AN INVESTIGATION OF THE WRITING TECHNIQUES OF
GRADUATE STUDENTS ON THE ENGLISH
FUNDAMENTALS EXAMINATION AT
ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY

MARY HARDEN HASTINGS

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ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

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R = 2  T = 55
Dedication

In view of contributions of love, undying inspiration and continued concern and exertion of effort throughout my education, I wish to dedicate this research to my mother, Mrs. Rosa Lee Thompson, and to Mrs. Faustine T. Petty, my aunt.
Acknowledgements

The writer wishes to express her sincere thanks and appreciation to Dr. Robert L. Smothers, advisor, who unselfishly supplied valuable information, advice, and suggestions to this research.

The writer wishes to acknowledge indebtedness to the Faculty of the English Department for supplying the data gathering instrument and to the students of Atlanta University who supplied the data.

M.H.H.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale.--Any educational program should have as its essential purpose the preparation of an individual to become as able and as efficient as his capabilities will permit in order to meet daily responsibilities and challenges. Inclusive in every educational program of any nation is instruction in the language of that nation. Language is the vehicle that enables one to express himself, thus making communication possible. The primary goal of language instruction is that of developing skill and effectiveness in oral and written expression.

Because language is used constantly from childhood throughout life, every individual of any democratic nation, such as the United States, needs to read, write, speak and understand his language easily and well. Competence in such language skills is of supreme importance from the point of view of maintaining and improving our democratic society. Language facility is not only an
instrument of democratic living and economic efficiency, but also important in personal growth and enrichment.

Lewis and Sisk corroborate the writer's thinking here by stating that:

Ability to communicate is essential for the establishment of satisfying personal relationships and for participating in groups of all kinds. Satisfying use of leisure time and the habitual ethical attitude depend in a considerable measure on the ability to understand the written and spoken word and to contribute, in turn, by writing and speaking.

If we accept the idea that communication is the primary objective of the language program, and if it is true that language is a vital part of every activity in which an individual engages, then it is only feasible to recognize the importance of the mastery of skills of written expression.

Although the principles underlying good language usage are essentially the same for both speaking and writing, written expression depends heavily upon the development of certain mechanical skills and utility. However, in modern society, we are beginning to recognize that memorized rules of English grammar are of little or

---

no benefit in written expression. We are becoming more and more convinced that the teaching of isolated grammar and mechanics will not improve an individual's skills of writing techniques.

... Students learn to write by writing not by (rote memory), filling in blanks, or pronoun drills . . . .

It is the belief of practical minded educators that writing instruction in today's curriculums would prove more meaningful to students if their activities and assignments were geared toward "real life" writing tasks and personal experiences.

An evaluation of the utilization of writing skills, abilities, activities, or experiences is based on the principles that "whatever is taught must fill an important need in life," and must be universal. Because of the frequent use of writing skills in one's life, the need for them is not only universal, but usually crucial and permanent. Cruciality results when there is lack of knowledge that is a pre-requisite for career specifications, educational requirements and daily necessities.

Times are changing, and it is becoming increasingly important that a person be able to express his thoughts

1Ibid., p. 312-313.
clearly and forcefully in writing. Colleges are demanding better writing performances and are selecting those who exhibit writing competency; industry is becoming choosier as to a job seeker's writing ability. Where, then, does the responsibility of teaching writing lie?

School curriculums have been criticized through the years for the lack of emphasis placed on writing in the English departments. Authorities argue: That secondary-school enrollments have jumped to record highs and the class loads are too heavy; the fact that there is poor supervision within the schools and English departments; and that community apathy among other reasons contribute to produce situations where there is little writing or where writing is disorganized and often repetitious in nature.

The writer feels, though, that the basic responsibility for providing instruction and activities that will foster writing fluency rests upon the English teachers. High schools and colleges are basically responsible for not training English teachers to fulfill this responsibility. Far too often high school English teachers have failed to concentrate on such matters as organization, logic, rhetoric, and creative expression because they,
themselves, were not equipped to dwell upon such.

Research has shown that yearly many colleges graduate English teachers who have not had an advanced course in written composition. These people are entering the high school classrooms daily to teach without ever having had to analyze and exercise control of reasoning processes, purpose, content, and form when writing. Thus, one should be able to understand and should not be too startled when graduates who are viewing themselves and their training make such comments as:

"I never wrote much of anything in high school."

"All we did was work on literature and grammar in my classes."

"My English teachers asked me to write my autobiography several times.

The writer feels that graduate schools also play a prominent role in re-enforcing the development of writing competency. Far too many graduate students exemplify a lack of writing efficiency and self-discipline due to reasons discussed. It is the writer's belief that research of the nature proposed will prove helpful for those persons who have writing difficulty and for those who are responsible for alleviating such problems.

Evolution of the problem.—The researcher's interest
in this study evolved from (1) past teaching experiences of English at the junior and senior high school levels; (2) observation of fellow colleagues who sought help when encountering writing problems; and (3) observation of the number of graduates who registered fear and exhibited a feeling of insecurity when confronted with formal writing assignments.

Contribution to educational knowledge.--This study in general purported to re-emphasize the need to improve written language in an ever changing society that is requiring writing competency. The writer hoped specifically that this study would: (1) supply information which pertains to the basic writing difficulties which impede the progress of graduate students; (2) prove beneficial to administrators and curriculum planners when planning English programs; (3) encourage English teachers to analyze and improve their methods of teaching written composition; and (4) inspire others to conduct a similar investigation using different subjects that might prove beneficial to research.

