

THE EFFECT OF NEWS WRITING INSTRUCTION  
IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION I ON  
THE WRITING PERFORMANCE AND  
ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS

By

LYLE D. OLSON

Bachelor of Science  
South Dakota State University  
Brookings, South Dakota  
1976

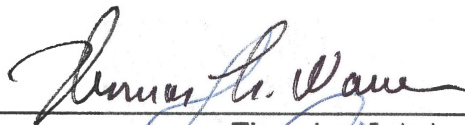
Master of Arts  
University of Oklahoma  
Norman, Oklahoma  
1981

Submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate College of the  
Oklahoma State University  
in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for  
the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION  
May, 1988

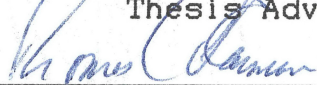
Thesis  
1988D  
052e  
cop. 2

THE EFFECT OF NEWS WRITING INSTRUCTION  
IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION I ON  
THE WRITING PERFORMANCE AND  
ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS

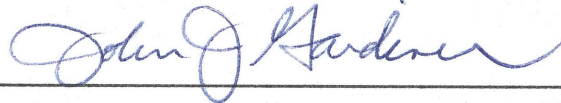
Thesis Approved:



Thesis Adviser









Dean of the Graduate College

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A study of this sort and writing a doctoral thesis cannot be done alone. I sincerely appreciate the contributions of the following:

Bartlesville Wesleyan College. Without a doubt the greatest debt I owe is to my employer and the great people who make up the institution. Except for being closer to Stillwater, I cannot imagine a more ideal employment situation while I completed my doctorate. But beyond the institutional support, I could not have completed this program without the support of individual colleagues. I owe special thanks to Mary Ruth Brown and Don Maness, who also completed their doctorates at OSU this semester. The "ordeal" I endured was made so much easier because I was not in it alone.

Six OSU professors. Special thanks, of course, go to Dr. Thomas Warren, my adviser, whose superb editing pen has helped me hone my writing skills. He also introduced me to a new field of writing and helped me expand my career horizons. I wish to thank Dr. Marlan Nelson, who made insightful suggestions throughout the entire project. I am grateful for Dr. William Warde's help with the statistical data. I am also grateful to EAHED professors John Gardiner and Thomas Karman for serving on my committee and to former

professor Ann Austin for inspiring me to become a better teacher and to pursue a doctorate.

My family. Thanks, Gwen, for your encouragement, prayers, and understanding of the demands of this study and of my doctoral program during the past three years (and over 30,000 miles). I wish to thank my one-year old son Aaron for delightfully "interrupting" and adding spice to the last year of my doctoral program.

The Lord. As a Christian, I would certainly be remiss if I did not publically thank the Lord for His watchful care during my doctoral program.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Background. . . . .	1
Problem . . . . .	9
Purpose . . . . .	10
Hypotheses. . . . .	10
Operational Definitions . . . . .	13
Limitations . . . . .	18
II. LITERATURE REVIEW. . . . .	21
Composition Research is Difficult . . . . .	21
Four Key Questions. . . . .	22
Technical Writing in Composition. . . . .	39
Technical and News Writing Similarities . . . . .	41
News Writing in Composition . . . . .	43
III. METHODOLOGY. . . . .	51
General Procedures. . . . .	51
Specific Procedures . . . . .	54
Classroom Instruction . . . . .	57
Method of Analysis. . . . .	61
IV. FINDINGS . . . . .	64
Demographics. . . . .	64
Statistical Analysis. . . . .	68
Summary of Results. . . . .	85
V. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS. . . . .	86
Summary . . . . .	86
Discussion. . . . .	87
Conclusion. . . . .	91
Recommendations . . . . .	92
NOTES . . . . .	95
BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .	97
APPENDICES. . . . .	106

Chapter	Page
APPENDIX A - QUESTIONNAIRE A . . . . .	106
APPENDIX B - QUESTIONNAIRE B . . . . .	111
APPENDIX C - <u>ENGLISH 3200</u> TEST . . . . .	116
APPENDIX D - ESSAY TEST. . . . .	120
APPENDIX E - HOLISTIC GRADING SCALE. . . . .	121
APPENDIX F - ENGLISH COMPOSITION I SYLLABUS. .	122

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Means of <u>English 3200</u> Pre-Test Scores and ACT English Scores for All Sections of English Composition I . . . . .	57
II. Statistical Test Used to Analyze the Main Hypothesis and Sub-Hypotheses One Through Six . . . . .	63
III. Pre-Test and Post-Test Respondents for All Sections of English Composition I and Developmental English . . . . .	65
IV. Major of Respondents. . . . .	66
V. Respondents Most Recent Writing Class . . . . .	67
VI. Makeup of Control, Treatment, and Non-Random Control Groups. . . . .	68
VII. Relationship of Treatment and Pre-Test Geer Fear Survey Anxiety Score on Three Writing-Related Stimuli . . . . .	70
VIII. Relationship of Treatment and Post-Test Geer Fear Survey Anxiety Score on Three Writing-Related Stimuli . . . . .	71
IX. Contingency Table for "How Helpful for the World of Work Do You View the Writing Instruction You Received in English Composition I This Fall?" . . . . .	79
X. Relationship of Treatment and Pre-Test and Post-Test Score on <u>English 3200</u> . . . . .	81
XI. Relationship of Treatment and Pre-Test and Post-Test Score on the Writing Exercise . . . . .	83



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

In the past two decades composition pedagogy has undergone considerable change.<sup>1</sup> Jerome Zurek explained that what has occurred in composition instruction "has been nothing less than the creation of an academic discipline" as strands of theory and research have led to new teaching practices (19).

The central theme of this revolution involves the process of writing rather than the form the written product takes. In "Contemporary Composition: The Major Pedagogical Theories," James Berlin (765-769) referred to the product emphasis as "Positivist" or "Current-Traditionalist" rhetoric and to the process emphasis as "New Rhetoric." Although "Current-Traditionalist" rhetoric has been the basis of composition instruction for decades, it did not, according to current scholars, grow out of research. Berlin (773) said that the "New Rhetoric" theory replaced the "Current-Traditionalist" theory and that it emerged out of cognitive-development research conducted by such authors as James Moffett, Linda Flower, John Hayes, Andrea Lunsford, and Barry Kroll.

Although the new emphasis on writing as process has its drawbacks<sup>2</sup>, leaders in composition instruction unanimously agree that the move from the what of composing (the product) to the how (the process) has been healthy and valuable. In a recent article entitled "Teaching Composition: Where We've Been and Where We're Going," Edward P. J. Corbett said the emphasis on process, like most good things, was susceptible to abuse and was eventually abused; however, the shift from product to process was "a salutary one and long overdue" (451). Berlin said the teaching approach of the "New Rhetoricians is the most intelligent and most practical alternative available, serving in every way the best interests of our students" (766). Moving from what to how has resulted in improved student writing performance and in changed teachers' perceptions of themselves, of their students, and of composition in general.<sup>3</sup>

This study supports the writing process emphasis, but it does not explain this emphasis in detail because the issue is so widely and thoroughly discussed in the field. Rather, the author contends that although the revolution in composition instruction has taken a gigantic step in the right direction because of the writing process emphasis, the revolution needs to take another step--perhaps not as gigantic, but a step none-the-less--to achieve more effective writing instruction.

This additional step revolves around one word: diversity. In what Donald Stewart (183) called a remarkable

essay, Winston Weathers assaulted "Current-Traditionalist" rhetoric's treatment of arrangement and style (the product emphasis). In "Grammars of Style: New Options in Composition" published in 1976, Weathers introduced the concept of diversity in writing instruction:

I'm asking simply to be exposed to, and informed about, the full range of compositional possibilities. That I be introduced to all the tools, right now, and not be asked to wait for years and years until I have mastered right-handed affairs before I learn anything about left-handed affairs. That, rather, I be introduced to all the grammars/vehicles/tools, compositional possibilities now so that even as I "learn to write" I will have before me as many resources as possible. That all the "ways of writing" be spread out before me and that my education be devoted to learning how to use them. (1)

Ten years after Weather's article, Les Perelman, in "The Context of Classroom Writing," discussed how to help students learn how to write in all the institutional contexts they will encounter. He continued the theme of diversity in writing instruction:

Rather than deny to our students that there is anything peculiar about the type of writing they produce in our classroom or attempt to make it more "real," we need to make them aware that there

is no one normal or correct form of discourse, just as there is no one correct way to dress. While teaching them to be comfortable in the garments we require them to wear for us, we need to instill in them both a sense that there are other equally valid forms of clothing and a knowledge of how to wear them. (478)

Along with these two authors in composition, authors in higher education also believe that diversity is a must in education. Speaking in the larger context of an entire curriculum, Nichols and Gamson contended in Liberating Education that colleges and universities "must accept the fact that the content of the curriculum must be pluralistic--that is, it must supply different plans for students to follow" (114). They also argued that a truly liberating education suggested diversity and that if "education is to bring students to a broad awareness of their lives from different perspectives, then they must study a variety of subjects and points of view" (125).

One way to achieve diversity in higher education is through interdisciplinary teaching approaches, a theme that is gaining support in academic circles. Harlan Cleveland, dean of the University of Minnesota's Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs and director of the Institute for the Future, believed that although education "is the drive wheel of the informatized [sic] society" and will become increasingly important, American institutions of

higher education need to make some changes (184). What is needed, he said, is a reward system for interdisciplinary teaching and research, integrative thinking, departmental cooperation, and above all, breadth, instead of specialized depth. He said educators need to take a hard look at a system that awards the "highest credentials for wisdom to those who master the narrowest slices of knowledge" (194).

In a paper presented in 1986 at the Twelfth International Conference on Improving University Teaching at Heidelberg, Germany, John Gardiner argued that the process of transforming massive amounts of information into useful, integrated knowledge will require interdisciplinary teams, and institutions (in business and industry as well as in education) need to encourage and reward collaboration. He concluded, "The information-processing university requires the use of interdisciplinary teams building bridges between the disciplines and encouraging collaboration across society as a whole" (370).

So, what does diversity have to do with composition instruction? Quite a lot. It implies the need for more varied, interdisciplinary approaches (both in content and methods) toward teaching writing, which will, as indicated above, fit well into current themes in higher education and will better prepare students for the information society Cleveland described. Students in English composition classes, for example, typically learn how to write the basic five paragraph essay with an introduction, three body

paragraphs with topic sentences, and a conclusion. They often also learn how to express themselves elegantly, with flowery words and long complex sentences. Such instruction is certainly useful and appropriate at times; totally throwing out traditional content and methods is not the answer either. But such instruction is also narrow and may be a disservice to students. Students need to learn that the basic essay format is not the only form that writing can take and that there are many styles of writing, some of which are not ornate and complex.

In this study, the author contends, therefore, that composition teachers should not only expose students to writing as process, but they should also expose students to different forms and styles of writing, or, as Perelman aptly put it, "other equally valid forms of clothing" (478). Students should be exposed to more diverse content and methods or, to put it another way, more "slices of the writing cake." Opponents of more diverse content and methods may argue that students will then know a little about a lot. However, students will benefit by knowing a little about other forms of writing (e.g., news writing and technical writing). Their knowledge of other forms will enhance and supplement what they already know a lot about (i.e., traditional essay writing).

