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Performance analysis: Hospitality industry employers' perceptions of their limited English proficient employees

Lafrenz, Lu Ann, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University, 1991
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS: HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT EMPLOYEES

DISTRIBUTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By
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1991

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FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field:

Education

Training and Development
Education Evaluation
Adult Education
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Demographic changes in the United States population will continue to affect the composition of the American workforce throughout the twentieth century (ASTD, 1989; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Johnston & Packer, 1987). The rate of growth of the United States population is projected to decline; therefore, employers will have to compete for a reduced number of potential employees (ASTD, 1989; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Erhlich & Garland, 1988; Johnston & Packer, 1987; Nussbaum, 1989). This reduction will be partially counterbalanced by the projected increase in the number of minorities, refugees, and immigrants (Johnston & Packer, 1987). A common difficulty, especially with refugees, and immigrants is their limited English proficiency (Ehrlich & Garland, 1988; Harrison, 1986; Longfield, 1985; Oxford & Carpenter, 1986). In the past, important contributions in the development of the United States industries were made by immigrants and refugees, most of whom had limited English proficiency skills (Acuna, 1981; Fogel, 1983; Friedenberg & Bradley, 1984;
Lopez-Valadez, 1985). In addition, the limited English proficient (LEP) individuals were employed primarily in low-skilled, low-paying, and low-prestige jobs (Acuna, 1981; Fogel, 1983; Friedenberg & Bradley, 1984; Lopez-Valadez, 1985). Traditionally, middle- and low-skilled jobs have been found in the service industry (Johnston & Packer, 1987). Today, approximately 75 percent of the United States workforce is estimated to be in the service industry; eight percent of this group is employed by the hospitality sector (ASTD, 1989; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Shifflet, 1989). The low-skill level of jobs and the ethnic and racial characteristics of the hospitality industry employees have made employment in this sector relatively easy for LEP individuals (Kohl & Greenlaw, 1981; Mill, 1989; Tanke, 1988).

In view of the anticipated continued reliance on LEP employees, the focus of this research was to investigate the perceptions of the hospitality industry employers relative to their LEP employees. Very little research has been done in reference to LEP employees in the hospitality industry and not any was found which specifically focused on the Chicago area.

**Significance of the Study**

Projections to the twenty-first century indicate that the largest increase in the workforce will be in the service industry (Johnston & Packer, 1987). Historically,
the service industry has relied considerably on young people as a major labor resource (ASTD, 1989; Bacas, 1989; Bernstein, 1988; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Fullerton, 1987; Johnston & Packer, 1987; Nussbaum, 1988). This resource is expected to decline throughout the 1990s. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the share of youths who recently sought summer jobs reached its lowest mark in 26 years (U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990). Immigrants and refugees along with other minorities (e.g., women and blacks) will account for the majority of the increase in the workforce (ASTD, 1989; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Copeland, 1988; Johnston & Packer, 1987; Nussbaum, 1988). Included in the number of minorities are approximately 34 million Americans who speak a native language other than English, some of whom can be classified as possessing limited English proficiency (Crandall, 1985). This number is projected to increase to over 40 million by the end of the twentieth century (Crandall, 1985).

**Statement of the Problem**

Through the 1990s, the number of employees needed in the hospitality industry will be affected by the predicted increase in the number of guests. According to the President of the American Hotel and Motel Association, "In the next decade travel and tourism as a whole will become the nation's number one employer, with one out of every
five American employees" (Etess, 1989, p. 16). As a result, heightened industry-wide competition can be expected among hospitality properties to vie for a greater portion of the workforce and for guests to maximize the profit potential (Anthony, 1988; Beard, 1989). In vying for guests, hospitality properties may have to offer increased or improved quality of services (Anthony, 1988; Beard, 1989; Petrini, 1989; Shifflet, 1989). Increased employees' English-language proficiency could, no doubt, help serve as a means of improving or facilitating employee performance and, thereby, the quality of guest services.

**Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the perceptions of the hospitality industry employers relative to their limited English proficient (LEP) employees. A primary concern was to establish baseline data that described the perceptions of hospitality industry employers in the Chicago metropolitan area relative to their LEP employees.

The following questions were formulated to give direction in the study:

1. What is the employment process for job applicants?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses or problems of LEP employees?
3. How effectively do LEP employees' communicate with management, guests, and co-workers?
4. What training programs and aids are available for LEP employees?

5. What are the greatest future challenges confronting the hospitality industry and what role will LEP employees play?

**Delimitations of the Study**

This study was delimited by the following boundaries:

1. The population represented only one segment of the service industry, specifically the hospitality sector.

2. The population represented only the Chicago metropolitan area, namely Cook and DuPage counties.

**Limitations of the Study**

The following limitations will affect the findings and conclusions of the study:

1. This study was based on responses from hospitality industry personnel managers and supervisors of LEP employees in the Chicago metropolitan area. Generalizations beyond this area cannot be assumed.

2. The validity of the data depended on the ability of the interviewer to elicit honest information from the participants during the interviews.
3. The validity of the data depended on the participant's ability to understand the questions in the interview schedule.

4. The data collected were subject to the validity and reliability limitations of the interview method.

Assumption

The assumption was made that the listings of the hospitality properties in the Chicago metropolitan area were accurate. The listings used were the 1989 Chicago and suburban Ameritech PagesPlus, the Hotel and Motel RedBook (American Hotel and Motel Association, 1989), AAA CitiBook Chicago (1989), and Hotel and Travel Index (Reed Travel Group, 1989).

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of the study, selected terms were defined as follows.

Chicago Metropolitan Area includes all suburbs in Cook and DuPage counties in addition to the city of Chicago (AAA Chicago and Vicinity Map, 1989).

Hospitality Industry refers to any business that primarily caters to guest lodgings (Brymer, 1984).
Hospitality Property is an individual hotel, inn, lodge, or motel. The following represent specific types of hospitality properties:

a. Ownership/Management Category

Corporation - is legally combined with other businesses.

Franchise - has the name, management, and marketing provided to them by another company in return for a share of the profits.

Independent - is privately owned.

Management Company - is operated or managed by a company other than the owner.

Management Company/Corporation - is operated or managed by a company on behalf of a corporation.

Franchise/Corporation - is a franchise owned by a corporation.

b. Price Category

Economy/Budget - charges less than $60.00 per room per night (Fodor's 90 Chicago, 1990).

Mid-Price - charges in the range of $60.00 to $100.00 per room per night (Fodor's 90 Chicago, 1990).

Luxury - charges $100.00 and above per room per night (Fodor's 90 Chicago, 1990).
c. Service Category

**Rooms-Only** - offers only sleeping facilities.

**Full-Service** - offers services in addition to sleeping facilities (e.g., food, laundry, banquet).

d. Size Category

**Small** - has less than 100 rooms and suites.

**Mid-Size** - has between 100 and 300 rooms and suites.

**Large** - has over 300 rooms and suites.

**Limited English Proficient (LEP)** refers to individuals who speak a native language other than English and who experience difficulty in understanding, speaking, reading, or writing English to the point that it is a barrier to continuous education and employment. Such low-language proficient individuals include immigrants, refugees, and United States born citizens (Friedenberg, 1989).

**Personnel Manager** is any person at a hospitality property who is responsible for the following employee procedures: selection, performance evaluation, termination, training, and discipline (Pickworth, 1981).
A review of literature revealed a dearth of published research in reference to limited English proficient (LEP) individuals. No research was found which specifically dealt with LEP individuals in the hospitality industry. However, the search yielded an appreciable number of reports and articles which were related, in varying degrees, to the study. The main headings for the review of literature are (1) United States Demographics, (2) Occupational, Cultural, and Social Adjustments of LEP Individuals, and (3) Education and Training for LEP Individuals.

**United States Demographics**

Demographic changes in the United States' population during the 1990s will affect the composition of the United States' workforce. The following projected changes suggest that the greatest impact on the hospitality industry's workforce will be (1) the slow down in the growth of the United States population, (2) the increase in the number of
immigrants, and (3) the increase in the number of minorities (Johnston & Packer, 1987).

With the exception of the 1930s, the growth in the United States' population is projected to be slower than in any other decade in history (Johnston & Packer, 1987). The workforce is also expected to mirror this slow growth (Table 1) which will be affected by the decline in the number of young people (Johnston & Packer, 1987).

Table 1
Population and Workforce Growth during the Years 1900 to 2000 (Average Annual Growth)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Workforce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of 16-to-24-year-olds in the workforce is projected to drop annually by one-half million from 1987 until 1995 (Bacas, 1989; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Fullerton, 1987; Johnston & Packer, 1987). As a result, industries, such as the hospitality, that have relied heavily on young workers will have to seek other labor resource alternatives from now to the turn of the century (ASTD, 1989; Bacas, 1989; Bernstein, 1988; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Fullerton, 1987; Johnston & Packer, 1987; Nussbaum, 1988).

Furthermore, immigration rates could significantly influence the population projections for the 1990s. The greatest uncertainty about the projections is the total number and composition of immigrants and refugees entering the United States (ASTD, 1989; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Fullerton, 1987; Johnston & Packer, 1987). According to Fullerton (1987), the percentage share of immigrants in the United States population will continue to increase through the twenty-first century (Table 2).

In regard to minorities, the projections suggest a dramatic change in the racial and ethnic composition of the workforce (ASTD, 1989; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Fullerton, 1987; Johnston & Packer, 1987; Nussbaum, 1988). Historically, white United States born males have represented the largest share of the workforce, but this number is projected to continue to drop throughout the
Table 2

Percentage Share of Immigrants in the United States

Population Projections for the Years 1972 to 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972 - 1979</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979 - 1984</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986 - 1995</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995 - 2000</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


1990s (ASTD, 1989; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Fullerton, 1987; Johnston & Packer, 1987; Nussbaum, 1988), as shown in Table 3. They will be replaced by the minorities, which will account for the largest percentage of net additions to the workforce (ASTD, 1989; Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Copeland, 1988; Gardner, 1986; Johnston & Packer, 1987; Nussbaum, 1988). Hispanics and Asians will represent the largest minority groups. Several authorities have projected that Hispanics actually will surpass Blacks in 1990 as the nation's single largest minority group (Bolick & Nestleroth, 1988; Cellini, 1985; National Commission for Employment Policy, 1982).
Table 3
Percentage of New Entrants into the Workforce in the Years 1985 and 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>1985</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. born white males</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. born white females</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. born nonwhite males</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. born nonwhite females</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant males</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant females</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


One result of the projected changes in the composition of the American workforce will be the focus of organizations on cultural differences affecting the roles and job performances of their minority group employees (Gerber, 1990; Solomon, 1990). According to Solomon (1990), ignoring cultural diversity in the workplace can negatively affect people and productivity. The concept of managing diversity implies that organizations create the necessary changes in their systems, structures, and management practices to eradicate obstacles that might keep
employees from achieving their potential (Gerber, 1990). According to Gerber (1990), the key to managing diversity is awareness and the adjustment of management practices, particularly interpersonal skills, to match the needs of individuals.

