned having to read in her field of study as most documents were in English. In addition, many of her courses were distance-learning courses, so there were no classmates to help her. She said reading was the activity she did most often in English, so it was her strongest.
For another group of interviewees, listening was their best skill. This was a very interesting point for all those who reported that they listened well had had exposure to English in a natural setting. Two students, an average LS student and a foreign student, had been on immersion programs, one on a government program for six weeks and another in the United Kingdom for six months. Three other average LS students had gone to Western Canada to work and travel during summers. Another average language school student had worked in the United States for one and a half years. All had had a vast amount of exposure to native English speakers and felt that their listening was their greatest strength. The students who had studied while being in the English environment were not misplaced; however, those students who had only travelled or worked were misplaced. After such exposure through immersion or work and travel, some interviewees also mentioned that they listened to music or watched television, sometimes exclusively in English because the original English version of the media was more interesting. No one who had had only classroom exposure to English stated that listening was their best skill, but students with exposure outside of formal instruction did.

No interviewees stated that writing or speaking were strengths, they were always the weaker skill areas. Speaking was perceived as the weakest area, especially for the foreign students. All the students who had arrived in Canada as foreign students at UU said that they had had little or no exposure to English in their own countries. Their school systems, whether in northern or western Africa or the Caribbean focused on writing and grammar with very little or no emphasis on speaking. On the other hand, students who had studied within the province mentioned the lack of opportunity to speak English and a certain level of shyness associated with speaking the second language. One mature student said she rarely spoke English except on trips, even when in Western Canada, the United States, or Europe, because she stayed with her travelling group and spoke French. Another average LS student said that the level of English required on a trip is limited to: “I want Number 5, please!”
Some interviewees stated that writing was their weakest skill area, although, the majority found it was neither a weakness nor strength. Students who had studied both inside and outside Quebec found their writing skills to be good; because they had focused on this in their prior English courses. Two foreign students stated that writing was a skill that allowed them time to look in the dictionary and grammar books and a chance to think about their message, which resulted in a good product. Both groups of students also mentioned that grammar explanation helped to improve writing, so they did not feel this skill area was too weak.

Of the few students that said that writing was their weakest skill, one average language school student discussed the fact that she had little opportunity to write in English other than in a classroom situation. Another mentioned the frustration of knowing that the way she wrote was not the way a real English speaker would. It was not that the skill was so weak; it just was just not at the level she wanted it to be. It must be noted that these interviewees, who believed their writing was their weakest skill, were at the highest course levels and were perhaps comparing themselves to native speakers’ ability to write.

The TOEIC formally evaluates reading and listening, and extrapolates ability from these two receptive skills to the productive skills of speaking and writing. ETS assumes that the proficiency levels measured on the TOEIC in the receptive skill area corresponds to ability in the productive skill areas. This extrapolation may be a valid procedure when exposure and ability to English has been equal across the four skill areas, but not when the ability in skill areas is unbalanced. The average LS student, who has had English at all three provincial educational institutions, before university, has had exposure to four skills English courses. Therefore, the average language school student may have fairly balanced proficiency across levels and so the TOEIC does not greatly over or under represent his abilities. However, if the average LS student reads a great deal for work or studies, or has lived and travelled in English locations without formal instruction at the same time, those skill areas may no longer be in line with his ability in the other skill areas. For foreign
students who have had English exposure that focused on the written aspects of the language, with little emphasis on speaking or listening, his ability in the skill areas may not be equal.

When the TOEIC score is used for placement purposes, imbalance between the four skill areas may result in student misplacement.

5.11.5 Results and Interpretation for Topic Five
Student’s Willingness to Work and Refusal to Drop the Course

The majority of those students who were considered misplaced were told by the teacher to work harder, to come and get help or to push themselves. In the face of such general advice, what was their reaction? Many of the interviewees worked extremely hard, much harder than for a similar course in another subject area. Two mature students actually gave up other courses to focus more on English, and one of them also found a conversation partner to practice her weakest skill, speaking. Three of the misplaced students mentioned working between ten to fifteen hours a week for a course that normally requires between three to six hours. These hours that they spent covered only what the teacher required, they did not include other activities such as studying for tests, or time spent with speaking partners or English activities (watching television or listening to the radio). The majority of the work was also grammar-focused. Another misplaced average LS student spoke of doing all the homework and then writing extra texts and still finding time to see the teacher on a weekly basis for an hour at a time. It would seem that a great deal of motivation accompanied the misplaced students, and a great many hours of work.

Two other misplaced average LS students said they did nothing more than the necessary work because of the workload they had in other courses. Even if they had wanted to do more, they reported being constrained by time. One part-time student and another full-time student said they needed extra help and would have appreciated it, but unfortunately, they did not have the time to get that extra help. Another misplaced foreign student candidly
reported that he was lazy and was willing to do only the minimum. He put his time in other areas, and he said he could live with whatever mark he received.

One misplaced average LS student stood out amongst the others for his position. He was a misplaced person to whom it was suggested that he move down a level, but he refused. Unlike many others, he refused to do more work in order to pass the course. He said he refused to work harder for one course than any other. Because a normal course requires a maximum of six hours, he said he would not do more. Further, he said that if he were going to work more than the normal amount in a course, it would be for a course in his program, not for an option course like English. He also stated that if he had decided to work more than the requisite six hours in one of his program courses he would increase his mark dramatically; however, in English he felt that a maximum of work would only bring a minimum of results; therefore, he was not interested in the extra work. He also mentioned that the results of the TOEIC placed him in a particular course level which inferred that he had acquired the proficiency required by the previous course level. Therefore, he believed that with the required six hours a week of work, he should pass the course.

For the misplaced students, responses to the question of willingness to work were varied. Some believed they needed to work harder and they did. They worked unbelievably hard. Others did what was required and accepted the results. It appears willingness to work is a personal choice; it is not solely a consequence of misplacement.

5.11.6 Results and Interpretation for Topic Six

Student Comments on the Granting of Passing Grades

When asked if a student who did not have 60% should be given a passing grade all students were quick to distinguish between a student with 58-59%, and a student with 50-58%. For the latter, there was no discussion, all said no. For the 58-59% there was a bit of difference between respondents. When the misplaced student does not attain 60%, the average LS students said any of a number of factors could influence the decision. Depending
on the interviewee, the amount of progress or the quantity of work or the getting extra help could all influence the teacher. It was really the fact that the student showed his willingness to work that influenced the students' responses and they stated that that particular student should be rewarded for this hard work. Two students from this group raised the idea that a student should be able to pass a course with the accomplishment of the necessary work. Therefore, if the student did the work, there should not be a failure. Another said that if failure is due to misplacement, it is not the fault of the misplaced student, who should not be there; consequently, that student should not fail.

However, the mature students had quite different opinions. Only one mature student said no, he could not really imagine why a passing grade, unattained by the student, would ever be granted. Other mature students mentioned that whether the passing grade is granted or not, the student does not have the competency required. This lack of competency will follow the student and so, by granting the grade, another problem is created. One mature student mentioned that when UU gives a grade to a student, it indicates a certain level of competency, if the mark is not equivalent to the student’s ability then that inconsistency is carried forward, often into the workplace.

In general, age was the factor, which split the students' opinion on the question of granting a passing grade to a student. The mature students, whether misplaced or correctly placed, considered the repercussions of such actions on the students and on the future of the labour force. The average language school student focused on the misplacement injustice and granting a passing grade was seen as somehow balancing the score on that injustice.

5.11.7 Results and Interpretation for Topic Seven

Student Description of Misplacement

It is one thing for a student to be identified as misplaced, but another to be one of those misplaced students, who feels weaker than the average in the class, but must go to the course every week all the same. When asked how the misplaced felt about their situation,
one answered that it felt miserable. Another replied it was very stressful. One misplaced
mature student said she never felt happy in the course, and she often wanted to leave the
class crying with frustration. She was asked if it got better as the course progressed. She
replied that it never did. She said she felt bad on the first day of class and equally bad on the
last day. What was especially hard for her was to see how others did practically nothing and
yet scored well on evaluations in the course. For other average LS students, the feeling of
being misplaced got better as the session progressed. Little by little, one realized she was not
as weak as she originally thought and then gained confidence. For another student being
misplaced was seen as a challenge. She rose to the occasion and loved learning, however,
she worried about her ability to do the next level, as did three other misplaced mature and
average LS students.

For some of the correctly placed, they said that they really felt strong in the class and
gained confidence where they once were uncertain about their ability. One correctly placed
foreign student said she was no longer afraid to speak, another average LS student said she
was ready to study at an English-speaking university. These students also had other higher
level courses to complete, but felt they were ready to go forward.

When asked whether they would pass or fail the course, the correctly placed answered
quickly and confidently. They were proud to say they were anticipating not only passing
grades, but many expected superior grades. The misplaced however, were not so quick to
answer. Almost half of the misplaced said that they would pass, but they were disappointed
with their marks and worried about the mark’s effect on their grade point average. One
foreign student said that without a C, the course would not count and he was concerned
about that aspect. The other half of the misplaced group was worried about getting a passing
grade. When asked what they were particularly concerned about, they answered that they
had had borderline marks all semester and expressed worry about their final examinations.
When pressed, they were not able to speculate if they would receive a passing or a failing
grade.
5.11.8 Results and Interpretation for Topic Eight

Student Suggested Solutions to Misplacement

Having not experienced misplacement, the correctly placed group of interviewees could not offer much in the way of suggestions to help the misplaced. They simply said that the misplaced students should work harder, get help or ask to be moved down to a lower level.

However, the misplaced had some interesting ideas. Many mentioned working in small groups as a factor that played a role with these students. One mature student commented that being placed with the stronger students in small groups and being forced to work with them side-by-side, week-after-week was hard. In her class, groups were formed once and there was no change for several weeks. Another average LS student said that she found working in small groups, with the group changing weekly, allowed her to see all the other students and to judge her proficiency in relation to the class. She had originally thought that she alone was the only weak student in the class, but by working in groups she saw that others were also weak. Over the weeks, and through group work, she grew to know everyone’s weaknesses, which made her feel better.

Another misplaced mature student suggested that a pre-course where students could learn about the course structure at LS, course level expectations, and course requirements before actually arriving at the first course would be useful. She also said that any re-evaluation could be carried out at this point rather than in the first class and would save precious class time. She would have appreciated learning about her language proficiency in terms of the TOEIC score, and the description of the course level in connection with the TOEIC score.

One misplaced average language school student described her teacher who offered extra assignments to help the weaker students. The work was evaluated and comments were
given, but no extra credit or bonus points were awarded. She appreciated this chance to improve her writing and suggested that it may help other misplaced students.

The suggestions raised by the interviewees, all of whom were considered misplaced, were insightful, especially as they were not given a lot of time to mull over their suggestions. Once again, there is a focus on the lack of communication between the TOEIC test results, the course levels, and the students at LS.

5.11.9 Results and Interpretation for Topic Nine

Students' Final Comments

When asked to comment on anything they wished, the majority, especially the interviewees who had been correctly placed, had nothing to add. However, the misplaced thanked the researcher for being interested in their personal experience with English courses at LS. A misplaced average language school student thanked the researcher for studying the use of the TOEIC scores for placement purposes. He went on to say that there were discrepancies between the structure and content of the TOEIC compared to the structure and content of the English classroom at LS.

5.11.10 Interpretation of the Major Findings from Student Interviews

From the student interviews, seven major findings emerged. The first involved the student’s experience with taking the TOEIC. Overall, for the majority of interviewees, TOEIC test-taking is not comfortable or easy. Students mentioned the speed of the test, the stress associated with a high stakes examination, and its length as factors they had to manage during testing. In addition, they found that having to concentrate intently for two hours in a second language examination situation daunting. In terms of communication about their test scores, they found the information inadequate and sometimes confusing.
Thus, it can be assumed that such discomfort during the sitting of a test would be reflected in lower test scores. In a business context, where performance is highly prized and competition fierce, an employer may want to know what employees can do in their second language under such conditions and therefore this format of test may be in order. However, placement testing wishes to determine what the test-taker does not know, from what he does, and needs to learn next. Placement testing does not typically interest itself with what the test-taker can manage to do under pressure. Therefore, it would seem that the TOEIC, a proficiency test, does not allow the students to perform at their best in the best of conditions, in order to demonstrate acquired knowledge, but rather allows students to demonstrate their best under less than ideal conditions.

The second major finding of the interviews was that students refuse to move when it is suggested, due to uncertainty of where they should put their trust. Students at the onset trust that the TOEIC correctly measures their English language proficiency and is used correctly to place them in an appropriate course level. When they arrive at the first class and a teacher, after a few hours, suggests a course level change, many students are then torn, do they believe in the TOEIC and its scores or the teacher’s re-evaluation? It is a battle which sometimes the teacher wins and sometimes the TOEIC wins; however, the student must live with the consequences of his decision.

The third major finding showed differences between: 1) the typical LS student, 2) a foreign student and 3) a typical LS student who have travelled, or worked in an English environment. The average LS student, who has had English at all three levels of provincial educational institutions, before university, with perhaps an immersion experience, has had exposure to four-skill English courses. Therefore, the average language school student may have fairly balanced proficiency across levels and so the TOEIC does not over or under represent his abilities. For foreign students who have had English exposure, which has focused on the written aspects of the language, with little emphasis on speaking or listening, his ability in skill areas may not be equal. The average LS student who, has lived or travelled in English locations without formal instruction at the same time, may no longer
have skill areas which are in line with his ability in the other skill areas. The TOEIC extrapolation procedure assumes that the proficiency found in the receptive skills reflects ability in the productive skill areas. This extrapolation may be a valid procedure when exposure and ability to English has been equal across the four skill areas, but not when the ability in skill areas is unbalanced.

The fourth and fifth findings relate to the reactions of students to being identified as misplaced. Many of the misplaced students, worked extremely hard to try to pass the course, but other misplaced students did only what was required by the teacher. They refused to do more. However, regardless of the final grade, most students felt that the amount of work they accomplished should translate into a passing grade from the teacher. For the average language school student who focused on their misplacement, granting a passing grade was seen as somehow balancing the score on that injustice. Nevertheless, for mature students, whether misplaced or correctly placed, they considered the repercussions of such actions on the students and the labour market. They therefore disagreed with the practice of granting passing grades. Once again, there is evidence that there is a struggle between the teacher and the student. The students have said that they have been badly treated by the testing and placing procedures at LS. As a result, whether they work hard or not, all interviewees except the mature students said that the misplaced deserved special treatment in the form of the teacher granting a passing grade even if they did not obtain the required 60%.

The last two findings, the sixth and seventh, involve the typically negative experience of misplacement and how it could be lessened. The reaction to misplacement was very individual, with some students describing it as embarrassing, others frustrating, some challenging, and others as a personal learning experience. There was no uniform reaction. However, the lack of communication between LS and its students was mentioned by a number of students as a problem area. Students suggested that there should be more communication, in particular more explanation about the TOEIC test scores and their use as a placement tool at LS to the student. They also suggested that there needs to be more communication about the structure and content of the various course levels at LS and how
they relate to the TOEIC and the TOEIC scores. Students explained that more communication would reduce confusion about the TOEIC test scores, subsequent placement, and course levels.

5.12 Major Findings for Teachers and Students from Questionnaire and Interview Phases

In the following section of the study, a summary of the major findings of the two phases of the study for both teachers and students will be recalled. This summary will focus first on the teacher findings (from the two phases of the study) and then on the student findings (from the two phases of the study).

5.12.1 Major Findings for Teachers from Questionnaires and Interviews

The first finding was that there was significant difference and a strong strength of association between the group of teachers and the number of times they had given the second course level. Whereas a larger number of the less experienced teachers of this sample had had some experience with this level, fewer of the more experienced group of teachers had given the course, but they had given it more times. Three interviewees, two at the Bachelor’s level and one at the Master’s, had a great amount of teaching experience at this level.

Secondly, in general teachers’ responses in the questionnaires showed little knowledge of the structure or content of the TOEIC; also the TOEIC knowledge showed no significant difference between groups of teachers according to teaching experience. However, the teachers who were interviewed were fairly knowledgeable of the perceived inadequacies of the TOEIC and very comfortable giving their opinion about those inadequacies. Teacher interviewees believed that using TOEIC scores to place students at LS resulted in misplacement and non-homogeneous groups.
A third finding was the amount of similarity between groups of teachers in their re-evaluation processes, and the variation in the number and direction of suggested moves; however, no significant difference between groups of more or less experienced teachers was found, therefore, the re-evaluation process was not raised during interviews.