New approaches that stress more diverse content and methods in teaching composition may prove to be useful in responding to two important concerns. First, evidence in

recent years of declining writing skills among high school and college graduates seems to reveal that perhaps the old methods have not been effective. Second, many students seem either to dislike English classes intensely or they fail to see practical application to the "real" world for the instruction they receive. Diversity of instruction may reap the benefits of improved skills and improved attitudes about writing.

Improved attitudes about writing is a crucial and relatively unexplored area in composition research. Research is scarce on such topics as writing anxiety, writer attitudes and motivation, and writer's block. Susan McLeod wrote in the December 1987 issue of College Composition and Communication that composition research has tended to ignore the "affective domain" (426). In that same issue, Alice Brand explained that historically composition researchers looked first at the what of writing (the product), and then, in the past two decades, at the how of writing (the process). She predicted that composition research would next investigate the why of writing (affective content and motivation) (442). In this dissertation, the author delves into the why of writing by examining how more diverse content in freshman composition affects students' attitudes and motivation.

Diversity in composition teaching methods and content has been aided immensely by the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) movement that gained momentum across the

country in recent years. This movement extended writing instruction beyond freshman composition into more advanced courses and out of English departments into other disciplines. This movement, in its best form, stressed process rather than product, promoted the need to expand the audience of student writing beyond the instructor, and encouraged writing and content-area instructors to do more than just look at final drafts of assignments.<sup>4</sup>

Along with the WAC movement, the literature included a few works that advocated more diverse approaches toward teaching composition. These approaches most often involved content that was more realistic (i.e., more closely related to writing students will do after college). Corbett said, for example, that English teachers have paid increased attention to the teaching of business, professional, and technical writing (450). This increased attention, however, has occurred primarily in upper division courses. A few colleges and universities accept technical writing or news writing courses in place of freshman composition. English departments, however, are understandably reluctant to turn over writing instruction to other departments or even to allow technical writing courses within the English department to replace freshman composition. A logical alternative, it seems, is to encourage composition teachers to include more diverse content within their freshman composition classes. More diverse content will, in turn, require different teaching methods to some extent. Except



for scattered attempts to include basic technical writing instruction in freshman composition, the literature revealed that the option of including more diverse content was not common within English departments.

The author built on what one researcher (Raisman) did with technical writing in freshman composition and suggested another, relatively unexplored, approach--the teaching of news writing in freshman composition. Because a more diverse teaching approach touches on the why of writing, the author predicted that students exposed to more diverse content would exhibit positive results in several important areas: their anxiety about writing, self-assessment of their writing ability, their attitudes about writing and motivation to learn to write better, their views of the practicality of writing instruction, and their improvement in writing skills.

### Problem

Recent articles on teaching technical writing indicate that replacing or supplementing traditional freshman composition instruction with technical writing instruction helps solve some of the problems of traditional instruction (see especially the discussion of Neal Raisman and Donna Stine's articles on pages 39-41). The style of writing in introductory news writing classes also seems well-suited to counteract some of the drawbacks of traditional composition discussed in Chapter II. Thus, this study asked:

What effect does news writing instruction in freshman English composition have on students' anxiety toward writing; their self-assessment of their writing ability; their attitude toward writing; their motivation to improve their writing; their view of the practicality of writing instruction for work after college; and their progress in grammar, mechanics, and writing skills?

### Purpose

This study attempted to determine if more diverse writing instruction would produce positive results in students' writing skills, attitudes about writing, and motivation to improve their writing. To accomplish this, the author conducted a study in the English Composition I classes at Bartlesville Wesleyan College in the Fall of 1986. The study included news writing instruction in one treatment group, using pre-tests and post-tests to determine if there were significant differences between the treatment group and three control groups that received less diverse writing instruction.

### Hypotheses

In general, this study examined the effect news writing instruction (a more diverse content and teaching method) had on the writing performance and attitudes of students enrolled in English composition. More specifically, it

examined the effect news writing instruction in freshman English composition had on students' anxiety toward writing; their self-assessment of their writing ability; their attitude toward writing; their motivation to improve their writing; their view of the practicality of writing instruction for work after college; and their progress in grammar, mechanics, and writing skills.

To help answer this question, the study tested the following main hypothesis:

(M1) Students taught news writing in English Composition I will show less anxiety about writing through lower scores on the Geer Fear Survey than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.

The possibility of lowered anxiety toward writing led to other sub-hypotheses. Neal Raisman found that the anxiety students develop about writing keeps them from learning to write well (1982). In another study, he discovered that not only does anxiety hinder the students' progress, but it also fosters resistance toward the course and the instructor (1984, 147). Based on these findings, this study examined six sub-hypotheses:

(S1) Students taught news writing in English Composition I will rate their writing ability higher than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content through higher scores on a

questionnaire.

- (S2) Students taught news writing in English Composition I will display a better attitude about their writing ability through higher scores on a questionnaire than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.
- (S3) Students taught news writing in English Composition I will display a higher motivation to learn to write through higher scores on a questionnaire than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.
- (S4) Students taught news writing in English Composition I will view that instruction as more practical for work after college through higher scores on a questionnaire than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.
- (S5) Students taught news writing in English Composition I will show more improvement in their scores on the English 3200 grammar and mechanics pre-test and post-test than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.
- (S6) Students taught news writing in English Composition I will show more improvement in their scores on a writing pre-test and post-test than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.

## Operational Definitions

This dissertation examined what occurred when two different types of content were taught in English Composition I: traditional content and news writing.

Traditional content was defined as the content of James M. McCrimmon's Writing With A Purpose, the textbook used in English Composition I at Bartlesville Wesleyan College. This textbook proceeds from the basic assumption that by reading, studying, and practicing model essays, modes of discourse, and rhetorical devices, students will learn and master writing. Common writing assignments include papers that compare and contrast, classify, define, and narrate. Students are taught to write essays with thesis statements in the introduction, body paragraphs with topic sentences, and concluding paragraphs (the basic essay pattern). The audience is usually undefined, and the essays are often personal and subjective. Material for these essays is derived primarily from a student's observations, memory, and experience. Course content for the four control groups was based on this book.

News writing content included instruction in the basic form and style of news writing. This content included the inverted pyramid (most important information to least important), lead writing, short paragraphs, heavy use of attribution to source material, use of third person, and an emphasis on conciseness and brevity. The news writing approach placed less emphasis on personal experience

(subjective) writing and creativity. Material for news writing usually does not come from a student's "head," but rather from outside sources such as interviews, fact sheets, and objective data. The preferred writing style is a clear, concise, direct presentation of information to a specific audience. Although news writers use introductions, conclusions, thesis and topic statements to some extent, news writers do not adhere to the basic essay format with introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion.

Several other terms related to the hypothesis and sub-hypotheses also need to be defined.

Earlier in this chapter (page 3), the author said the revolution in composition needed to take another step--diversity--to achieve more effective writing instruction. More effective writing instruction is defined as that which includes diverse content and methods, preferably interdisciplinary content such as business writing, news writing, or technical writing. It includes instruction that is more closely related to the writing students will do after college. For this dissertation, the author measured the effectiveness of writing instruction in various ways through the seven hypotheses.

Anxiety, the key term in the main hypothesis, was measured by responses to the Geer Fear Survey, a scale to measure fear developed by James Geer in 1965 and published in Behavior Research and Therapy. This survey, used in Ralsman's study (discussed in more detail in Chapter II),

asks students to rate individual stimuli as to how strongly or weakly a particular stimulus generates an anxiety reaction. The survey lists 50 possible fear-producing stimuli such as "rats," "death or injury of a loved one," "speaking in public," and "public humiliation." Ralsman ("Technical Writing," 146) altered Geer's survey slightly, adding educationally-induced stimuli, such as "failing a test," "writing papers for a grade," "teachers," "English classes," "spelling words," and "reading." The author also included these six items. Students responded to the 50-item survey on a scale of zero (no reaction) to six (terror).

For sub-hypothesis 1, the author measured students' self-assessment of their writing ability by using a questionnaire designed for this study. This section of the questionnaire included the following seven items:

How would you rate your overall writing ability?

How would you rate your ability to spell?

How would you rate your ability to use grammar correctly?

How would you rate your ability to punctuate correctly?

How would you rate your ability to put on paper what you want to say?

How would you rate your ability to think up material to write about?

How would you rate your ability to compile information from a variety of sources into an organized paper?

The author selected these seven items to obtain data on how

each student rated his or her overall writing skills and to obtain data on what each student saw as his or her specific strengths and weaknesses. Possible responses to these items were on a Likert scale with 5 being "excellent" and 1 being "poor." Students with higher scores on this section rated their writing ability higher.

For sub-hypothesis 2, the author measured students' attitudes toward their writing ability, again by using the questionnaire created for this study. The questionnaire included three items to measure attitude:

Do you enjoy writing?

How much confidence do you have in your writing ability?

How easy is writing for you?

Possible responses to these items were also on a Likert scale. For the first item, students' choices varied from 5 "very much" to 1 "not at all." For the second item, students' choices varied from 5 "a lot" to 1 "very little." For the last item, students' choices varied from 5 "very easy" to 1 "very difficult." Students with higher scores on this section of the questionnaire displayed a better attitude about writing.

For sub-hypothesis 3, the author measured student motivation to learn to write better. The questionnaire included four items to measure motivation. They were

How important is it to you to improve your writing?

How willing are you to do out-of-class, non-graded



projects to improve your writing?

How willing are you to let other students evaluate your writing?

How receptive are you to a teacher's evaluation or critique of your writing?

Possible responses to these items were on a Likert scale with 5 being "very" and 1 being "not at all." Students with higher scores on this section were more motivated to improve their writing ability than students with lower scores.

For sub-hypothesis 4, the author measured the students' perceptions of the practicality of the writing instruction they received for work after college. This section involved three items on post-test questionnaire B:

How valuable do you view the writing instruction you received in English Composition I this fall?

How helpful for the world of work do you view the writing instruction you received in English Composition I this fall?

How helpful for college writing tasks was the writing instruction you received in English Composition I this fall?

For this hypothesis, the second item was key. Again, the author used the Likert scale outlined above. Students with higher scores on the second item viewed the writing instruction they received as more practical for work after college than students with lower scores. In this section, students also had the opportunity to list two things they

learned in English Composition I that were new and to list two things that they considered a waste of time.

For sub-hypothesis 5, the author measured progress in grammar and mechanics skills by scores on the 100-point English 3200 post-test. English 3200, a programmed textbook in grammar and usage by Joseph Blumenthal, has accompanying tests, including a pre-test, various unit tests, and a final test. Bartlesville Wesleyan College's composition program uses the pre-test as a placement test for incoming freshman. The author compared the difference in scores of the pre-test taken at the start of the semester and the same test taken at the end of the semester.

For sub-hypothesis 6, the author measured progress in writing skills by using a writing assignment given to students in all groups before and after the study. Two instructors evaluated each student's response holistically.<sup>5</sup>

#### Limitations

There were four main limitations to this study. One limitation involved limited generalization of the results because of the research design. The author taught the treatment group, but was not able to teach one of the control groups because of his teaching load. Any findings will be local in applicability.