**Occupational, Cultural, and Social Adjustments of LEP Individuals**

Studies in this section are related to the occupational, cultural, and social adjustments of LEP individuals needed in American society and the workforce. The referenced authors reported personal characteristics of different language groups and specific problems they faced when seeking education and training opportunities.

Stein (1979) conducted a study to determine if occupational adjustment patterns of Vietnamese refugees (1975 to 1977) were similar to those of other refugee groups. He used data from (1) a series of five telephone surveys conducted by Opportunity Systems, Inc., (2) a series of 11 Reports to Congress prepared by the Health Education and Welfare Task Force for Indochinese Refugees, and (3) proceedings from eight Congressional hearings about Indochinese refugees. More similarities than differences were found between the Vietnamese and other refugee groups. Stein reported that the most lengthy adjustment periods were social and cultural and that employment was critical for refugees to move into the
main-stream of society. Employment offered opportunities for refugees to practice language, become socially involved and accepted, and become economically self-sufficient. The more acculturated refugees had higher positions and more contacts with the dominant culture than other refugees. Impediments to employment were underutilized education and job skills but the greatest impediment was the lack of language fluency.

A purpose of a study conducted by Bach and Bach (1980) was to determine how effectively Indochinese refugees main-streamed into the American workforce. Indochinese refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia (1975 to 1977 entrants) were examined along with national employment surveys of the United States Department of Health and the Annual Alien Address Register maintained by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Bach and Bach reported that 41 percent of the subjects accepted jobs immediately after arrival in the United States. According to the refugees, language training was crucial in securing employment or better employment. As a result of limited English skills, the researchers suggested that refugees are exploited in the workforce which translated into longer hours of work, inadequate income, and elementary fears of self-insufficiency. Research was recommended in the following areas: employment-participation data on the entire refugee population; the influence of agencies, ethnic enclaves,
government programs, and community reception of the participation of refugees in employment; and the identification of programs and services available and unavailable to refugees.

Shore and Platt (1984) used 1980 census data and field work reports from studies conducted (1961-1983) by a variety of authors to evaluate the effect of oral and written English language skills of Samoan immigrants in on-the-job situations. According to Shore and Platt, the Samoans were very concerned about their English proficiency. The combination of limited English proficiency and unfamiliarity with American expectations and values hindered Samoans when they prepared resumes and job applications and during interviews. Shore and Platt concluded that language barriers and cultural differences encouraged the underemployment and unemployment of Samoans in white collar jobs and supervisory positions.

In 1982, the National Commission for Employment Policy (NCEP) conducted a study to determine the causes and dimensions of employment problems among Hispanics. Data were obtained from studies previously completed by the United States Bureau of the Census. The three primary barriers Hispanics faced in the job market were reported to be lack of English-language proficiency, low educational background, and discrimination. Lack of English proficiency often resulted in fewer job possibilities,
hindered training and education advancement, and was a vehicle for on-the-job discrimination. Hispanic workers who had difficulty communicating in English received lower wages than those proficient in the language. Hispanic-Americans were also penalized to a greater degree for their limited English proficiency than other groups with a similar lack of English skills.

Cellini (1985) examined the impact of Hispanic culture on management in the American workplace. He reported that Hispanics are not accustomed to the scientific-management approach, predominantly used in America. With the increase of Hispanics in the American workforce, the author suggested acceptance and accommodation of Hispanic cultural differences by employers. Hispanics are more sensitive and respectful than their American counterparts, and thus require more tact from managers during communication with all levels of management. Since a language barrier exists, Hispanic workers require more detailed information (perhaps in Spanish) in regard to employee benefits, job requirements, and safety regulations. The author also recommended Spanish-language training for management in addition to English-language training for employees.

Latkiewicz (1983) sought the reaction of Utah employers' to Indochinese refugees as job applicants and employees. Questionnaires, personal interviews, and a language-proficiency test were used with personnel managers
and supervisors at 80 Utah companies that hired Indochinese employees and 73 Utah companies that were potential employers. The overall reactions to the Indochinese as job applicants and employees were generally positive. The greatest barriers to employment identified by respondents were language and cultural differences. Listening (understanding) was considered the most important on-the-job language skill, followed by speaking, reading, and writing. However, interest was low in having English language classes at company sites.

Education and Training for LEP Individuals

This section was included in the review of literature since educational and training programs may be worthwhile vehicles to help attain and improve the quality of services in the hospitality industry. The authors in this section placed emphasis on the importance of language for the success of LEP individuals in educational settings and on-the-job.

Granville (1982) conducted a study to determine the status and effectiveness of Michigan’s vocational education programs for LEP individuals. To collect data, mail questionnaires were developed for use with directors of bilingual programs (n = 75), directors of vocational programs (n = 57), and teachers and counselors who worked with vocational or bilingual programs (n = 6 per district) in 20 vocational areas. Personal interviews were conducted
with a minimum of 30 LEP students and their parents within each of the language groups identified (Arabic/Chaldean, Indochinese, and Spanish) to determine the effectiveness of the programs. Statistics from Michigan's Employment Security Commission and Department of Education as well as national studies were used to ascertain employers' needs and predict future employment trends in Michigan. Granville reported that students and parents with limited English proficiency were not served by vocational educational and often were unaware of vocational education opportunities. They were frequently influenced by cultural biases in the selection of vocational programs, a problem enhanced by the shortage of secondary counselors and vocational education teachers trained to help LEP students. Therefore, current programs were not structured to meet the multiple needs of LEP students. Additionally, bilingual persons were underrepresented on vocational advisory committees. Granville emphasized the use of a comprehensive program in bilingual vocational education as the most efficient way to provide LEP students with the education needed to get a job and maintain it.

Berry and Feldman (1983) conducted case studies at nine federally funded bilingual vocational training sites to identify obstacles which prevented LEP trainees from full participation in such programs. The authors interviewed all staff members at each site and completed limited
observations of classrooms, laboratories, and work-site activities. Language was identified as the primary obstacle which prevented trainees from full participation in bilingual vocational training programs. Other obstacles were cultural, financial, instructional, and programmatic. Programmatic obstacles ranged from inappropriate or inconvenient location or schedules to inappropriate materials and assessment instruments.

The purpose of a study reported by Belfiore and Burnaby (1984) was to bring together important issues relative to English in the workplace. Data were collected through interviews with management and employees, on-the-job observations, and language assessments of employees. The findings supported the need for EWP programs. Both management and union personnel linked communication problems and attitudes with the quality of service offered by service industries. In addition, the management reported that persons with limited English-language skills had more on-the-job accidents, lower productivity levels, and fewer promotions within organizations than their native English-speaking counterparts.

An ethnographic study of the Vietnamese community in Santa Clara County, California, was executed by Finnan (1981). The subjects were adults enrolled in a six-month electronics technical training program. Finnan interviewed the trainees informally and observed their
social interactions. His findings reinforced the importance of social assimilation of refugees who had entered the United States. The author recommended that refugees acquire some work experience in the United States before enrolling in extended training in order to understand the job market. He also strongly advocated that prior to training refugees learn to speak enough English to obtain jobs in accordance with their interests.

Slatter (1974) was interested in the effect of employment of non-English speaking immigrants on British businesses and the cost and benefit of providing language training at the company level. He conducted open-ended interviews with management-level employers (n = 21). The employers reported that language training could help reduce conflicts between management and language-minority groups and between different ethnic groups and also increase the potential for language minority groups to be promoted. Employers also stated that business organizations could benefit from accepting the social responsibility of providing English language training to such employees since effective communication is the basic prerequisite to help overcome cultural differences, disparities of social attitudes, and prejudice.

Baldwin (1982) evaluated the Indochinese in the workforce in terms of meeting the needs of their employers in Orange County, California. Local government officials
and businessmen were used to develop an interview schedule which was administered to 534 Indochinese refugees and 604 non-refugees living in the county. In general, refugees were assigned excellent or good ratings by the employers and were described as quick learners, mathematically inclined, and highly dedicated to job advancement. The greatest problem posed to the employers was the inability of the refugees to communicate in English, a major entrance requirement for most of the educational and training programs. As a result, a large percentage of these workers were excluded from participation in such programs. Baldwin recommended the expansion of English classes at neighborhood sites, exploration of teaching the English-language and culture by television and radio, adaptation of existing instructional materials to include job-specific vocabulary, and establishment of a business and education task force.

Oberle (1990) examined issues service industries faced when providing classes of English as a second language (ESL) for their employees. He obtained data from informal contacts with companies involved in ESL programming. Oberle reported that few hotels conducted on-going ESL classes and tutoring sessions or reimbursed tuition. Typically English language training was not on-going in the hospitality industry, but began after high-guest-contact employees and guest or supervisor barriers became
intolerable. This case-by-case method of implementing English training was only meeting temporary needs of both the hotels and their LEP employees. According to Oberle, a major business and industry concern was the determination of the appropriate provider of ESL training. Most of the funding for ESL programs has been provided by the business sector. Since 1988, however, the Workplace Literacy Partnership Act (WLPA) has allowed the United States Department of Education to allocate federal funds to businesses and educational institutions to provide basic education in the workplace. Consequently, 50 percent of the WLPA awards in the 1988 fiscal year were made to ESL training programs. Oberle expressed the belief that the number of employers providing ESL training would increase in the future.