Fourthly, questionnaires showed that both groups of teachers had little knowledge of the students' departmental language requirements. In interviews, most teachers stated that students would change course level when it was suggested to them. Nevertheless, if they refused, the questionnaire and interview responses showed significant difference and great strength of association between the less and more experienced teachers in the belief that a language requirement is the reason students refuse to move. However, some teachers, from interviews, reported that the mature or foreign student would move, even if the course level change resulted in an increase in the number of courses needed to complete language requirements.

Fifthly, all teachers in both questionnaires and interviews responded that the students' receptive abilities are superior to their productive. In particular, reading skills are the students' strongest. Those same teachers said that the students' weakest skill was speaking, especially for the foreign students. If students required extra help in any skill area, teachers said it would be in the productive skill areas. In fact, teachers, in questionnaires, reported that the misplaced student's need for outside help differed significantly in the skill area of listening for two course level groupings. The less experienced teachers believed the third and fourth course levels and the fifth and sixth course levels of students needed extra help in listening, whereas the more experienced teachers did not. This finding did not show strength of association.

In teacher interviews, although not a part of the questionnaire, there was a difference in opinion between teachers with different educational levels and their opinions about students dropping the English course. Master's teachers stated that students who were in difficulty, and might possibly fail the course, did not drop the course because they trusted
the TOEIC as a test and trusted its scores. Bachelor’s teachers thought the misplaced students misjudged their own failing situations in not considering dropping the course.

Seventh, when students do not drop the course but do not pass the course, teachers, in questionnaires, stated that a student’s overall ability was the first factor to be used in making the pass/fail decision. However, there was no significance difference between the less and more experienced teachers for this factor. In interviews, Bachelor’s teachers focused on the student’s final grade tally when deciding to grant a passing grade; however, the Master’s teachers focused on the student’s competency or overall ability.

The eighth finding, in both questionnaires and interviews, was that most teachers deemed misplacement as a negative experience for both teachers and students. In interviews, Master’s teachers described dealing with misplacement by focusing on how to help the individual misplaced student who, in their opinion, had been caught in a bad situation (misplacement) through no fault of their own. On the other hand, the Bachelor’s teachers focused on describing the misplaced student’s negative behaviour. These teachers believed it would not have occurred had the student realized his situation and dropped the course. Misplacement was negative for all teachers. In interviews, Master’s teachers suggested that teachers need more help in coping with the misplaced, and Bachelor’s teachers suggested that the replacement of the TOEIC would eliminate misplacement.

Lastly, because of the findings related to factors used by teachers when granting passing grades and the behaviour of the misplaced, the number of student failures per teacher was found to be significantly different between teachers with a Bachelor’s degree and those with a Master’s or Doctoral degree. Bachelor’s teachers failed significantly more students than the Master’s and Doctoral teachers. When making pass/fail decisions Bachelor’s teachers focused on the grade itself, rather than linguistic competency and they felt that misplacement could be partially blamed on the student. For Master’s and Doctoral teachers, they focused on overall linguistic competency and believed misplacement was not the student’s fault, but rather a systemic reality.
5.12.2 Major Findings for Students from Questionnaires and Interviews

There are three main headings under which the major findings from the student questionnaire and interviews fall. They are: description of the misplaced, experience with the TOEIC, and issues with misplacement. Under each heading, there are a number of individual findings.

Regarding the description of the misplaced, the first finding was that the misplaced group of students differed significantly from the correctly placed group in terms of age, with the misplaced students being older. A second finding was that the misplaced group of students also had a first language other than French and a second language other than English. On both of these points, the misplaced and the correctly placed groups differed significantly. Another significant finding was that previous English as a second language education at the elementary, secondary and college level differed between the misplaced and the correctly placed groups. Lastly, two significant findings from the analysis of multiple regression found that the misplaced group had greater chances of not having had college English education and being placed by their TOEIC scores in the two lowest levels followed by the fifth and sixth course levels.

In interviews, the misplaced were found to be 1) foreign students or 2) typical LS students who have travelled, or worked in an English environment. For foreign students who have had English exposure, which has focused on the written aspects of the language, with little emphasis on speaking or listening, ability in skill areas may not be equal. Secondly, the average LS student who has lived or travelled in English locations without formal instruction at the same time may no longer have balanced skill areas. As the TOEIC scores assume that that the proficiency found in the receptive skills reflects the same level of ability in the productive skills, this may not be a valid procedure when exposure to and ability in English have not been equal across the four skill areas.
In questionnaires, in terms of strengths and weaknesses in skill areas, students indicated strength in receptive skills and weakness in productive areas. This was the same for all four combined course levels; therefore, there was no difference between groups of students. In interviews, reading was considered the best ability for students with speaking or writing being the areas of greatest weakness. In interviews, listening was the area that showed the most diversity. Students who had exposure to the English language outside of formal instruction tended to have listening skills that were superior to their ability in the other skill areas.

In terms of the second group of findings, experience with the TOEIC; in general, students found that taking the TOEIC was not comfortable or easy. In addition, they found that having to concentrate intently for two hours in a second language examination situation very difficult. In terms of communication about their test scores from LS, they found the information inadequate and sometimes confusing. In questionnaires, students indicated that the multiple-choice format of the test was bothersome. This factor was found to be significantly different between the misplaced and the correctly placed group of respondents. However, there was only weak strength of association between variables. In interviews this factor was not mentioned at all. However, students did mention the speed of the test, stress associated with a high stakes examination and test length as factors they had to manage during testing.

The third finding has to do with misplacement. The first finding from questionnaires was that students refuse to move after a suggestion by the classroom teacher due to a desire to stay in the course or uncertainty about the suggested course level. In interviews, students stated they stayed due to uncertainty of where they should put their trust. Many students described being torn between believing the test and its score or the teacher’s opinion about their abilities. No student mentioned course requirements as a reason they stayed.

The second and third findings relate to the reactions of students to being misplaced. In questionnaires and interviews, many of the misplaced students described working extremely
hard to try to pass the course. Other misplaced students did only what was required and did not try to do more. However, regardless of the final grade, most students felt that the amount of work they accomplished should translate into a passing grade from the teacher. For mature students, whether misplaced or correctly placed, they considered the repercussions of passing students without the necessary proficiency level and disagreed with the practice for any reason.

The last two findings, the fourth and fifth, involve the typically negative experience of misplacement and how it could be lessened. The reaction to misplacement was very individual, with some students describing it as embarrassing, others frustrating, some challenging, and others as a personal learning experience. There was no uniform reaction to misplacement; however, in interviews, a number of students stated that misplacement could be lessened through more communication about the evaluation system and placement practices, which would reduce confusion about the TOEIC test scores, placement, and course levels.

5.12.3 Major Findings Related to the Impact of the TOEIC on Teachers and Students

From the questionnaire and interviews from teachers and students, the major findings related to topics were: demographic background, TOEIC experience and knowledge, re-evaluation practices and consequences, type of extra help for the misplaced, refusal to drop the course by the misplaced, student’s willingness to work, experience of misplacement, and course failure. Although all findings were important and worthy of investigation, the study will now focus only on the major findings, which relate to the concept of the impact of TOEIC use on teachers and students.

The first significant consequence related to the impact of using TOEIC for placement purposes on teachers and students is the existence of misplacement. From the teacher interviews, it was learned that both groups of teachers, those with a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree, blamed misplacement on the use of the TOEIC at LS. From the student’s
questionnaire, inferential findings described the misplaced. He or she is typically a foreign or mature student, who does not have French as a first language or English as a second, did not complete college level English courses and has been initially placed into either one of the two lowest course levels. In interviews, teachers also were able to identify the misplaced students as typically being foreign or having had extended exposure to English outside of a formal educational setting. In both cases, those students were found to have unbalanced ability in the four skill areas. As the result of unequal exposure to those skills in their second language, the use of their TOEIC scores for placement purposes resulted in misplacement.

Once a student has been identified as misplaced, there are a number of events which naturally follow. First, the teacher tries to identify the student who is considered misplaced by a re-evaluation process. The teacher comes to the student and offers a course level change, sometimes to a higher course level, more often to a lower course level. The misplaced student must either decide to believe in the use of TOEIC score for placement purposes (its methods of using the typically stronger receptive skills to judge ability in the weaker productive skills) and refuse the move or believe in the teacher and the teacher’s re-evaluation practices and accept the move. With either decision, the misplaced student must make a decision in a very short period of time for it quickly becomes too late to change level. Therefore, the second consequence of the impact of misplacement is the necessity for the misplaced student to decide to believe in the use of the TOEIC scores or the results of re-evaluation carried out by the teacher.

According to students, if the student refuses to change course level and instead decides to stay in the initial course level it is because he fears that the suggested course level will not be appropriate. Alternatively, he may want to stay at the initial course level where he was placed. However, teachers believe that the misplaced student stays in the initial course because of departmental language requirements.

The differing opinion as to why the misplaced stay in course levels after the suggestion of a move creates the third consequence related to misplacement which is the
failing situation. This consequence involves both the teachers and the student. The two
groups of teachers diverged in their opinions as to why the misplaced do not react to their
failing situation by dropping the course. The Bachelor’s group of teachers thought the
students stayed because they did not judge the situation correctly. However, the Master’s
teachers said students do not drop the course because they believe in the placement system.

Lastly, the third consequence on teachers and students related to misplacement is the
decision that must be made about passing or failing the misplaced student. It was found that
teachers with a Master’s degree had significantly fewer failures than teachers with a
Bachelor’s degree. Master’s teachers in the interview phase of the study tended to consider
misplacement as a systemic problem with the student perceived as the unwilling victim.
They considered overall ability in judging whether to grant a passing grade to a misplaced
student. Bachelor’s level teachers, in the interviews, tended to describe misplacement as an
unfortunate situation in which the individual misplaced student could have possibly played a
more active role with a different final outcome. These teachers focused on the mark tally, no
other factors were used to make the pass/fail decisions.

However, the typical misplaced LS student felt that they should be given a passing
grade if they progressed or had the required overall ability. In contrast, the mature misplaced
students worried about the future consequences of such practices.

In summary, the practice of using the TOEIC scores to place students in English
courses at LS has been found to have impact on the stakeholders, who are teachers and
students. The major impact is identified as student misplacement from which three
consequences derive. They are: the dilemma of the misplaced student to change or not
change course level, the possible failing situation of the misplaced, and lastly, the pass or
fail situation about which teachers must make decisions.
CHAPTER VI DISCUSSION

In the following chapter, the results of the study are discussed with reference to previous related studies and within the Model of Test Usefulness (Bachman and Palmer, 1996). The focus of the study was the impact (area, extent and direction) of the use of the TOEIC as a placement test at LS. However, findings that related to other qualities of test usefulness were identified and could not be ignored for each of its six qualities must be considered with equal importance, with no single quality over-riding another. For that reason, the six qualities of test usefulness and the related evidence are included in this discussion section.

6.1 Evidence of the Existence of the Six Qualities of Test Usefulness

In the following discussion, each quality of test usefulness, reliability, construct validity, authenticity, interactiveness, practicality, and impact will be addressed. Each quality will be examined individually while focusing on the findings of this particular research study in the light of previous findings of related research studies in the aim of gathering evidence to support the use of the institutional TOEIC as a placement tool at LS.

6.1.1 The Test Usefulness Quality of Reliability

The first quality of test usefulness to be examined is reliability. This quality is concerned with the ability of test-takers to score similarly on different versions of tests, during different testing sessions. Due to features of the TOEIC such as: a multiple-choice format, electronic scoring, and a procedure to even out differences between test versions; the institutional version of TOEIC is reported to have high reliability. There have been a small number of studies on TOEIC reliability and the majority have been produced by ETS, the producer of TOEIC. Some studies have been reviews of TOEIC reliability and a few of these have been carried out with independent data.
ETS itself states that the reliability of this version of the TOEIC is high. Most reviews of the TOEIC which used data produced by ETS (Chapman, 2004) agree; such as Moritoshi (2001) who found that the TOEIC’s reliability is reported to be at an acceptable level. It appears from this limited research that the TOEIC is reliable in terms of its scores being consistent from testing situation to testing situation.

In previously discussed research, which considered reliability across testing situations, the multiple-choice format of the test is said to be partially responsible for its high reliability. In investigating the TOEIC’s reliability within this study, student participants, in questionnaires, were asked to respond to a question about the factors that were disturbing during the taking of the TOEIC. Respondents’ answers to questionnaires were expected to shed light on factors which could disturb test-takers and in turn have an influence on test scores. Students identified the multiple-choice format of the test as the most bothersome or annoying of the entire TOEIC test-taking experience. Although this factor was found to be significantly different in terms of its ability to disturb the student between the misplaced and the correctly placed groups of respondents, it did not show a strong association. Therefore, reliability was not found to be negatively affected by the format of the test; however, the significant variation between the two groups of participants cannot be ignored and may be worth reinvestigating.

One other factor, which may have influenced score variation and reliability, was the effect of guessing on the TOEIC. In response to a question on the student questionnaire that pertained to the percentage of guessing, over 50% of the students reported guessing between 11-30% while taking the TOEIC. Inferentially, there was no significant difference between the misplaced and the correctly placed groups of respondents and the amount of guessing. These findings support the fact that guessing does not appear to affect reliability as Moritoshi (2001) stated.
Some factors, external to the test, which could possibly help to explain unreliability in the TOEIC scores, relate to the test-taking experience itself. Three other bothersome or annoying factors, which were not listed on the questionnaire, but added to the “Other” category by the student participants, were 1) the noise in the room, 2) the business content of the test, and 3) personal conditions, such as sickness or tiredness. None were found to show significance on a T test to measure mean differences. These findings can perhaps be explained by the very small sample size of less than twenty students who actually used the “Other” option for this question. Had these answers been listed as possible annoyances and all 677 student participants had the opportunity to express themselves on these factors, the results may have been significantly different.

However, in an attempt to further investigate these factors, they were followed up in the second phase of the study. During this phase, the TOEIC’s reliability was investigated. Student participants were asked to describe the TOEIC test-taking experience. The multiple-choice format of the test was not mentioned by the interviewees, neither was noise in the room. One interviewee mentioned the business content of the test, and another said personal factors. However, the factor that the majority of the interviewees mentioned as annoying was the speed of the test. Although it was found to be insignificant on a T test to measure mean differences, one of the thirteen interviewees reported that she had taken the TOEIC three times, resulting in three different scores. In searching for a justification for such variation in the TOEIC scores, the fact of re-taking the test did not, in itself, equal improved test scores for this misplaced student. This student had three TOEIC scores, which were so different that the student’s first TOEIC score (in the mid 400’s to high 500’s), second test score (between 300 and 449), and third test score (higher than 600, up to 674) earned her a place in three different course levels at the language school. She received the lowest score on the second test-taking attempt. When asked if she could account for the score variation, this student reported that she had not engaged in behaviours between test-taking sessions (outside studying, test-taking strategies) that could explain the score differences. She did say that she was a slow worker and her personal strategy of working slowly and carefully did not give her the results she wished, so she increased her speed on the second and third attempts. The variation in her TOEIC score appears to be rooted in the speed to which she
worked, in conjunction with the speed of the test. Although she was the only student to voice this opinion in the interviews; many students added the speed of the test answer to the “Other” option of their own questionnaire. Therefore, there may have been other students who had similar experiences, but did not express themselves in the questionnaire. This factor, the speed of the test, may prove to affect the reliability of the TOEIC when used for placement purposes; however, it needs to be further investigated.

Factors related to test reliability were examined to discover which factors could affect test scores and result in student misplacement. Factors such as, the multiple-choice format of the test; the percentage of guessing; the speed of the test, the noise in the testing room, the business content of the test and personal conditions (sickness or tiredness), were all investigated in the student questionnaire. None were found to vary significantly between groups of respondents, except the format of the test, yet the strength of association was too weak to be acceptable. One factor, the speed of the test, disturbed the test-takers, but had very few students who gave that response as it was not listed on the questionnaire. In addition, one interviewee described her difficult experience in dealing with the speed of the test, which resulted in score variation. However, the small numbers of respondents may have resulted in the insignificant findings and a larger sample could have possibly provided results that would report, with certainty, that the TOEIC scores for placement purposes cannot be proven to be reliable. Such evidence has not been found in this study, but the TOEIC’s reliability, across test versions and test-taking sessions, has been put in doubt.