The second limitation involved the instructors (the author and three part-time instructors) in the study. As

John Barth says, "An excellent teacher is likely to teach well no matter what pedagogical theory he suffers from" (qtd. in White, 251). Thus, it could be argued that any results were due to the teaching abilities of the instructors and not the content. Nancy Stein, a professor of behavioral science and education at the University of Chicago, stated a relevant, although perhaps minority, view of this limitation:

At this point we cannot say that a particular mode or process of instruction is more powerful than another. . . In fact, our contention is that the actual substance and organization of content is far more powerful in predicting successful instruction than is the mode of instruction.

(27-28)

(With this in mind, the author assumed that if the treatment group scored significantly higher than the control groups on any or all of the hypotheses, the treatment group did so because of the content of the course and not because of instructor differences.)

A third limitation involved the length of the study and related difficulties in measuring writing improvement. Mina Shaughnessey said that because writing is such a slow-developing skill, it should be measured over longer periods than a semester (146). In Evaluating College Writing Programs, Witte and Faigley also pointed out that "even if the development of writing skills is accelerated by means of

instruction, growth along those dimensions which affect writing quality may occur so slowly as not to be meaningful after a relatively short time." They explained further that instruction may cause improved cognitive skills, improved understanding or awareness, etc. without there "being any immediate evidence in the student's written texts" (36).

A fourth limitation was the single-mode writing test used for the pre-test and post-test. White reported that because some students perform much better in one form of writing than another (such as personal experience writing versus analytic topics), it is best to include at least two modes of discourse on writing tests (226). However, because of time limitations during BWC's freshman testing period, it was not possible to include more than one writing exercise.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Composition Research is Difficult

Although literature reviews in any academic field are time-consuming and tedious, such reviews in teaching writing and composition are especially difficult. In Teaching and Assessing Writing, White said, "Those who specialize in composition now find themselves in an academic no-man's land of interdisciplinary studies" in education and psychology (241). In 1983 Patrick Scott and Bruce Castner wrote in "Reference Sources for Composition Research: A Practical Survey" that

The problem composition research poses is a topic-based search in a field where publications will be classified and indexed (if at all) in a shifting, and sometimes short-lived terminology, and it is a search that has to be tackled through overlapping, selective, and often discontinuous reference sources. (761)

Three years later in "Bibliographic Problems in Research in Composition," Scott outlined the difficulties of bibliographic control in the field. One problem is demarcation, as "Composition is a hybrid, practical sort of field,

with very ill-defined and shifting boundaries" (168). In addition, shifts in teaching approaches and research focus over the last two decades have created shifts in the taxonomy and terminology of the field. Such shifts, according to Scott, make even the "mammoth ERIC database difficult and unpredictable as a bibliographic resource in composition" (169).

In the literature review for this study, the author encountered some of the problems these authors point out, as well as other difficulties. White, Scott, and Castner referred primarily to "composition" research, but other fields, most notably journalism and technical writing, also deal with the teaching of writing, further complicating bibliographic searches. As a result, this literature review is interdisciplinary, drawing upon sources in business, education, English, journalism, and technical writing.

#### Four Key Questions

A literature review relevant to this study needed to deal with four main questions:

- (1) Why bother to try a more diverse approach toward teaching English composition?
- (2) What has been tried with technical writing in English composition, and what were the results?
- (3) How does technical writing instruction compare with news writing instruction?
- (4) Has news writing instruction been used in English

composition at the college level?

### Why Bother?

The first question--why bother?--is the most important and requires the longest answer. There are six key reasons why it is necessary to search for more diverse content and methods in teaching freshman composition: students' weak writing skills, students' strong dislike of English, students' failure to see the value of writing instruction, the need for more diversity (i.e., interdisciplinary experiences), the need for a more student-centered teaching approach, and it may be students' last chance.

Weak Writing Skills. The first reason is weak writing skills. As mentioned in Chapter I, increasingly weak writing skills of high school graduates entering college and college graduates have created turbulence in the area of freshman composition pedagogy. In 1983 the National Commission on Excellence in Education published its now well-known A Nation at Risk. The Commission cited College Board scores showing a virtually unbroken decline from 1963 to 1980, with average verbal scores falling more than 50 points on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (8-9). One year later the Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force found that although Iowa led the nation in several academic achievement areas, there was a consensus among educators that high school students left school with deficiencies in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and other intellectual

abilities directly or indirectly associated with aims of language arts departments (9).

The reasons behind the weak writing skills of students who take traditional English classes are numerous and complex. One key reason may be the heavy grading loads of high school English teachers. Another reason could be the lack of training English teachers typically receive in teaching writing and, as a result, their heavy emphasis on literature at the expense of writing instruction. The work loads and training of English teachers were beyond the scope of this study. There are, however, three other key factors within the scope of this study that may contribute to weak writing skills and that help illustrate that traditional composition instruction is not as effective as it could be. These factors involve (1) the writing style taught in traditional composition classes, (2) lack of an audience for the writing, and (3) writing without a body of knowledge.

Students' writing skills may be weak (i.e., unclear, confusing, wordy) simply because they are not taught how to write clearly. In Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace, Joseph Williams said, "the most common reason for bad writing is, I think, the simplest: Most writers have just never learned how to write clearly and directly in the first place" (5). Williams is referring to writers who have attended school and have taken required English classes, which, unfortunately, often foster bad writing. In Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing,



Mina Shaughnessy said that "much of the writing English teachers promote, consciously or unconsciously, is not simple" (196). English teachers' judgments, instead, are generally

shaped by years of exposure to belletristic literature, and their pleasure in the arrangement of words, in the exploitation of rhetorical options, or even in their custodial responsibilities toward the tradition of letters has made them the most likely agents of the high style.

(196)

In Basic News Writing, Melvin Mencher said that good journalistic writing is clear and simple; however, "[d]espite the clarity of such writing, teachers of high school and college English resist this kind of writing. Worse, they condemn it" (280). Mencher cited a study titled "Style and Its Consequences: Do as I Do, Not as I Say" by Rosemary Hake and Joseph Williams, both English professors. They discovered that English teachers consistently preferred muddy prose to clear writing and found more errors in clearly written essays than in complicated essays even though the essays were exactly the same except for style. In his unpublished dissertation, Dennis Jones found similar results. When asked to choose the best journalistic stories, graders with an English background typically chose the longest and wordiest stories. Thus, although certainly not all English teachers promote unclear and wordy writing,

the literature seemed to reveal that many do. And, because they do, composition instruction is weakened and contributes to students' poor writing skills.

If many English teachers do indeed prefer muddy, lengthy, and wordy prose, they are not in line with the preferred writing style in business and industry. Bennett and Olney reported the results of a 1983 survey sent to executives at the vice-president level in 100 randomly selected Fortune 500 companies. These executives indicated that "lack of clarity" and "lack of conciseness" were the two most common communication problem areas they encountered (17). When these executives ranked the most serious communication problems they face, "lack of clarity" was first and "lack of conciseness" third (18). These executives do not prefer muddy and wordy prose.

In Good Style for Scientific and Engineering Writing, John Kirkman cited research that encourages the use of sentences that are "reasonably short and not too complex" (6). Studies also showed that whenever possible, writers should use short, ordinary, familiar, non-technical, and concrete words rather than the opposite: long, grand, unfamiliar, technical, and abstract words (16).

The last chapter in Daniel Felker's Guidelines for Document Designers listed nine pages of research in 25 areas, including the following guidelines: "Write short sentences," "Do not insert excess information into a sentence," and "Avoid unnecessary and difficult words."

These three works--Bennett and Olney, Kirkman, Felker--help illustrate the contrast between the writing style many English teachers seem to prefer and the writing style executives prefer and writing experts encourage.

Along with the writing style taught, the fact that English composition instruction typically occurs in a vacuum without a realistic audience may contribute to students' weak writing skills. Glynda Hull and David Bartholomae explained:

Students need to see that the writing they do serves some end, and they need to hear from a reader--a person or a roomful of people willing to be interested, surprised, pleased, or in some way engaged--how far afield or close to the mark they've come. (51)

In the same vein, Daniel Levinson wrote in Independent School that one of the most depressing conditions British Writing Project member Harold Rosen observed was that the pupil was "informing someone about something which the other person knows better than he does anyway. And nobody is called upon to do that outside school" (31). Levinson, who promoted instruction in journalistic writing, pointed out further that "[n]othing refines the higher-order writing skills . . . like facing an audience that really cares what you write about and how you write about it" (32). In typical English composition instruction, it is difficult for teachers to create situations in which students see that

their writing serves a useful end. Students view many assignments as artificial and useless. It is also tough for composition instructors to expand the audience for student writing into more realistic situations.

On the other hand, in other types of writing instruction, such as news and technical writing, it is easier for teachers to create realistic audiences for student writing and for students to see the value of their writing.

Clarence Hach, a journalism textbook author and former English department chair, has said that teaching writing skills in a journalism class is easier than in an English class "because students have a sense of an immediate audience." He contended further that students write better because they can understand the purpose of having clear, precise, and accurate prose (26).

In addition to the writing style and lack of a realistic audience, weak writing skills may be the result of traditional English composition instruction because students typically write without a body of knowledge. Instead they write expressively or creatively, often about personal experiences. Mike Rose said, "Few academic assignments (outside of composition) require a student to produce material ex nihilo; she is almost always writing about, from, or through others' materials" (119). At an institute at the University of Chicago on "Cognitive Strategies and Writing: A Dialogue Across Disciplines," Joseph Williams said that personal experience or expressive writing does not

transfer well to other academic situations and that students need to learn to write out a body of knowledge. At that same institute, Paul Connolly, director of the writing program at Bard College, said that to be useful, composition writing should be tied "to real knowledge, substantive content."

Expressive or personal experience writing is useful and should certainly not be eliminated, but it should not be taught exclusively. However, including other content-rich types of writing is difficult. Unless composition teachers are involved in a Writing Across the Curriculum program or have interdisciplinary experience in teaching writing, it is hard for them to create situations in which students can write out of a body of knowledge.

More diverse writing instruction in English composition, such as technical writing or news writing as the author encourages in this dissertation, would combat all three of these problems that contribute to weak writing skills. With more diverse instruction, students would be more likely to learn a clearer and more concise writing style. Students would write to an expanded and more realistic audience. Students would write either out of a body of knowledge or on topics, such as a news story, in which they obtain the content through interviews, fact sheets, etc. and not through their memory, observation, and experience.

The "I Hate English" Dilemma. The second main reason

for bothering to try out new teaching approaches is simple: to help motivate students and to improve their attitudes about writing instruction. Most students simply do not like English composition even though it is so vitally important. In "Why Don't They Like English?," Holden explained that traditional grammar and usage instruction has failed us and the picture of the English teacher as guardian at the gate of language purity is as much an enemy of teaching success today [in 1981] as it ever was. . . . Students hate English because it is not their thing but ours. No other subject has been force fed so long to so many. (17)

After surveying 500 college graduates about their writing habits, Harwood said in "Freshman English Ten Years After: Writing in the World" that the "narrow focus of many writing programs on mechanics and usage seems questionable in light of the experience" of the alumni he surveyed (283). A narrow focus and a sometimes fanatical emphasis on language purity are reasons students hate English. Although language purity, mechanics, and usage are certainly important, new approaches that are grounded in research and proved to be effective in teaching these areas need to be taken to counteract the "I hate English" dilemma.

Holden believes composition instruction must "Show students in the most practical way that language study extends beyond the classroom in time as well as in place" (19). Holden's solution leads to the third main reason

writing instructors should bother searching for better ways to teach writing in freshman composition.