Summary

The projected demographic changes in the United States population that will have the greatest impact on the hospitality industry's workforce are the slow down in the growth of the United States population and the increase in both the number of immigrants and minorities. There was consensus in the literature reviewed that the lack of English-language skills was the greatest obstacle to employment and educational success faced by limited English proficient (LEP) individuals. In addition, the lack of English-language proficiency adversely affected the
occupational, cultural, and social adjustments of LEP individuals. Other problems encountered by LEP individuals entering the workplace or training programs were cultural differences, lack of education, limited job skills, and discrimination. The overall reactions of employers to LEP job applicants and employees were positive. Employers believed that language training could help reduce management or consumer and LEP employee misunderstandings as well as increase the LEP employees' potential for promotion. The studies supported the need for vocational educational and work-related English programs both on-site and community-wide.
CHAPTER III
Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology and design used in the study. The main headings are (1) Selection of the Population and Sample, (2) Development of the Instrument, (3) Data Collection, and (4) Data Analysis.

Selection of the Population and Sample

The population for investigation in the study consisted of hospitality property personnel in the Chicago metropolitan area. The sub-headings for this section are (1) Locale, (2) Subjects, (3) Sampling Technique, and (4) External Validity.

Locale

The selection of the Chicago metropolitan area was determined after consultation with members of the researcher's dissertation committee and two individuals who were knowledgeable about the hospitality industry. They were a service industry language consultant who specialized in the hospitality industry and a hospitality management faculty member from The Ohio State University. The Chicago
metropolitan area was selected as the site for the research since there were a substantial number of hospitality properties in the area and the sizable representation of limited English proficient (LEP) individuals in the area (Illinois Public School Bilingual Census, 1989-1990; U.S. Department of Commerce, 1983). In addition, there was a dearth of research or published information in reference to the LEP workforce in the area. Another important consideration was the proximity of the location to the researcher because of the cost of travel and the time involved collecting the interview data.

**Subjects**

The respondents in the study were the personnel managers and supervisors of LEP employees at each of the 45 hospitality properties in the sample. Personnel managers were selected as subjects since they usually are most widely involved with all aspects of employment, such as selection, training, and evaluation (Divine, 1984; Lomperis, 1989; McVey, 1989; Pickworth, 1981). More specifically, they are responsible for performance appraisals, termination of employment, and conduction of exit interviews (Lomperis, 1989; McVey, 1989).

The personnel managers at each property were asked to identify a supervisor who worked with a large number of LEP employees. Supervisors are more intimately involved than personnel managers with LEP employees on a day-to-day basis
and are aware of specific information about their strengths and weaknesses (Lomperis, 1989; McVey, 1989). A potential disadvantage of interviewing supervisors was the possibility that they could also have limited English proficiency, making it difficult for the researcher to ask questions and interpret responses (Lomperis, 1989; McVey, 1989). However, this was not encountered in the study.

A total of 74 respondents were interviewed in this study. There were 29 personnel manager respondents, 29 supervisor respondents, and 16 respondents who answered both personnel manager and supervisor interview questions. The 16 respondents who answered both sets of interview questions assumed both personnel manager and supervisor job roles. Thus a total of 45 respondents (29 supervisors and 16 managers/supervisors) answered all the personnel manager interview questions and 45 respondents (29 supervisors and 16 supervisors/managers) answered all the supervisor interview questions. (See Table 4.)

Four sources were used to compile the list of properties in the Chicago metropolitan area. They were Ameritech PagesPlus (1989) for the city of Chicago and the individual suburbs in Cook and DuPage counties, the Hotel and Motel RedBook (American Hotel and Motel Association, 1989), the Hotel and Travel Index (Reed Travel Group, 1989), and the AAA CitiBook Chicago (1989). A total of 539 properties were identified in the Chicago area.
Table 4  
Respondent’s Job Role, Type of Interview Questions, and Total Number of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of interview questions</th>
<th>Personnel manager</th>
<th>Personnel manager/supervisor</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel manager</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a The total 16 represents the 16 respondents who answered both the personnel manager and supervisor interview questions.
b A total of 74 respondents were interviewed, however, there were 45 respondents for both the personnel manager and supervisor interview questions.

Non-Respondent Information. Twenty-three personnel managers chose not to participate in the study. The non-respondents were replaced by other hospitality properties randomly selected from the population for a total of 45. (A description of each non-respondent by location, price, size, and type of service can be found in Appendix A.)
There were a variety of reasons why personnel managers chose not to participate in the study. As shown in Table 5, the reason most often cited by personnel managers was "not interested" \((n = 8, 34.8\%)\), followed by "no LEP employees" \((n = 5, 21.7\%)\), "too busy" \((n = 5, 21.7\%)\), and "we do not release that information" \((n = 3, 13.0\%)\). The non-respondents were distributed among the three locations (airport, \(n = 7\) or 30.4%; downtown, \(n = 8\) or 34.8%; and suburban, \(n = 8\) or 34.8%). Price-wise, the largest group of non-respondents consisted of personnel managers from the economy/budget hospitality properties \((n = 15, 65.2\%)\). Lack of interest was the primary reason given by this group for refusal to participate; for example, one personnel manager said, "People who stay here don’t care if our employees speak English" (Appendix A, Property #9).

All of the non-respondents \((n = 5)\) with no LEP employees were from properties in suburban locations. Several of the personnel managers explained why they did not have any LEP employees. One stated, "At the present time all employees speak English. We’ve had too many customer complaints when we’ve had employees who can’t speak English so we haven’t hired any lately" (Appendix A, Property #19). Another suburban personnel manager stated, "We don’t have any employees who have difficulty speaking English mostly because we have no public transportation to get them here from the city" (Appendix A, Property #21).
Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>Downtown Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No LEPs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too busy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No release information</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sampling Technique**

Selection of the sample was based on a stratified random sampling technique. The two categories most salient in the hospitality industry are price and location (Lodging Hospitality's Top 400 Performers, 1988; Lomperis, 1984, 1989; McVey, 1989; Shifflet, 1989; Yenckel, 1989). Properties can be categorized on the basis of the room rate per night which was used in this study. Only three price categories were identified in most of the published information (Brymer, 1984; Hedges, 1989; Shifflet, 1989)
which were also used by the hospitality industry resource persons interviewed prior to the development of the instruments (Lomperis, 1989; McVey, 1989; Zaft, 1989). However, only 230 (42.7%) of the 539 Chicago hospitality properties had room rate listings in the published resources available to the researcher (Hotel and Motel RedBook, 1989; Hotel and Travel Index, 1989; AAA CitiBook Chicago, 1989). Average price ranges for Chicago and national properties are listed in Table 6.

Table 6
Hospitality Property Average Price Range Per Night:
Chicago and National

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>$ Price range</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy/Budget</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Price</td>
<td>60 - 100</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury</td>
<td>Over 100</td>
<td></td>
<td>Over 70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a From Fodor’s 90 Chicago, 1990, p. 171.

Location was the second category used to stratify the sample. *Lodging Hospitality* (a magazine) publishes an annual list of top performers in the industry. The breakdown of location categories for corresponding Chicago sites were (1) downtown, (2) airport (O'Hare and Midway), and (3) suburban (Cook and DuPage counties). In the study, the categorization of properties by location was easier than by price since (1) location information was available in all four sources used to identify the properties and (2) maps of Chicago and vicinity could be used to help define the three sub-group locations.

**External Validity**

Research lacks external validity if the researcher does not exert control for errors jeopardizing external validity: frame error, sampling error, selection error, and non-response error (Kerlinger, 1973). The potential errors were controlled by the researcher as explained in the following sections.

**Frame error.** The assumption was made by the researcher that the combination of the *Ameritech PagesPlus* (1989), the *Hotel and Motel Redbook* (American Hotel and Motel Association, 1989), *Hotel and Travel Index* (Reed Travel Group, 1989), and the *AAA CitiBook Chicago* (1989), represented an accurate listing of hospitality properties in the Chicago metropolitan area. Frame error was
controlled by using multiple listings of the target population.

**Sampling error.** A second potential problem can be sampling error, or the selection of a nonrepresentative sample. To control for sampling error, the subjects were randomly selected from the two strata (location and price) in the population (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1985). The total sample size for the study was 45, with 15 properties per location strata and 15 properties for each price strata. Even though a sample is relatively small, increasing the variation of the sample by stratifying should result in common patterns among the properties in the population (Patton, 1980). In addition, variation between the strata may emerge to indicate what makes properties atypical (Patton, 1980).

**Selection error.** Selection error can also jeopardize external validity. Such an error often occurs when multiple lists are combined to identify the population in a study (Kerlinger, 1973), such as was done in this study. To control for selection error the properties were combined into a single alphabetical list and any duplication of properties was removed.

**Non-response error.** Non-response error is the portion of planned subjects which cannot be reached, or refuse to participate (Dillman, 1978). Any properties which declined to participate were noted and another property was randomly
selected to replace it. Strategies to limit the number of non-respondents and control for non-response error included explaining to potential respondents the purpose of the study (Dillman, 1978) and the availability of subsequent results (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1985; Borg & Gall, 1979; Dillman, 1978). In addition, assurance was given as to the confidentiality of responses.

**Transferability.** A purpose of the study was to contribute to the literature through an investigation of the Chicago metropolitan area hospitality industry employers' perceptions of their LEP employees. No claim was made for the generalizability of the findings; however, the information covered in the study was maximized by employing the stratified random sampling technique. Therefore, application of the results could be made to similar hospitality industry properties depending on how close the presentation and interpretation of data "fit" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

**Development of the Instrument**

To acquire the necessary data, the decision was made to use a two-part instrument: an interview schedule and a questionnaire. The researcher recognized the potential disadvantages of the interview technique; namely, time consuming (for both the researcher and the respondent), costly, and inconvenient. However, the interview method was considered desirable since it permitted the probing of
responses where deemed essential. The sub-headings considered in this section are (1) Interview Schedule, (2) Questionnaire, (3) Validity of the Instrument, and (4) Pilot Test of the Instrument.