6.1.2 The Test Usefulness Quality of Construct Validity

In evaluating the use of the institutional version of the TOEIC, construct validity may help to explain why the TOEIC scores do not adequately evaluate the language abilities of test-takers for placement into LS classrooms. Construct validity has a number of facets, such as content relevance and coverage; concurrent criterion relatedness; and predictive ability (Bachman and Palmer, 1996). Once again, the vast amount of literature on the validity of the TOEIC has been produced by ETS and they state that TOEIC validity is high. Moritoshi
reviewed the TOEIC in terms of content relevance and coverage; criterion-related validity; and predictive ability. In terms of concurrent criterion relatedness, he found that correlations between sections (reading and listening) of the test are weak and circular, with one set of results used to buttress another set. Lastly, he did not find any evidence of predictive validity or ability. The Hirai (2002) study investigated the TOEIC's ability to predict productive skill proficiency from receptive skill proficiency as measured by the TOEIC scores when the TOEIC was used as a placement tool within a business situation. His study’s findings were that the TOEIC had business-related content, but was unreliable in its ability to extrapolate from one set of skills (receptive) to the other set of skills (productive), especially with test-takers with the TOEIC scores of between 450-650 points.

As a result of the preceding studies, whose results found unreliability in the predictive ability of the institutional TOEIC as a proficiency test within business contexts; the discussion now considers the predictive ability of the TOEIC when used for placement purposes.

The TOEIC is marketed a valid measure of two receptive skills from which ability in the productive skills can be inferred. However, as previously discussed, related studies have shown criterion validity of the TOEIC to be weak. In particular, concurrent validity was found to be unsatisfactorily supported and predictive validity was unevaluated. From the student questionnaire, 30% of students who took the TOEIC and were in classes at the language school in Fall 2007, were identified as misplaced. Inferentially, the misplaced group of respondents differed from the correctly placed group in the characteristics of: age, first and second language, and educational background in English. Through both the questionnaire and interview phases, these characteristics, belonging to the misplaced group of students, helped explain why criterion-validity, and predictive validity in particular, is questioned. First, the procedure of extrapolation is based on the fact that the test-taker has had approximately the same amount of formal exposure to each of the four skills. LS students who have gone through the provincial educational system and completed collegiate English courses, which are four skills courses as mandated by the provincial government,
seem to fit this description, having had more or less equal exposure in all four skill areas. Those test-takers, who have been educated outside of the province and are recognized as foreign students who typically come from countries with a focus on reading and writing and have little exposure to oral English language, tend to have imbalanced ability in the four skill areas. Other students who have not completed the four skill collegial English courses or have had considerable exposure to oral English, but have not had formal instruction to the same degree, do not. Both types of students have unbalanced skill areas and are identified as misplaced.

Both the teacher and the student questionnaires and interviews supported the fact that the receptive skill areas are the students' strongest abilities and the productive skill areas are the weakest. Teachers and the group of misplaced students were both asked to indicate the skill areas in which the misplaced would seek extra help. Students, at all eight course levels reported they would seek help for grammar and writing, followed by speaking and pronunciation. Teachers reported the same findings. In the interview process, teachers were asked to indicate the strengths and weaknesses of students. They reported that reading is the average LS student's strongest ability and speaking is the weakest. However, for foreign students, writing and grammatical knowledge were the strongest skill areas and speaking was the weakest. In interviews, the students reported the same as the teachers. The average misplaced student described his strongest skill areas as listening and reading, but weaker writing and speaking skills, which resulted in the identification of misplacement. The foreign educated student, in interviews, discussed their weak listening skills and strong writing and grammatical skills, both of which resulted in misplacement.

When considering the foreign-educated student only, they mentioned that their educational backgrounds in English were based on an educational system which focuses on the reading and writing of English. They explained that there was little or no listening in their past language experiences and even less of a speaking component. Consequently, their low TOEIC score in the listening portion resulted in that type of student being placed in a low course level, but their unevaluated writing skills and grammatical knowledge were far
superior to the average LS student at that level. This imbalance would seem to be related to the lack of formal instruction of all four skills.

For the average LS student, several of them stated that they had very good listening skills because of having worked or travelled in an English environment. However, their writing skills lagged for they had not had formal education of the language at that same time. For these students, their strong listening skills resulted in elevated TOEIC scores and placement in course levels where they could not perform at the required level. They fell down due to their proficiency levels in writing and grammar. Another mature student stated that she read a great deal for her job, but she had never had the opportunity to speak. Therefore, she felt this was her weakest skill area. Her high TOEIC score, due to her strong reading skills, were not reflected in the other skill areas for she could not speak or write at the required level for the course. This imbalance seems to relate to the lack of formal instruction in all four skills simultaneously. In addition, one correctly-placed foreign student, who had finished a six-month immersion, which included formal instruction, stated that he felt he no longer had one skill area which was much weaker than another. He felt balanced and strong in all skill areas and he was considered correctly placed. Not only the students, but also the teachers, when questioned, exhibited doubt in the ability of the TOEIC scores to extrapolate productive abilities from receptive skills.

Through the teacher questionnaire, it was shown that teachers carry out re-evaluation procedures the first day of classes which allows them to delve into the areas that they feel the TOEIC has not evaluated sufficiently. During the first class, almost all teachers ask students to write for re-evaluation purposes. The majority of teachers also ask students to perform a speaking activity the first day of classes so teachers can hear a sample of what the student is able to produce with the spoken language. Most teachers do both types of re-evaluation activities for they believe the TOEIC score does not provide adequate evaluation. They also know these two areas are taught and evaluated in the LS classroom.
The findings from the teacher and student questionnaires and interviews give support to the findings by Moritoshi (2001), and Hirai (2002). The findings of their studies concluded that the ability of the TOEIC to adequately extrapolate productive skill ability from the measurement of receptive skills was invalid. This study has also found evidence that the misplaced group of students have been shown to differ significantly from the correctly-placed group in terms of age, first and second language, and educational background. In addition to the interview data from teachers and both the misplaced and correctly placed groups of students, regarding linguistic strengths, weaknesses and linguistic background in both formal and informal learning environments, unbalanced linguistic ability in the four skill areas results in the identification of misplacement. Therefore, the results of this study give evidence to the fact that predictive validity, which is the basis of the TOEIC extrapolation procedure, cannot be supported when the institutional version of the TOEIC is used for placement purposes at LS.

This discussion has so far investigated the TOEIC in regards to two of the six qualities of test usefulness, reliability and construct validity particularly predictive validity. This discussion now turns to the third and fourth qualities of test usefulness to further evaluate the evidence of the usefulness of the TOEIC for placement purposes.

6.1.3 The Test Usefulness Quality of Authenticity and Interactiveness

Authenticity is concerned with the ability of a test’s tasks to represent the real life use of the target language. Both Moritoshi (2001) and Hirai (2002) commented on the authenticity of the institutional TOEIC. Both determined that the linguistic content was satisfactory; however, both studies were considering its use in an international business context, not a university context such as LS.

The quality of interactiveness focuses on the tasks that the test-taker will carry out to provide evidence of his ability in the language. Cunningham (2002) discusses that particular quality and concludes that the multiple-choice format of the test does not mirror real life
linguistic demands. Moritoshi (2001) considers both these qualities in his review. In terms of authenticity, he concludes that the TOEIC does appear to test reading and writing within a business context, by asking test-takers to read and listen. However, Moritoshi (2001) states that the presence of these two qualities is restricted only to the two receptive skills it measures and not the productive skills which are not formally evaluated. Therefore, according to these three researchers, the TOEIC cannot claim to have these two qualities of test usefulness.

The TOEIC has a multiple-choice format, which asks test-takers to listen, read, and then darken the correct answer to a question on a computerized sheet; they do not actually do anything with or in the language. Secondly, the TOEIC does not formally measure writing and speaking. However the students in classrooms at the language school need to be able to perform in all four skill areas. Therefore, the TOEIC does not mirror the tasks students will be asked to carry out in the LS classrooms. In addition to the context of the language school classrooms, a small number of students on questionnaires and a number of the interviewed teachers commented on factors related to authenticity and interactiveness. A few students, on questionnaires, raised questions about the international business content of the TOEIC and a few teachers during interviews asked if the business content of the test corresponded to the test-takers who are full-time university students with little or no contact with the international business world. During student interviews, one student identified as misplaced discussed how she was unable to answer certain questions due to the business content. Another student interviewee demanded to know how his ability to answer the questions on the TOEIC corresponded to the type of work he was assigned in the class. He found that his TOEIC score did not correspond to the proficiency that was required to perform in the course in which he was placed. He stated that if writing were such an important part of the course, why was it not part of the placement test, the TOEIC.

In conclusion, the students and teachers in this study provide support to the claim by Moritoshi (2001) that the TOEIC does not have authentic or interactive tasks, not even for the test-takers for which it was designed, but certainly not for the students at LS. Students
are required to perform at a certain proficiency level in all four skill areas, and they will not see a multiple-choice test during a course at LS. The failure of the TOEIC to address the academic test-takers at LS and require test-takers to perform tasks that mirror the second language classroom at LS, limits the ability of the test score to accurately evaluate and then place students in the appropriate course level. Therefore, findings from this study support the findings of previous studies that the multiple-choice format of the TOEIC with business content does not have authentic nor interactive tasks for test-takers at LS.

6.1.4 The Test Usefulness Quality of Practicality

The quality of practicality considers the administrative details associated with using a particular test in a particular context. No researcher has expressly investigated this quality of the TOEIC; however certain evaluations of the TOEIC, have discussed its practicality. In fact, it appears that practicality is a clear area of strength. According to Nall (2003), the TOEIC needs few resources to test a large number of test-takers.

Without a doubt, the TOEIC is practical for the administration of LS, most standardized tests are practical, hence their popularity. However, the TOEIC is not cheap; each student is charged forty Canadian dollars; however, the test costs between eighty-five and one hundred Canadian dollars. Despite the cost, purchasing and using the TOEIC means that LS does not have to create an in-house placement test. Therefore, its only concern is with the administration of the test. The administration of the TOEIC is also straightforward. Basic recording devices are easily found at UU and ETS provides the test, answer sheets, and tape recording. Test correction is done by ETS using computer. In addition, a minimal amount of staff is required for test administration and reporting scores to students, and a certain number of people are required to oversee the taking of the TOEIC. However, none of the staff would appear to require any highly specialized training as they simply do the necessary clerical tasks related to 1) setting dates for tests, 2) monitoring the test-takers during the test and 3) communicating the test results. Therefore, the TOEIC appears to be practical for the administration of LS.
Impact is the sixth quality of test usefulness to be discussed.

6.1.5 The Test Usefulness Quality of Impact

Test impact is a quality of test usefulness used to judge a test’s effects on stakeholders. Two studies that investigated impact were Guerrero (2000) and Fox (2004). Guerrero (2000) focused on the validity of a proficiency test, using Messick’s (1989) framework, which includes the concept of impact. Guerrero (2000) found that the proficiency test used to evaluate the linguistic ability of potential second language Spanish teachers (FSE) had negative impact on the test-takers. Most particularly it negatively affected test-takers with Hispanic last names that spoke Spanish at home. He was able to state that the test favoured test-takers who had only formally studied the language (non-native speakers) over those who were native speakers of the language. Not only was the impact of the test to the disadvantage of those native speakers of Spanish in terms of test score, the fact that they were consequently not hired to be teachers created possible impact on students. Guerrero (2000) speculated that test impact may have been felt by students who were not taught by the teachers who were the best able to offer the more complex instruction of the language because the native speakers of Spanish were not hired. Although he did isolate the short term impact of the proficiency test on one group of test-takers (potential teachers who were not hired), he did not focus on stakeholders (students, administrators) other than test-takers.

The other relevant study was by Fox (2004). She investigated the impact of placement test scores using the CAEL Assessment and their connection to test-taker failure in second language classrooms and consequently, in general university courses. The participants in the study all came from countries outside of Canada, and had English as a foreign language. Misplacement of test-takers was found to be linked to the listening and writing portions of CAEL. Fox (2004) found that the impact of inaccurate placement testing falls on students, but also on teachers and the teaching institution, although she did not investigate, in detail, the consequences of any stakeholder other than the students. Acculturation and the policy of
teachers who often grant weak students passing grades when undeserved were found to be responsible for student failure rates in university courses, not only in second language courses. Although she sought information about misplacement, she focused on the impact of the test-takers, not all stakeholders.

Each of the two preceding studies isolated and discussed the impact of a particular test, and both studies focused on impact in terms of the test-takers. Neither of the studies evaluated the TOEIC, used as a placement test, nor focused on stakeholders other than the test-takers themselves. Therefore, this study investigated the impact of the TOEIC on the both groups of LS stakeholders, both teachers and students.

First, this study considered impact as misplacement from the use of the TOEIC scores for placement purposes at LS, and found evidence that misplacement exists. A number of findings from the study support that statement. Firstly, teacher respondents identified between 4-16% of students in courses as misplaced. Secondly, of the total sample of respondents (677) who answered the student questionnaire, 30% were identified as misplaced by both their teacher and themselves and had refused a course level change. Thirdly, the results of probability tests, Chi-square and/or Fisher's Exact, helped to create a profile of the typical misplaced student. It was found that the group of misplaced students varies significantly from the correctly placed group and can be described as being a foreign or mature student with a first language other than French and a second language other than English. He has not had the experience of English courses at the collegial level and probably has been placed by his TOEIC score in one of the two lowest course levels.

In the profile of the misplaced, the fact of not having had previous college English experience was the factor which correlated most significantly with misplacement. One difference between the groups of the average LS students and the mature and/or foreign students was English experience at the college level. College English courses are four skills which allow the students' language skills to progress in a balanced manner. The result is more balanced proficiency across the skill areas for students. It is this lack of balance,
between the four skills which identifies the misplaced group of students. Through interviews with teachers and the correctly-placed and misplaced groups of students, all groups described the misplaced foreign students as having had 1) little exposure to the four skills; and 2) formal instruction focusing on reading and writing. The typical misplaced LS student was described as having worked in an English environment without simultaneously having had formal English instruction in writing and grammar.

Two other descriptors, which identify the misplaced are 1) scoring into one of the two lowest course levels and 2) having first and second languages other than French and English. The second course level at LS was the only course which showed significant difference in the amount teaching experience for groups of teachers with less and the more experience. In particular, few of the group of more experienced teachers have taught this level, but they have done so three or more times. Many more of the less experienced group of teachers have given the course, but only once or twice. As the second course level is one where most of the foreign and mature students will be placed (those with a first language other than French and a second language other than English), and the level where teacher experience is extremely varied, it would be unsurprising that the misplaced will be here. However, misplacement was shown to exist at all course levels, therefore, it is not the course level which leads to misplacement.

Therefore, the major impact of using the institutional version of TOEIC as a placement test at LS is student misplacement due to failure of the receptive skill area evaluation to extrapolate to productive skill ability. These findings support the work of Fox (2004) in which test-takers when taking placement tests, experience student misplacement. Secondly, this study supplied evidence, similar to the Fox (2004) study that misplacement also seems to stem from inadequate evaluation of the writing and listening (productive language skills) of the test-taker. The results of this research study on the impact of the TOEIC on the stakeholders at the language school revealed that the TOEIC, when used for placement purposes, has impact on its stakeholders in the form of student misplacement.
In conclusion, the evaluation of the TOEIC in the light of the model of test usefulness has been examined. Each quality of test usefulness was examined with regards to findings from previous studies and this study. It was found that, like the findings of Moritoshi (2001) and Hirai (2002), the TOEIC at LS was not found to have reliable test scores, particularly in their ability to predict productive skill from receptive skills, as discussed by Moritoshi (2001) and Hirai (2002). The TOEIC was also evaluated in terms of test authenticity and interactiveness, Moritoshi (2001) and Hirai (2002) both agree that the business content of the TOEIC is acceptable, but only for the two skill areas it formally evaluates. At UU, which is an academic context rather than a business one, the business content of the TOEIC makes it appear unauthentic for these test-takers. Cunningham (2003) claims a multiple-choice test format cannot claim to be interactive, and this test format does not fit with the tests that students at LS will experience in their language course. Therefore, the interactiveness of the TOEIC tasks is also questionable. The TOEIC was found to be practical for the administration at LS. These findings support the comments by Nall (2003) regarding the presumed practicality of the TOEIC due to its popularity. Lastly, the quality of impact was examined. In the Fox (2004) study, impact was found to be student misplacement which was found to be related to the two productive language skill areas being overlooked, or under-valued, in the placement test. Similar findings were found in this study. Evidence was found to support the fact that misplacement stems from the failure of the extrapolation procedures that the TOEIC uses to judge productive skill ability from formal receptive skill area evaluation for placement purposes.