The Value of Writing Skills. The third "why bother?" is that composition teachers must help students understand that writing skills are critically important outside of the classroom, and if students do not clearly see how important writing skills are in a traditional freshman composition class, then teachers should perhaps try new and more diverse approaches.

Studies of the kinds of writing done by college graduates lend credence to the accusation that traditional freshman composition may prepare students for the type of writing they will do in college, but it does not prepare them as well as it could for the work world after graduation. Harwood's 1979 survey of 500 alumni of a small, state-supported institution found that the typical graduate wrote something at work once or twice a day. The most significant finding, however, was that graduates did almost no writing unrelated to work. These adults did little of the creative or reflective writing commonly taught in English courses (282).

In "The Trouble with Employees' Writing May Be Freshman Composition," Elizabeth Tebeaux argued that traditional composition, as it is typically taught, does not prepare students adequately for the writing they will do after college (14). She believed the essay "needs to be deemphasized as the main, if not the sole, teaching form in

freshman composition" (17). Tebeauz said she can trace a number of employee writing problems to the writing strategies individuals learned in freshman composition (9). To help students see the value of writing instruction more clearly, Tebeauz believed composition instructors must explain to students how writing in school differs from writing on the job and that students need preparation in both areas.

In "The Trouble with Technical Writing is Freshman English," Britton asked, "Is it realistic to build a writing course around a form of composition that is rarely if ever pursued by the graduate in his professional life?" (132). Nearly all composition students have asked this question in some form, such as "Because people never write essays in the real world, why do we have to write them?" Once introspective teachers of freshman composition ask Britton's question, the door is open for them to consider more diverse teaching methods.

Diversity Is Necessary. In Chapter I the author introduced the fourth reason to bother searching for new methods of teaching English composition: diversity and its teammate concept of interdisciplinary experiences. Weathers explained the need to teach the "full range of compositional possibilities" and that "all the 'ways of writing' be spread out before me" (1). Perelman wrote about the need to instill in students both a "sense that there are other equally valid forms of clothing and a knowledge of how to



wear them" (478). In a larger context, educators Nicols and Gamson suggested that a liberating education should be diverse, with a pluralistic curriculum. Cleveland and Gardiner spoke about the need for breadth, cooperation, interdisciplinary teaching, and bridge-building.

James Kinneavy also encouraged diversity. In his widely-cited work A Theory of Discourse, Kinneavy discussed four types of written discourse: referential, persuasive, literary, and expressive. In a chapter in Tate and Corbett's The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook, Kinneavy referred to these as the four basic purposes of communication (96). Traditional composition classes emphasize expressive discourse (i.e., journals and diaries) and literary discourse (short stories, short narratives). Referential discourse (informative, exploratory, or scientific) is typically ignored. Technical writing and news writing fit into the referential discourse category. Kinneavy said the important lesson to be drawn is that "no composition program can afford to neglect any of these basic aims of discourse" (97).

Despite Kinneavy's admonition, compositions programs do neglect referential discourse. The result is that students receive lopsided, and perhaps unfair, instruction simply because teachers are not exposing students to, in Weathers words, "the full range of compositional possibilities" (1). In Teaching and Assessing Writing, White cited research that indicates writing ability varies widely according to

the mental operation a particular writing topic demands (117). He explained that some students have an easier time writing about themselves than about abstractions, and vice versa (118). Likewise, some students have an easier time with more concrete and factual referential discourse than they do with more abstract and subjective expressive discourse, and, again, vice versa. White said important writing tests should include more than one topic. If a test includes only one mode, "we will be disadvantaging those students who perform better in another mode and favoring those who do best in the one mode we test" (118). Not only should tests include more than one mode of writing, but composition classes should also include instruction in more than one, and preferably all four, of Kinneavy's forms of discourse.

A More Student-Centered Approach. Holden's earlier comment that "[s]tudents hate English because it is not their thing but ours. No other subject has been force fed so long to so many" (17) leads to the fifth reason writing teachers should bother to search for more diverse approaches toward teaching writing. Holden implied strongly, and correctly, that through the years traditional composition has been more teacher-centered than student-centered. In a teacher-centered approach, the instructor does most of the talking and presents a set body of knowledge without trying to determine what students need to learn. In a student-centered approach, the instructor identifies student needs

and then selects content and methods that address those needs.

Higher education literature strongly advocates student-centered teaching methods, and some key authors in composition support the move away from teacher-centered approaches. Shaughnessy said that for basic writers, a teacher-centered model is particularly ineffective because it "triggers stereotyped responses that impede learning and is especially unsuited for the highly social activity of writing" (Basic Writing 148).

Both Jolly (34) and Lunsford (Cognitive Development 261) supported student-centered instruction for basic writers, but their comments also applied to freshman composition classes. They explained that it makes little sense to present canned lectures to students with different abilities and to use class time to discuss issues that have little relevance to what the students need to know. Writing instruction must start with obtaining writing samples that allow the teacher to diagnose individual weaknesses. Lunsford wrote, "The truth is that these students can learn if we teach them rather than some [sic] 'content material'" (What We Know 51-52).

Student-centered instruction will become even more important as increasing numbers of non-traditional age students enter composition classes. Max Raines, writing in a higher education journal, said adults want instruction to give them the writing skills they need to perform on their

jobs (2-4). Recent articles in English journals also address the issue of non-traditional students. In "Students from the Work Place Change the Role of the Writing Instructor," Virginia Polanski said to meet the expectations of non-traditional students, writing instructors must design flexible courses and interact with students who come to their classes from the work place, "determining the needs students bring with them and accommodating the course to the needs" (217). Because of the expectations of students who come to writing classes from the work place, the role of the writing instructor is changing from "prescriber [teacher-centered] to coordinator [student-centered]" (221). In "The Needs of Adult Learners in Composition," Paula Pomerence and JoAnna Mink "suggest teaching methods suited to the personality characteristics of the adult learner" (205).

The student-centered approach these authors advocate conforms to the most effective method of teaching writing George Hillocks identified in an extensive meta-analysis (a statistical method that shows the validity of a particular class of study) of over 500 research studies on written composition. In Research on Written Communication: New Directions for Teaching, Hillocks (116-128) identified four teaching approaches. The presentational mode emphasizes the role of the teacher as a presenter of knowledge about writing. This approach, the most common mode of instruction, is characterized by lectures, teacher-led discussion, the study of models, specific assignments that usually

involve imitating a pattern or following rules previously discussed, and feedback after the writing.

The natural process mode emphasizes the student as a generator of ideas, criteria, and forms. It is characterized by free writing about whatever interests the student, writing for audiences of peers, generalized objectives, opportunities to revise and rework writing, and high levels of interaction among students.

Hillocks' third approach, the environmental mode, places the teacher and student in a better balance, with the teacher planning activities and selecting materials through which students interact with each other to learn writing skills. In this approach, teachers minimize lecture and teacher-led discussion. Small group activities allow for high levels of peer interaction. In contrast to the natural process mode, the environmental mode uses concrete tasks to achieve clear and specific objectives.

In the fourth approach, the individualized mode, students receive instruction through tutorials, programmed materials of some kind, or a combination of the two. The chief distinction is that this approach seeks to help students on an individualized basis.

Hillocks said that the task-specific and student-centered environmental mode of teaching was the most effective. The presentational mode is too teacher-centered, the natural process mode is too loosely-structured, and the individualized mode can degenerate into

students working alone on tedious programmed grammar drills.

Over the years a teacher-centered approach (presentational mode) in traditional composition has helped create the "I hate English dilemma" and has often failed to motivate students to learn to write better and to help students see the value of writing skills. A student-centered approach (environmental mode) would help combat these problems. Furthermore, a logical spin-off of a student-centered approach is diverse, interdisciplinary writing instruction that would help prepare students for the varied communication tasks they will face in their academic careers and in the careers after college.

Students' Last Chance. The author has discussed five key reasons why it is necessary to search for more diverse content and methods in teaching freshman composition: students' weak writing skills, students' dislike of English, students' failure to see the value of writing instruction, the need for more diversity, and the need for a more student-centered teaching approach. The sixth, and final reason, is very practical: for many students, freshman composition is the last writing course they will take. As mentioned earlier, Tebeaux, who has taught workshops for three large corporations and served as a writing consultant to a large county government, said many employee writing problems can be traced to freshman composition. She worked with 250 writers in business organizations or county government and found that 218 of 250 (87%) reported that

freshman composition was the only writing instruction they received in college (9). If freshman composition is the only writing course students take in college, it needs to address, as Tebeaux argued, how writing at school differs from writing at work.

### Technical Writing in Composition

To improve students' writing skills and attitudes about writing instruction, to help students see the value of writing skills, to provide diversity of writing instruction, and to provide student-centered writing instruction, composition instructors need to consider alternative teaching approaches. Teaching technical writing in freshman composition is one such alternative that is, according to the literature, gaining increased attention.

Neal Raisman conducted the most significant study in this area. His key finding in a two-year longitudinal study at the Marine Maritime Academy was "that teaching technical writing in freshman composition was over 200% more effective in lowering student writing anxiety than literary-essay or rhetorical teaching approaches." In addition, reduced resistance to learning to write led to greater ease in acquiring writing fundamentals, greater acceptance of instruction and of the value of writing well. Testing indicated a rise in student performance with composition skills and rules while demanding 40% less instructional time than other teaching modes (145).

Possible causes for the greater effectiveness of this technical writing-based instruction lay in two main areas, according to Ralsman's study. First, students appeared to be aware of the possibly greater value of the technical style of writing over the literary-essay style. This attitude generated greater receptivity. A second factor had to do with brain activity. In his article in The Technical Writing Teacher, Ralsman said,

Since [sic] the technical writing style matches the actions of the left hemisphere, the student may process it more effectively and with greater facility than the literary-essay style which would be processed more in the non-dominant right hemisphere . . . Left hemispheric-technical style would, therefore, generate less tension and anxiety than would a literary-essay approach to instruction . . . . (156)

Ralsman's observations supported Kinneavy's admonition to include all four of the forms of discourse in composition classes and White's suggestion to include more than one writing mode on tests.

Others who have taught technical writing in freshman composition supported Ralsman's claims of reduced anxiety and increased performance. In "Teaching Basic Technical Writing in Freshman Composition," Donna Stine reported that students exposed to technical writing feel they are learning skills they will use after college. They also appreciate



the practical nature of the course, like the clear, straightforward style of technical writing, and appreciate being able to write about subjects they care about (94).

Britton also voiced strong support of this approach: "There is so much wrong with freshman English and so much right about technical writing that I suggest they trade places in the academic scene." He suggested that technical writing courses be required of all students, and then students could select elective subjects like essay and creative writing if they wish (131).

In "Freshman Composition with a Business Focus," Emil Roy argued that business writing courses also display certain virtues that transfer well to freshman English, such as a more clearly defined audience and purpose in writing (286). Roy's course was unique in that he used fine literature as a thematic centerpiece. He used Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman as an extremely well written case study of the pressures of business values on an American family, and based class discussions and assignments around the play (287). Roy believed that with the large percentage of business majors at his college, a course seriously designed to appeal to their interests "could go far to lessen their writing anxieties" (285).