Statement of the problem.--This study was concerned with the investigation of technical errors made by a random sample of Atlanta University Graduate Students on the
English Fundamentals Examination, June, 1967, in order to determine their writing difficulties.

Purpose of the study.-- The purpose of this study in a broad scope was to determine whether Atlanta University Graduate Students had developed competence in writing in previous educational training.

More specifically, the purposes of the study were:

1. To determine if students had control of logical thought processes related to writing a business letter, an argument and an exposition.

2. To discover if students could discriminate between expository, argumentative and other forms of writing.

3. To ascertain how well students had control of content.

4. To determine if students had command of writing techniques that contribute to clarity and effectiveness.

Definition of terms.--For the purpose of clarity, the following terms have been used and are defined:

1. Writing techniques - This term encompasses principles and mechanics of writing as conceived by grammarians.

2. Writing habits - Frequent and customary utilization of correct writing conventions.

3. Language - Any means, vocal or other of expressing or communicating feeling or thought.

The terms written composition, writing expression,
and written language were used interchangeably in the study.

Limitations of the study.—The major limitations of this study were:

1. The subjects were limited to only 100 graduate students of the 213 persons who took the English Fundamentals Examination in June, 1967.

2. The number of test booklets available was not a representative sample of the total enrollment of the university.

3. Writing samples were limited only to business letters, argumentations, and expositions.

Source of data.—Data for this study were secured from the test booklets of 100 students enrolled in the various schools (education, arts and sciences, business administration, library services, and social work) of Atlanta University, who took the English Fundamentals Examination on June 13, 1967.

Locale of study.—The study was conducted at Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia, 1967.

Method of research.—The method employed in this research was the Descriptive-Survey utilizing the English Fundamentals Examinations.

Procedure.—The procedure consisted of the following steps:

1. Permission from proper school officials to
conducted the study was secured.

2. The literature pertinent to this research was reviewed, summarized, and presented in written form in the thesis.

3. One hundred test booklets of the English Fundamentals Examinations were examined for technical errors made.

4. The data were assembled and treated in the manner indicated as most fruitful by the nature of the data and the purposes of the research.

5. The findings, recommendations, conclusions, and implications were formulated and written up for inclusion in the finished thesis copy.

Survey of related literature.—A society in an age of automation, complex human relationships, and rapid changes and innovations requires literate members who use writing skills fluently and clearly in a variety of forms.¹

In primitive society, man could function satisfactorily if he had good listening skills and effective oral language expression. In more complex societies, it is necessary for a person to be able to read and write the language. In instruction in written expression, primacy

Improvement in writing comes as a result of continuous writing experiences and recognition and critical evaluation of technical errors made. Skill in correct writing develops through the proper exercise of the desired writing habits. Desirable habits are established through properly motivated use of carefully constructed drill materials. If a student does not recognize errors in written expression when he sees them, he is not likely to correct his errors.

Ideally, students should be asked to write on subjects that interest them and about which they know enough to write. Subject matter that meets both these requirements, interest and knowledge, is not invariably based on reading. Content suitable for developing writing skills may be drawn from any field of knowledge and experience. Numerous educators have corroborated the writer's thinking on this view by such statements as:

Composition, with its emphasis on the writer's purpose and control, is no way compatible with illiteracy. It demands that the writer accept the responsibility to give orders and from to his written expression. The control of the language in action must be his.¹

is given to an emphasis upon the communication of ideas with a secondary emphasis upon effectiveness of expression.

With the emphasis upon the communication of ideas, attention is given to having ideas which are worth writing, to organizing ideas in a meaningful way, and to using colorful and rich language.¹

In order to communicate effectively through written expression, the writer has to have a purpose for writing. He has to be able to discriminate the purpose and know exactly whether he is writing to inform, persuade, explain, or express his ideas or emotions for the entertainment or enlightenment of others. Closely related to purpose is the consideration of the writer's audience. It is not only necessary that the writer knows that he is writing to inform but also he must remain cognizant of whom he is informing. The writer, too, has to remain in the realm of his audience for his choice of content, form, and diction will depend upon his readers. If he is too removed then the writing task becomes more difficult.

Teaching composition in the future should become more and more a process of training young people to think and to organize and to understand through their own written language, to push forward honestly, imaginatively, responsibly, (and) creatively in formal expression . . . .

Since dissatisfaction and disorientation from today's society have been cited as major causes of the drop-out problem, perhaps the sterility of our writing assignments is a contributing factor. If the school's major purpose is to teach the student to think, then he must be allowed to draw from his own treasure house of knowledge, and experiences. It might even be more realistic to make creative writing the major point of departure in the writing curriculum. Certainly, we need to recognize that if each student brings a different set of learning experiences into a classroom, we cannot backstep writing activities for him. We must let him develop the individuality in writing as we prize it in other aspects of school and social life. 2

Finally writing has a general evaluative function

1 Ibid., p. 108.
for the writer: it tests his power to think through a subject, to organize ideas, to observe accurately; it tests his control of grammar and usage, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. We do not learn to punctuate merely as an end in itself, but rather so that our writing becomes more easily readable or more effective. Spelling, like punctuation, is a writing skill, not an oral skill cultivated for the purpose of participating in spelling bees to entertain the school and community. The use of capital letters is a writing convention also. One of the reasons, then, for teaching writing is to provide realistic practice opportunities for the application of knowledge about written conventions.¹

Educational programs recognize the functional situations in which a person should be able to handle written expression and these types of writing should receive emphasis. One learns to write, as has been reiterated, through much practice in writing. Who, then is responsible for the type of instruction that is necessary?

Many English teachers still begin their teaching without having a college course in advance composition.