**Interview Schedule**

The structured type of interview was chosen to gather comparable data across property sites (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Structured interview schedules (1) reduce the possibility of bias by minimizing interviewer effects, (2) make the best use of the limited time available in an interview, (3) reduce the need for interviewers to make judgments during the interview, and (4) help make the interview process more inclusive and systematic by delimiting the issues discussed (Patton, 1980). According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), other advantages of structured interviews are the ease of coding responses and the expenditure of less time than for more informal interviews. (See Appendix B for interview schedule.)

The literature search revealed a dearth of published research related to the training of LEP employees in the hospitality industry. As a result, assistance with the development of the interview schedule was sought from other sources. Important sources for purposes of this study were questionnaires and interview schedules used in LEP adult vocational education research (Cellini, 1985; Friedenberg, 1987; Haverson & Haynes, 1982; Kremer, 1985; Latkiewicz,
1982; Lomperis, 1984). Valuable assistance was also obtained from a service industry language consultant, a hospitality management faculty member, and the President of the Columbus Ohio Hotel and Motel Association.

Less valuable sources in the present study were published articles and research conducted in the hospitality industry. Included were (1) guest survey results (Cadotte & Turgeon, 1988; Lewis, 1984; Lewis & Pizam, 1981), (2) descriptions of managers' job responsibilities (Divine, 1984; Jones & DeCotiis, 1984; Mitchell, 1989), and (3) information about the industry's segmentation and categorization (Shifflet, 1989; Wileynski & Forster, 1989; Yenckel, 1989). Articles and books were also reviewed concerning (1) the current and future trends in the hospitality industry (Beard, 1989; Brymer, 1984; Examining the Eighties, 1981; Mill, 1989), (2) the impact of the multicultural workforce (Copeland, 1988; Cullen, 1981; Kohl & Greenlaw, 1981; Tanke, 1988), (3) the training practices in the hospitality industry (Etess, 1989), and (4) industry labor shortages (Farkas, 1988; Help Wanted: 1 Million Workers, 1986; Kennedy, 1989).

Questionnaire

In addition to the interview schedule, a brief questionnaire was developed primarily to collect demographic information about the properties and employees. To reduce the time required for the interview, the
questionnaire was sent to those personnel managers who had agreed to participate in the study prior to the scheduled interview. This procedure also gave the personnel managers an opportunity to ascertain information they may not have readily recalled during the interview, such as the number of LEP employees. In addition to responding to demographic items, the personnel managers were asked to rate (on a five-point Likert scale) the importance of English for all employees in each department at their property. (The questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.)

Validity of the Instrument

Various resources were used to help assess the content validity of both the questionnaire and the interview schedule. To establish content validity, a panel of experts was chosen from (1) the researcher's dissertation committee members and (2) an advisory group. This group included a hospitality management faculty member, a service industry language consultant, and the President of the Columbus Hotel and Motel Association. The members of the advisory group had substantive knowledge of the LEP workforce population and the hospitality industry. Therefore, their contribution was especially valuable in eliminating redundant or inappropriate questions. The role of the dissertation committee members was to evaluate the interview schedule and the
questionnaire in terms of efficiency in soliciting answers to the questions posed in the study.

**Pilot Test of the Instrument**

A pilot test of the interview schedule was conducted to determine if the questions (1) were stated clearly, (2) were easy to respond to, (3) elicited the desired information, (4) did not lead the participants, (5) were appropriate, and (6) left participants with a positive impression (Dillman, 1978). Six representative properties were used from the Chicago metropolitan area for the face-to-face interview in the pilot test. The employers were contacted by phone to determine if they would be interested in participating in the pilot test. If a positive response was obtained, an interview was scheduled. The questionnaires were sent with a cover letter prior to the interview. The pilot test interviews were conducted in the same manner as they were expected to be in the actual study. The interviewer asked permission to audiotape the interviews which was granted in all instances. The interview schedule and questionnaire were revised (Appendices B and C) based on suggestions proposed by the pilot-test participants. The cover letter remained unchanged. An additional important contribution of the pilot test was the determination of the length of time required for the interviews. The interview required
approximately 45 minutes with the personnel manager and 20 minutes with the supervisor.

Data Collection

The data were obtained from the interviews and the questionnaires. Initially, phone calls were made to personnel managers to enlist participants in the study. The researcher gave a brief description of the purpose of the study, its scope, and design. The researcher requested a face-to-face interview with the personnel manager and a supervisor of LEP employees. As an added inducement to secure cooperation, the personnel managers were informed that a copy of the subsequent research results would be available (Dillman, 1978).

If the request for an interview was granted, the researcher sought permission to send a brief questionnaire for the personnel manager to complete prior to the scheduled interview. This procedure helped eliminate questionnaire return-rate problems since completed questionnaires could be collected at the time of the interview. Subsequently, a questionnaire was sent along with a cover letter (Appendix D) which reiterated the purpose of the study and confirmed the interview date and time.

Data for the study were collected by a face-to-face interview. Again, the personnel managers and supervisors of the 45 hospitality properties in the Chicago
metropolitan area were asked to be interviewed by the researcher. The interviews were completed during a three-month-period. The interview times were arranged for the morning or afternoon hours according to the convenience of the respondents. All interviews were conducted in the personnel managers' offices. The respondents were assured of complete confidentiality at the time of scheduling the interview and again immediately prior to the beginning of the interview. With the permission of the participants, the interviews were audio-recorded. This procedure increased the accuracy of the data collected and freed the interviewer to concentrate on the interview process (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Patton, 1980). Following the interview, a thank-you letter was sent to each of the participants (Appendix E).

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the most crucial technique for establishing credibility is

...the member check, whereby data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stakeholding groups from whom the data were originally collected (p. 314).

To clarify any misunderstandings, member checks in the study were performed by verbal summarizations at the end of each interview. In some cases, follow-up phone calls were made when the researcher needed clarification after data were transcribed.
Data Analysis

Immediately after each interview the researcher prepared field notes summarizing the setting and the affective tone of the interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). The audiotapes were transcribed as soon as possible following the interview (the same day to a lapse of two days) and the transcripts were examined to identify common and diverse themes or categories. Each participant's comments were compared to prior comments to determine if they fell within the same category (Glaser & Strauss, 1969).

Initially, six transcripts were analyzed. Each line in the transcript was numbered and then identified and categorized by a code word. The Ethnograph (Seidel, Kjolseth, and Seymour, 1988), a computer program, was used to search for the identified categories in the remaining transcripts. According to Seidel, Kjolseth, and Seymour (1988), one of the major advantages of this program is that it enables the researcher to code, recode, and sort data files into analytic categories, eliminating the need to cut and paste. Only central tendency statistics were used in the analysis of the data.

Summary

The population for investigation in the study consisted of 45 hospitality properties in the Chicago metropolitan area. The selection of the sample was based on a
stratified random sampling technique. The two strata used were location (airport, downtown, and suburban) and price (economy/budget, mid-price, and luxury). The data were collected by a two-part instrument developed by the researcher which consisted of a mail-questionnaire and an interview schedule.
CHAPTER IV
Presentation of Data

In this chapter, the focus is on the perception of hospitality industry employees in relation to their limited English proficient (LEP) employees. The data for the study were obtained from 45 hospitality industry properties in the Chicago metropolitan area. Methods of data collection were on-site structured interviews (Appendix B) and a mail questionnaire (Appendix C). The sample included fifteen properties from each of three locations: airport, downtown, and suburban. Each location contained five properties from each of the three price categories: economy/budget, mid-price, and luxury. The results are presented under two main headings: Questionnaire Data and Interview Data.

Questionnaire Data

The questionnaire was used to acquire demographic data for the hospitality industry properties in the Chicago metropolitan area. Prior to conducting the interview the questionnaire (Appendix C) was sent to personnel managers who had agreed to participate in the study. The
sub-headings for this section are (1) Properties: Location, Price, Size, Ownership/Management, and Service, (2) Employee Information, and (3) Property Departments: Number of LEP Employees and Importance of English.

**Properties: Location, Price, Size, Ownership/Management, and Service**

For each of the three locations (airport, downtown, and suburban), daily room rate or price was used to categorize the hospitality properties as (1) economy/budget, (2) mid-price, or (3) luxury. Size categories were defined as (1) small or less than 100 rooms; (2) mid-size or 100 to 300 rooms; and (3) large or more than 300 rooms. Ownership/management categories were (1) corporation, (2) franchise, (3) independent, (4) management company, (5) management company/corporation, and (6) franchise/corporation (see definitions on page 7). The two types of service categories were full-service and rooms-only. Findings relative to the above categories are presented in this sub-section according to location of properties one of the methods used to stratify the sample.

**Airport.** The daily room rates at the airport location ranged from a low of $43.00 at an economy/budget property to a high of $200.00 at a luxury property. The size of airport properties varied from a low of 89 rooms to a high of 1,100 rooms. All but two of the airport properties were
Table 7

Breakdown of Properties in the Sample by Location, Price, Size, Ownership/Management, and Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Ownership/Management</th>
<th>Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Mid-Size</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airport:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy/</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Price</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>3 -</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy/</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Price</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy/</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Price</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in the mid-size (n = 7, 46.7%) or the large category (n = 6, 40.0%), as shown in Table 7.

All six ownership/management categories were represented in the airport sample. The largest ownership/management group represented in the sample was independent (n = 5, 33.3%). Full-service was offered by all five properties in both the mid-price group and the luxury group. Only one economy/budget property provided full-service (Table 7).

**Downtown.** The price of rooms at properties in the downtown location ranged from $44.00 to $265.00. Considerable variation was present in property size which was as low as 52 rooms to as high as 1,173. The largest number of properties were in the mid-size and large categories, each of which had six (Table 7). All six (40.0%) types of ownership/management were represented in the downtown category (Table 7). The greatest number of properties were owned or managed by management company/corporation (n = 5, 33.3%), followed by franchise/corporation (n = 4, 26.7%). Full-service was provided by 11 of the downtown sample (73.3%). Rooms-only type of service was offered in both the mid-price (n = 1, 6.7%) and economy/budget (n = 3, 20.0%) properties (Table 7).