#### Similarities Between Technical and News Writing

This literature review included examples of technical writing instruction in freshman composition because similar

studies and articles on the use of news writing in freshman composition were not available. A careful examination of technical writing instruction, however, revealed key similarities between technical writing and basic news writing. An unpublished article the author wrote for a course in "Teaching Technical Writing and Business Writing" at Oklahoma State University discussed the common ground technical writing and basic news writing share. They share a common purpose to inform, a common emphasis on the reader (although technical writing delves into audience analysis in considerably more detail because technical writers write for more diverse sets of readers), and a common writing style that is objective, straightforward, factual, clear, and concise.

Mary Hester pointed out the similarities between technical writing and news writing in a recent article titled "The Press Release as a Beginning Assignment in Technical Writing." She said press releases, which are written in a style closely akin to news writing style, are a good vehicle for teaching basic technical writing principles, such as writing technical material for a general audience, using a specific organizational format, selecting meaningful specifics, keeping tone and language objective, writing clearly and concisely, summarizing information, and checking accuracy of statements.

(291)

Therefore, if, as Britton suggested, technical writing should trade places with traditional freshman composition, likewise basic news writing could replace, or at least supplement, traditional composition instruction.

### News Writing in Composition

As indicated, technical writing instruction is attracting increased attention as a possible alternative to traditional freshman composition. Several articles discussed this approach, and there was at least one significant study in the area (Raisman's). The same cannot be said for the use of basic news writing instruction in freshman composition. The literature review revealed that journalistic writing has been part of writing instruction in grade school and high school, but it has not been used in college composition classes.

One aspect of journalistic writing instruction that is used in composition instruction is the "5 Ws and H": who, what, when, where, why, and how. News writing teachers use these words to help students formulate questions for news sources and content for news stories. In 1975 Robert Bain wrote in Freshmen English News that writing teachers should treat their students as potential journalists and suggested that they use these six words. This journalistic method is often used as a pre-writing technique.

Beyond the "5Ws and H," however, journalistic writing instruction is not part of college composition classes. A

detailed search in the Education Index and the Humanities Index back to July 1980 revealed no articles that dealt with using basic news writing instruction (either as a supplemental unit or as the entire course content) in freshman composition. An ERIC database search linking "Writing (Composition)" and "News Writing" in September 1985 and two searches linking "English Instruction" and "News Writing" and "Writing (Composition)" and "News Reporting" in December 1987 produced similar results.

Although the author did not find any articles that outlined the use of journalistic writing instruction in freshman composition, eight articles did hint that journalistic writing should perhaps be considered as an alternative approach to traditional freshman composition.

Tohtz and Marsh wrote that the best procedure for teaching a student how to write was to establish the classroom as an "analogical model of a publications office" (327). On the first day of class these professors told students that they would be acting as staff writers and that the professors would be acting as editors of a bi-weekly publication. Writing assignments varied from narrative accounts to articles, but the instructors stopped short of teaching basic news writing. This approach did involve students in responsible, active performance, which Tohtz and Marsh said was the only way one learns to write (329).

A short article by John Pauly in The ABCA Bulletin, a business publication, presented a stronger case for

including journalism instruction in freshman composition, although it was not an actual case study. Pauly said, "courses in journalism and business writing offer a more effective and efficient way of teaching undergraduate students to write than courses in freshman composition do" (6). He pointed out that journalism and business writing treat writing as a form of communication rather than self-expression and both must keep their audiences in mind. He said the main success of both forms is that they assume students have little to say, but go ahead and teach students how to write nonetheless. "Journalism and business writing courses cut through all the romantic bugaboo about creativity and convince students that anyone with courage, patience, and determination can learn to write," Pauly concluded (8).

In "Writing English vs. Writing News--Is There a Difference?," Dennis Jones said there are two distinct breeds of writing teachers--those who teach journalism and those who teach English. Jones cited Mencher and his own dissertation research (both discussed earlier) that showed how English teachers seemed to prefer wordy and complex writing to concise, clear writing. Jones concluded that "[i]t's time to stop questioning the effectiveness of journalistic writing instruction. It's time to start shouting that what we do works" (29).

In a paper presented for a meeting of the Secondary Education Division of the Association for Education in

Journalism and Mass Communication, Jack Dvorak presented a strong argument that Journalism plays an important role in the secondary school language arts curriculum in the context of the educational reform movement. Dvorak contended that

Journalism has been fulfilling several elements considered crucial in the language arts program for many years--in many cases more completely, more richly and more understandably for students than many traditional English composition courses and other English writing courses. (1)

He concluded that the assumption of school administrators that English writing courses are superior to journalistic writing courses is erroneous and that "journalistic writing has as much, if not more, value as any other writing course in the language arts curriculum" (29).

Dvorak's support of Journalism instruction runs deep and goes beyond the purpose of this study; however, parts of his argument are worth summarizing briefly. He cited John Dewey's emphasis on active doing and contemporary thinker and educator Mortimer Adler's three modes of learning and three modes of teaching. Dvorak said that a Journalism class, with its typical publication outlet, "adheres to the highest level of intellectual activity" (20) and has a natural predisposition to be taught at all three of Adler's levels (didactic, coaching, and Socratic). Dvorak also cited TheodoreSizer, who in Horace's Compromise described the importance of the self-esteem of students in the

learning process. Dvorak believed that personalization was a key attribute of journalism instruction. He said that journalism teachers who have taught English often commented that one key difference between the two was that journalism built personal relationships that enhanced learning (21-23).

In 1981 Koziol studied high school students who took journalism and found that the clear advantage of journalism over English was that the journalistic techniques students used provided an approach to writing that was clear, precise, and understandable--while at the same time enjoyable (12). His results reveal that news writing instruction has the potential to solve some of the problems of traditional composition (e.g., lack of clarity, poor student attitudes).

In "Journalism Is Not an Academic Joke," Daniel Levinson, who was also cited earlier, argued that journalism courses not only accomplish the basic task of teaching students to write better, but they also provide a good way for students to learn some important lessons, such as facing the consequences of what they have written (32).

Last, two recent articles in Journalism Educator open the door for more cooperation between composition and news writing--two disciplines keenly interested in writing instruction. In "Research on Writing Process Can Aid Newswriting Teachers," Jerome Zurek pointed out that although teaching writing and developing better news writers are key concerns of journalism educators, texts and journals

In the field "show little knowledge of what might be called the current revolution in composition instruction" (19). He reviewed five years of Journalism Educator and Journalism Quarterly and found no mention of current research in composition instruction. To help fill this gap, Zurek's article highlighted the key development in composition teaching over the past two decades--the writing process.

Zurek also said that except for one leading figure, composition faculty did not seem to be all that concerned about what went on in Journalism instruction either. He said five years of College English and College Composition and Communication showed no attention to the teaching of news writing. Zurek said it is especially puzzling that composition researchers avoid Journalism writing instruction because they pay attention to other forms of professional writing, such as technical writing, but "not to the most common form of professional writing, journalism" (19).

Donald Murray is the single exception Zurek cited. Murray, Pulitzer Prize winning editorial writer of the Boston Globe and now professor of English at the University of New Hampshire, bridges the gap, according to Zurek, between the composition classroom and the newsroom with such works as A Writer Teaches Writing, Writing for Your Readers, How I Wrote the Story: A Book For Writers by Writers about Writing, and "Newswriting" in Writing for Many Roles.

After Zurek's article appeared in the spring of 1986, the author expanded Zurek's theme, submitting an article to



Journalism Educator titled "Recent Composition Research is Relevant to Newswriting." This article, published in autumn 1987, discussed four topics in composition especially pertinent to journalism instruction--writing as process, writing across the curriculum, modes of instruction, and dealing with errors. The author referred to Maxine Hairston's "The Winds of Change: Thomas Kuhn and the Revolution in the Teaching of Writing." Hairston says that refining the new paradigm of writing as process is the challenge of contemporary composition and rhetoric scholars (89). The author noted that it is also the challenge of today's journalism instructors, for as Zurek said (and I concurred), those who teach journalism and those who teach composition--both keenly concerned with writing and instruction in writing--need to pay more attention to each other.

With few exceptions, business communication textbooks, articles on effective written communication in various fields, and research into the kind of writing executives and their publics want call for to-the-point, concise, straightforward, organized, stylistically simple, and jargon-free writing. These characteristics describe the kind of writing taught in most technical writing, business writing, and basic news writing classes. It is not the type of writing commonly taught in traditional freshman composition classes.

The eight articles reviewed point out the particular advantages of news writing instruction and suggested either

directly or indirectly that these strengths might counteract some of the weaknesses of traditional composition instruction. Based on this literature, this study contended that including basic news writing as part of a freshman composition course would, as Pauly suggested, "cut through all the romantic bugaboo about creativity" (8) and help students learn to write and see the value of writing instruction. Students may even learn to like composition.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### General Procedures

This dissertation asked what effect news writing instruction in freshman English composition had on students' anxiety toward writing (the main hypothesis) and on the following factors in the sub-hypotheses:

- 1) students' self-assessment of their writing ability,
- 2) their attitude toward writing,
- 3) their motivation to improve their writing,
- 4) their view of the practicality of writing instruction for work after college,
- 5) their progress in grammar and mechanics skills,
- 6) and their progress in writing skills?

To determine if more diverse writing instruction would produce positive results in the areas listed above, the author conducted a study in the English Composition I classes at Bartlesville Wesleyan College (BWC) in the fall of 1986. The general format of the study included news writing instruction in one randomly-assigned treatment group and used pre-tests and post-tests to determine if there were

significant differences between the treatment group and three randomly-assigned control groups.

The author patterned the procedures he used to test the main hypothesis after Ralsman's longitudinal study of writing anxiety among freshman composition students in classes using the traditional literary-essay approach and a technical writing approach. Ralsman found the Geer Fear Survey to be an effective tool in measuring decreases in anxiety in students who wrote papers using the two approaches toward writing. Ralsman chose this particular survey because Geer "had substantiated the validity of his tool through rigorous testing and cross-testing against other studies of fear" and had used college students as his population base ("I Just Can't Do English" 20). Ralsman found that students exhibited three major areas of fear. "Death or injury to a loved one" produced the greatest level of anxiety. "Fear of social disgrace" caused the second highest level of reaction, while having to "write papers for a class" created the third greatest anxiety ("Technical Writing" 147).

For this current study, incoming freshman at Bartlesville Wesleyan College completed the Geer Fear Survey at the beginning of the semester and again near the end of the 17-week semester. The author rearranged the 50 items on the survey to prevent familiarity with the pattern from affecting the responses. For both the pre-test and post-test, the author attached the Geer Fear Survey to the

questionnaire created for this study.

The author tested sub-hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4 via "home grown" means because the literature review did not reveal any studies that tested the factors included in these sub-hypotheses. The author designed Questionnaire A (Appendix I) as part of the requirements for a two-credit independent study with Marlan Nelson during summer school prior to conducting this study. The author also consulted Thomas Warren, his dissertation advisor; a section on questionnaires (91-97) in Dr. Warren's Technical Writing: Purpose, Process, and Form; and Berdie and Anderson's Questionnaires: Design and Use. The questionnaire was informally pre-tested by having four students (non-freshmen) complete it and comment on its clarity. None of the students indicated any problem areas. Questionnaire B (Appendix II) was part of the post-test. Because Questionnaire B was very similar to Questionnaire A, the author did not pre-test it.