Many would much rather teach literature than composition; some define isolated grammar and usage practice as composition; some concentrate largely on a textbook approach and teach about composition; others do not see the ways or advantages of correlating writing with literature and other areas of the language arts.¹

Fortunately, many of our training institutions have accepted the modern theories of learning, and have shifted the emphasis in their training from general to special method courses. The best of courses are offered by qualified subject matter experts with advanced professional training in principles of curriculum construction, in modern psychological principles of learning up-to-date classroom procedures, as well as in the use of the best methods and instruments for evaluating the results of teaching.²

² Green and Petty, op. cit., p. 13.
CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Preparatory Statement.—The purpose of this chapter be to categorize, present, analyze, and interpret the data derived from the one hundred test booklets selected randomly from two hundred thirteen subjects participating in the English Fundamentals Examination taken on June 13, 1967. From the one hundred books selected and examined, seventeen (17) passed, thirty-five (35) received a grade of incomplete and forty-eight (48) failed.

General Information

Nature and Evolution of English Fundamentals Examination.—The English Fundamentals Examination administered to all students of Atlanta University before completion of requirements for graduation is comprised of four parts: spelling dictation, letter of application for a job, and exposition, and an argument. The examination aims primarily to reveal how well one can express himself in logical paragraphs written in cultivated, colloquial English. Emphasis is placed on development of thought, good usage, spelling, and conventional punctuation. The writer did
not concern herself with the nature of spelling errors from the spelling dictation section of the English Fundamentals Examination but tabulated only the spelling errors found in the content of the writing samples.

Of the two hundred thirteen students who took the English Fundamentals Examination on June 13, 1967, approximately two hundred were graduate students enrolled at Atlanta University for the 1967 summer session. The other students were enrolled at Morehouse and Clark Colleges. The researcher examined 100 text booklets for technical errors after they had been evaluated by the faculty of the English Department.¹

The letter of application, the exposition, and the argument were written by students taking the examination in blue books, which were referred to in this research as test booklets. If, in the test booklets, the students expressed themselves in logical, well developed paragraphs, written in cultivated colloquial English according to accepted form, organization, style, and content, they received a grade of "P" for passing. If the instructors of Atlanta University felt that the errors or weaknesses exhibited in the test booklets could be alleviated within

¹See the appendix for suggestions for evaluating test booklets and for the topics suggested for the exposition and arguments.
a reasonable time through conferences and individual aid, the
students received a grade of "Inc" for incomplete. If the
instructors felt that the nature of the weakness required
systematic work in class, the students received a grade of
"F" for failure.

Organization and Treatment of Data

Classification of Subjects According to Sex, School and
Grade.—From the 100 test booklets examined, data were organized
concerning subjects who passed, subjects who received incompletes,
and subjects who failed. These data are presented in Tables I, II, and III. From the data in Table I, it may be seen that the
number of subjects who failed was equally distributed between
females and males. Table I also points out the fact that the
greatest percentage of failures was found in the school of
education.

From the data revealed in Table II, one can easily see
that the greatest percentage of persons who received incompletes,
as with failures, was found in the school of education. It is
interesting to note that the percentage range was from 0% to
37.14%. Further, Table II shows that the number of students
who received incompletes is less than the number of students
who failed.
DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS ACCORDING TO SCHOOLS AND SEX WHO FAILED THE ENGLISH FUNDAMENTALS EXAMINATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subjects</th>
<th>Sex of Subjects</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>27.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>35.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Library Service</td>
<td>16.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Library Service</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>8.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Total

48
TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS ACCORDING TO SCHOOLS AND SEX WHO RECEIVED INCOMPLETES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subjects</th>
<th>Sex of Subjects</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>37.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>11.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Library Service</td>
<td>22.86</td>
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<td>Library Service</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>-- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 35

Table III shows that the total number of subjects who passed was approximately 33.33 per cent of the total number who failed and approximately 50 per cent of the total number
who received an incomplete. Further Table III reveals that the

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS ACCORDING TO
SCHOOLS AND SEX WHO PASSED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subjects</th>
<th>Sex of Subjects</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>35.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>23.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Library Service</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Library Service</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>11.76</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>5.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>11.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 17

highest percentage of subjects passing was found in the school of education, as was likewise evidenced in Tables I and II.
There were no subjects to pass from the school of social work.

A summary of Tables I, II, and III in Table IV reveals that the frequency of failures is 48 per cent; while the frequency of incompletes is 35 per cent, and the frequency of passing grades is 17 per cent. Further, Table IV reveals that

**TABLE 4**

**SUMMARY OF DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS' GRADES ACCORDING TO SCHOOLS WHO TOOK THE ENGLISH FUNDAMENTALS EXAMINATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subjects</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Library Service</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Inc.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Library Service</td>
<td>Inc.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>Inc.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>Inc.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>Inc.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Library Service</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 100

the greatest percentage of failures is in the school of education totaling 30 per cent and 1 per cent or the least number is failures is found in the school of social work.
Background Information Relating to Types of Errors Made.--

Along with the emphasis upon the communication of ideas, the English Fundamentals Examination placed emphasis upon effectiveness of expression. According to Manchester, Thomas, and Scott:

Learning to write is learning best how to express the facts, opinions, and feelings that you already possess, or may hereafter possess. . . . Writing is an art, a skill; and one's success in mastering it comes from learning its secrets and how to put them in practice.¹

They further maintain that effectiveness in general plan and effectiveness in details are the pre-requisites for becoming a successful writer in college and thereafter.