**Suburban.** The greatest range in daily room rates was exhibited in the suburban location: $36.00 at an
economy/budget property to $500.00 at an independent luxury one. The size range of properties was not as great as at the airport or downtown locations: the smallest had only 18 rooms; the largest, 421. The majority (n = 9, 60.0%) of the suburban properties were in the mid-size category. Ownership/management categories included corporation, franchise, independent, and franchise/corporation, each of which accounted for 20.0 percent (n = 3) of the suburban sample. Full-service was offered by all five luxury properties, two in the mid-price group, and none in the economy/budget category (Table 7).

Employee Information

The demographic information for employees was elicited from personnel managers through three items on the questionnaire (Appendix C). The participants were asked to give the number of full-time and part-time employees for both the total group and the LEP segment. The personnel managers were also asked to indicate the native languages spoken by their LEP employees.

Number of employees. A total of 8,583 workers were employed by the 45 Chicago properties in the sample. The least number of employees at any property was four and 987 was the greatest; the median was 86. The total number of LEP employees was 1,654. The range was from a low of one to a high of 260 with a median of 23. Fourteen of the personnel managers did not report the total number of
employees according to full-time and part-time as requested; therefore, the data could not be divided into the two parts.

The greatest number of LEP employees worked at downtown properties (\( n = 786, 47.5\% \)). Second was at the airport location with 653 (39.5\%) LEP employees. The suburban location had only 215 (13.0\%) LEP employees (Table 8). On the basis of price, the luxury-group category had the greatest total number of employees (\( n = 5,747, 67.0\% \)) as well as the greatest number of LEP employees (\( n = 1,130, 68.3\% \)). However, LEP employees (\( n = 119 \)) constituted the greatest percentage (29.9\%) in the economy/budget group (\( n = 398 \)), as shown in Table 8.

The large size category had the greatest number of total employees (\( n = 6,763, 78.8\% \)), as well as LEP employees (\( n = 1,204, 72.8\% \)). However, the size category with the highest percentage of LEP employees was the small size group (\( n = 105 \)) with 31.4 percent; followed by mid-size (\( n = 1,715 \)) with 24.3 percent (Table 8).
Table 8

Breakdown of Employees by Location, Price, and Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total No. employees</th>
<th>Total No. LEP employees</th>
<th>% LEP employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>3,433</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>3,661</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>1,489</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>8,583</td>
<td>1,654</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Price</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy/Budget</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Price</td>
<td>2,438</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury</td>
<td>5,747</td>
<td>1,130</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>8,583</td>
<td>1,654</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Size</td>
<td>1,715</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>6,763</td>
<td>1,204</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>8,583</td>
<td>1,654</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Native languages of employees. The LEP employees in the 45 properties spoke 16 native languages other than English. Spanish was most commonly spoken by the LEP employees (n = 43) at all three locations (Table 9). Next were Polish (n = 17), Pilipino (n = 15), Cambodian (n = 8), Romanian (n = 5), and Russian (n = 5). Polish and Pilipino were spoken at all three locations. Languages spoken by LEP employees at fewer than five properties were Chinese, Italian, Lao, Vietnamese, Arabic, Greek, Gujarati, Japanese, Nigerian, and Serbian/Croatian.

Table 9
Number of Languages Spoken by LEP Employees by Property

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Airport</th>
<th>Downtown</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pilipino</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cambodian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Property Departments: Number of LEP Employees and Importance of English

The personnel managers were asked to identify the number of departments at their properties and how many of them had LEP employees. In addition, the personnel managers were to report the importance of English proficiency in each of their departments. According to the data, all 45 properties had a housekeeping department, all of which employed LEP workers (Table 10). A total of 29 of 32 kitchen departments and 22 of the 23 laundry departments had LEP employees. The next three departments with the largest number of LEP employees were general maintenance (18 out of 42), steward (16 out of 23), and banquet set-up (15 out of 23). Eight of the 30 waiter/waitress departments, seven of the 25 room-service departments, and six of the 21 grounds maintenance departments employed LEP workers. Only one of the high-guest contact departments (front desk) had an LEP worker. Departments with no LEP employees were management, human resources, mechanical maintenance, and security.

The personnel managers were asked to rate (on a five-point Likert scale) the importance of English proficiency in each of their departments. English proficiency was generally rated as unimportant or very unimportant for departments with a high percentage of LEP employees, such as laundry ($n = 21, 91.3\%$), kitchen ($n = 25, 78.1\%$), and
Table 10

**Total Number of Properties with Listed Departments and Number of Departments with LEP Employees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Total No. of properties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With listed departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance general</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steward</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banquet set-up</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiter/waitress</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room service</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance grounds</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front desk</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

assigned to steward (n = 11, 47.8%), as shown in Table 11. Conversely, English proficiency was consistently rated as important or very important for departments with no LEP employees (e.g., host/hostess, management, reservations, and security).

Some differences were evident in ratings assigned by the personnel managers to the importance of English
Table 11
Departments in Property, Number of LEP Employees, and Importance of English in Each Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>1 &amp; 2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4 &amp; 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance general</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steward</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banquet set-up</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiter/waitress</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room service</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance grounds</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front desk</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resources</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance mechanical</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rating key: 1 = Very Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = No Opinion, 4 = Important, and 5 = Very Important.

b Number of properties with listed departments.

Number of properties with LEP employees in the listed department.

d Number of properties with this department who responded to this importance rating.

e Number of properties with LEP employees who responded to this importance rating.
proficiency in the housekeeping, banquet set-up, and room service departments (Table 11). For example, the ratings the housekeeping departments (n = 45, minimum of one LEP employee per department) were as follows: 3 - very unimportant (6.7%), 22 - unimportant (48.9%), 2 - no opinion (4.4%), and 18 - important (40.0%). The importance of English proficiency in the banquet set-up department was primarily distributed across three ratings: important (n = 10, 43.5%), no opinion (n = 5, 21.7%), and unimportant (n = 8, 34.8%). Thirteen (52.0%) of the personnel managers had no opinion as to the importance of English proficiency in the room-service department.

There was an inconsistency in the ratings assigned to the importance of English related to the placement of LEP employees. All 30 of the properties with food and beverage services rated English proficiency for waiters and waitresses as important (n = 14, 46.7%) or very important (n = 16, 53.3%). Eight of the 30 properties had LEP employees serving as waiters and waitresses.

**Interview Data**

Structured interviews were conducted at the 45 properties. Depending on the question involved, the researcher interviewed either the person who assumed the job role of personnel manager or supervisor (Appendix B). The information that follows is organized according to the five research questions developed for the study.
Research Question #1

What is the employment process for job applicants?

Personnel managers were asked for the following information to obtain the answers to the employment process used for job applicants at their properties:

1. How do applicants learn about positions at your property?
2. How do you make employment decisions?
3. What difficulties do you encounter when screening limited English proficient applicants?
4. How do you decide where to place your new limited English proficient employees?

This section is presented under the following headings:
(1) Marketing Strategies Used by Properties, (2) Employment Decisions, (3) Screening Difficulties with LEP Employees, and (4) Placement Decision Considerations.

Marketing strategies used by properties. According to the personnel managers, job applicants learned about the different position openings at their properties in a variety of ways. Word-of-mouth was cited as generating the largest number of applicants: 15 each by airport and suburban properties, and seven by downtown properties (Table 12). Almost three fourths (n = 33, 73.3%) of the properties placed advertisements in newspapers but primarily to recruit for the higher-skill positions (e.g., managers). Two other marketing strategies used by
mid-price and luxury properties were reciprocal contacts between the property and either area schools or agencies. Other less effective marketing strategies for obtaining applicants included in-house postings and walk-ins.

Table 12
Breakdown of Marketing Strategies by Property Location and Price According to Personnel Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing strategies</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th></th>
<th>Price</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>Mid-Price</td>
<td>Luxury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word-of-mouth</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper ads</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency referrals</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School referrals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk-ins</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[a\] Total number and percent of the 45 personnel managers who responded to each area.
Employment decisions. Data obtained for this section are presented according to employment procedures and considerations. Procedures most frequently reported involved screening by personnel managers or their assistants ($n = 32$), interviews with department managers and supervisors ($n = 29$), and reference checks ($n = 26$), as shown in Table 13. In addition, verification of work papers of immigrants and refugees was performed by eight properties.

English proficiency was the most frequently cited consideration when making employment decisions ($n = 18$), followed by hotel experience ($n = 15$), as previously shown in Table 13. Additional considerations were the ability to complete job applications ($n = 9$), the availability and reliability of transportation ($n = 7$), and recommendations of current employees ($n = 6$) if applicable. A few of the personnel managers ($n < 5$) wanted to know the relationship between the applicants' work experience and the job for which they were applying, why the applicants wanted to work at their property, positions or departments where the applicants wanted to work, and why interruptions (if present) existed in applicants' work records.
Table 13

Breakdown of Procedures and Considerations for Employment Decisions by Property Location and Price According to Personnel Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property category</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedures

Screening by personnel managers or assistants

Interview by department supervisors

Reference check

Considerations

English proficiency

Previous hotel experience

\( a \)

Total number and percent of the 45 personnel managers who responded to each area.
Screening difficulties with LEP employees. Lack of English-language fluency was the primary difficulty reported by 32 (71.1%) of the 45 personnel managers. This included all in the airport properties (n = 15), 12 in the downtown properties, and five in the suburban properties (Table 14). In the price category, 14 luxury, 11 mid-price, and seven economy/budget property personnel managers also had difficulty screening applicants. The Spanish-language was most commonly spoken by the LEP employees. Seventeen (38.0%) of the personnel managers reported that they spoke some Spanish or were fluent in the language. The remainder of the personnel managers either spoke English exclusively or little if any Spanish, but they expressed the desire to learn Spanish or increase their fluency.

Another difficulty cited in the screening process involved verification of work documentation, such as currency of green cards (n = 9). Several personnel managers had difficulty verifying work references (n = 4) since the applicants’ prior work experience was outside the United States. Three suburban properties reported that they had no difficulties during screening.
Table 14
Breakdown of LEP Employment Screening Difficulties by Property Location and Price According to Personnel Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screening difficulties</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work documentation</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking work references</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number and percent of the 45 personnel managers who responded to each area.