Having found evidence that the institutional TOEIC scores, when used for placement purposes at LS, result in student misplacement of approximately 30%, it is now necessary to examine the impact of misplacement on stakeholders. In order to do so, Bachman and Palmer (1996) and their view of impact as part of test usefulness will be the lens from which the discussion will be viewed.
6.2 The Consequences of Misplacement for Teachers and Students

From the major findings of the study, it can be stated that, when the TOEIC is used as a placement test at LS, there is impact in the form of student misplacement. This misplacement has three consequences on stakeholders at LS. The first consequence impacts test-takers and concerns the LS student’s reaction to the feedback of misplacement. The second consequence impacts on all stakeholders and relates to the decisions made by test scores and the student’s management of misplacement. The last consequence affects mainly teachers, but the repercussions have possibly serious effects on the test-takers. It focuses on the teacher’s management of the misplaced in pass/fail situations within the language classroom. Each of the three consequences will be examined individually in the next section of the discussion.

No studies have investigated these particular consequences of misplacement, which come from using the TOEIC as a placement tool at LS. Therefore, the three consequences will be discussed using questionnaire and interview data as support. These three consequences will be linked to research which may possibly be useful in explaining the existence of such findings.

6.2.1 Student Reaction to Being Identified as Misplaced

Face validity involves the acceptance or the belief that test-takers have in a test. No one has specifically investigated the face validity of the TOEIC for it is a still-debated aspect of test validity (Bachman, 2003). However, Nall (2003) and Moritoshi (2001) both state that the TOEIC most likely has high or very high face validity. Justifications for such claims are limited. Nall (2003) makes his claims based on the fact that the TOEIC is used in many different settings, so it must be seen as credible. Moritoshi (2001) uses the concept of face validity to discuss the content coverage of the TOEIC. He supports his claim because of the TOEIC’s direct measurement of the two receptive skills, although he cannot carry this
validity to the productive skills which TOEIC does not formally evaluate. Neither these researchers, nor this study expressly considered the face validity of the TOEIC when used as a placement test; however, the belief test-takers have for the TOEIC and its scores need to be addressed.

Recalling that 1) the TOEIC, in this study, was found to be unreliable when predicting productive skill ability from receptive ability, 2) the TOEIC's business content was considered non-interactive, 3) the TOEIC's multiple-choice test format was judged unauthentic, and 4) the use of the TOEIC for placement purposes at LS produced misplacement rates at about 30% in Fall 2007, it is not difficult to understand why teachers find the use of the TOEIC does not result in adequately placing the students at LS in language classes.

It is obvious from the teacher questionnaire and interview data, that the TOEIC is not believed to evaluate students adequately. If it were, teachers and the pedagogical advisor at LS would not spend the time and energy they do in re-evaluation procedures. As it has been found that the predictive validity of the TOEIC is unsupported, teacher re-evaluation procedures would seem to be necessary. However, in carrying out these procedures, the teacher flagrantly expresses doubt to students about the TOEIC's use in correctly placing test-takers. In addition, the teacher then goes on to suggest an alternative course level to the one recommended by the TOEIC. All these actions would seem to result in the lowering of the face validity of the TOEIC in the opinion of the test-takers.

When accepting or rejecting a course level change, the misplaced student has only his own beliefs about his linguistic proficiency, a course number and title, and a lone TOEIC score. Most of the student interviewees who were identified as misplaced mentioned the lack of information surrounding their TOEIC score and their inability to understand how the score and the courses at LS were matched. When forced to make a decision regarding course level changes, most of these students felt the teacher knew the course level and they followed the teacher's suggestion, as they had no other base from which to judge. In
interviews, students from both the misplaced and the correctly-placed groups reported following the teacher's suggestion and trusting that the teacher knew which course was the best for the student. One of these interviewee asked if the TOEIC needed to be written at all, and why pay forty Canadian dollars, if the teacher was in a better position to judge the appropriate course level. Only one misplaced student interviewee did not change course level when it was suggested and even at the end of the course when facing certain course failure he stated that it was the TOEIC score he believed, not the teacher who had suggested the move. He stated that the TOEIC was correct in its judgement of his ability; although he could not state why he believed in it. As much as it may appear, from the misplaced students who were interviewed, that the misplaced most often follow the teacher's suggestion of a change in course level, information gathered from the questionnaire showed that there are many misplaced students who refuse to move.

When the misplaced respondents were asked why they did not change course level when it was suggested they cited a desire to stay in the course and an uncertainty as to whether the suggested course level would be appropriate. In other words, they chose to believe their TOEIC score had correctly placed them. When teachers were asked what kept students in classes, they reported prior completion of that lower course level, a desire to stay in the course and the departmental language course requirements. This last factor was found to be significantly different between groups of teachers with less and more teaching experience. The less experienced groups had the opinion that course requirement was a more important factor in the student's refusal to change course level than the group of more experienced teachers believed. This finding also showed great strength of association. Students, however, did not mention language requirements as a factor in their staying. There are three possible reasons which could explain why students refuse a course move when they have not previously completed the suggested level.

The first is simply that the course level accorded by the TOEIC score pleased the student. It was perhaps at the prescribed level which would complete the second language course level. Although this could be the case for the one interviewee who refused to move, it is not supported by the findings in the student questionnaire in which few students
mentioned the second language requirement as the reason they stay where the TOEIC scores placed them. However, teachers with less teaching experience, in teacher questionnaires, were found to vary significantly, with strong strength of association, in their belief that the language requirement was the reason the misplaced refuse to move.

The second reason the majority of students in the questionnaire gave for staying in the course level was the desire they had to stay in the original course. This answer is understandable; for some students believe their TOEIC scores are correct and doubt the teacher’s suggested course level.

The third reason given for students not moving was uncertainty as to appropriateness of the suggested level. Students may doubt the teacher’s ability to make such a judgement. However, it might be that the teacher is perceived as unconvincing in his discussion with the student, or the student might trust his TOEIC scores the most.

In general, from the interview process, it can be determined that for teachers at LS, the TOEIC has low face validity because of the misplacement they report from the use of its scores. For the majority of misplaced students who were interviewed, the face validity of the TOEIC is certainly not high. Much like the teachers, students in interviews reported questioning the TOEIC’s use in placing them in the appropriate course level. However, in questionnaires, a large number of the misplaced refused to change course level, perhaps due to the high face validity or belief they accorded the TOEIC, perhaps because they did not find the teacher more credible than the test.

The mixed results from the discussion of the first consequence of misplacement do not support the speculation of high face validity which both Moritoshi (2001) and Nall (2003) purport, but neither has it been shown that the TOEIC has low face validity. It appears that for some misplaced test-takers at LS when the TOEIC is used for placement purposes it has higher face validity than for others.
The face validity of the TOEIC was not an aspect that was formally investigated as part of this study. The finding that face validity seemed to differ between the misplaced students and was perhaps involved in the misplaced student’s refusal or acceptance of a course level change was unexpected. Having no further information than what has already been disclosed, it is beyond the scope of this study to suggest reasons for difference in the TOEIC’s face validity between the misplaced; nevertheless, it certainly warrants investigation.

If the misplaced student chooses to stay in the initial course level where he was placed and refuses the teacher’s suggestion of a course level change, he will most likely experience the second consequence of misplacement.

6.2.2 The Willingness to Work of the Misplaced

The second consequence involves test-takers and their management of misplacement. Not only does the misplaced student’s willingness to work affect the individual student, this factor also impacts the teachers. Therefore, this second consequence, what the student and the teacher do in order to deal with misplacement will be seen from both stakeholders’ points of view.

There are two types of misplaced students: those who are placed in courses which are too high for them, and those who are placed in courses which are too low. The more common situation, identified by ten of the fifteen teachers has the misplaced students assigned to courses which are considered too high for their proficiency. The result is a discrepancy between what the student is able to do and what he must be able to perform in order to have the required 60% at the end of the course. In order to try to deal with the issue of misplacement, the misplaced student is often told by the teacher to get extra help or to work harder. This seems to be the approach of the majority of teachers because 66% of them indicated that misplaced students will need extra help with writing and grammar outside of the classroom and 80% will need extra help in the classroom. When dealing with the
misplaced group of students, almost all teachers reported focusing on offering help to the students outside of the classroom. However, students do not usually follow the advice of the teacher, for the majority of students did not go get extra help and teachers recognize that the approach does not often result in students coming for extra help.

The misplaced students who do actually get help are few, but those few use the teacher extensively. In interviews, only one student reported seeing the teacher, but she did so once a week for an hour each time. During interviews, one teacher reported having had students who came weekly for extra help, yet he said it was a rarity. The majority of students, due to other obligations, did not feel they had the time to meet with the teacher outside of the course; although two students indicated they would have liked to have had the time. All students, the one who met with the teacher outside of the class, and those who did not, worked very hard to lessen the gap between their proficiency and the course requirements. Some of interviewed students reported doing three times the amount of work for their English course than for their other courses. Those same students reported dropping or delaying registration for other courses because of the time required for the English course. Other students did not only do the work required, plus try to catch up in areas they were particularly weak, they also sought out speaking partners, and one student did weekly extra writing assignments. However, the teacher rarely has knowledge of these extra-curricular activities.

But there is another picture, one where the student does the required amount of course work, regardless of his proficiency and maintains that the TOEIC correctly evaluated him. Therefore, he does not consider himself misplaced, although the teacher did, and feels that he does not need to work more than any other student. This misplaced student reported that he was willing to do no more than the required six hours of homework per week. His explanation was that the amount of work he did would not be reflected in his final mark, so he was unwilling to do more than the minimum.
Some misplaced students follow the teacher’s advice and get extra help outside of the course, but the majority struggle on alone trying to put in the hours necessary of work which will result in obtaining the proficiency level required to pass the course. This extra work, unless it directly involves the teacher, often goes unseen and unrecognized by the teacher.

Whether or not the misplaced student seeks help from the teacher, most of the misplaced students reported an overall feeling of negativity towards the experience of being misplaced. In particular, they described feeling embarrassed, shy, pushed aside, dumb, or extremely stressed. Only a few student respondents and none of those student interviewees were able to state that the distance between the course requirements and their own proficiency was viewed as a personal challenge. Over half of the sample of teachers also reported that the misplaced students exhibited negative behaviour. One misplaced student described feeling miserable during English class. Another said she never felt she was at the right course level and always felt stressed about the class and the course requirements. Another said she was embarrassed to see how superior she was in writing and grammar knowledge compared to some of her classmates. She knew she was in the wrong course level. As a result, she withdrew from the group. Another felt a great deal of anger at being placed in a course in which he had a great deal of difficulty. He believed in the TOEIC and its use for placement. Although he was failing, he did not think he was misplaced. He felt it was his particular teacher who had increased the proficiency level required to pass the course (made the tests and the correction of them harder).

In conclusion, there are two distinct ways for students to manage misplacement. One way is to do no more work than what is minimally required by the classroom teacher. The second way is to work extremely hard in diverse ways to catch up on review material, and integrate new material. The students from this second group also mentioned finding speaking partners, doing extra assignments, getting help from peers or family, but most importantly, they told of dropping other courses or delaying certain activities in order to make room in their schedules for more English. The difference in this willingness to work, between the two groups of misplaced students, was not specifically examined in this study. However, as some of the misplaced students did exhibit such willingness to work and others
did not, this may be an area which should be further examined, in order to investigate what differentiates the two groups of misplaced students in this aspect.

Although the misplaced students from the two groups differed in their willingness to work, they are similar in not seeking outside help from the teacher.

Although the teachers offer to help the misplaced, students do not usually seek out the teacher. However, teachers reported expecting the student to take an active role in dealing with their misplacement, which for most teachers is the outward manifestation of seeking extra help from them. When the student makes no contact, the teachers do not press further. They reported feeling that it is the student's responsibility to make the move toward the teacher, so when this does not happen the student is left to his own devices.

If the misplaced student refused to change level when it was suggested by the teacher, he is then faced with working with the course material at a level which may be more advanced than his proficiency. In reaction to this discrepancy, he must make a conscious decision to try to work more. The teacher, for his part, offers to help the misplaced, but not more often than he offers to help the other students in the course. However, the misplaced student often cannot react to this offer. If the student does not meet with the teacher for extra help, the amount of work a misplaced student does is not recognized by the teacher. This situation is not problematic if the student manages to have 60% at the end of the course. However, it is a different story when he does not.

6.2.3 Teacher Decision about the Pass or Fail Situation of the Misplaced Student

The last of the three consequences of student misplacement at LS impacts heavily on the teachers. At the end of the course, it is the teacher who must decide to grant or withhold a passing grade to a misplaced student. This consequence of misplacement greatly affects teachers and highlights differences that were found in the study concerning Bachelor's
versus Master’s teachers. In this study, it was expected that teaching experience may have been related to differences between teacher’s answers to certain questions, which was not the case. However, it was found that teachers differed significantly in one aspect, the number of student failures, according to the teacher’s level of education (Bachelor’s or Master’s).

At the onset of the study, differences in opinions were expected between the less and more experienced teachers; however, educational background was not predicted to be a significant variable. Even more surprising, it was only significant for the number of failures per class. After some investigation into the previous research on teacher education, information was found to be scarce. Most authors speak of teacher education in the second language classroom in terms of the dilemma of hiring the native speaker versus the second language speaker; or the native speaker without teacher education versus the second language speaker of the language with formal teacher education. No research was found which focused on the level of educational degrees (undergraduate versus graduate) or the differences between teachers who held those different types of degrees. However, one author, Tsui (2002: 6) included educational level in her description of an expert teacher along with experience, reputation, recommendation, and classroom behaviours.

As the educational level alone is not sufficient in attempting to comprehend why the differences between the two groups of teachers in this study exist, the broader concept of teacher expertise may explain what sets the two groups apart. According to the results of a case study project by Tsui (2002), expert teachers differ from non-experts. Expert teachers reinvest in themselves as teachers through experimentation and exploration. In carrying out both of these activities, it was stated that expert teachers, “have to draw on their practical knowledge or the knowledge of their colleagues, and they have to obtain formal knowledge in resources and references on teaching. This kind of knowledge renewal, or knowledge growth, is vital to the development of expertise” (Tsui, 2002: 267). Therefore, it is not that a Master’s/Doctoral degree rather than a Bachelor’s degree is solely responsible for differences in teacher groups in this study, it is that the seeking of higher educational degrees indicates a reinvestment in teaching. This, according to Tsui (2002), is one factor
which helps to distinguish the expert teacher from the non-expert. A second factor which sets expert teachers apart is that they are able to move beyond the immediate teaching situation, to see the larger picture, a larger context, and envision the more general goal of the learning (Tsui, 2002: 256). This theory fits with the findings from this study.

The study found that 80% of teacher respondents stated that student failure was most often related to weaknesses in grammar and/or writing and that one to two students of a group of twenty-five, would fail to obtain the required 60%. When the student fails to reach a passing grade, teachers used two different factors to determine if a passing grade would be granted. The first was overall linguistic ability and the second was the amount of improvement made. Linguistic ability was the factor most Master’s teachers used and it was the factor preferred by the majority of mature and foreign students. However, improvement was the factor chosen most often by the Bachelor’s teachers when granting passing grades. The average LS student felt any factor which resulted in a pass for the misplaced could be satisfactorily employed.

However, failure does occur. It was a very interesting finding that failure rates varied significantly between teachers who held Bachelor’s level degrees and those with Master’s or Doctorates. The Bachelor’s teachers failed significantly more students than the Master’s/Doctoral teachers. In interviews, the Bachelor’s teachers reported that they believed that a misplaced student should realize his difficulties and react to them by either dropping the course or getting extra help. However, most students do not seek extra help from the teacher due to time constraints. Therefore, many students decide to stay in the course level in which the TOEIC scores place him and do not follow the teacher’s suggestion of extra help. When the student fails to have the required 60%, failure by Bachelor’s teachers was deemed an acceptable result. Bachelor’s teachers did not report considering factors other than the student’s improvement and/or outward display of interest in passing the course. They did not mention considering overall linguistic ability. Yet, according to the students who were interviewed, the majority did not meet with the teacher, so it is unclear how the teacher would know the amount of effort or time a particular student
made. Unless the student was tracked closely throughout the session, improvement is a factor which is quite difficult to measure.

Conversely, for this group of Master’s teachers, in interviews, they said that they felt misplacement was systemic flowing from the use of the TOEIC and not the fault of the individual. Therefore, this group of teachers looked at the overall ability of the student, regardless of the total percentage the student had accrued, and then considered the individual student’s academic situation. For example, if the student needed to take the next course level to complete his language requirement, Master’s teachers considered the student’s ability to successfully complete the next course when making pass/fail decisions.