By effectiveness in general plan is meant such an arrangement of the writer's ideas as will enable the reader to catch the main drift of the writer's message without effort and without confusion. By effectiveness in details is meant everything that has to do with correctness of words, phrase, and sentence, and with force and finish of style. Correctness involves, first of all, correct grammar. Correctness involves also the mastery of spelling, mastery of words and their meanings, and the mastery of punctuation and capitalization.

The researcher found that the majority of graduate students

whose test booklets were examined exhibited the greatest de-

ciciency in effectiveness in detail, the latter pre-requisite

for becoming a successful writer.

**Examples of Types of Errors Made.**—The following is a

list of errors taken from the students' papers. These examples

show students' habits in writing sentence fragments and de-

pendent clauses for full sentences:

1. To make all concerned a better citizen no matter
of race, creed, or color.
2. In reply to an advertisement in the New York Times
that you want a children's librarian.
3. Looking for a most interesting and personal inter-
view.
4. Especially in public schools.
5. A certificate in Special Education on the five-year
level.
6. Also a better quality teachers and a better school
atmosphere.
7. That is, interest on the part of teachers in de-
signing, creating, and implementing oral programs.

All of the preceding examples were written as complete ideas

contributing to the development of a central idea. An investi-
gation of the students' papers revealed another serious de-
ciciency in sentence structure - that of run-on sentences.

Cited below are examples of such taken from the students' papers:

1. Black power is creating racial dislikes, there are
rioting- coming up from the black power movement,
the leader seems not to have any thought toward the
the person that is not his followers but all have to
suffer as they are from blood shed and killing.
(rioting for riotings and poor diction)
2. In our classrooms today, the problems are of overcrowdness (for crowdedness) salaries at the minimum of (for minimum) other states, duties that are not required, teaching out one's major field, discipline and many others.

3. Demonstrations have produced evil affect (plural and diction) upon our culture on the other hand we look at the advantages that protests from student (for students) have namely: Better jobs have been provided, educational facilities . . .

4. I am forty years old, at present taking courses in Administration at Atlanta University.

Some students, seemingly, failed to realize that every sentence in the composition had to make sense in order for the purpose, which is to communicate thought, to be accomplished. The presence of a single sentence that turns out to be meaningless, due to punctuation, is a serious blot even on an otherwise credible composition.

The following listings of examples represent some of the other most prevalent errors of the subjects whose test booklets were examined:

I. Diction

1. Whenever one attempts to carry out a plan without having first planned what to do, mishaps (bad luck) set in.

2. To be a successful student one has to formulate, (to express in a formula), live and study by certain standards.

3. There (for their) main concern was to teach the main skills such as: . . .

4. I agree (with whom? Perhaps the word maintained could have been used) that no one should be a user of drugs.
5. If he is convicted or centure (for censured) there will be many others of his kind that will follow in his footsteps.

II. Subject-Verb Agreement

1. I think protests really means fighting to get what is rightful (for rightfully) yours. (protests-mean)

2. The protests has really paid off. (protests-have)

3. The Librarian (capital) think that everyone should know how to use the facilities of the library. (librarian-thinks)

4. One can easy (easily) see with (wrong word) the changes that has taken place all over the world. (changes-have)

5. Many new aids has come in use. (aids-have)

6. The television are teaching the use of l 1 1 l l 1 (television-is)

7. The educational point of view seem to be left out. (point-seems)

III. Errors in Capitalization

1. I have a B. A. Degree in Social Studies and a minor in Education. (Use of superfluous capitals)

2. I received a B. A. Degree in Elementary Education with a minor in Library Service. (Use of superfluous capitals)

3. The Negro will never be able to obtain full Citizenship without help from other American Citizens.

4. The bible says . . . . . . . . . . (Use of insufficient capitals)

5. We as a race of people will never be able to cope. . . . (Use of insufficient capitals)
IV. **Spelling Errors taken from Content**

1. intergration . . . . . integration
2. edsacational . . . . . educational
3. asses . . . . . access
4. acrited . . . . . accredited
5. recieved . . . . . received
6. borne . . . . . born
7. descent . . . . . decent
8. critized . . . . . criticized
9. bios , . . . . . bias
10. trufully . . . . . truthfully
11. famous . . . . . famous
12. existane , . . . . . existence
13. teenagers . . . . . teenagers
14. base . . . . . basis
15. priviledges . . . . . privileges
16. citizens . . . . . citizens

V. **Plurals and Pronoun References**

1. Two political party (for parties) in the south will bring about better relations.
2. I read that there are several opening (for openings) in your school system.
3. You may contact the following reference: ( for references)
4. I think that one of the worts thing (for things) that will ever occur in the Negro movement is . . .
5. It is very unfair for a person to pay more for property or rent because they (he) are unwanted.
6. The State Department of Education has re¬versed in their ( for its) thinking.
7. One must inject into their (for his) mind that no matter what the situation may be she (for he) will strive to do her (for his) best.

**Information on Classification of Errors for Presentation.**

For the purpose of presentation and interpretation, the researcher grouped the technical errors made by the subjects in the test booklets according to mechanics, grammar and structure, form, and expression. For clarity, the researcher
referred to grammatical errors as those errors made in the form and structure of words and with their customary arrangement in phrases and sentences. Errors made in punctuation, capitalization and spelling are referred to as mechanical errors.