Placement decision considerations. English-language fluency was the most important consideration of personnel managers (n = 25, 55.6%) when placing employees (Table 15). Limited English proficient employees were placed in jobs with little or no guest contact. Five (11.1%) of the personnel managers stated that LEP employees were placed where they would have language support; for example, with
bilingual supervisors. The remaining placement considerations reported by the personnel managers were employees’ qualifications (n = 18, 40.0%), current job openings (n = 17, 37.8%), and applicants’ job interests, (n = 12, 26.7%).

Table 15
Breakdown of Employee Placement Considerations by Property Location and Price According to Personnel Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Placement considerations</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current openings</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants’ interest</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual supervisors</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Total number and percent of the 45 personnel managers who responded to each area.
Research Question #2

What are the strengths and weaknesses of LEP employees?

Interview questions that related to the second research question were as follows:

1. What do you consider are the strengths of your limited English proficient employees?
2. What types of on-the-job weaknesses or problems do you encounter with limited English proficient employees?

The following are the sub-headings for this section: (1) LEP Employees' On-the-Job Strengths and (2) LEP Employees' On-the-Job Weaknesses or Problems.

**LEP Employees' on-the-job strengths.** All of the supervisors readily identified the strengths of their LEP employees which were said to far outweigh any weaknesses or problems. The LEP employees were described as hard working (n = 35, 80.0%), dependable (n = 15, 33.3%), and reliable (n = 10, 22.2%), as shown in Table 16. LEP employees were also reported to demonstrate a strong work ethic (n = 8, 17.8%) and a strong desire to advance (n = 7, 15.6%). Several supervisors reported that their LEP employees were willing to work overtime (n = 5), completed their assignments thoroughly (n = 4), tried harder than other employees (n = 4), and worked well as part of a team (n = 3).
Sixteen or 21.6 percent of the supervisors volunteered a comparison of their LEP employees with their native English-speaking counterparts. The LEP employees were reported to have a more positive attitude towards work in general, set higher quality standards for themselves and others, and performed above average on-the-job.

Table 16
Breakdown of On-the-Job Strengths of LEP Employees by Property Location and Price According to Supervisors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard working</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependable</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliable</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong work ethic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want to advance</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Total number and percent of the 45 supervisors who responded to each area.
**LEP employees' on-the-job weaknesses or problems.**

Problems reported by all of the supervisors involved the difficulties experienced by their LEP employees in communicating in English. The communication problem that emerged most frequently was understanding of and responding to guests' requests (n = 21, 46.7%). These were followed by comprehension of (1) training instructions (n = 14, 31.1%), (2) on-the-job instructions (n = 10, 22.2%), (3) benefits (n = 6, 13.3%), and (3) disciplinary actions (n = 5, 11.1%), as shown in Table 17. Additional problems reported by less than four supervisors centered around cultural differences, such as less importance placed on punctuality and acceptance of women in supervisory roles. Also mentioned was the lack of understanding of safety procedures which commonly resulted in accidents. Unreliable and limited transportation were also cited but were more of a problem in the suburban properties than in the other two locations.
Table 17

Breakdown of On-the-Job Problems of LEP Employees by Property Location and Price According to Supervisors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guests</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job instructions</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Total number and percent of the 45 supervisors who responded to each area.

b Covers paychecks, insurance, days off, sick leave, and overtime.
Research Question #3

How effectively do LEP employees' communicate with management, guests, and co-workers?

The following questions were asked to obtain information for the third research question.

1. What are the most important English communication skills your limited English proficient employees need (understanding, speaking, reading, and writing)?

2. How effective is the interaction which takes place between your limited English proficient employees and supervisors, guests, and co-workers?

Data for this research question are presented under the following headings: (1) Importance of Various English Communication Skills and (2) Interaction Effectiveness of LEP Employees.

**Importance of various English communication skills.**

The supervisors were asked to indicate which of the following were the most important communication skills needed by their LEP employees: understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. A total of 40 (88.9%) of the supervisors rated understanding as the most important communication skill (Table 18). The second most important one was speaking (n = 38, 84.4%). Over one half (n = 23, 51.1%) of the supervisors considered writing as unnecessary and 33.3 percent (n = 15) made the same comment about
reading for employees in low-skill departments (e.g., steward, kitchen, and laundry).

Table 18
Ratings Assigned to the Importance of Communication Skills of LEP Employees According to Supervisors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding/speaking</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a Rating</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a 1 = Most important to 4 = Least important; NA = Not applicable.

b Number of supervisors assigning each rating.

c Percentages rounded to highest whole number because of space.
Interaction effectiveness of LEP employees. The interaction between LEP employees and supervisors varied greatly and was affected considerably by the degree English language fluency of the LEP workers. Even though a large percentage of supervisors (n = 28, 62.2%) were bilingual, they did not necessarily speak the same language as their LEP employees. Further, LEP employees were not always assigned to departments with bilingual supervisors. As a result, tensions and frustrations were created between the two groups. When available, appropriate staff members or co-workers of LEP employees served effectively as interpreters. In some instances, non-verbal communication was used such as smiles between supervisors and LEP employees. Some LEP employees displayed reluctance to raise questions or ask for additional information in order not to appear unintelligent or disrespectful of the authority of the supervisors.

Interaction between the LEP employees and guests was usually quite limited according to the supervisors. When it did occur, the LEP employees often had difficulty responding to the requests of guests for service or information because of inadequate fluency in the English language. To minimize interaction or problems between the two groups, the LEP employees were placed in low-guest contact positions. Also, the LEP employees were encouraged to seek help if needed in interpreting guests' requests.
The majority of supervisors had not received any written compliments (57.8%) or complaints (55.5%) from guests about their LEP employees. Several of the properties had actually discontinued the practice of making guest comment cards available.

Supervisors described the interaction between LEP employees and co-workers outside of their language groups. The most prevalent characterization of such interactions was that the members of the different language groups usually did not intermingle and among themselves spoke their native language. Limited English proficient employees encountered some resentment by their co-workers because they were perceived to receive special consideration by supervisors (e.g., more individualized training).

Research Question #4

What training programs and aids are available for LEP employees?

The following questions were asked in the interview to obtain the information to answer the fourth research question.

1. What has been done at your property to enhance the performance of limited English proficient employees?
2. What should be done?
3. What constraints and difficulties do you encounter in offering additional opportunities?
The respondents for these questions were the personnel managers. Sub-headings for this section include
(1) Actions Taken to Enhance Job Performance,
(2) Additional Actions Needed to Enhance Job Performance,
and (3) Constraints and Difficulties.

**Actions taken to enhance job performance.** Little variation across properties was evident in actions taken to enhance LEP employees' job performance according to personnel managers' comments. As shown in Table 19, the most frequent actions taken were the employment of bilingual supervisors (n = 29, 64.4%), bilingual personnel office staff (n = 27, 60.0%), and interpreters (n = 23, 51.1%). Bilingual signs (n = 14, 31.1%) were posted in work areas to give on-the-job instructions and safety information. Additionally, nine (20.0%) properties held training demonstrations, conducted orientation programs (n = 9, 20.0%), and used co-worker interpreters (n = 7, 15.6%). Several of the properties reimbursed LEP employees for the cost of English classes or sponsored on-site language (Spanish) classes for management (n = 3, 6.7%).
Table 19

Breakdown of Actions Taken to Enhance LEP Employees' Performance by Property Location and Price According to Personnel Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions taken</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th></th>
<th>Price</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Economy/Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual supervisors</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual personnel office staff</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreters</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual signs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrations</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-worker interpreters</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Total number and percent of the 45 personnel managers who responded to each area.
Additional actions needed to enhance job performance.

The personnel managers suggested a number of needed actions to help improve the job performance of the LEP employees. No one action, however, was cited by more than 24.4 percent (n = 11) of the properties (Table 20). The most frequent suggestion involved on-site English classes (n = 11, 24.4%). The next two were bilingual supervisors (n = 11, 24.4%) and the addition of bilingual personnel office staff (n = 9, 20.0%); both of which were listed as the most frequent actions taken to enhance job performance (Table 20). Additional suggestions included informing LEP employees about the availability of English as a second language (ESL) programs (n = 5, 11.1%), reimbursing tuition for English classes (n = 3, 6.7%), and hiring interpreters (n = 3, 6.7%). Eight or 17.8 percent of the personnel managers believed that nothing needed to be done.
Table 20

Breakdown of Additional Suggested Actions to Enhance LEP Employees' Job Performance by Property Location and Price According to Personnel Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested actions</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Economy/Budget</td>
<td>Mid-Price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site classes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual supervisors</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual personnel office staff</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform of ESL programs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a Total number and percent of the 45 personnel managers who responded to each area.
Constraints and difficulties. Practically all of the constraints and difficulties in maximizing job performance and job opportunities for LEP employees were related to on-site English classes. Almost 65 percent (n = 29) of the personnel managers stated that the major constraint was the lack of money (Table 21). Other responses were that on-site English classes were not cost effective and no need existed to offer such classes (n = 7, 15.6% in both instances); property not interested (n = 6, 13.3%); and lack of time and qualified teachers (n = 5, 11.1% in both instances). It was interesting to note that in most cases suggestions for needed action were verbalized by the personnel managers even before they were asked to name constraints or difficulties.
Table 21

Breakdown of Projected Constraints and Difficulties

Offering On-Site English Classes by Property Location and Price According to Personnel Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints and difficulties</th>
<th>Property Category</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Economy/Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of money</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not cost effective</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No current need</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property uninterested</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of qualified teachers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No time</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Total number and percent of the 45 personnel managers who responded to each area.
Research Question #5

What are the greatest future challenges confronting the hospitality industry and what role will LEP employees play?

Future challenges of the hospitality industry were expected to be similar to those being currently experienced but even more critically according to the personnel managers. Two of the greatest challenges involved competition for labor and guests.

An adequate and well-functioning labor workforce was expected to be especially germane to the economic well-being of the hospitality properties included in the study. Competition for the workforce was not only expected to be generated from other hospitality properties but from service industries in general. Limited English proficient employees were believed to be a sizable source of labor in view of the projected growth trends in the United States population and workforce. Work transportation was considered important by the personnel managers who represented all three locations, but was the greatest problem of suburban properties.