All incoming freshmen at Bartlesville Wesleyan College take the English 3200 pre-test (Appendix III) and complete a short writing exercise to determine whether the composition faculty should place them in Developmental English, a remedial course, or English Composition I. (We also examine each student's ACT English score or SAT verbal score.) For this study, Professor Mary Ruth Brown, the chair of the Division of Humanities, and the author created a new writing exercise (Appendix IV) based on suggestions in

Edward White's Teaching and Assessing Writing (126). The author used English 3200 to test sub-hypothesis 5 and the new writing exercise to test sub-hypothesis 6.

#### Specific Procedures

On Friday afternoon, August 22, during freshman orientation, the author helped administer the English placement test to approximately 95 students. About 20 students who arrived on campus late completed the test in BWC's testing center. The test consisted of the English 3200 pre-test, the newly-created writing exercise, and Questionnaire A, which included the Geer Fear Survey. Although students had 90 minutes to complete all three portions of the test, no student worked more than one hour on them.

Professor Mary Ruth Brown and the author used a holistic grading scale (Appendix V) from White (126-127) to grade the essay portion of the test. We assigned a score of 6 to superior responses, and scores of 4, 4 and 1/2, 5, or 5 and 1/2 to papers that were well-handled, but deficient in one or two characteristics of the superior paper. We assigned scores of 2, 2 and 1/2, 3, or 3 and 1/2 to papers that were weak in content, mechanics, or sentence structure. We reserved the scores of 1 and 1 and 1/2 for papers that exhibited serious and consistent writing faults.

After we had each graded the essays, we compared our scores and negotiated on 10 to 12 papers where our scores

differed more than one and a half points. We also carefully reevaluated the work of students who scored a 2 or below on the essay test and had low scores (generally 55 or below) on the 100-point English 3200. We then placed 15 students with the weakest skills in Development English.

Next, we used a table of random numbers to assign the remainder of the students to four day sections of English Composition I. These sections all met at the same time (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning from 8:30 to 9:20). A fifth section met from 6 to 9:40 Monday evening. It was not possible to randomly place students into this section because several part-time and non-traditional students had already pre-enrolled.

During freshman registration, four unavoidable factors slightly altered the randomness. First, some students did not come to freshman orientation, missed the placement testing, and thus were not on the master list used during the random selection process. (This master list had to be compiled before registration began.) While the author placed some of these students in the evening section, others could not take the evening class because of schedule conflicts and had to be placed in one of the day sections. Second, a few students took the placement tests and were randomly assigned to a class, but never enrolled. Third, five students who were not first-time freshman (they all took English Composition I over) did not take pre-tests and were also not on the master list. Last, a few students

randomly assigned to a day section needed to enroll in the night class for personal reasons and vice versa. The end result of these circumstances was that the treatment group contained one student and the three control groups contained a total of five students that were not randomly assigned to that particular section.

Random selection helped neutralize any innate differences in the writing abilities of students in the treatment group and the control groups. To verify the equality of the groups, the mean scores of the English 3200 pre-test and students' ACT English scores were calculated. The means of the English 3200 pre-test scores for the four day sections were 67.67, 68.27, 68.60, and 71.65, a range of only 3.98 points (5%). The means of the ACT English scores for the four sections were 17.6, 18, 20, and 20.7, a range of 3.1. This second verification, however, was tenuous because we only had ACT scores for two-thirds of the students. (The mean scores of the non-random, night class were close to those of the day sections: 71.40 on English 3200 and 17.67 on the ACT.) Table I presents these results.

At the end of the semester, students in the four day sections took the same English 3200 test and writing exercise again. They also completed Questionnaire B, which contained the Geer Fear Survey with the items rearranged. Questionnaire B differed from Questionnaire A in four other ways. First, seven items that dealt with demographic information were deleted. Second, Questionnaire A asked



TABLE I  
 MEANS OF ENGLISH 3200 PRE-TEST SCORES AND ACT ENGLISH SCORES  
 FOR ALL SECTIONS OF ENGLISH COMPOSITION I

Section	<u>English 3200</u> Mean	ACT English Mean
Control 1	71.65	20.00
Control 2	68.27	18.00
Control 3	67.67	17.58
Treatment	68.60	20.70
Non-random control	71.40	17.67

students to rate the quality of their high school instruction in writing, while Questionnaire B asked students to rate the quality of instruction they received in the English Composition I class they were finishing. Third, Questionnaire B contained a new item that asked students if their confidence in their writing ability increased as a result of English Composition I. Last, Questionnaire B contained three new items asking students to rate the practicality of the writing instruction they received in English Composition I.

#### Classroom Instruction

Three different part-time instructors taught the control groups, using the traditional approach presented in James McCrimmon's Writing with a Purpose. These classes covered the following nine chapters in McCrimmon:

Part I -- The Writing Process

Chapter 1 -- "Toward Purposeful Writing"

Chapter 2 -- "Planning"

Chapter 3 -- "Drafting"

Chapter 4 -- "Revising"

Part II -- The Expression of Ideas

Chapter 5 -- "Common Methods of Development"

Chapter 6 -- "Paragraphs: Units of Development"

Chapter 7 -- "Sentences: Patterns of Expression"

Chapter 8 -- "Diction: The Choice of Words"

Part III -- Special Assignments

Chapter 11 -- "The Essay Examination"

Students in the three control groups completed similar (and traditional) assignments, such as narrative, comparison/contrast, classification, descriptive, and process essays. The students, however, did not all complete the same assignments because each instructor had considerable freedom in deciding what to assign. The only stipulation at the start of the semester was that each instructor cover the same chapters in McCrimmon. The overall purpose for all the sections of English Composition I was to help students learn to write better. To accomplish this, each instructor dealt with grammar and mechanics problems as they arose; however, none of the instructors provided grammar instruction in a systematic way in an attempt to bolster their class' post-test English 3200 scores. (The author monitored this through monthly meetings with the composition faculty.)

For the treatment group, the author included news writing instruction for one-half of the semester, and then used the traditional approach the last half of the semester. The syllabus (Appendix VI) for the treatment group differed from the syllabi for the other three classes only in the following additional course objectives:

1. Students will attain the ability to explain the similarities and differences between business, news, technical, and essay writing styles.
2. Students will attain the ability to write papers in each of the above writing styles.

Students in the experimental class purchased the McCrimmon text to use the second half of the semester. (They also needed it for English Composition II during the spring semester.) In addition to this textbook, the author gave lectures in the experimental class on the principles of basic news writing.

Outlined below are the class activities, content, and assignments the author used to instruct students during the non-traditional, more diverse first half of the semester.

WEEK 1: Course overview, "Getting to Know You Exercise," discussion of and written response to handout on "Understanding Your Own Writing Process" from Linda Flower's Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing.

WEEK 2: Lecture on how traditional essay writing style typically taught in English classes differs

from news writing style, as well as business and technical writing styles; lecture on news writing style based on Crump's chapters on "The 'Inverted Pyramid' Format" (25-28) and "The Body of A News Story" (29-36).

WEEK 3: Lead writing exercise; news story assignment; introduction to biographical sketches.

WEEKS 4/5: Students used journalistic "5Ws and H" to interview each other in pairs, wrote a biographical sketch of their partner, helped each other in groups, learned to use PC-Write word processing program on IBM computers, typed their sketches into the computer, and produced a class biographical sketch booklet.

WEEK 6: News writing conciseness exercise, lecture and assignment on publicity releases, lecture on writing of abstracts.

WEEK 7: Lecture that reviewed how news writing style is similar in many ways to business and technical writing style, followed by two typical technical writing assignments--an abstract and "The Name's Afoot," which requires students to write a set of instructions--that reinforce good news writing style.

WEEK 8: Lectures on audience analysis, mid-term essay examination.

After mid-semester break, the author returned to traditional English Composition I instruction for eight weeks, using the McCrimmon textbook. The author covered the same nine chapters that the instructors of the control groups covered, although, of course, more quickly. Students completed three five-paragraph essays, as well as a classification and descriptive writing assignment.

For all sections of English Composition I, Week 17 was devoted to completing the post-tests for this study and final examinations.

#### Method of Analysis

The method of analysis to test the hypotheses in this dissertation was straightforward and simple.

As usual, the starting point was to use descriptive statistics to calculate the frequencies, percentages, and means of the various scores from the control groups and treatment group on the pre-test and post-test Geer Fear Survey; Questionnaires A and B measuring students' self-assessment of their ability, attitude, motivation, and practicality; the English 3200 pre-test and post-test; and the writing assignment pre-test and post-test.

The author used two common statistical tests to analyze the means of the various scores: the t test and the chi square test of independence. The t test, the most basic parametric statistic, can be used with interval or ratio data. The Geer Fear Survey scale of 0 to 5 produced

interval data, while the scores on the English 3200 tests and writing assignment produced ratio data. Thus, the author used the t test on the main hypothesis (the Geer Fear Survey), sub-hypothesis 5 (English 3200) and sub-hypothesis 6 (the writing exercise). The t test compared the mean scores for the treatment group and the control groups to determine if any differences were significant or simply due to chance.

Although the Likert scale of 1 to 5 for the items on Questionnaires A and B produced interval data, the best method of analysis for sub-hypotheses 1 through 4 was the chi square, a non-parametric statistic appropriate for nominal and ordinal data. The chi square test calculated the difference between the pre-test and post-test rating of each student on each item (i.e., did the student's rating stay the same, or did it go up or down 1, 2, 3, or 4 "points"). The test then tabulated the frequency of these changes for students in the control and treatment groups and compared the observed and expected frequencies to determine whether or not the differences in distribution were significant. Table II summarizes the statistical tests used to analyze the seven hypotheses.

As is the traditional practice in social science research, the author adopted a .05 alpha level for the statistical tests.

The author also used the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient to check the validity of the

holistic scores assigned to the writing samples for sub-hypothesis 6.

TABLE II

STATISTICAL TEST USED TO ANALYZE THE MAIN HYPOTHESIS AND SUB-HYPOTHESES ONE THROUGH SIX

Hypothesis	Item Measured	Statistical Test
Main	Anxiety	T test
Sub-1	Self-assessment	Chi square
Sub-2	Attitude	Chi square
Sub-3	Motivation	Chi square
Sub-4	Practicality	Chi square
Sub-5	Grammar, mechanics	T test
Sub-6	Writing	T test

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

#### Demographics

At the beginning of the 1986 fall semester at Bartlesville Wesleyan College, 114 students took the pre-test material for this study: the English placement tests (English 3200 and the writing exercise) and Questionnaire A (including the Geer Fear Survey).

As indicated in Table III, 13 students who completed the pre-tests left school before or during the first week of classes. Eleven other students did not complete English Composition I. (At some time during the semester before the author administered the post-test, these 11 students either withdrew from class or were withdrawn for not meeting BWC's class attendance requirements.) Of the remaining 90 students still enrolled at the end of the semester, 79 (88%) completed the post-tests. (One control group instructor was not very diligent in stressing the importance of the post-tests, and five of her students did not complete all of the post-test material.)