The researcher relied upon Lewis and Sisk's elaboration of form and expression for clarity:

Form is the means by which content is made clear. Without "know how," establishing "why," "to whom," and "what," is of little avail. Writing "know how" includes the ability to decide on a pattern or structure of development to convey ideas by means of well constructed sentences and paragraphs. Students should learn first that ideas are developed and amplified by furnishing examples or details, illustrating, or giving reasons and reactions in a logical sequence or pattern. This is organization. After the student masters the plan of organization, then he has to translate his ideas into effective, unified, coherent sentences and paragraphs. Generally speaking, this is expression. The basic fundamentals, referred to in this research as writing techniques, needed to foster good form and expression are a mastery of grammar and usage, structural, patterns, and mechanics.

Test booklets of the 100 subjects used were examined by the researcher for the following mechanical, grammatical and structural errors:

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1}}\text{Lewis and Sisk, op. cit., p. 323.}\]
1. Subject-Verb Agreement
2. Verb-Tense
3. Spelling
4. Punctuation
5. Sentence Fragments
6. Capitalization
7. Pronoun Reference
8. Plurals and Possessives
9. Paragraph Indentation
10. Run-on Sentences
11. Dangling Modifiers

The following is the list of errors grouped under form and expression for which the researcher examined test booklets to find:

1. Form of letter
2. Form essays
3. Organization and Logical Development of Ideas
4. Diction
5. Lack of Depth of Ideas - Superficiality
6. Legibility of Handwriting
7. Redundancy

Tables 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 will show a distribution of the types of errors made by the subjects who failed, the subjects who received incompletes, and the subjects who passed. The composite errors made by subjects in each category will be indicated on two tables.

Errors Made by Subjects Who Failed.--Table 5, page 28, lists the types of mechanical, grammatical and structural errors made by the subjects who failed and reveals the number of subjects who made errors in each category. The data included indicated that the highest per cent of errors
TABLE 5
MECHANICAL, GRAMMATICAL, AND STRUCTURAL ERRORS
MADE BY THE 48 STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED F
AS THE FINAL GRADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Error</th>
<th>Number of Persons Who Made the Errors</th>
<th>Per Cent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject-Verb Agreement</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>54.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb Tense</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>87.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Fragments</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>58.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalization</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun Reference</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plurals and Possessives</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph Indentation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run-on Sentences</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangling Modifiers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

in spelling. Twenty-eight subjects or 58.33 per cent of the total group wrote sentence fragments for sentences. Twenty-six subjects or 54.16 of the total group wrote sentences in which the subject and verb did not agree. Twenty-four or 50.00 per cent of the total group had difficulty punctuating correctly. Further, Table V reveals that the subjects who failed experienced least difficulty with dangling modifiers and run-on sentences.

Table 6, page 29, shows the types of errors made according to form and expression by the 48 subjects who failed. It can be seen from Table VI that errors in form and expression were made by the subjects who failed but in somewhat smaller degrees than in mechanics, grammar, and structure. Twenty-eight
TABLE 6

ERRORS MADE IN FORM AND EXPRESSION BY
THE 48 STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED F
AS THE FINAL GRADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Error</th>
<th>Number of Persons Who Made the Errors</th>
<th>Per Cent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form of Letter</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form of Essays</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>58.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization and Logical Development of Essays</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>39.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Depth of Ideas—Superficiality</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redundancy</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legibility of Handwriting</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subjects or 58.33 per cent of the total group had difficulty with the form used in expository and argumentative composition. Nineteen subjects or 39.58 per cent of the total group exhibited difficulty in organizing and developing essays in a unified coherent manner. Eighteen subjects had difficulty selecting the correct words to be used; while 17 subjects repeated ideas too often in the written compositions. Only 4 subjects or 8.33 per cent of the total group wrote too poorly for their essays to be read.

Errors Made by Subjects Who Received an Incomplete.—Table VII, page 30, indicates the type of mechanical, grammatical, and structural errors made by the 35 subjects who
TABLE 7

MECHANICAL, GRAMMATICAL, AND STRUCTURAL ERRORS MADE BY THE 35 STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED AN INCOMPLETE AS THE FINAL GRADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Error</th>
<th>Number of Persons Who Made the Errors</th>
<th>Per Cent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject-Verb Agreement</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb Tense</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Fragments</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalization</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun Reference</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plurals and Possessives</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

received a grade of incomplete. It is interesting to note that errors of paragraph indentation, run on sentences, and dangling modifiers were not made by the subjects in this category. Table VII further shows that subjects in this group made far less errors in the other areas listed than the subjects who failed. It can be seen from Table VII that the highest per cent of the total group had errors in spelling; while only 3 or 8.57 per cent of the total group had errors in punctuation and pronoun reference.

The data found on Table VIII, page 31, reveal the types of errors that were made in form and expression by the students who received an incomplete. The data show 8 or 22.86 per cent of the total group did not use words correctly in sentences.
**TABLE 8**

ERRORS MADE IN FORM AND EXPRESSION BY THE 35 STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED AN INCOMPLETE AS THE FINAL GRADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Errors</th>
<th>Number of Persons Who Made the Errors</th>
<th>Per Cent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form of Letter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form of Essays</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization and Logical Development of Ideas</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Depth of Ideas—Superficiality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legibility of Handwriting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of these 8, the researcher found that 3 subjects were foreign students who were confused with idioms. Table VIII further reveals that 7 or 20.00 per cent of the total group were not aware of the acceptable forms employed in writing expositions and arguments. Six of these subjects neglected either to summarize or conclude their essays. Six or 17.14 per cent of the total group did not organize and develop their ideas logically; while only 1 or 2.85 per cent of the total group wrote poorly. Table VIII also reveals that none of the subjects in this category was redundant in his writing.