To help meet the competition for guests, the amount and quality of service provided were expected to increase in importance. The LEP employees were reported to play a vital role in catering to the guests; therefore, increasing the English language proficiency of such employees would have to be seriously addressed in the future. The
personnel managers recognized the importance of economic considerations or costs in regard to steps taken to increase the amount and quality of guest service as well as in meeting the competition for the workforce.

**Summary**

Data were obtained via a questionnaire about employee and property demographics. In addition, the respondents were asked to rate the importance of English in each department in their property. The personnel managers generally rated English proficiency as unimportant for departments with high percentages of LEP employees. The second method of data collection was an on-site structured interview. English-language deficiency was a concern when screening job applicants, placing employees in departments, interacting with guests, giving on-the-job instructions as well as during training. The most prevalent actions taken to enhance LEP employees' performance were employment of supervisors and personnel office staff who were bilingual. The greatest future challenges facing the hospitality industry were competition for labor and guests.
CHAPTER V
Summary, Implications, and Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to investigate the perception of hospitality industry employers in relation to their LEP (limited English proficient) employees. To acquire the necessary data for the study, a stratified random sample of 45 hospitality properties was selected from the Chicago metropolitan area. Included in the sample were 15 properties from each of three locations: airport, downtown, and suburban. Each location was subdivided into three price categories: economy/budget, mid-price, and luxury.

Summary of Findings

A mail questionnaire and an on-site, structured interview schedule were the instruments used to collect data from personnel managers and supervisors at the hospitality properties in the study. The primary purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain background or demographic information about the properties as well as the employees. Property data included (1) daily room rate, (2) size, (3) type of ownership/management, and (4) type of service provided. The employee information included the
total number of employees, the number of LEP employees, and the native languages spoken by their LEP employees.

The largest portion of data were collected from the face-to-face interviews. The following section includes the five research questions and the main findings related to each question.

Research Question #1

What is the employment process for job applicants?

The personnel managers reported that LEP employees learned about vacancies from family members and friends employed at hospitality properties (82.2%). The most common procedure for making employment decisions involved screening job applicants by personnel managers or assistants (71.1%). The most important consideration when making employment decisions was English proficiency (40.0%). However, English proficiency was not reported as a requirement by any of the personnel managers but was identified as a major difficulty when screening LEP applicants (71.1%). Placement decisions were based on employees' proficiency in the English language (55.6%).

Research Question #2

What are the strengths and weaknesses of LEP employees?

According to 80.0% of the supervisors, LEP employees' most outstanding on-the-job strength or asset was that they were hardworking. Problems reported by all 45 supervisors
involved LEP employees' lack of fluency in the English language.

**Research Question #3**

**How effectively do LEP employees' communicate with management, guests, and co-workers?**

According to the supervisors, lack of fluency in the English-language was a real problem for LEP employees when communicating with all three groups (management, guests, and co-workers). The majority of the supervisors did not receive any written guest complaints or compliments related to their LEP employees. This was not unexpected in that LEP employees were generally placed in low-guest contact departments.

**Research Question #4**

**What training programs and aids are available for LEP employees?**

According to the personnel managers (64.4%), the most common action taken to aid LEP workers was the employment of bilingual supervisors. The most frequently reported additional action needed to help LEP employees was on-site English classes (24.4%); however, the majority (64.4%) of the respondents reported that they did not offer on-site classes because of the lack of finance.

**Research Question #5**

**What are the greatest future challenges confronting the hospitality industry and what role will LEP employees play?**

Personnel managers believed that current hospitality industry challenges would continue and become even more
Critical in the future. Their focus was primarily on labor shortages, competition for employees, high employee turnover, and the need for high quality employees.

**Conclusions**

The conclusions in this section were based on the data collected from the 45 hospitality properties included in the study. No claim was made for the generalizability of the findings; however, the information covered in the study was maximized by employing the stratified random sampling technique. Therefore, application of the results could be made to similar hospitality industry properties depending on how close the presentation and interpretation of data "fit". The Chicago metropolitan area is comprised of a large number of ethnic, cultural, racial, and language groups that may be similar to other large metropolitan areas.

It may be concluded that:

1. The researcher received a high level of cooperation from the sample that participated in the study. This may be attributed to the recognition of the need for research in the hospitality industry, interest in the research topic, or interest in developing relations with a major university in the area.
2. The characteristics of the sample were similar to the characteristics of the Chicago metropolitan area as a whole (e.g., racial, ethnic, language).

3. The LEP employees were placed primarily in low-guest contact departments (e.g., kitchen, laundry, steward). Conversely, the LEP employees were not placed in high-guest contact departments (e.g., management, human resources, mechanical maintenance, security). There was some discrepancy related to the importance of English rating for the properties with food/beverage service and the placement of LEP employees in those departments. All respondents rated English important or very important in the waiter/waitress department; however, a number of properties employed LEP individuals as waiters/waitresses. This may be partially attributed to different definitions of limited English proficiency, or LEP individuals might have been placed in restaurants similar to their ethnic backgrounds (e.g., Chinese restaurant). Employment for LEP individuals was not so difficult; however, placement was affected by language. (See Conclusion 7.)

4. All properties employed LEP individuals in housekeeping; however, there was some variation regarding the importance of English in that
department. This may be attributed to room rates and the importance guests and management place on service at the various properties (e.g., luxury properties may rate the importance of English higher than economy/budget properties). Thus, the more expensive the rooms and the more emphasis placed on service the higher the importance of English.

5. Word-of-mouth was cited as generating the largest number of applicants for hospitality properties. This marketing strategy was deemed successful by the respondents in this study; however, future recruitment strategies to widen the applicant pool might include expansion and strengthening of industry relations with local agencies and schools. These relations were particularly limited at the economy/budget locations. This might be attributed to the fewer number of total employees needed at these locations.

6. The LEP employees' greatest on-the-job strength was they were hard working. This might be attributed to such factors as the need of LEP employees to overcompensate for their lack of English skills, their desire to be promoted, and their particular cultural background. The lists of LEP employees' strengths generated by the
respondents were much more extensive than the lists of weaknesses.

7. English-language proficiency was cited as the LEP employees' greatest on-the-job weakness. This was also the greatest consideration for placement of LEP employees. As a result of their lack of English skills, LEP employees were placed, whenever possible, in low-guest contact departments and in departments with bilingual supervisors who spoke the same language. The lack of English-language proficiency also created the greatest difficulty during the application screening process. In addition, English-language proficiency was a prominent consideration for employment.

8. The most frequent action taken to enhance LEP employees' job performance was related to communication with LEP employees in their native language (e.g., bilingual supervisors, bilingual personnel office staff members, interpreters). Bilingual staff support coupled with placement of LEP employees in low-guest contact departments seems to contribute to the perpetuation of LEP employees' lack of English skills. In these cases there is little motivation for LEP employees to
learn English or for the employers to support on-site English classes.

9. The most frequent suggested action to enhance LEP employees' job performance was on-site English-language classes. It is impractical for many of the properties to individually offer on-site classes. The main factor the respondents gave for not offering classes at their properties was the lack of funds. Several of the respondents requested a list of English-language classes to share with their LEP employees.

10. Non-respondents were primarily from the economy/budget properties and those in the suburban locations. The guests that stay at economy/budget properties may be less concerned with the type of service offered (e.g., English proficiency of employees) and the guests usually have limited contact with employees. These properties were not interested in participating in this study because limited English proficiency was not a concern of their guests. Non-respondents were also from suburban properties that were located a long distance from where LEP individuals live and the availability of public transportation was scarce. In these cases it would seem
unrealistic for LEP individuals to seek and retain employment long distances from their homes.

**Implications**

Information presented in this section is based on the 45 hospitality properties included in the study and, therefore, has specific reference to them. However, it could have some value to other hospitality properties with similar characteristics, such as location in a large metropolitan area with a sizable number of LEP employees. In fact, selected portions of the information might well be of value to other service-oriented industries.

As stated previously, two of the greatest challenges or issues confronting the hospitality industry center around the competition for labor and guests. Of the two issues, competition for labor is expected to be the more critical. Therefore, marketing strategies to recruit employees should be of utmost importance.

A marketing strategy which could be most beneficial is the establishment of a strong relationship with volunteer non-profit agencies which assist job seekers. Such a strategy would, of course, entail reciprocal obligations on the part of the hospitality property (e.g., donating time and money).

Once the employees are in place, a real challenge is to retain them or reduce the industry-wide high turnover rate.
An important strategy could involve increased concessions or flexibility on the part of the industry. A positive work environment could require relatively little cost and could boost the morale of the workers. An example of such an environment is to provide support management with at least one person who is bilingual or preferably, multilingual. Another practice which might help enhance the working environment is regularly scheduled meetings to discuss any communication misunderstandings and inform the employees of such items as important future events and changes.

Cultural diversity can also play an important role in adding to or subtracting from a positive and productive working environment. Such an environment impinges on the relationship between the different racial and ethnic groups and, perhaps, even more important, between that of the groups and the prevailing American culture. One way to address this issue is to increase managements' awareness of their employees' cultural backgrounds. Another is to familiarize the LEP workforce with the American work-related culture.

Another practice to retain employees might be to help reduce or eliminate transportation problems. Properties might offer transportation assistance (e.g., provision of vans, limousines, or coordination of car pools) for employees.
The second most important challenge voiced by the personnel managers was that of competition for guests. Currently guests have increased expectations regarding the amount and kinds of services to which they are entitled. Recently, there has been an appreciable increase in the number of new hospitality properties, particularly in the economy/budget and mid-price categories. The mid-price properties are trying to compete with the luxury properties by increasing the amount and quality of services and offering special packages to compete with the economy/budget properties.

Deeply involved in the competition for guests is the adequacy of employees' fluency in the English-language in view of the reliance of service industries on minorities, immigrants, and United States born LEP individuals. Mastery of this challenge should not only be beneficial in guest-related situations but could pay important dividends as far as recruiting and retaining employees are concerned.