It seems that Master’s/Doctoral teachers chose to judge the misplaced student’s overall linguistic ability and consider the future challenges the student would face when deciding to grant a passing or failing grade, rather than reconsidering the student behaviour in conjunction with the classroom. However, the Bachelor’s teachers chose to focus on the mark tally of 60% and limited their view of the pass/fail situation to the misplaced student in their classroom situation. The findings of the differences between these two groups of teacher seem to offer support to the work of Tsui (2002) who expressed belief that one of the characteristics of an expert teacher is the ability to see beyond the classroom. Secondly, expert teachers re-invest, often through further education, in their career as a teacher.

Therefore, the differences between the two groups of teachers in the number of failures they had in Fall 2007 may not lie uniquely with the educational level of the teacher. The differences between the concepts of expert and non-expert teachers are characterized by many factors. One is re-investment in the profession, which is outwardly manifested by educational level. Another is having a wider vision of the classroom and education, in general. This finding was completed unexpected and truly deserves a much more thorough investigation.
6.2.4 Conclusions of the Discussion

Overall, the TOEIC, a proficiency test, and used as a placement tool at LS has been examined while focusing on each of the six qualities of test usefulness. The findings of the questionnaire and interview data, have provided evidence to support the conclusions that the institutional version of the TOEIC 1) is unreliable in assuring reliability of test score from one version or one session to another; 2) has doubtful criterion validity for the TOEIC was found to lack predictive validity (no evidence found to support the use of the formal evaluation of two receptive skills to be representative of productive ability); 3) was not found to have authentic tasks (due to the format of the test) or interactive tasks (due to its business content); 4) was found to be practical for LS administration; and 5) had negative impact on stakeholders. As impact was the focus of the study, it was further investigated. It was found that impact manifests itself in student misplacement which in turn creates three consequences. All three consequences are extra burdens which are placed on the stakeholders (students and teachers) in reacting to and managing misplacement.

The stakeholders must deal with the three consequences of misplacement. First, the misplaced must react to the information that misplacement has occurred (by accepting or refusing a course level change as proposed by the teacher). This decision may be influenced by the face validity of the TOEIC. Second, the misplaced student must decide on his willingness to work in the language course. The third consequence involves making fail/pass decisions for the misplaced who fail to obtain 60% in the course. Significant difference between Bachelor’s and Master’s/Doctoral teachers and their number of failures was found. The Bachelor’s teachers tended to consider willingness to work and the 60% mark tally, whereas the Master’s teacher focused on overall linguistic ability. Finally, it can be said that the use of the TOEIC at LS as a placement tool has impact which has three major negative consequences on stakeholders.
6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The focus of this study was the use of the institutional version of the TOEIC for placement purposes and its impact on stakeholders at LS using the model of test usefulness. More generally, it inquired into the effect of using a test for a purpose and population for which it was not designed. Further investigation could explore the usefulness of another test which is not used for the purpose or the population it was originally designed. This type of study would provide support for this study’s findings.

As the institutional TOEIC is used at LS, this study investigated this version of the test. However, if the TOEIC version which includes writing and speaking sections were examined and its impact on stakeholders explored, interesting findings in the area of impact may be discovered. A future study could compare the impact of this version of the TOEIC on stakeholders with the impact of the institutional version of the TOEIC. Once again, further research could buttress the findings of this study regarding impact.

From the second phase of the study, in which the student and teacher questionnaire and the interview data was combined, there was one very surprising finding; that Bachelor’s and Master’s teachers were significantly different in the number of failures they had in Fall 2007. It was suggested by this researcher that the finding was related to the factor of expert versus non-expert teachers, as discussed by Tsui (2002), but as this was not the study’s focus, further examination was beyond the scope of this study. However, the expert teacher and how he differs from the non-expert is a truly interesting area of language teaching which merits further study.

6.4 The Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study allowed for the identification of those groups of students who are typically misplaced at LS and the description of the consequences of that misplacement. However, these findings are limited to the LS context and the TOEIC test.
Another area, which is always problematic in a research study, is sample size, and the degree to which that sample represents the true population. For the teacher questionnaire portion of the study, the teacher sample numbered fifteen, but twenty-six teachers were contacted. This loss of eleven teachers was most likely not due to the questionnaire or its topic, but rather to the time constraints of the teachers. All the teachers who did not answer the questionnaire were part-time teachers. As most have full-time work elsewhere, they may not have felt that they had the time or the inclination to invest in the study. For whatever reason that they chose not to complete the questionnaire, it resulted in a small sample size and perhaps a lack of significance on the teacher questionnaire items.

The inability of the study to involve a larger number of teachers likely had repercussions on the number of student questionnaires answered. Teachers who themselves did not answer the questionnaire were less likely to give the questionnaires to their students. Once again, it was most likely to be a part-time teacher who chose not to be involved in the study. Although completed student questionnaires numbered six hundred and seventy-seven, one particular level, the fourth, was under-represented compared to the actual number of sections of that course in Fall 2007, and compared to the typical number of sections most sessions. This loss of information from this particular level on student questionnaires may have resulted in a loss of significance on certain questions which pertain to the course level titled Intermediate which included the third and fourth course levels.

There were two challenges in gathering participants for the interviews in Phase II of the study. One was to find enough willing participants; the other was to find participants who theoretically represented the student population at LS.

Teacher participants represented a variety of educational backgrounds, sexes, ages, first and second languages, and amounts and types of teaching experiences. In addition, all teachers who were interviewed had completed Phase I questionnaires. Therefore, the study investigated the experience of misplacement using the same population of teacher respondents and interviewees.
Student participants were required to be identified as misplaced or correctly placed, and to represent all age groupings, both sexes, a variety of first and second languages, course levels, and English educational backgrounds. However, this study was not able to interview a student at the lowest or the fourth course level. The lack of interviewees particularly those from the lowest level which typically has a large number of misplacements may have narrowed the knowledge of the experiences or opinions of misplacement. Unlike the teacher interviewees who had completed questionnaires, the student interviewees had not. This was due to the ethics committee at UU not allowing the identification of students who answered questionnaires. Failure to contact those questionnaire respondents meant that interviewees were not chosen from the same sample population. This may mean that respondents and interviewees did not have the same experience and are not similar in their experience of misplacement.
CONCLUSION

After the adoption of the TOEIC, a standardized proficiency test, as a placement tool at LS, teachers reacted by questioning its appropriateness. In order to examine the appropriateness or validity of the use of the TOEIC as it is used in this particular context, this study first investigated the TOEIC’s test design and purpose.

In the field of language testing, it has been proven that tests have specific designs and purposes; therefore, it appeared that the TOEIC, which was designed to be a proficiency test, was not well-suited for use as a placement tool at LS. Moreover, the TOEIC only formally measures the two receptive linguistic skills, and extrapolates ability in the other two productive skill areas. Secondly, as the TOEIC has business-related content and is designed for use in international business situations, it did not appear to be well-fitted as a placement tool at LS for university students.

Having found support for the theory that the TOEIC was most likely not valid as a placement tool for use at LS, gave rise to the study’s research questions which investigated the impact (area, extent and direction) of the use of the TOEIC on stakeholders. The findings of this study were examined using the Model of Test Usefulness (Bachman and Palmer, 1996).

To carry out the investigation of the impact of the TOEIC, a mixed methods design was employed, with both quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) data collected at different stages of the study. Both teachers and students from LS were participants in the study. The results from the first phase of the study were consulted and became the basis of the interview questions of the second phase.

As expected, results of the study supplied evidence that the TOEIC when used as a placement test at LS was unreliable in assuring reliability of test score from one test version
or session to another. Secondly, it was found to lack predictive validity (no evidence found to support the use of the formal evaluation of two receptive skills to be representative of productive ability). Neither was the TOEIC found to have authentic test tasks, nor require test-takers to do anything in the language similar to what they would be required to do in the LS classrooms. The one bright area for the TOEIC was its practicality for LS administration. Very importantly, the research questions were answered when it was found that the TOEIC had negative impact on stakeholders in the form of student misplacement.

The impact of the TOEIC was explored more deeply in the second phase of the study. From the findings in the quantitative portion, interview questions surrounding the topic of student misplacement were developed. It was found that misplacement creates three negative consequences for the misplaced teachers and students.

The first consequence concerns how the misplaced student reacts to the information that he is considered misplaced. He can accept or refuse a course level change when it is proposed by the teacher. It was suggested that in making this decision, the face validity of the TOEIC may play a role. Secondly, those misplaced students who refuse to move must decide on the amount of extra work they are willing to do in the language course in order to pass. The third consequence impacts the teachers. It was found that Bachelor’s teachers tended to consider willingness to work and the final mark tally when granting passing grades to the misplaced, whereas the Master’s teachers focused on overall linguistic ability. Also, teachers who held a Bachelor’s degree failed significantly more students than the teachers with Master’s degrees. It was suggested that the difference between teachers may be related to expert versus non-expert teachers, as the expert teacher is distinguished by educational level and an ability to look outside of the limited classroom setting when dealing with students.

The conclusions of the study support the fact that the TOEIC was not found to be a useful test when used as a placement tool at LS. The use of the TOEIC at LS as a placement tool may have certain advantages, but its use has negative impact on stakeholders.
This study’s results support the work of others in the field of testing in purporting that when a test is used for purposes and on populations for which it was not designed, it results in negative impact for stakeholders.
REFERENCES


Canadian Academic English Language (CAEL) Assessment www.cael.ca
Retrieved October 12, 2005.


Appendix A

The Context of the Study

UU, with a population of 39 000, is a French-speaking university in North America and has seventeen faculties granting Bachelor’s, Master’s and Doctoral degrees. Attached to the Faculty of Arts is LS (the language school) which offers second language courses in a dozen languages, one of which is English. All of the students enrolled in an English course at LS are test-takers, for no student is admitted to a class without first having taken the placement test and obtained a score.

English as a Second Language Curriculum

Elementary School Curriculum for Test-takers

The average student entering UU is French-speaking, between the ages of eighteen to twenty-one and has completed six years of elementary school, five years of secondary school and 2-3 years of college. Most students at UU today began to study English as a second language at the age of nine, in grade 4 of elementary school. The maximum number of hours per elementary school year for a second language for those students was seventy-two. Although this seems like a very few hours, most students do not even receive this for each school has the right to dispense hours in a second language as they choose as long as there is one hour a week (http://www.meq.gouv.qc.ca/reforme/curriccu/anglais/chap04.htm, p.7). There are about 40 weeks in a school year so the seventy-two hours can be as little as 40 hours. But, it was reported at the same website that 66% of teachers said they devoted less than half the number of suggested hours, meaning fewer than 36 hours in a school year. Therefore, elementary school students receive somewhere between 36 and 72 hours of English second language instruction in grades 4, 5 and 6. The difference between the two extremes depends on the local administration and its scheduling choices. After three years of English instruction in the elementary years, students may have had as few as 108 hours of instruction, or as many as 216 hours.
The focus of the elementary English classroom is reading and writing, but includes speaking and listening. Consulting a textbook in the series, *The Spinning Series*, which was used in elementary English classrooms in the late 1990’s, the time the current students at LS would have been in elementary school, activities and evaluation grids for the four skill areas were provided. Each chapter was designed with one speaking activity valued at 25 out of a possible 100 points. There were five listening activities valued at 10 points each for a total of 50 points. The two reading activities were valued at 10 points each and writing was evaluated once for 15 points. From these divisions it is clear that the listening was given predominance, 50%, in terms of evaluation, and therefore one would suppose this percentage was represented in class time as well. The three other skill areas were less weighty with 25%, 20% or 15%. In general, listening and speaking were foremost in the elementary second language classrooms.

**Table IA**

**Elementary School English Second Language Classroom Evaluation.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>Number of Evaluations per Chapter</th>
<th>Value of Evaluations</th>
<th>Total Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Secondary School Curriculum for Test-takers**

In secondary school, for students who are currently at university, second language instruction was a maximum of ninety hours per school year. Once again, each school has the right to dispense hours in a second language as they choose as long as compulsory content is covered, although it is not clear what part of the curriculum is compulsory.
There are about 40 weeks in a secondary school year so the ninety hours can possibly decrease and no minimums are given. We can suppose, like in elementary school, hours may decrease by as much as 50%, so once again students may be receiving between 45 and 90 hours during the 5 years of secondary school. Therefore, some students may have received 450 hours of English as a second language and others 225.

The global objectives of the first years of secondary school are comprehension of oral and written texts. One textbook series for English second language in the province of Quebec in the mid 1990's was *Zoom*. It follows the same proportions of skills as *The Spinning Series*. The focus of the class is on comprehension skills (listening and reading); the productive skills of writing and speaking are secondary in focus. There are normally three or four activities per chapter for listening and reading and two or three activities for writing and speaking. As with the elementary curriculum, listening and reading are the focus in terms of time and weighting. For each evaluation there are mastery levels with the terms C 1, 2, 3 and P 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The C refers to comprehension skills, where 1 means partial understanding and 3 means total understanding. The P refers to production skills, where 1 means “makes grammatical or spelling (or pronunciation) errors but students can make themselves understood with a lot of help.” A 5 means no errors and done without help. (*Zoom*, 13). Once again, listening is the focus of the secondary English classroom. For secondary school completion, students need to understand oral and written messages with the help of certain preferred operations. Again, they must also be able to express themselves both orally and in writing while using a certain number of required operations. A complete description of the certain operations are listed in terms of terminal functional objectives of which there are approximately four which are extended across each skill area.
Table IIB
Secondary School English Second Language Classroom Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>Number of Evaluations per Chapter</th>
<th>Value of each Evaluation</th>
<th>Total Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5, 4, 6</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6, 5, 4</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the objectives for the five levels of instruction of secondary school have been reached, a provincial English examination is given. It is normally secondary five students (last year of secondary school) who are evaluated. There are three sections to this provincial pass/fail examination: written production, and oral and written comprehension. Both websites, (http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/DGFJ/instructions/pfd/directives 2003-2004.pdf) and www.essb.qc.ca/resources/exams/elaexam04.ppt supply information about this topic.

College Curriculum for Test-takers

College studies in the province follow secondary school and they normally last a two-three year period. A pre-university program, leading to university, will be two years, while a vocational trade, usually signalling the end of higher studies, will be three. Regardless of the program, each student must take a minimum of two English second language courses of forty-five hours each. In some collegial institutions students take either an in-house or a provincial-wide placement test; other institutions use the final provincial examination, final secondary school marks or a combination of the two in order to place students. Depending on the results of the particular college’s English placement test, students are placed into one of four levels. The first of the two mandatory courses at any level focuses on reading, writing, listening and speaking. Although there are general objectives, no proportion of evaluation or time is given, therefore, a breakdown of 25% for each skill area is common.
practice. The second mandatory course at any level focuses on the particular language needs of a student in a particular program of study. Once again all four levels are four-skill based with the content of the course necessarily related to a student's particular domain; once again the breakdown is often 25% across all skill areas. After the completion of these two courses, students have added another 90 hours of formal English instruction. (http://www.cpe.gouv.qc.ca/form_prof_voies_form.htm)

Table IIIC
College Level English Second Language Classroom Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>Number of Evaluations</th>
<th>Value of Evaluations</th>
<th>Total Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore, before arriving at university, the typical student has had a minimum of 423 hours of English as a second language. The maximum that a student can have prior to arriving at UU is 756 hours of formal instruction. The majority of this time has been spent in four-skill classes, which focused on the comprehension skills at the elementary levels, but with time also spent on reading, writing, and speaking.

University Curriculum for Test-takers

When a student first arrives at UU, he needs to familiarize himself with the course requirements for his Bachelor's degree. Major changes in the composition of the Bachelor programs at UU occurred in November 1998 and led to the current description of a student in a program who must:
To summarize, a Bachelors student must take at least a third, or 30 credits, of the 90 total course credits, from their discipline (otherwise known as a major concentration), and at least 15 credits from one discipline or many distinct disciplines (otherwise known as a minor concentration). The last group of courses form the section called personal development. Credits come from a related discipline, or a course that integrates other disciplines, or a course that is complimentary and involves aptitudes such as public speaking or computer mastery or courses related to culture. Culture is related to second language learning, as each student is required to possess a sufficient knowledge of at least a second language “de posséder une connaissance suffisante d’au moins une deuxième langue”.

Following the recommendations of 1998, each faculty decided independently on the courses that would be required for their programs. In terms of second language requirements, the majority of faculties have chosen the completion of the fourth course level for their minimum second language requirement, but Science d’Administration (Business Administration), some programs within the Faculty of Arts and all International programs have chosen the completion of the fifth course level. If a student’s score is below the
requirement, he must take courses until he has completed the minimum requirement. If the student has a higher level of proficiency than the minimum requirement, some faculties allow for the student to take any course he wishes, others require a course of any language other than English.