**Errors Made by Subjects Who Passed**.--The data on Table IX, page 32, indicate the types of mechanical, grammatical and structural errors that the subjects who passed made. The data
TABLE 9
MECHANICAL, GRAMMATICAL, AND STRUCTURAL ERRORS MADE BY THE 17 STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED "P" FOR PASSING GRADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Error</th>
<th>Number of Persons</th>
<th>Per Cent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject-Verb Agreement</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>76.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Fragments</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalization</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

reveal that 13 or 76.47 per cent of the total group had spelling errors; while 4 or 23.52 per cent of the total group had difficulty differentiating between sentences and sentence fragments. Only 2 or 11.76 per cent of the total group had subject-verb disagreements and trouble with capitalization. Table IX further reveals that subjects who passed did not make technical errors in verb tenses, faulty references, plurals and possessives, paragraph indentation, run-on sentences and dangling modifiers.

Table X, page 33, reveals the data on the errors made in form and structure by the subjects who passed. It can be seen from the Table that 7 or 41.17 per cent of the total group had difficulty in selecting the correct words to use. Two or 11.76 per cent of the total group did not adhere to acceptable form
TABLE 10

ERRORS MADE IN FORM AND EXPRESSION
BY THE 17 STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED "P" FOR PASSING GRADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Error</th>
<th>Number of Persons Who Made the Errors</th>
<th>Per Cent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redundancy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form of Letter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

while writing their business letters and 1 or 5.88 per cent of the total group was repetitional. Table X further reveals that subjects who passed did not witness difficulty with organizing ideas, developing ideas, diction, essay forms and legibility of handwriting.

Table XI, page 34, reveals a composite picture of the errors made by the total number of subjects whose test booklets were examined. Of the 100 booklets examined, 66 subjects had spelling errors. Thirty-eight subjects could not distinguish between sentences and sentence fragments. Thirty-five subjects did not write their essays according to acceptable form; while only 16 subjects did not use the appropriate form for a business letter. Thirty-three per cent of the group had difficulty with the choice of words and 28 per cent did not punctuate correctly. Table XI further
### Table 11

Summary of Errors Made by the 100 Students Whose Test Booklets Were Examined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Error</th>
<th>Total Number of Persons Who Made the Errors</th>
<th>Per Cent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Fragments</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form of Essays</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject-Verb Agreement</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization and Logical Development of Ideas</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalization</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redundancy</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Depth of Ideas</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form of Letter</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb-Tense</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plurals and Possessives</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph Indentation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun Reference</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run-on Sentences</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangling Modifiers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legibility of Handwriting</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
reveals that the entire group had least difficulty with run-on sentences and dangling modifiers.
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recapitulation of Research Design and Methodology.—Times are changing, and it is becoming increasingly important that a person be able to express his thoughts clearly and forcefully in writing. The writer feels that the basic responsibility for providing instruction and activities that will foster writing fluency rests upon the English teachers. High schools and colleges are basically responsible for not training teachers to fulfill this responsibility. The writer feels that graduate schools also play a prominent role in re-enforcing the development of writing competency. It is the writer's hope that research of the nature conducted will prove helpful for those persons who are responsible for alleviating such problems.

The conclusions, implications, and recommendations inherent in this research have been derived from the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from students.
performance on the English Fundamentals Examination. Information from one hundred (100) test booklets comprised the data for this research.

**Purpose of the Study.**—The major purpose of this study was to analyze the performance of 100 graduate students on the English Fundamentals Examination.

The more specific purposes of this research were as follows:

1. To determine if students had control of logical thought processes related to writing a business letter, an argument, and an exposition.

2. To discover if students could discriminate between expository, argumentative, and other forms of writing.

3. To ascertain how well students had control of content.

4. To determine if students had command of writing techniques that contribute to clarity and effectiveness.

**Definition of Terms.**—The significant terms which are pertinent to this research are defined in the statements to follow.

1. "Writing techniques", as used in this study, encompasses principles and mechanics of writing as conceived by grammarians.

2. "Writing habits" as used in this study, refers to frequent and customary utilization of correct writing convention.
3. "Language" as used in this study, has reference to any means, vocal or other, of expressing or communicating feelings or thoughts.

The terms written composition, written expression, and written language have been used interchangeable in this study.

Locale and Research Design.--The analyses of the students' performance in the testbooklets were performed at Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia, during the 1967 Summer school session. The method employed in this research was the Descriptive Survey utilizing the English Fundamentals Examination. The analyses of these were formulated into significant Findings, Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations which constitute the content of the finished thesis copy.

Summary of Related Literature.--A summarization of the related literature is presented in the statements to follow:

Lois V. Johnson has said:

A society, in an age of automation, complex human relationships, and rapid change and innovations, requires literate members who use writing skills fluently and clearly in a variety of forms.¹

According to Carl F. Brown:

In primitive society, man could function satisfactorily if he had good listening skills and effective oral language expression. In more complex societies, it is necessary for a person to be able to read and write the language. In instruction, in written expression, primacy is given to an emphasis

upon the communication of ideas with a secondary emphasis upon effectiveness of expression. With the emphasis upon the communication of ideas, attention is given to having ideas which are worth writing, to organizing them in a meaningful way, and to using colorful and rich language.¹

Improvement in writing comes as a result of continuous writing experiences and recognition and critical evaluation of technical errors made. Skill in correct writing develops through the proper exercise of desired writing habits. Desirable writing habits are established through properly motivated use of carefully constructed drill materials. If a student does not recognize errors in written expression when he sees them, he is not likely to correct his errors.

Educational programs recognize the fractional situations in which a person should be able to handle written expression and these types of writing should receive emphasis. Who, then, is responsible for the type of instruction that is necessary?