Of the 79 students who completed both the pre-tests and post-tests, 11 were enrolled in Developmental English. Although students in this remedial class completed all the



TABLE III

PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST RESPONDENTS FOR ALL SECTIONS OF  
ENGLISH COMPOSITION I AND DEVELOPMENTAL ENGLISH

N of students who:	took		didn't take		Percent
	pre-test	withdrew	post-test	post-test	
Control 1	18	1	12	5	12/17 = 71
Control 2	17	2	15	0	15/15 = 100
Control 3	15	2	11	2	11/13 = 85
Treatment	19	0	18	1	18/19 = 95
*NR Control	15	2	12	1	12/13 = 92
Dev. Eng.	17	4	11	2	11/13 = 88
TOTALS	101**	11	79	11	79/90 = 88

\*Non-random, evening class

\*\*13 other students took the pre-tests but left school within the first week of classes.

pre-test and post-test material, their responses were not part of this study. The author used the responses of the remaining 68 students in the demographic analysis. (This total included 12 students enrolled in the non-randomly selected evening class.)

Of the 68 students in all sections of English Composition I, 31 were male and 37 female. Although the respondents' ages ranged from 17 to 40, 46 of the students, or 67.6%, were 18 years old. Five students (7.4%) were 17 and six (8.8%) were 19. The ages of the remaining 11 students (16%) varied from 21 to 40 with no three students being the same age.

TABLE IV  
MAJOR OF RESPONDENTS

Major Area	N	Percent
Business	13	19.1
Behavioral Science	6	8.8
Computer Science	3	4.4
Education	14	20.6
English	1	1.5
Health Sciences	5	7.4
Religion	8	11.8
Undecided	15	22.1
Other	3	4.4
TOTAL	68	100

Table IV above shows the majors of the 68 students. The largest group was 15 undecided students, followed by 14 education majors, and 13 business majors.

Three questions on the demographic portion of Questionnaire A dealt with the respondents' previous exposure to composition and news writing classes. The first item asked

When was the last time you took a class that dealt primarily with writing instruction?

As indicated in Table V, 40 students, or 58.8%, indicated they had a writing class as a senior in high school and 15, or 22.1%, took a writing class as a junior.

In addition to the question about their most recent writing class, a second item asked

TABLE V  
RESPONDENTS MOST RECENT WRITING CLASS

When	N	Percent
Senior year in high school	40	58.8
Junior year in high school	15	22.1
Sophomore year in high school	6	8.8
Freshman year in high school	2	2.9
Grade school	1	1.5
Other	<u>4</u>	<u>5.9</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

Have you ever taken a Journalism writing class?

Sixty-one students, or 89.7%, said "no," while 7 said "yes." Of the 7 students who said "yes," six had taken one Journalism class and one student had taken two Journalism classes.

A final demographic item asked each respondent

Have you ever worked on a student newspaper or yearbook?

Twenty students, or 29.4%, said "yes," while 48 students, 70.6%, said they had not worked on a student newspaper or yearbook staff.

For the statistical analysis, the author (following the advice of William Warde, professor of statistics) combined the three randomly-assigned control groups and compared the responses of those students on the pre-tests and post-tests

TABLE VI  
MAKEUP OF CONTROL, TREATMENT, AND NON-RANDOM  
CONTROL GROUPS

Group	N	Percent
Control group*	38	55.9
Non-random control	12	17.6
Treatment	<u>18</u>	<u>26.5</u>
TOTAL	68	100

\*Includes three sections of English Composition I with class sizes of 15, 12, and 11.

to the responses of the students in the treatment group. Above, Table VI shows the breakdown of these groups. (The author ran a second set of tests that included the responses of the 12 students enrolled in the non-random evening class and a third set that removed the one non-randomly assigned student from the treatment group and the five non-randomly assigned students from the combined control groups.)

#### Statistical Analysis

As indicated in Chapter III, the author used two straightforward statistical procedures--the t test and the chi square test of independence--to test the main hypothesis and the six sub-hypotheses. Following are the results of these statistical tests. (These results include only the students in the combined random control group and the

treatment group. They do not include the 12 students enrolled in the non-random, evening class.)

Results of the Main Hypothesis:

The main hypothesis stated

Students taught news writing in English Composition I will show less anxiety toward writing through lower scores on the Geer Fear Survey than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.

The author used the t test to determine if any change in students' anxiety between the control group and treatment group was significant. As mentioned in Chapter I, the Geer Fear Survey contained six educationally-induced stimuli: "failing a test," "writing papers for a grade," "teachers," "English classes," "spelling words," and "reading." Each student responded on a scale of 0 (no reaction) to five (terror) as to how strongly or weakly each of these items generated an anxiety reaction.

For the purposes of the t test, the author grouped and totaled the responses for each student on three items: "writing papers for a grade," "English classes," and "spelling words." (A student's total could be as low as zero for no anxiety reaction for any of the items, or as high as 15 with a terror reaction for all three items). Next, the author calculated the grand mean scores on the pre-test for the students in the randomly-selected control groups and the students in the treatment group.

On the pre-test, the mean of the three fear survey

TABLE VII  
RELATIONSHIP OF TREATMENT AND PRE-TEST GEER FEAR SURVEY  
ANXIETY SCORE ON THREE WRITING-RELATED STIMULI

	N	Mean	DF	t score	p value
Control	35	5.29	51	-1.6403	0.1071
Treatment	18	6.83			

Items for the control groups was 5.29, while the mean of the items for the treatment group was 6.83. The p value of 0.1071 revealed that the difference between these two means was not significant at the .05 level. Above, Table VII presents these results.

The calculations for the same items on the post-test Geer Fear Survey showed that for both the control and treatment groups, student anxiety lessened about the three educationally-induced stimuli. The mean of the three items for the control groups decreased to 4.43, while the mean for the three items for the treatment group dropped to 5.33 (see Table VIII). Once again, however, the p value of 0.3585 revealed that the difference between the two means was not significant.

Therefore, because the mean difference between the control and treatment groups was not significant, the main hypothesis was rejected. It was not necessary to conduct a t test between the means of the two groups on the pre-test

TABLE VIII

## RELATIONSHIP OF TREATMENT AND POST-TEST GEER FEAR SURVEY ANXIETY SCORE ON THREE EDUCATIONALLY-INDUCED STIMULI

	N	Mean	DF	t score	p value
Control	37	4.43	53	-0.9263	0.3585
Treatment	18	5.33			

and post-test. The decrease in anxiety of .86 (the mean of 5.29 minus the mean of 4.43) for the control group and the decrease of 1.50 (6.83 minus 5.33) for the treatment group would also have been insignificant.

Results of Sub-Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4:

These hypotheses measured students' self-assessment of their writing ability, students' attitudes toward writing, students' motivation to improve their writing, and students' views of the practicality of writing instruction. Questionnaires A and B contained questions to measure each of these four areas. Students responded to each question on a Likert scale of 5 (usually representing "excellent" or "very") to 1 (usually representing "poor" or "not at all").

For sub-hypotheses 1 through 4, the chi square test of independence calculated the difference between the pre-test and post-test rating of each student on each item (i.e., did the student's rating stay the same, or did it go up or down

1, 2, 3, or 4 "points"). The chi square test tabulated the frequency of these changes for students in the control and treatment groups and then compared the observed and expected frequencies to determine whether or not the differences in distribution were significant.

Sub-hypothesis 1:

Students taught news writing in English Composition I will rate their writing ability higher than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content through higher scores on a questionnaire.

Questionnaire A contained seven items (8 through 14) and Questionnaire B the same seven items (1 through 7) designed to measure students' self-assessment of their writing ability.

Research question 1-A: Self-assessment of writing ability:

How would you rate your overall writing ability?

For this item, students responded on a scale of 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor). The author used the chi square test of independence to determine the relationship between the treatment and control group and how students' rated their overall writing ability. The chi square of 1.337, p of 0.720 indicated the relationship was not statistically significant.

Research question 1-B: Self-assessment of writing ability:



How would you rate your ability to spell?

Again, students responded on a scale of 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor) on Questionnaires A and B. Again, the author used the chi square test to determine if there was a relationship between the treatment and how students' rated their ability to spell. The chi square of 6.411, p of 0.170 indicated the relationship was not statistically significant.

Research question 1-C: Self-assessment of writing ability:

How would you rate your ability to use grammar correctly?

The chi square of 0.590, p of 0.899 indicated there was no statistically significant relationship between the treatment and how students' rated their ability to use grammar correctly.

Research question 1-D: Self-assessment of writing ability:

How would you rate your ability to punctuate correctly?

The chi square of 5.185, p of 0.269 indicated there was no significant relationship between the treatment and how students' rated their ability to punctuate correctly.

Research question 1-E: Self-assessment of writing ability:

How would you rate your ability to put on paper what you want to say?

The chi square of 6.598, p of 0.252 indicated there was no

statistically significant relationship between the treatment and how students' rated their ability to put on paper what they wanted to say.

Research question 1-F: Self-assessment of writing ability:

How would you rate your ability to think up material to write about?

The chi square of 2.991, p of 0.559 indicated there was no statistically significant relationship between the treatment and how students' rated their ability to think up material to write about.

Research question 1-G: Self-assessment of writing ability:

How would you rate your ability to compile information from a variety of sources into an organized paper?

The chi square of 1.409, p of 0.843 indicated there was no statistically significant relationship between the treatment and how students' rated their ability to compile information from a variety of sources into an organized paper.

In summary, because none of the seven research questions measuring students' self-assessment of their writing ability indicated a significant relationship between the item and the treatment, sub-hypothesis 1 was rejected.

Sub-hypothesis 2:

Students taught news writing in English Composition I will display a better attitude about their writing

ability through higher scores on a questionnaire than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.

This section of Questionnaire A contained three items (20 through 22), while Questionnaire B contained the same items (13 through 15) designed to measure students' attitudes about writing.

Research question 2-A: Attitudes about writing:

Do you enjoy writing?

Students responded on a scale of 5 (very much) to 1 (not at all) on Questionnaires A and B. The chi square of 4.492,  $p$  of 0.344 indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between the treatment and how much students' enjoyed writing.

Research question 2-B: Attitudes about writing:

How much confidence do you have in your writing ability?

Students responded on a scale of 5 (a lot) to 1 (very little) on Questionnaires A and B. The chi square of 0.320,  $p$  of 0.956 indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between the treatment and how much confidence students had in their writing ability.

Research question 2-C: Attitudes about writing:

How easy is writing for you?

Students responded on a scale of 5 (very easy) to 1 (very difficult) on Questionnaires A and B. The chi square of 1.392,  $p$  of 0.707 indicated that there was no significant

relationship between the treatment and students' rating of how easy writing was for them.

In summary, because none of the three items measuring students' attitude about writing indicated a significant relationship between the item and the treatment, sub-hypothesis 2 was rejected.

Sub-hypothesis 3:

Students taught news writing in English Composition I will display a higher motivation to learn to write through higher scores on a questionnaire than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.

Questionnaire A contained four items (16 through 19), while Questionnaire B contained the same items (9 through 12) designed to measure students' motivation to improve their writing skills.

Research question 3-A: Motivation to learn to write:

How important is it to you to improve  
your writing?

Students responded on a scale of 5 (very) to 1 (not at all) on Questionnaires A and B. The chi square of 9.385,  $p$  of 0.052 revealed that there was almost a statistically significant relationship between the treatment and how important it was for students to improve their writing.

Research question 3-B: Motivation to learn to write:

How willing are you to do out-of-class,  
non-graded assignments to improve your  
writing?