Challenges and questions exist as to who should bear the primary responsibility of providing English-language classes. Potential groups that might sponsor English classes are (1) external volunteer non-profit agencies (e.g., Goodwill) or educational units (e.g., vocational education) and (2) the hospitality properties themselves, individually or collectively.
If outside resources are utilized, the hospitality properties should have detailed information regarding the availability of English classes in the metropolitan area, both where the employees work and live. One resource accessible to employers to help employees locate English-language opportunities is the annually-issued Directory of Voluntary Agencies (United States Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1989), which lists all non-profit organizations by city and state. A second resource is English as a Second Language (ESL) and Bilingual Education Programs in Illinois (Illinois Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages/Bilingual Education, 1987). The latter includes English classes available according to location, tuition cost, total number of classes and number of classes per week, length of individual class sessions, and number of language levels.

Public schools and agencies also can be enlisted to assist with the English-language issue. The hospitality properties could increase their cooperation (e.g., monetary support) with schools and agencies that offer English-language classes and give input relative to what could be taught (e.g., job-specific language), and when and where classes could be offered. It might be helpful if on-site property meeting facilities were made available for such English classes.
Another potential group that might assume the responsibility for English-language classes (e.g., job specific) are the hospitality properties themselves. Instructors could be recruited from external sources (e.g., language consultant) or internal sources. If internal expertise is not available, the addition of permanent or temporary staff members might be necessary. However, there is a shortage of qualified ESL instructors at both state and national levels.

When to offer on-site classes is a challenge the properties must face. If classes are offered before or after work shifts, there could be problems involving family commitments and with transportation. The scheduling problem is further exacerbated as a result of the divisions of employees into three shifts at each property.

The cost of on-site English-language classes may be prohibitive to individual properties (e.g., few potential students or need to offer three shifts of classes). The costs include instructors’ salaries and LEP employees’ incentives to attend classes, and the use of the facilities (which could reduce rental income). One solution to help reduce the cost is to collectively offer classes (e.g., share instructors and other resources) within hospitality chains or by a variety of properties (different ownership) in close proximity to one another.
However, availability of classes is not necessarily sufficient to insure English-language class attendance; inducements are often essential to entice employees to take advantage of the classes. Monetary rewards to help LEP employees attend English classes might be tuition reimbursement, paid time-off, and some type of assistance with transportation to and from classes. Also indirect inducements could be helpful, such as the opportunity for employees to increase social adjustment, assist with fulfillment of citizenship requirements (for immigrants and refugees), and increase the opportunity for job promotions.

In conclusion, the potential appears to exist for numerous solutions to the challenges involved in the hospitality industry's successful dealing with competition for the workforce and guests. Realistically, however, the options are limited since every solution demands cost trade-offs or compromises of varying degrees on the part of the hospitality industry. This is especially true if the situation is viewed from a short-term approach. A pragmatic strategy would be to concentrate on joint efforts with the hospitality industry at the national level and, particularly, at the regional level (e.g., the Chicago Hotel and Motel Association).

Based on the predicted demographic changes in the American workforce the hospitality industry will have to place greater reliance on the so-called non-traditional
types of employees in the future. Included in this group are the disadvantaged, the handicapped, the elderly, and of course, the limited English proficient. Therefore, it is essential that inadequacies of employees' limited English proficiency be addressed and alleviated as soon as realistically practical. The degree to which changes can be implemented and their ultimate cost to employers will depend greatly on an increase in the productivity of the employees and cooperative efforts, especially within the hospitality industry.

Recommendations

As a result of conducting the present study, additional research with a similar or related focus should be worthwhile because of the dearth of published studies pertaining to the hospitality and other service-oriented industries. The hospitality industry, especially, would appear to benefit by research efforts in view of its importance in the United States' economy. Recommendations for future research follow.

1. As a follow-up to the present study,
   a. conduct personal interviews with LEP employees in the hospitality industry to determine similarities and differences between their responses to applicable segments of the research instruments and the perceptions of the personnel managers and supervisors,
b. check the degree of agreement between the personnel managers and supervisors' responses with those of selected executives at higher levels in the hospitality industry, and
c. determine expectations along with priorities from guests relative to services provided by the hospitality industry as well as suggestions for improvements.

2. Conduct research with other service industries (e.g., restaurant and retail) which employ LEP employees to determine the feasibility of cost-sharing efforts.

3. Determine the most cost effective and practical or realistic methods of improving the fluency of hospitality industry employees with limited English proficiency.

4. Investigate various approaches to enlist the cooperation of LEP employees to attend English-language classes.

5. Discover if significant differences exist between LEP individuals from various racial and ethnic groups as to
   a. types of job-related expectations, including satisfactions and dissatisfactions,
   b. the importance and effect of cultural differences on job satisfaction, and
c. barriers to education and employment.

6. Identify the perceptions of directors of bilingual and vocational programs and the perceptions of instructors and counselors who work with these programs relative to

a. the perceived needs of their LEP students (e.g., language, vocational, and cultural),
b. how effectively the needs are being met, and recommendations to facilitate and improve the learning process,
c. barriers these individuals believe LEP individuals face entering training and educational programs, and
d. recommendations to facilitate and maximize the preceding concepts.
Appendix A

Location, Price, Size and Service Information for Hospitality Properties Non-Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property N*</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Service</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

*N = Non-Respondent
Appendix B

Interview Schedule

**Personnel Managers**

1. How do applicants learn about positions at your property?
2. How do you make employment decisions?
3. What difficulties do you encounter when screening limited English proficient applicants?
4. How do you decide where to place your new LEP employees?
5. What has been done at your property to enhance the performance of limited English proficient employees?
6. What should be done?
7. What constraints and difficulties do you encounter in offering additional opportunities?
8. What are the greatest future challenges confronting the hospitality industry?
9. What role will limited English proficient employees play?

**Supervisors**

1. What do you consider are the strengths of your limited English proficient employees?
2. What types of on-the-job weaknesses or problems do you encounter with limited English proficient employees?
3. What are the most important English communication skills your limited English Proficient employees need (understanding, speaking, reading, and writing)?
4. How effective is the interaction which takes place between your limited English proficient employees and supervisors, guests, and co-workers?
Appendix C

A STUDY OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY'S LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT EMPLOYEES--BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. PROPERTY INFORMATION
1. Price classification of your property (Check one)
   ___Economy/Budget  ___Mid-Price  ___Luxury
2. Daily room rate (Range) _____ - _____
3. Type of property (Check one)
   ___Full-Service  ___Rooms-Only
4. Nature of ownership/management (Check all that apply.)
   ___Corporation  ___Independent
   ___Franchise  ___Management Company
   ___Other _________________
5. Number of rooms _____
6. Location (Check one)
   ___Airport  ___Downtown/Business District
   ___Suburban  ___Other _________________

B. EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
7. Number of employees                   ||
8. Number of limited English proficient employees (LEP)                   |
9. What native languages are spoken by your limited English proficient employees? (Check all language groups employed.)
   ___Arabic  ___Haitian  ___Russian
   ___Assyrian  ___Italian  ___Serbian/Croatian
   ___Cambodian  ___Japanese  ___Spanish
   ___Chinese  ___Korean  ___Urdu (Pakistan)
   ___Czech  ___Lao  ___Vietnamese
   ___Greek  ___Pilipino  ___Other ___________
   ___Gujarati (India)  ___Polish  ___Other ___________
Hospitality Industry’s Limited English Proficient Employees

10. **First**, check all departments that are represented in your property. **Second**, check the departments that have limited English proficient employees (LEP). **Third**, indicate how important you believe English proficiency is in each department at your property by circling the appropriate number.

**Key:**
1 = Very Unimportant (VUI)
2 = Unimportant (UNI)
3 = No Opinion (NO)
4 = Important (I)
5 = Very Important (VI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departments in Property (Check all that apply)</th>
<th>LEP Employees (Check all that apply)</th>
<th>Importance of English (Circle one answer)</th>
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<td>____</td>
<td>VUN UNI NO I VI</td>
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<tr>
<td>____Front Desk</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>____Host/Hostess</td>
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<td>____Steward</td>
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<td>____Waiter/Waitress</td>
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<td>____Other</td>
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</table>
Appendix D

Dear Mr./Ms. ________:

As we enter the 1990s consensus exists that the hospitality industry will be faced with challenges such as labor shortages and increased reliance on immigrants, refugees and American born citizens with limited experience with the English language. These limited English speaking individuals speak a language other than English and have difficulty in understanding, speaking, reading, or writing English. There seems to be a link between communication problems and the quality of products and services provided by employees.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the hospitality industry employers' perceptions of their limited English speaking employees. Your help is essential to ensure that results truly represent the hotel industry in Chicago. If possible, could you please complete the enclosed questionnaire of background information regarding your property prior to my interview appointment ______day, ______, 1990, at ___:__ a.m./p.m.

You or your property will in no way be identified by name in the study results. All personal comments will be held in strict confidence. I will be glad to answer any questions that you may have concerning this study, or more specifically the questionnaire or the scheduled interview. Just write or call me at the address and phone number listed on the letterhead. If you are interested in a copy of the results please let me know at the time of the interview or at a later date.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Lu Ann LaFrenz
Assistant Professor
Northern Illinois University
Appendix E

Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, Illinois 60115-2854

Department of Human 
and Family Resources  
815 753 1196

Dear Ms./Mr.____________:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you again for taking the time from your busy schedule to meet with me to discuss your limited English speaking employees and your ideas regarding future challenges in store for the hospitality industry. The information you shared with me will be extremely helpful to my study. I would like to restate that you or your property will in no way be identified by name in the study results and all personal comments will be held in strict confidence.

When I have completed my interviews and analysis I will send you a copy of my results. I am finding this study to be an interesting one, and my hotel contacts like yourself to be very helpful.

Sincerely,

Lu Ann Lafrenz  
Assistant Professor  
Northern Illinois University
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McVey, K. A., Internship Coordinator Hospitality Management Department, The Ohio State University (personal communication, October, November, December, 1989).


Zaft, C. J., General Manager Columbus Marriott North, Columbus, Ohio and President of the Columbus Hotel and Motel Association (personal communication, October, 1989)