According to William H. Evans:

Many English teachers still begin their teaching without having a college course in advanced composition. Many of these teachers much rather teach literature than composition; some concentrate largely on a textbook approach and teach about composition; others do not see the ways or advantages of

correlating writing with literature and other areas of the language arts.\(^1\)

Fortunately, many of our training institutions have accepted the modern theories of learning, and have shifted the emphasis in their training from general to special methods courses. The best of these courses are offered by qualified subject matter experts with advanced professional training in principles of curriculum construction, in modern psychological principles of learning up-to-date classroom procedures, as well as in the use of the best methods and instruments for evaluating the results of teaching.\(^2\)

**Summary of Basic Findings.**—The data obtained, as a result of this investigation, revealed the findings which follow:

Table 1

1. The number of subjects who failed was equally distributed between females and males. The greatest percentage of failures was found in the school of education.

Table 2

2. The greatest percentage of subjects who received incomplete was found in the school of education. The number of subjects who received "incomplete" was less than the number of subjects who failed.


3. The total number of subjects who passed was approximately one-third as large as the total number who failed and it was approximately one half as large as the total number who received an "incomplete". The highest per cent of subjects passing was found in the school of Education.

4. A summary of Tables 1, 2, and 3 shows that the frequency of "failures" was 48 per cent; while the frequency of "incompletes" was 35 per cent, and the frequency of "passing" grades was 17 per cent.

5. The highest per cent (42 subjects or 87.50 of the total group) of mechanical, grammatical and structural errors made by the subjects who failed was found in spelling. Data reveal that 28 subjects or 58.33 per cent of the group experienced difficulty with dangling modifiers.

6. Data indicate that 28 subjects or 58.33 per cent of the group had difficulty with the form used in expository and argumentative composition. Only 4 subjects or 8.33 per cent of the total group wrote too poorly for their essays to be read.

7. Subjects who received "incompletes" did not make such mechanical, grammatical, and structural errors as faulty paragraph indentation, run-on sentences, and dangling modifiers. The highest percentage of errors (11 subjects or 31.42 per cent of the group) was found in spelling; while only 3 per cent or 8.57 per cent of the group had errors in punctuation.
8. According to form and expression, the highest per cent (22.86) of errors by subjects who received and "incomplete" was found in diction. More of the subjects on this category made errors in redundancy.

9. According to mechanics, grammar, and structure, data reveal that 13 or 76.47 per cent of the group who passed had errors in spelling. There were no errors made by this group in verb-tense, faulty pronoun reference, plurals and possessives, faulty paragraph indentation, run-on sentences and dangling modifiers.

10. The only errors made in form and expression by subjects who passed were in diction - 7 subjects or 41.17 per cent of the group; redundancy - 1 subject or 5.88 per cent of the group; and letter form- 2 subjects or 11.76 per cent of the group.

11. A summary shows that of the students' performance in one hundred (100) test booklets examined, 66 per cent of the errors was found in spelling; 38 per cent in sentence fragments; 35 per cent in form of essays; 34 per cent in subject-verb-agreement; 33 per cent in diction; 28 per cent in punctuation; 25 per cent in organization and development of ideas; 18 per cent in redundancy; 16 per cent in letter form; 11 per cent in faulty pronoun reference; 16 per cent in lack of depth of ideas; 12 per cent in plurals and possessives; 12 per cent in faulty paragraph indentation; 5 per cent in legibility of handwriting; 3 per cent in dangling modifiers.
A SUMMARY OF THE BASIC FINDINGS ILLUSTRATED
ON THE TABLES ENCOMPASSED IN CHAPTER 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subjects</th>
<th>Sex of Subjects</th>
<th>Highest Percent of Failures Found in School of Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who Failed - 48</td>
<td>24 - Males</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24 - Females</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subjects</th>
<th>Sex of Subjects</th>
<th>Highest Percent of Persons Receiving Incomplete Found in School of Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who Received Incomplete - 35</td>
<td>24 - Females</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 - Males</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subjects</th>
<th>Sex of Subjects</th>
<th>Highest Percent of Persons Receiving &quot;P&quot;'s Found in the School of Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who Passed - 17</td>
<td>10 - Females</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 - Males</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanical, Grammatical, and Structural Errors Made by the 48 Subjects Who Failed</th>
<th>Highest Number of Subjects Making Similar Errors</th>
<th>Type of Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                                                                                 | Least Number of Subjects Making Similar Errors | Type of Error |
|                                                                                 | 3                                              | Dangling Modifier |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form and Expression Errors Made By 48 Subjects Who Failed</th>
<th>Highest Number of Subjects Making Similar Errors</th>
<th>Type of Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Form of Exposition and Form of Argument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                                                                                 | Least Number of Subjects Making Similar Errors | Type of Error |
|                                                                                 | 3                                              | Punctuation   |
A SUMMARY OF THE BASIC FINDINGS ILLUSTRATED 
ON THE TABLES ENCOMPASSED IN CHAPTER 2  
(Continued)

| Mechanic, Grammatical, and Structural Errors Made By the 35 Subjects Who Received Incomplete | Highest Number of Subjects Making Similar Errors - 11 | Type of Error Spelling |
| Form and Expression Errors Made By the Subjects Who Received an Incomplete | Highest Number of Subjects Making Similar Errors - 8 | Type of Error Diction |
| | Least Number of Subjects Making Similar Errors - None | Type of Error Redundancy |
| Mechanical, Grammatical, and Structural Errors Made By the 17 Subjects Who Passed | Highest Number of Subjects Making Similar Errors - 13 | Type of Error Spelling |
Conclusions

On the basis of the foregoing data, the writer drew the following conclusions:

1. Most of the subjects have not developed efficient writing techniques during previous educational training.

2. Formal writing instruction in most instances, is needed in order to improve graduates students' ability in developing conventional habits and skills.