All credited second language courses are given by the language school which is a division of the Faculty of Arts at the North American university. Although each course at the language school is credited, the school cannot grant diplomas. Taken from its web site, the language school

a comme mandat principal de répondre aux besoins de la communauté universitaire en ce qui regarde la formation pratique en langues secones et étrangères et l'évaluation des compétences dans ces domaines. Elle peut aussi être appelée à offrir des cours visant à faire connaître les cultures véhiculées par les langues qu'elle enseigne”(www.elul.ulaval.ca).

When translated the quotation states that the language school responds to the needs of the university community in terms of teaching the functional use of language as a second or foreign language and evaluates competencies in this domain. The language school can also be called upon to introduce various cultures through the languages it teaches. Although the language school offers regular and immersion courses in twelve languages, English and Spanish constitute the majority of courses given.
Appendix B

Teacher Letter of Introduction for Questionnaire

Anne Mullen
3372 rue Lambert Closse
Quebec, QC
G1W 2S4

October 1, 2007

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your knowledge and experience as an English teacher at the École des Langues de Université Laval is of interest and value; therefore I am writing to request your participation in a study entitled Impact of TOEIC on the Stakeholders of École de Langues de l’Université Laval (Ethics certification number 2006-236). I am conducting this study as part of my Doctoral studies at University Laval. Its goal of the study is to examine the impact of using a proficiency test as a placement tool. To complete the study, I would need a certain number of teachers who agree to participate.

Participation in the study would require that you complete a short questionnaire involving your experience with the use of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) which is used as a placement tool for English at the École des Langues de Université Laval. It should take approximately 20 minutes.

A second stage of the study involves a personal interview. The interview will involve your experience with the use of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). If you are chosen for an interview, it will last a maximum of one hour. Lastly, you may also be asked to help solicit a small number of students from your classes who would also be interviewed by the researcher.

The questionnaire stage and the interview stage of the study are not interrelated; therefore you may complete a questionnaire but refuse an interview or not complete a questionnaire and still participate in an interview. You can refuse participation in the study at any time for any reason. If you have any questions or need further explanation you may contact me at anne.mullen.1@ulaval.ca or (418) 659-5077.

I thank you in advance for agreeing to be part of this study for your collaboration is of the utmost importance.

Anne Mullen
Appendix C
Student Letter of Introduction for Questionnaire

THE IMPACT OF TEST OF ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION (TOEIC) ON STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN ECOLE DES LANGUES UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL (ELUL) AT UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL.

FEUILLET D’INFORMATION

Présentation
Cette étude (Numéro d’approbation : 2006-236, May 8, 2007) est réalisée dans le cadre du projet de doctorat de Anne Mullen, dirigé par Zita De Koninck, professeure au département de langues, linguistique et traduction à l’Université Laval.

Avant d’accepter de participer à ce projet de recherche, veuillez prendre le temps de lire et de comprendre les renseignements qui suivent. Ce formulaire d’information et de consentement vous explique le but de ce projet de recherche, ses procédures, avantages, risques et inconvénients. Il indique les coordonnées des personnes avec qui communiquer au besoin. Il peut contenir des mots ou expressions que vous ne comprenez pas. Si c’est le cas, nous vous invitons à poser toutes les questions que vous jugerez utiles au chercheur responsable du projet.

Nature de l’étude
Ce projet de recherche vise à mieux comprendre les retombées de l’utilisation du test TEST OF ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION (TOEIC) sur le processus de classement effectué à l’École de langues de l’Université Laval.

Déroulement de la participation
Votre participation à cette recherche consiste à répondre au questionnaire qui portera sur les éléments suivants:

1. opinions sur l’anglais comme langue seconde
2. comportements dans les classes d’anglais langue seconde
3. biographie langagière connaissance du test TOEIC
4. expérience du déroulement du test TOEIC
Risques, inconvénients et avantages pour le participant

Pour les participants, la recherche sera l’occasion de réfléchir sur leur expérience d’apprentissage ou d’enseignement d’une langue seconde.

Participation volontaire et droit de retrait

Vous êtes libre de participer à ce projet de recherche. Vos réponses, votre participation à la recherche et votre décision de vous en retirer ne sont eu aucune façon liée à votre démarche académique et elles n’auront aucune conséquence sur votre parcours scolaire. Si vous décidez de mettre fin à votre participation, vous pouvez communiquer avec la chercheure, au numéro de téléphone indiqué dans ce document. Tous les renseignements vous concernant seront alors détruits.

Confidentialité et gestion des données

Les mesures suivantes seront appliquées pour assurer la confidentialité des renseignements fournis par les participants :

1. Les noms des participants ne paraîtront dans aucun rapport ;
2. les divers documents de la recherche seront codifiés et seule la chercheure aura accès à la liste des noms et des codes de façon exclusive ;

THE IMPACT OF TEST OF ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION (TOEIC) ON STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN ECOLE DES LANGUES UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL (ELUL) AT UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL.

1. les résultats individuels des participants ne seront jamais communiqués ;
2. les matériaux de la recherche, incluant les données, seront conservés pendant deux ans après quoi ils seront détruits ;
3. la recherche fera l’objet de publications dans des revues scientifiques, et aucun participant ne pourra y être identifié ou reconnu.

Pour des renseignements supplémentaires

Si vous avez des questions sur la recherche et sur les implications de votre participation ou encore si vous voulez mettre fin à votre participation, veuillez communiquer avec Anne Mullen, chercheure, au numéro de téléphone suivant (418) 656-2131, poste 12494, ou à l’adresse courriel suivante : anne.mullen@elul.ulaval.ca

Remerciements

Votre collaboration est très précieuse et je vous en remercie.
Appendix D

Direction Sheet for Teachers Regarding Student Questionnaire Completion

Anne Mullen
(418) 6556-2131, ext. 12494
anne.mullen@elul.ulaval.ca


Dear ,

I am writing to request your participation in a study by distributing and collecting questionnaires.

Students in your class(es) are being solicited as possible participants in the study, Impact of TOEIC on the Stakeholders of École de Langues de l'Université Laval (ethics certificate number 236-2006). The goal of the study is to examine the impact of using a proficiency test as a placement tool; in this aim, students are asked to complete a questionnaire.

The questionnaire is in French and requires no explanation on your part. There is a letter of introduction and explanation to be handed out to each student, which they can keep. The letter gives the student all the necessary information. The student questionnaire itself will take about 10 minutes, at the maximum 20 minutes, and can easily be completed during the break period, which is a good time to carry out the completion. It is not necessary that you remain in the room with the students. Please read the directions below, which detail your responsibilities, and contact me by telephone or e-mail, if you have any questions.

1. Explain that they are being asked to complete a questionnaire about their experience in taking TOEIC, the English test for placement at ELUL. Pass out the explanatory letter.

2. Ask students to put up their hands if they are willing to complete the questionnaire.

3. Pass out the questionnaires to students.

4. Place the completed questionnaires in the envelope.

*** If students ask what to do if they do not understand a question, tell them to leave it unanswered.

***If students say that their response is not listed, tell them they may add a response to any question.

***It is not an option to take the questionnaire home to complete it.
When the questionnaires have been completed and handed back, please seal the envelope which has been provided. Return the self-addressed envelope to DKN 2305 and place it in the mail slot.

I thank you in advance for your participation in this part of the study.
Appendix E
Letter for Teacher Questionnaire Completion

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Due to your expertise and experience as an English teacher at the École des Langues de l'Université Laval, you are being asked to participate in this study by responding to the following questionnaire. This questionnaire will take no more than 20 minutes to complete and only requires you to check the appropriate boxes. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and your insight greatly valued.

The following questionnaire is a vital part of a Doctoral study (Ethics number 2006-236) entitled the Impact of Using a Proficiency Test as a Placement Tool: The case of TOEIC at the École de Langues de l'Université Laval

Please read and respond to the following 32 questions. When you have completed the questionnaire please return it to the envelope, place the return address on the envelope and place it in internal mail at École des Langues de l'Université Laval (DKN 2305) as soon as possible.

Thank you very much for giving of your time and knowledge.
Appendix F

Teacher Questionnaire

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Due to your expertise and experience as an English teacher at the LS of UU, you are being asked to participate in this study by responding to the following questionnaire.

This questionnaire is a vital part of a Doctoral study (Ethics certificate number 2006-236) entitled the Impact of Using a Proficiency Test as a Placement Tool: The case of TOEIC. To ensure the confidentiality of the information you divulge, your name will not appear in any report, your answers to the questions will be coded, and only the researcher will have access to the list of names and codes.

This questionnaire will take no more than 20 minutes to complete and only requires you to darken a box to indicate your answer.

Please read and respond to the following 32 questions. When you have completed the questionnaire please place it in the envelope that has been provided. Then, place the envelope containing the completed questionnaire in the mail slot at LS.

If you have any questions while completing the questionnaire, you can contact me by sending an e-mail at anne.mullen@elul.ulaval.ca or telephoning at 656-2131, extention 12494.

Thank you very much for giving of your time and knowledge. Your cooperation and quick return of the completed questionnaire is greatly appreciated and your insight greatly valued.
DIRECTIONS

The following questionnaire contains 32 questions.

There are three types of questions.

1. A first type asks you to write a short paragraph in which you give your opinion about a given statement.

2. A second type of question asks you to read a question and choose an answer, or more than one, from among a number of possible answers.

3. A third type of question asks you to position yourself, in regard to a particular subject, by choosing among a scale of frequencies or quantities.

For all questions, to indicate your choice of answer, check the box in front of your choice. If your choice of answer is not already provided, you may add your choice by checking the “Other” box and then writing your choice in the space provided.

Below you will find a sample question.

SAMPLE QUESTION

What language(s) do you speak at home?

1 ( ) English

2 ( ) French

3 ( ) German

4 ( ) Italian

5 (X) Other...Russian...
**QUESTION 1**

Please indicate how many times you have taught the following courses.

**ANL 14956 Basic English I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 times</th>
<th>1-2 times</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANL 14957 Basic English II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 times</th>
<th>1-2 times</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANL 14958 Intermediate English I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 times</th>
<th>1-2 times</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANL 14959 Intermediate English II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 times</th>
<th>1-2 times</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANL 14960 Advanced English I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 times</th>
<th>1-2 times</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANL 14961 Advanced English II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 times</th>
<th>1-2 times</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANL 19554 Advanced English III**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 times</th>
<th>1-2 times</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANL 22771 Advanced English IV**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 times</th>
<th>1-2 times</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 2**

Have you ever seen or heard the contents of a TOEIC test?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

337
If you answered NO to the preceding question, please skip to question 5.

**QUESTION 3**

What type of questions have you read or heard on the TOEIC test?

1 ( ) Multiple choice
2 ( ) Fill-in-the-blank
3 ( ) Short answer (1 paragraph)
4 ( ) Long answer (more than 1 paragraph)
5 ( ) Matching

**QUESTION 4**

What skill areas did the questions evaluate?

1 ( ) Reading comprehension
2 ( ) Listening comprehension
3 ( ) Writing production
4 ( ) Speaking production

**QUESTION 5**

Are you aware that that certain programs at Université Laval have an English language level requirement?

1 ( ) Yes
2 ( ) No

If you answered NO to the preceding question, please skip to question 7.

**QUESTION 6**

Please indicate the correct level requirement for the following programs offered at UU.

**Sciences d'Administration**

1 ( ) ANL 14958
2 ( ) ANL 14959
3 ( ) ANL 14960
4 ( ) One course at any level
5 ( ) A number of courses at any level

**Communication**

1 ( ) ANL 14958
2 ( ) ANL 14959
3 ( ) ANL 14960
4 ( ) One course at any level
5 ( ) A number of courses at any level
Pharmacie

1 ( ) ANL 14958
2 ( ) ANL 14959
3 ( ) ANL 14960
4 ( ) One course at any level
5 ( ) A number of courses at any level

Science et Génie

1 ( ) ANL 14958
2 ( ) ANL 14959
3 ( ) ANL 14960
4 ( ) One course at any level
5 ( ) A number of courses at any level

QUESTION 7
Do you evaluate students at the beginning of a new session to verify placement by TOEIC?

1 ( ) Yes
2 ( ) No

QUESTION 8
Do you use activities to evaluate students at the beginning of a new session to verify placement by TOEIC?

1 ( ) Yes
2 ( ) No

If you answered NO to the preceding question, please skip to question 10.

QUESTION 9
Please indicate the types of activities you use to evaluate students at the beginning of a new session.

1 ( ) A writing activity
2 ( ) A grammar activity
3 ( ) A speaking activity
4 ( ) A pronunciation activity
5 ( ) A listening activity
6 ( ) A reading activity
7 ( ) Other..............................
QUESTION 10

Please indicate the frequency of which you use the following factors to evaluate of students at the beginning of a new session as a way of verifying placement by TOEIC?

Consideration of other English courses

1 ( ) Never
2 ( ) Sometimes
3 ( ) Often
4 ( ) Always

Consideration of other English experience (immersion, travel, work)

1 ( ) Never
2 ( ) Sometimes
3 ( ) Often
4 ( ) Always

Student claims of misplacement by TOEIC

1 ( ) Never
2 ( ) Sometimes
3 ( ) Often
4 ( ) Always

Other.............................

1 ( ) Never
2 ( ) Sometimes
3 ( ) Often
4 ( ) Always

QUESTION 11

Do you use the evaluation process and/or other factors to identify students who need to change course level?

1 ( ) Yes
2 ( ) No

QUESTION 12

After the evaluation process, do you identify students who need to change course level?

1 ( ) Yes
2 ( ) No

If you answered NO to the preceding question, please skip to question 25.
**QUESTION 13**
How many students would you typically identify as needing to change course level, if the class had 25 students?

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>1-2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>3-4 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>5-6 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>7-8 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>9-10 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 14**
Of the students you typically identify as needing to change course level, which type of change do the majority require.

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>A higher course level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>A lower course level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 15**
Of those students, which you identify as needing to move to a higher course level, how many students change course level?

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>1-2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>3-4 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>5-6 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>7-8 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>9-10 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 16**
Of those students, which you identify as needing to move to a lower course level, how many students change course level?

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>1-2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>3-4 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>5-6 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>7-8 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>9-10 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTION 17
If students remain in the course, even if you identified them as needing to move to a lower course level, what reasons keep the students in your class?

Scheduling conflicts
1 ( ) Never
2 ( ) Sometimes
3 ( ) Often
4 ( ) Always

Student's departmental level requirement
1 ( ) Never
2 ( ) Sometimes
3 ( ) Often
4 ( ) Always

Too late in the semester for student to move
1 ( ) Never
2 ( ) Sometimes
3 ( ) Often
4 ( ) Always

No room in another class
1 ( ) Never
2 ( ) Sometimes
3 ( ) Often
4 ( ) Always

Student has already completed the previous course level
1 ( ) Never
2 ( ) Sometimes
3 ( ) Often
4 ( ) Always
Student wished to stay in the course

1 ( ) Never  
2 ( ) Sometimes 
3 ( ) Often  
4 ( ) Always

Other ........................................
1 ( ) Never  
2 ( ) Sometimes  
3 ( ) Often  
4 ( ) Always

QUESTION 18
If students identified as needing to be moved to a lower level course cannot be moved and remain in the course, do they require extra teacher support in the class from the teacher?
1 ( ) Yes  
2 ( ) No

QUESTION 19
If students, identified as needing to move to a lower level course, remain in the course, do they require extra teacher support outside of the class from the teacher?
1 ( ) Yes  
2 ( ) No

QUESTION 20
In your opinion, to what extent does a student usually require extra teaching support at the following levels. If you do not have experience at a particular level please check the box I have never taught this level

ANL 14956 and 14957 Basic Levels I and II

Help with reading
0 ( ) I have never taught this level
1 ( ) None  
2 ( ) Very Little  
3 ( ) Some  
4 ( ) A lot
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help with grammar explanation</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>A lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help with listening</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>A lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help with writing production</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>A lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help with oral speaking</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>A lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help with pronunciation</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>A lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANL 14958 and 14959 Intermediate Levels I and II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 ( )</th>
<th>I have never taught this level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help with reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>A lot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help with grammar explanation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>A lot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help with listening</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>A lot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help with writing production</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>A lot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help with oral speaking</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>A lot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help with pronunciation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>A lot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANL 14960 and 14961 Advanced Levels I and II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Help with reading</th>
<th>Help with grammar explanation</th>
<th>Help with listening</th>
<th>Help with writing production</th>
<th>Help with pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>( ) I have never taught this level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( ) None</td>
<td>( ) None</td>
<td>( ) None</td>
<td>( ) None</td>
<td>( ) None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( ) Very Little</td>
<td>( ) Very Little</td>
<td>( ) Very Little</td>
<td>( ) Very Little</td>
<td>( ) Very Little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( ) Some</td>
<td>( ) Some</td>
<td>( ) Some</td>
<td>( ) Some</td>
<td>( ) Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( ) A lot</td>
<td>( ) A lot</td>
<td>( ) A lot</td>
<td>( ) A lot</td>
<td>( ) A lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Help with oral speaking**

1. ( ) None
2. ( ) Very Little
3. ( ) Some
4. ( ) A lot

**ANL 19554 and 22771 Advanced Levels III and IV**

0. ( ) *I have never taught this level*

**Help with reading**

1. ( ) None
2. ( ) Very Little
3. ( ) Some
4. ( ) A lot

**Help with grammar explanation**

1. ( ) None
2. ( ) Very Little
3. ( ) Some
4. ( ) A lot

**Help with listening**

1. ( ) None
2. ( ) Very Little
3. ( ) Some
4. ( ) A lot

**Help with writing production**

1. ( ) None
2. ( ) Very Little
3. ( ) Some
4. ( ) A lot
Help with pronunciation

1 ( ) None
2 ( ) Very Little
3 ( ) Some
4 ( ) A lot

Help with oral speaking

1 ( ) None
2 ( ) Very Little
3 ( ) Some
4 ( ) A lot

QUESTION 21
Do you feel that the extra support from the teacher raises the misplaced student to the level required to pass the course?