3. Major findings indicate that students experienced most difficulty with mechanics and grammar.

4. Subjects are not aware of their writing weaknesses.

5. Legibility of handwriting of graduate students is not a major deficiency.

Implications

Inherent in the conclusions drawn from these findings are the following implications:

1. Curriculum planners need to place more emphasis on writing instruction in educational programs.

2. High school English teachers and college instructors need to be made aware of the necessity of developing their students' writing techniques sufficiently.

3. All subject area teacher need to be cognizant of students' writing deficiencies and support the English teachers in developing students' abilities to their maximum.

4. Parents should provide many first-hand and vicarious experiences for their children in order that they may have more knowledge of content suitable for developing writing skills.
5. Students need to become alert in realizing their weakness and put forth a concentrated effort to help themselves.

Recommendations

The implications of the conclusions drawn in this study seem to warrant the following recommendations:

1. That curriculum planners should put forth a greater effort in providing educational programs that stress writing competency.

2. That English teachers re-evaluate their preparation and competencies in themselves and their methods of teaching language arts.

3. That English teachers place more emphasis on individual compositions.

4. That Atlanta University and probably graduate schools in general continue to initiate some type of course that will help combat the writing deficiencies of their students.

5. That more studies similar to this one be conducted in order to point out inherent weaknesses.
ENGLISH FUNDAMENTALS EXAMINATION

ATLANTA UNIVERSITY \hspace{1cm} JUNE 13, 1967

NOTE: This test aims primarily to reveal how well you can express yourself in logical paragraphs written in cultivated colloquial English. Emphasis is placed on development of thought, good usage, spelling, and conventional punctuation. Take your time and write as well as you can.

I. Spelling dictation.

II. Exposition. Explain one of these viewpoints, plans, hypotheses, processes, etc. (at least three pages)

A. What Student Protests Really Mean

B. The Two-Party Political System in the South

C. New Trends in Teaching Biology (or any other course)

D. What Has Happened to the Threat of the Bomb

E. Two Types of Courage (you may wish to discuss persons who have shown these types of courage or your own explanation of the types)

F. A Basic Concept for the History (or other) Teacher (or other professional)

G. The Significance of Polling Public Opinion

H. How to \hspace{1cm} (Succeed or Fail as a Student, Disagree without Being Disagreeable, Conduct an Interview, Evaluate an Editorial).

I. Three Major Threats to World Peace

J. The American Attitude Toward Youth

K. A Definition of a Conservative (in politics, in education, etc.)

L. Some Aspects of Academic Freedom

M. A Cause-and-Effect Analysis of Poverty Among Minorities
III. Write a letter of application for a job in your field or for which you are otherwise qualified. (A request for a job application blank is not a letter of application).

IV. Argument. Defend or oppose one of these propositions. (at least three pages)

A. School Consolidation Is a Necessity for Good Public Education
B. "Black Power" A Sensible Solution to Racial Problems
C. Teachers Should Have the Right to Strike
D. Draft Evasion Is Not a Sign of Lack of Patriotism
E. Capital Punishment Does Not Deter Crime
F. A Third World War Is Inevitable
G. Federal Laws Should Prohibit Discrimination in Housing
H. Students Should Have More Voice in the Administration of Colleges and Universities
I. A Case for (or against) Drug Usage
TO THE STAFF MEMBERS:

Below are suggestions for evaluating the examinations:

1. **Spelling.** Each student is required to spell correctly 90% of the words called. A student correctly spelling 54 or more words should receive the grade of "P"; a student misspelling 7 or more words, a grade of "F".

2. **Blue Book.** If the student expresses himself in logical, well developed paragraphs written in cultivated colloquial English, he should receive a grade of "P".

   If, as you look at errors or weaknesses you feel that within a reasonable length of time the deficiency can be worked off in a conference, he should receive a grade of "INC" (Incomplete).

   If you feel that the nature of the weaknesses require systematic work in a class, he should receive a grade of "F".

   **Letter of Application.** An acceptable letter meets the requirements of form (any acceptable form,) style, content.

   **Exposition and Argument.** These aspects of the examination should be considered for organization, logical development of thought, paragraphs and sentences, usage, spelling, mechanics.

3. Please return reports on the enclosed form by Tuesday, 12:30 P.M., June 20, 1967, to Office 211, Haven-Warren, Clark College.
COMMENTS FOUND IN THE TEST BOOKLETS
THAT WERE MADE BY THE INSTRUCTORS
WHO EVALUATED THEM

1. "Purposes and basic ideas as not clear."
2. "Under developed"
3. "In terms of topic, paragraph purposes are not clear."
4. "This paper needs an introduction."
5. "But what does this say about your topic?"
6. "Ideas are not clearly stated nor clearly focused."
7. "You said this in the first paragraph."
8. "Are the trends being improved or is it methods?"
9. "Weak paragraph structure."
10. "Almost a direct of repetition of first sentence."
11. "Avoid on-sentence paragraphs."
12. "No prospective employer would bother to read this difficult handwriting."
13. "Avoid shift to second person."
14. "Very poor in good English usage."
15. "Weak in usage and general command of the language."
16. "--Not a typical letter that a graduate student would write."
17. "Not an argument- an opinion - need systematic work in class."
18. "This is not an argument - please re-write."
19. "This (exposition) seems a bit rambling, unorganized."
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Periodicals


Unpublished Material