1 ( ) Yes
2 ( ) No

QUESTION 22
On average, how many of the misplaced students, who could not move to a lower level course, fail to reach the pass mark of 60%?

1 ( ) None
2 ( ) 1-2 students
3 ( ) 3-4 students
4 ( ) 5-6 students
5 ( ) 7-8 students
6 ( ) 9-10 students

QUESTION 23
If the student fails to reach the pass mark of 60%, what aspect, or aspects, of their second language is most often responsible?

1 ( ) Reading
2 ( ) Writing
3 ( ) Listening
4 ( ) Speaking
5 ( ) Grammar knowledge
6 ( ) Pronunciation
7 ( ) Other.................................
QUESTION 24
When deciding to grant a passing grade to a student who fails to have an overall mark of 60% in the class, to what extent do you consider the following?

The amount of improvement made

1 ( ) None
2 ( ) Very Little
3 ( ) Some
4 ( ) A lot

The amount of extra help sought

1 ( ) None
2 ( ) Very Little
3 ( ) Some
4 ( ) A lot

The student's academic situation, for example, the course is required for graduation or no further courses are required

1 ( ) None
2 ( ) Very Little
3 ( ) Some
4 ( ) A lot

Consequences of failure for the student for example, time, money, grade point average

1 ( ) None
2 ( ) Very Little
3 ( ) Some
4 ( ) A lot

Attendance in the course

1 ( ) None
2 ( ) Very Little
3 ( ) Some
4 ( ) A lot

Active participation in the course

1 ( ) None
2 ( ) Very Little
3 ( ) Some
4 ( ) A lot
The student's overall ability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Very Little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>A lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Very Little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>A lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 25**

In your own words, respond to the following statement. Describe the behaviour of a typical misplaced student in your class who you identified as needing to move to a lower level, but who did not move.
QUESTION 26
In your own words, respond to the following statement.
Describe your behavior toward a typical student in your class who you identified as needing to move to a lower level, but who did not move.

QUESTION 27
Please indicate your gender.
1 ( ) Male
2 ( ) Female

QUESTION 28
Please indicate your first language.
1 ( ) English
2 ( ) French
3 ( ) Other .............................................

QUESTION 29
Please indicate your age bracket.
1 ( ) 25-35 years
2 ( ) 36-45 years
3 ( ) 46-60 years
4 ( ) 60+

QUESTION 30
Please indicate the highest educational level you have completed.
1 ( ) Bachelor's
2 ( ) Master's
3 ( ) Doctorate
QUESTION 31

Please indicate how many years you have taught English as a second language at the high school or CEGEP level.

1 ( ) 1-4 years  
2 ( ) 5-9 years  
3 ( ) 10-14 years  
4 ( ) 15-20 years  
5 ( ) 20+ years

QUESTION 32

Please indicate the number of points of seniority you have at LS.

1 ( ) 0-20 points  
2 ( ) 20-40 points  
3 ( ) 40-60 points  
4 ( ) 60-80 points  
5 ( ) 80+ points

YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE QUESTIONNAIRE.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
Appendix G

Student Questionnaire

Vous avez vécu l'expérience de suivre un ou des cours d'anglais à LS. Pour cette raison, nous faisons appel à vous pour participer à cette étude en complétant le questionnaire suivant.

Vous y consacrerez moins de 20 minutes de votre temps. Pour assurer la confidentialité des renseignements fournis, votre nom ne paraîtra dans aucun rapport et vos réponses seront codées.

Le présent questionnaire constitue une partie essentielle d'une étude doctorale (certificat d'éthique numéro 2006-236) intitulée *The Impact of Using a Proficiency Test as a Placement Tool: The case of TOEIC.*

Sachez que votre collaboration et votre point de vue sont très importants et grandement appréciés.

Merci infiniment pour le temps consacré à cette tâche et pour les renseignements que vous voulez bien partager avec nous.

**QUESTIONNAIRE DES ÉTUDIANTS**

Le questionnaire comporte 38 questions.

Il est constitué de trois types de questions:

1. Un type de questions suppose que vous écriviez un court paragraphe dans lequel vous donnez votre opinion au sujet d'un énoncé en particulier.

2. Un deuxième type de questions suppose que vous lisiez une question et ensuite que vous choisissiez une réponse ou plus d'une, parmi les choix offerts.

3. Un troisième type de questions vous demande de vous positionner par rapport à un sujet en particulier en ayant recours à une échelle de fréquences ou de quantités.

Pour toutes les questions, pour indiquer votre choix de réponse, veuillez noircir la case correspondant à ce choix. Si votre choix de réponse ne figure pas dans la liste fournie, veuillez noircir la case « Autre » puis inscrire votre réponse dans l'espace prévu à cet effet.

Voici un exemple de question.

**Exemple de question**

Veuillez indiquer la langue que vous parlez à la maison

1  ( ) L'anglais
2  ( ) Le français
3  ( ) L'allemand
4  ( ) L'italien
5  (X) Autre ... la russe
Le questionnaire d'étudiant

**QUESTION 1**
Veuillez indiquer votre sexe.

1 ( ) Féminin
2 ( ) Masculin

**QUESTION 2**
Indiquez à quelle catégorie d'âge vous appartenez.

1 ( ) 18-20 ans
2 ( ) 21-24 ans
3 ( ) 25-29 ans
4 ( ) 30+

**QUESTION 3**
Indiquez votre langue maternelle.

1 ( ) Arabe
2 ( ) Anglais
3 ( ) Français
4 ( ) Espagnol
5 ( ) Autre …………………

**QUESTION 4**
Indiquez votre langue seconde.

1 ( ) Arabe
2 ( ) Anglais
3 ( ) Français
4 ( ) Espagnol
5 ( ) Autre …………………

**QUESTION 5**
Au Québec, avez-vous complété au moins 3 années d'anglais langue seconde à l'école primaire?

1 ( ) Oui
2 ( ) Non

**QUESTION 6**
Au Québec, avez-vous complété 5 années d'anglais langue seconde à l'école secondaire?

1 ( ) Oui
2 ( ) Non

**QUESTION 7**
Avez-vous complété 2 cours d'anglais langue seconde au CÉGEP?

1 ( ) Oui
2 ( ) Non

**QUESTION 8**
En anglais, parmi les quatre habiletés suivantes, dans laquelle vous sentez-vous le plus ou la plus compétent(e)?

1 ( ) Compréhension écrite
2 ( ) Compréhension orale
3 ( ) Production écrite
4 ( ) Production orale
**QUESTION 9**
En anglais, parmi les quatre habiletés suivantes, dans laquelle vous sentez-vous le moins ou la moins compétent(e)?

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Compréhension écrite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Compréhension orale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Production écrite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Production orale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 10**
A quelle fréquence vous adonnez-vous aux activités suivantes en anglais?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activité</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lire des livres ou des revues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lire des manuels scolaires ou des articles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Écrire des courriels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clavarder (chat) sur Internet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Écrire des rapports ou des comptes-rendus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Écouter de la musique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regarder la télévision, des films</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parler avec des clients</td>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parler avec des collègues au travail</td>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parler avec des amis ou de la famille</td>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autre.................................</td>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>Jamais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>À l'occasion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Souvent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Toujours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 11**
À quel niveau d'études êtes-vous inscrit(e)?

| 1 ( ) | Premier cycle |
| 2 ( ) | Deuxième cycle |
| 3 ( ) | Troisième cycle |

**QUESTION 12**
Quel est votre programme d'étude?

| 1 ( ) | Administration |
| 2 ( ) | Agronomie |
| 3 ( ) | Architecture |
| 4 ( ) | Biologie |
| 5 ( ) | Communication publique |
| 6 ( ) | Droit |
| 7 ( ) | Forsterie |
| 8 ( ) | Génie civil |
| 9 ( ) | Kinésiologie |
| 10 ( ) | Nutrition |
| 11 ( ) | Pharmacie |
| 12 ( ) | Relations Industrielles |
| 13 ( ) | Sciences Infirmières |
| 14 ( ) | Autre................................. |
**QUESTION 13**
Veuillez indiquer le cours d'anglais dans lequel vous êtes actuellement inscrit.

<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 14956 Basic English I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 14957 Basic English II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 14958 Intermediate English I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 14959 Intermediate English II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 14960 Advanced English I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 14961 Advanced English II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 19554 Advanced English III</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 22771 Advanced English IV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 14**
Quel est le niveau d'anglais exigé dans votre programme pour obtenir votre diplôme?

<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 14958</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 14959</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>ANL 14960</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Un cours d'anglais peu importe le niveau</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Un certain nombre de cours d'anglais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 15**
Avez-vous déjà passé un examen du TOEIC (test de classement pour les cours d'anglais)?

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oui</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Non</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Si vous avez répondu <<NON>> à la question précédente,
SVP rendez-vous à la question 23.

**QUESTION 16**
Avez-vous passé l'examen du TOEIC à UU?

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oui</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Non</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 17**
Pendant l'examen du TOEIC, comment décririez-vous la qualité sonore de l'enregistrement?

<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Je ne m'en souviens pas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Insatisfaisante</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfaisante</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Excellente</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 18**
À quel point les éléments énumérés ci-dessous ont-ils nui à votre concentration pendant l'examen?
Les déplacements des gens dans la salle m'ont nui

<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

La durée de l'examen m'a nui

<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Le format de choix multiple de l'examen m'a nui
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

La qualité de l'enregistrement m'a nui
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Le lieu (la lumière, la température de la salle, le siège) m'a nui
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Le stress associé à l'examen m'a nui
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Autre........................................
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

QUESTION 19
Comme stratégie d'examen, le TOEIC vous encourage à tenter de deviner lorsque vous n'êtes pas certain(e) de la réponse.
À votre avis, quel est le pourcentage de réponses pour lesquelles vous n'étiez pas certain(e)?
1 ( ) 0-10%
2 ( ) 11-20%
3 ( ) 21-30%
4 ( ) 31-40%
5 ( ) 41-50%
6 ( ) plus de 50%

QUESTION 20
Avez-vous déjà passé un examen de langues seconde de type choix multiple dont le format était semblable à celui de l'examen du TOEIC?
1 ( ) Oui
2 ( ) Non

Si vous avez répondu «NON» à la question précédente,
SVP rendez-vous à la question 22.

QUESTION 21
Combien d'examens semblables à celui du TOEIC avez-vous déjà passé?
1 ( ) 1-2
2 ( ) 3-4
3 ( ) 5-6
4 ( ) 7+
QUESTION 22
À quel niveau avez-vous été classé(e) après l'examen du TOEIC?

1 ( ) ANL 14956 Basic I
2 ( ) ANL 14957 Basic II
3 ( ) ANL 14958 Intermediate I
4 ( ) ANL 14959 Intermediate II
5 ( ) ANL 14960 Advanced I
6 ( ) ANL 14961 Advanced II
7 ( ) ANL 14554 Advanced III
8 ( ) ANL 22771 Advanced IV

QUESTION 23
Étiez-vous d'accord avec le niveau auquel vous avez été assigné(e) ?

1 ( ) Oui
2 ( ) Non

Si vous avez répondu «OUI» à la question précédente,
svp rendez-vous à la question 25

QUESTION 24
Selon vous, à quel niveau auriez-vous dû être placé ?

1 ( ) Un niveau plus bas
2 ( ) Un niveau plus élevé

QUESTION 25
Après le classement, en fonction du résultat obtenu au TOEIC ou à la première rencontre en classe, est ce que l'enseignant(e) a parlé de la possibilité d'un changement de niveau ?

1 ( ) Oui
2 ( ) Non

Si vous avez répondu «NON» à la question précédente,
SVP rendez-vous à la question 38.

QUESTION 26
Après que votre professeur(e) ait suggéré que vous changiez de niveau, l'avez-vous fait ?

1 ( ) Oui, j'ai changé de niveau
2 ( ) Non, je n'ai pas changé de niveau

Si vous avez répondu «OUI» à la question précédente,
SVP rendez-vous à la question 38.

QUESTION 27
Vous n'avez pas changé de niveau, en dépit d'avoir été identifié par l'enseignant(e) comme ayant besoin de changer de niveau. Dans quelle mesure les facteurs suivants vous ont-ils influencé(e) dans votre décision de ne pas changer de niveau ?

J'avais des problèmes d'horaire
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Je ne voulais pas me rajouter des cours
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup
Il était trop tard dans la session pour changer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

J'avais déjà complété le niveau précédent avec succès

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Il n'y avait aucune place disponible dans une autre classe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Je désirais rester dans le cours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

J'avais des ami(e)s dans le cours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Je me sentais à l'aise dans le groupe ou avec le professeur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Je n'étais pas certain(e) que l'autre niveau soit approprié.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

J'avais déjà acheté tous les livres pour le cours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Autre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUESTION 28
Dans quelle mesure, avez-vous éprouvé des difficultés dans les domaines suivants:

**Compréhension écrite**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domaine</td>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>3 ( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compréhension orale</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production écrite</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production orale</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connaissances grammaticales</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prononciation</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autre</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 29**
Présentement, avez-vous besoin d'aide supplémentaire en dehors du cours?

1 ( ) Oui
2 ( ) Non

Si vous avez répondu <<NON>> à la question précédente,
SVP rendez-vous à la question 31.

**QUESTION 30**
Indiquez la quantité d'aide supplémentaire dont vous avez besoin en fonction de chaque domaine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domaine</th>
<th>1 ( )</th>
<th>2 ( )</th>
<th>3 ( )</th>
<th>4 ( )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compréhension écrite</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compréhension orale</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production écrite</td>
<td>1 ( )</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production orale</th>
<th>1 ( )</th>
<th>Pas du tout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connaissances grammaticales</th>
<th>1 ( )</th>
<th>Pas du tout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prononciation</th>
<th>1 ( )</th>
<th>Pas du tout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autre</th>
<th>1 ( )</th>
<th>Pas du tout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION 31**
Dans quelle mesure vous consacrez-vous habituellement aux activités suivantes :

**Parler à l'enseignant(e) au sujet de vos difficultés en anglais**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 ( )</th>
<th>Pas du tout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rencontrer un enseignant(e) de cours privés**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 ( )</th>
<th>Pas du tout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Travailler le matériel du cours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 ( )</th>
<th>Pas du tout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Faire du travail supplémentaire en dehors du matériel de cours (lire, écouter la radio, regarder la télévision, etc.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 ( )</th>
<th>Pas du tout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 ( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Faire des exercices supplémentaires reliés au matériel du cours
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Faire des devoirs écrits supplémentaires (paragraphes, essais, rapports, comptes-rendus)
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Demander une explication supplémentaire à l'enseignant(e) sur le matériel
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Avoir un(e) partenaire de conversation pour des pratiques supplémentaires
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Chercher de l'aide auprès d'autres personnes (parents, amis, autres étudiant(e)s, etc.)
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Faire du travail de laboratoire supplémentaire
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Autre.................................
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

QUESTION 32
Avez-vous pensé à abandonner le cours à cause des difficultés rencontrées?
1 ( ) Oui
2 ( ) Non

QUESTION 33
Dans quelle mesure les facteurs suivants vous ont-ils empêché(e) d'abandonner le cours?
Le retard encouru pour terminer vos études
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

La perte du statut d'étudiant à temps plein
1 ( ) Pas du tout
2 ( ) Très peu
3 ( ) Un peu
4 ( ) Beaucoup

363
Les coûts reliés à la reprise du cours

1 ( ) Pas du tout  
2 ( ) Très peu  
3 ( ) Un peu  
4 ( ) Beaucoup

La honte associée à l'idée d'abandonner un cours

1 ( ) Pas du tout  
2 ( ) Très peu  
3 ( ) Un peu  
4 ( ) Beaucoup

L'espérance de voir vos notes s'améliorer

1 ( ) Pas du tout  
2 ( ) Très peu  
3 ( ) Un peu  
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Le fait qu'il soit trop tard pour abandonner le cours sans pénalité

1 ( ) Pas du tout  
2 ( ) Très peu  
3 ( ) Un peu  
4 ( ) Beaucoup

L'idée qu'il est préférable de rester dans le cours et de s'améliorer

1 ( ) Pas du tout  
2 ( ) Très peu  
3 ( ) Un peu  
4 ( ) Beaucoup

L'idée que d'abandonner le cours ne soit pas une solution

1 ( ) Pas du tout  
2 ( ) Très peu  
3 ( ) Un peu  
4 ( ) Beaucoup

Autre........................

1 ( ) Pas du tout  
2 ( ) Très peu  
3 ( ) Un peu  
4 ( ) Beaucoup

QUESTION 34
Selon vous, obtiendrez-vous la note de passage à la fin de ce cours?
0 ( ) Je ne suis pas certain(e)
1 ( ) Oui
2 ( ) Non

QUESTION 35
Si un(e) étudiant(e) mal classé(e) n'obtient pas la note de passage pour le cours, jusqu'à quel point l'enseignant(e) devrait-il (elle) prendre en considération les aspects suivants dans sa décision d'accorder tout de même une note de passage.
Le progrès accompli par l'étudiant(e) dans le cours

1 ( ) Pas du tout  
2 ( ) Très peu  
3 ( ) Un peu  
4 ( ) Beaucoup
La quantité de travail effectuée par l'étudiant(e) dans le cours

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

La quantité d'aide supplémentaire que l'étudiant(e) est allé(e) chercher en dehors du cours

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

La situation académique de l'étudiant(e) (le cours est exigé pour l'obtention de diplôme où aucun autre cours n'est requis)

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Les conséquences pour l'étudiant (temps perdu, coût encouru, baisse de la moyenne académique)

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

La présence au cours

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

La participation active dans le cours

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Les habiletés globales de l'étudiant(e)

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Autre

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Pas du tout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Très peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Un peu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUESTION 36
Selon vous, devrait-t-on faire passer un(e) étudiant(e) qui a été mal classé(e) pour au moins une des raisons nommées dans la question 35?

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Oui</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Non</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTION 37
En vous appuyant sur votre propre expérience, décrivez comment vous ressentez le fait d’être un(e) étudiant(e) faible dans un cours d’anglais langue seconde.

QUESTION 38
En vous appuyant sur votre propre expérience, décrivez comment un(e) enseignant(e) traite un(e) étudiant(e) faible dans un cours d’anglais langue seconde.

VOUS AVEZ COMPLÉTÉ LE QUESTIONNAIRE, UN GRAND MERCI!
Appendix H

Introduction Letter for Interviews

April 11, 2007

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your knowledge and experience as an English teacher at the LS at UU is of interest and value; therefore I am writing to request your participation in a study which I am conducting as part of my Doctoral studies. The goal of the study is to examine the impact of using a proficiency test as a placement tool. To complete the study, I need a certain number of teachers who agree to participate.

The first stage of the study, involving questionnaires, has been completed, and once again, I thank for your participation. The second stage of the study involves a personal interview. This interview will focus on your experience with the use of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). If you agree to an interview, it will last a maximum of one hour. This interview will be recorded and will be scheduled at a time convenient for you.

The questionnaire stage and the interview stage of the study are not interrelated; therefore, you may not have completed a questionnaire, but may still participate in an interview. You can refuse participation in the study for any reason. The approbation number of this study, 2006-236, was approved on May 8, 2007.

If you have any questions or need further explanation, you may contact me at anne.mullen@elul.ulaval.ca, at home (418) 659-5077 or the office (418) 656-2131 (extension, 12494).

I thank you in advance for agreeing to be part of this study as your collaboration is of the utmost importance. Please contact me by e-mail or telephone to agree to be a part of this portion of the study.

Anne Mullen
Appendix I
Recruitment Notice

ANNONCE DE RECRUTEMENT

Impact of TOEIC on the Stakeholders of École de Langues de l'Université Laval

Cette étude a fait l'objet d'une approbation officielle par le Comité d'éthique de la recherche de l'Université Laval (no. CÉRUL 2006-236, date de l'approbation avril 2007).

Étudiante doctorat en linguistiques, je suis à la recherche d'étudiants disposés à participer à une entrevue individuelle, d'un maximum d'un heure, portant sur leur expérience de passation du test TOEIC utilisé à l'École des langues comme test de classement.

Si vous êtes intéressé à participer, veillez communiquer avec moi à l'adresse suivante anne.mullen.1@ulaval.ca ou au numéro suivant (418) 656-2131, poste 12494. Votre participation à cette étude sera grandement appréciée. Merci à l'avance pour votre collaboration.

Anne Mullen
Appendix J
Consent Form

THE IMPACT OF TEST OF ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION (TOEIC) ON STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN ÉCOLE DES LANGUES UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL (ELUL) AT UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL.

FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT POUR LES ENTREVUES...

Présentation
Cette étude (Numéro d’approbation : 2006-236, May 8, 2007) est réalisée dans le cadre du projet de doctorat de Anne Mullen, dirigé Zita De Koninck, professeure au département de langues, linguistique et traduction à l’Université Laval.

Avant d’accepter de participer à ce projet de recherche, veuillez prendre le temps de lire et de comprendre les renseignements qui suivent. Ce formulaire d’information et de consentement vous explique le but de ce projet de recherche, ses procédures, avantages, risques et inconvénients. Il indique les coordonnées des personnes avec qui communiquer au besoin. Il peut contenir des mots ou expressions que vous ne comprenez pas. Si c’est le cas, nous vous invitons à poser toutes les questions que vous jugerez utiles au chercheur responsable du projet.

Nature de l’étude
Ce projet de recherche vise à mieux comprendre les retombées de l’utilisation du test TEST OF ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION (TOEIC) sur le processus de classement effectué à l’École de langues de l’Université Laval.

Déroulement de la participation
Votre participation à cette recherche consiste à répondre aux 5-10 questions qui portera sur les éléments suivants:

1. opinions sur l’anglais comme langue seconde
2. comportements dans les classes d’anglais langue seconde
3. biographie langagière connaissance du test TOEIC
4. expérience du déroulement du test TOEIC

Chaque entrevue durera environ une heure, avec la chercheure dans une salle de conférence à Pavillon De Koninck. Toutes les entrevues seront enregistrer.

Risques, inconvénients et avantages pour le participant
Pour les participants, la recherche sera l'occasion de réfléchir sur leur expérience d'apprentissage ou d'enseignement d'une langue seconde.

**Participation volontaire et droit de retrait**

Vous êtes libre de participer à ce projet de recherche. Vos réponses, votre participation à la recherche et votre décision de s'en retirer sont complètement indépendantes de votre démarche académique et qu'elles n'auront aucune conséquence sur votre parcours scolaire. Vous avez la liberté de ne pas répondre à toutes les questions. Si vous décidez de mettre fin à votre participation, vous pouvez communiquer avec la chercheure, au numéro de téléphone indiqué dans ce document. Tous les renseignements personnels vous concernant seront alors détruits.

**Confidentialité et gestion des données**

Les mesures suivantes seront appliquées pour assurer la confidentialité des renseignements fournis par les participants :

1. Les noms des participants ne paraîtront dans aucun rapport ;
2. les divers documents de la recherche seront codifiés et seule la chercheure aura accès à la liste des noms et des codes de façon exclusive ;
3. les résultats individuels des participants ne seront jamais communiqués ;
4. les matériaux de la recherche, incluant les données et les enregistrements, seront conservés pendant deux ans après quoi ils seront détruits ;
5. la recherche fera l'objet de publications dans des revues scientifiques, et aucun participant ne pourra y être identifié ou reconnu.

**THE IMPACT OF TEST OF ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION (TOEIC) ON STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN ÉCOLE DES LANGUES UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL (ELUL) AT UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL.**

**Pour des renseignements supplémentaires**

Si vous avez des questions sur la recherche et sur les implications de votre participation ou encore si vous voulez mettre fin à votre participation, veuillez communiquer avec Anne Mullen, chercheure, au numéro de téléphone suivant (418) 656-2131, poste 12494, ou à l'adresse courriel suivante : anne.mullen@elul.ulaval.ca

**Remerciements**

Votre collaboration est très précieuse et je vous en remercie.
Signatures

Je soussigné(e) consens librement à participer à la recherche intitulée :
«THE IMPACT OF TOEIC (TEST OF ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION) ON STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN ECOLE DES LANGUES UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL (ELUL) AT UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL. J'ai pris connaissance du formulaire et je me déclare satisfait des explications, précisions et réponses que la chercheure m'a fournies quant à ma participation à ce projet. Je comprends que je peux mettre fin à ma participation en tout temps sans avoir à subir de conséquence négative ou de préjudice et sans devoir justifier ma décision.

__________________________________________ Date : ________________________________
Signature du participant, de la participante

Je déclare avoir expliqué le but, la nature, les avantages, les risques et les inconvénients du projet de recherche au participant, avoir répondu au meilleur de ma connaissance aux questions posées et avoir fait l'appréciation de la compréhension du participant.

__________________________________________ Date : ________________________________
Signature de la chercheure

Plaintes ou critiques

Toute plainte ou critique concernant ce projet de recherche pourra être adressée au Bureau de l'Ombudsman de l'Université Laval :

Pavillon Alphonse-Desjardins, Bureau 3320
Université Laval
Québec (Québec)
G1K 7P4

Renseignements - Secrétariat : (418) 656-3081
Télécopieur : (418) 656-3846
Courriel : ombuds@ombuds.ulaval.ca
Appendix K
Teacher Interview Questions

INTERVIEW Introduction

Two questionnaires were distributed in the Fall of 2007 to all teachers who were teaching, or usually teach. 15 teachers responded and some of 37 of the 49 sections, in total 677 students. The questionnaires asked about TOEIC, its repercussions, as a placement tool at LS and the following interview will also.

QUESTIONS

1. Could you tell me about yourself in terms of your experience related to teaching?

2. Could you tell me what you know about TOEIC?

According to the responses from the student questionnaires, the majority think reading is their strongest skill and speaking is their weakest.

3. Would you agree? Why or why not?

According to the teacher questionnaire, all teachers suggest some movement either towards the top or the bottom, but students do not always agree to move.

4. Have you had this experience?

According to students, who identified themselves as misplaced, the majority stay due to their desire to remain in that initial class. According to the majority of teachers, misplaced students stay due to administration constraints.

5. What has been your experience with misplaced students who were asked to move, but did not? (extra help, attitude, ability, weak areas)

According to the questionnaire, most students who are misplaced require help for writing, speaking, grammar explanations and or pronunciation.

6. Would you agree? What has been your experience?

According to the questionnaire, 80% of students who are misplaced never consider dropping the course and stay because they hope either the marks will change for the better, or they wish to stay and improve as much as they can or they feel that dropping the course is not a solution.
7. What is your reaction to this statement? B) What has been your experience?

80% of students who say they are misplaced expect to pass their English course.

8. What is your reaction to this statement? B) What has been your experience?

If a student is not successful in obtaining 60%, 70% of students think they should be given a passing grade if they have either made progress, worked a lot, sought extra help, attended the courses, participated, had overall linguistic strength to be considered or if the failure would have negative consequences on their academic situation.

9. What is your reaction to this statement? B) What has your experience been?

Teachers say the behavior of a misplaced student can be described as negative.

10. Could you imagine what factors or changes could make it less so for the teachers?

Misplaced students say being a misplaced student is a negative experience.

11. Could you imagine what could make it less so for students?

12. Is there anything you would like to ask or say?
Appendix L

Student Interview Questions

1. Pouvez-vous me dire de vos expérience en anglais ? B) à l’école secondaire ? B) au collège ? B) à l’université ?

Pouvez-vous décrire votre expérience avec l’examen TOEIC ? B) Pouvez-vous décrire les côtés positifs ? B) les négatifs ?

Can you tell me a little about your past learning experiences in English? B) in high school? B) in college? B) in university?

Can you describe your experience in taking the TOEIC? B) Can you describe the positives? B) the negatives?

2. Lorsque vous avez reçu les résultats de TOEIC et le niveau de cours que vous aviez à suivre, étiez-vous d'accord avec le placement de TOEIC ?

When you received your score and the course you needed to take, did you agree with the TOEIC placement?

3. Lors du votre premier cours, aviez-vous voulu changer de niveau? Votre professeur vous a-t-il suggéré de changer a niveau?

Did you want to move or was it suggested by the teacher that you move?

B) Avez-vous changé de niveau? B) Si oui, pourquoi ? B) Sinon, qu’est-ce qui aurait pu vous convaincre à changer de niveau? B)Pour quelle raison êtes vous resté ? B)Your motivation?

B) Did you move? B) If yes, why? B) If no, could anything have convinced you to change levels? FOR MISPLACED WHO DIDN'T MOVE B)Why did you stay? B)Willingness to work?

Pouvez-vous estimer votre meilleure compétence et votre plus faible? B) Pouvez-vous justifier pourquoi?

What is your worst and best skill area? B) Can you explain why?


Did you require extra help? B) In what areas?

5. Si un étudiant ne réussit pas d'obtenir une note finale de 60%, 70% d'étudiants pensent que l'étudiant devrait être accordé une note de réussite dans le cas où:

il a fait du progrès accompli,
la quantité du travail effectuée ou d’aide supplémentaire,
la participation active,
la présence,
nos habiletés globales,
on les conséquences sur leur carrière universitaire.

If a student is not successful in obtaining a passing grade of 60%, 70% of students think they should be given a passing grade if they have either made progress, worked a lot, sought extra help, attended the courses, participated, had overall linguistic strength to be considered or when the failure could have negative consequences on their academic situation.
6. Quelle est votre réaction à ce constat?  
What is your reaction to this statement? B) What has your experience been?

6. Que pensez-vous que l'on pourrait faire pour faciliter la situation de l'étudiant mal placé?  
What do you think could be done to make the situation of the misplaced student easier?

7. Avez-vous des questions ou commentaires?  
Is there anything you would like to ask or add?
two methods and to eliminate the weaknesses of choosing one method over another, this study uses a mixed methods design.

When mixed method designs were first introduced, there were three design types. The first type was: equivalent status designs (both qualitative and quantitative approaches used equally) and the second were: dominant-less dominant designs (using qualitative or quantitative designs which are not traditionally used in a particular area of study) and the third were: multilevel designs. Multilevel designs were further divided to include: 1) sequential (the use of a qualitative phase then a quantitative phase of a study or vice versa) and 2) parallel/simultaneous designs (both qualitative and quantitative data collected at the same time with different groups of subjects) (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 1998). Although the mixing of methodology offered various design possibilities, the mixing of methods alone was considered too limiting.

Creswell (2003: 211-12) offered four areas in which a researcher needs to answer questions about a research design and the answers to those questions leads to the choice of the appropriate mixed methods design. The four questions relate to: 1) the type of implementation sequence of the quantitative and qualitative data collection (sequential or parallel/simultaneous); 2) the priority given to the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis (first qualitative data collected then quantitative or vice versa or both collected at the same time); 3) the point at which the quantitative and qualitative data will be combined (mixing of data at the level of the data collection process, analysis, interpretation or at a number of phases); and 4) the overall theoretical perspective (a larger theoretical perspective which over-rides the entire study). The decisions, which the researcher makes in these four areas, determine which strategy to employ in choosing a research design.

It was Patton (1990) who envisioned a way that the two methodologies could be combined, not only in design, but across three major phases of the research especially within an educational or social science research study setting. He combined three components: the