Students responded on a scale of 5 (very) to 1 (not at all) on Questionnaires A and B. The chi square of 7.485, p of 0.189 indicated there was no statistically significant relationship between the treatment and this item.

Research question 3-C: Motivation to learn to write:

How willing are you to let other students evaluate your writing?

Students responded on a scale of 5 (very) to 1 (not at all) on Questionnaires A and B. The chi square of 3.095, p of 0.685 indicated that there was not a statistically significant relationship between the treatment and this item.

Research question 3-D: Motivation to learn to write:

How receptive are you to a teacher's evaluation or critique of your writing?

Students again responded on a scale of 5 (very) to 1 (not at all) on Questionnaires A and B. The chi square of 6.044, p of 0.418 indicated that there was no significant relationship between the treatment and this item.

In summary, because none of the four research questions measuring students' motivation to improve their writing indicated a significant relationship between the item and the treatment, sub-hypothesis 3 was also rejected.

#### Sub-hypothesis 4:

Students taught news writing in English Composition I will view that instruction as more practical for work after college through higher scores on a questionnaire

than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.

Questionnaire B contained three items (17-19) designed to measure students' view of the practicality of the writing instruction they received in English Composition I.

Research question 4-A: Views of the practicality of writing instruction:

How valuable do you view the writing instruction you received in English Composition I this fall?

Students responded on a scale of 5 (very) to 1 (not at all). The chi square of 3.166, p of 0.367 indicated there was no statistically significant relationship between the treatment and this item.

Research question 4-B: Views of the practicality of writing instruction:

How helpful for the world of work do you view the writing instruction you received in English Composition I this fall?

Students again responded on a scale of 5 (very) to 1 (not at all). The chi square of 13.197, p of 0.010 indicated that a statistically significant relationship did exist between the treatment and this item. The Cramer's V strength of association statistic of 0.485 indicated a moderately strong relationship between the treatment and the response of students in the treatment group to this item. Table IX lists the observed and expected frequencies for this item.

TABLE IX

CONTINGENCY TABLE FOR "HOW HELPFUL FOR THE WORLD OF WORK DO YOU VIEW THE WRITING INSTRUCTION YOU RECEIVED IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION I THIS FALL?"

		1	2	3	4	5	
Control	Observed	1.0	7.0	10.0	16.0	4.0	
	Expected	0.7	4.7	7.5	17.0	8.1	
	Row %	2.63	18.42	26.32	42.11	10.53	100%
Treatment	Observed	0.0	0.0	1.0	9.0	8.0	
	Expected	0.3	2.2	3.5	8.0	3.9	
	Row %	0.0	0.0	5.56	50.00	44.44	100%
TOTAL N		1	7	11	25	12	56

For research question 4-B, the scale of students' responses ranged from 5 (very) to 1 (not at all). The table above shows that 17 students in the treatment group (94%) responded with a 4 or 5 on this question. One other student responded with a 3. Responses for the control group, however, were not that positive, with 8 students (20%) checking the 1 or 2. Ten students (26%) marked the 3, while 20 students (50%) responded with a 4 or 5.

Research question 4-C: Views of the practicality of writing instruction:

How helpful for college writing tasks was the writing instruction you received in English Composition I this fall?

Students responded on a scale of 5 (very) to 1 (not at all).

The chi square of 5.585, p of 0.134 indicated that the relationship between the treatment and this item was not significant.

In summary, the key item for sub-hypothesis 4 was research question 4-B. This question measured students' perceptions of how practical for work after college the writing instruction was that they received. (Research questions 4-A and 4B measured other aspects of practicality not directly related to sub-hypothesis 4). Therefore, because research question 4-B indicated a significant and moderately strong relationship to the treatment, sub-hypothesis 4 was accepted.

#### Sub-hypothesis 5:

Students taught news writing in English Composition I will show more improvement in their scores on the English 3200 grammar and mechanics pre-test and post-test than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.

The author used the t test to determine if any changes in the students' scores on the English 3200 pre-test and post-test between the control group and treatment group were significant.

The t test procedures involved subtracting each student's pre-test score from his or her post-test score and calculating the mean of improvement for the students in the control group and students in the treatment group.

As indicated in Table X, students in the control group



TABLE X  
RELATIONSHIP OF TREATMENT AND PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST SCORE  
ON ENGLISH 3200

	N	Mean	DF	t score	p value
Control	37	4.46	53	-0.3386	0.7363
Treatment	18	5.33			

Improved their English 3200 scores an average of 4.46 points, while students in the treatment group improved their scores 5.33 points. The p value of 0.7363 revealed that the difference between these two means was not significant. Based on the t test of the mean difference of improvement on the English 3200 pre-test and post-test, sub-hypothesis 5 was rejected.

Sub-hypothesis 6:

Students taught news writing in English Composition I will show more improvement in their scores on a writing pre-test and post-test than students taught a more traditional, less diverse content.

Again, for this hypothesis the author used the t test to determine if any changes between the control group and treatment group were significant.

As mentioned in Chapter III, Professor Mary Ruth Brown and the author used a holistic scale to score the responses

to the writing exercise. The Pearson product-moment correlation indicated a relatively high degree of correlation (0.84) between our ratings of the students' pre-test writing samples. The correlation, however, between our scores on the post-tests dipped to 0.67. This drop occurred for the following reasons. In the fall, if our scores differed more than 1 and one-half points on any student's paper, we discussed our differences of opinion and negotiated a common score. Negotiation was necessary because we were placing students in Development English and had to be more precise. After the semester ended, there was no urgent reason, other than the purposes of this study, to negotiate scores that differed considerably. Professor Brown was extremely busy with her dissertation and preferred not to evaluate the writing samples until it was absolutely necessary. Consequently, although the author scored the post-test writing samples within a month after the semester ended, Professor Brown did not score the samples until one year later.

The t test procedures for sub-hypothesis 6 involved averaging the two raters' holistic scores on the pre-test writing exercise and on the post-test writing exercise. The pre-test average was then subtracted from the post-test average to determine the amount of improvement. As indicated in Table XI, students in the control group improved their scores an average of 0.5263 points on the holistic grading scale, while students in the treatment

TABLE XI  
RELATIONSHIP OF TREATMENT AND PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST SCORE  
ON THE WRITING EXERCISE

	N	Mean	DF	t value	p value
Control	38	0.5263	54	-0.9838	0.3296
Treatment	18	0.7500			

group improved their scores an average of 0.7500 points. The p value of 0.3296 revealed that the difference between these two means was not significant. Thus, sub-hypothesis 6 was rejected.

After obtaining these results, the author ran all of the chi square and t tests two more times. First, the author included the 12 students in the non-random control group (N of 68 instead of 56). The results were quite similar. Only one item ("How important is it to improve your writing?") was significant (chi square of 10.304, p of 0.036) that was not significant before. With the N of 56 for the random control groups, this item was almost significant with a p value of 0.052.

The item that measured students' views of the practicality for the work world of the writing instruction they received was again significant when the non-random class responses were included. However, with a p value of 0.031 and Cramer's V of 0.395 (compared to 0.010 and 0.485),

the relationship was not as strong.

The author ran the chi square and t tests once more, this time removing one student (N of 17 instead of 18) from the treatment group and removing five students from the control group (N of 33 instead of 38) that were not randomly placed. In the majority of cases the p value became smaller (for example, 13 of the 19 chi square tests had smaller p values), but the changes between the treatment and control groups were still not significant, except for research question 4-B measuring practicality.

The questionnaires also contained three other items not directly related to the hypotheses. The author included these research questions to further analyze the effect of news writing instruction in English Composition I. First, Questionnaire A contained the following question:

How would you rate the writing instruction you received in high school?

Questionnaire B contained the same question, altered slightly:

How would you rate the writing instruction you received in English Composition I this fall?

Students responded on a scale of 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor). The author used the chi square test of independence to determine if there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test responses of the control and treatment groups on these two questions. The chi square of

5.627,  $p$  of 0.131 indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between the treatment and how students rated the writing instruction they received in high school and in English Composition I.

Questionnaire B also contained the following item:

Has your confidence in your writing ability  
increased as a result of this class?

Students responded on a scale of 5 (very much) to 1 (not at all). Again, the author used the chi square test to determine if there was a significant difference between the responses of the control and treatment groups on this item. The chi square of 7.860,  $p$  of 0.097 indicated that the relationship between the treatment and this item was not significant at the .05 level.

#### Summary of Results

This dissertation tested one main hypothesis and six sub-hypotheses. The statistical tests revealed that any differences between the control group and treatment group for the main hypothesis and five of the six sub-hypotheses were not significant. The only sub-hypothesis accepted was number 4. This hypothesis measured the students' views of how practical for work after college the writing instruction was that they received in English Composition I.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

This dissertation examined the effect news writing instruction in freshman English composition had on students' anxiety toward writing (the main hypothesis) and on the following factors in the sub-hypotheses:

- 1) students' self-assessment of their writing ability,
- 2) their attitude toward writing,
- 3) their motivation to improve their writing,
- 4) their view of the practicality of writing instruction for work after college,
- 5) their progress in grammar and mechanics skills,
- 6) and their progress in writing skills.

The author hypothesized that for all seven factors, students in the treatment group that received news writing instruction would score higher or show more improvement than students in the three control groups that received more traditional, less diverse writing instruction.

As indicated in Chapter IV, the statistical analysis indicated that for six of the seven factors (anxiety, self-assessment, attitude, motivation, grammar and

mechanics, and writing skills), there was no significant difference between the scores of students in the treatment group and those in the control groups.

The only significant difference occurred in the students' perception of the practicality of the writing instruction they received for work after college. Students in the treatment group that received the more diverse, non-traditional news writing instruction viewed that instruction as more practical for work after college than the traditional instruction students in the control groups received.

#### Discussion

Based on the statistical analysis, the author rejected six of the seven hypotheses. Although there is a body of literature that seems to provide a convincing argument for the necessity of more diverse writing instruction, this study did not provide empirical support for such an idea. The lack of significant results could, of course, simply be due to the fact that more diverse writing instruction does not have a positive effect on students' writing performance and attitudes and, consequently, does not combat some of the traditional weaknesses of English composition instruction. The lack of significant results may also be due to several factors related to the author's research design. The uncontrollable effects of contamination may have influenced the results. On the small BWC campus, it was

inevitable that students in the treatment group would talk to students in the control group about the different or unusual instruction they were receiving.

The timing of the post-testing may also have affected the results. The author post-tested at the end of the semester, eight weeks after the more diverse instruction had ended and immediately after half a semester of traditional composition instruction. The compressed half a semester of traditional composition immediately prior to the post-test may have caused some tension among students in the treatment group and may have lessened the positive effects of the non-traditional, news writing instruction.

Perhaps the major reason for the lack of significant results was the third limitation cited in Chapter I (page 20). This third limitation involved the length of the study and related difficulties involved in measuring writing improvement. Shaughnessey said that because writing is such a slow-developing skill, it should be measured over longer periods than a semester (146). Witte and Faigley also pointed out that "even if the development of writing skills is accelerated by means of instruction, growth along those dimensions which affect writing quality may occur so slowly as not to be meaningful after a relatively short time." They explained further that instruction may cause improved cognitive skills, improved understanding or awareness, etc. without there "being any immediate evidence in the student's written texts" (36). White explained that "an early



indication of improvement to come is an attitude change." He said students often begin to show better attitudes about writing after "passing through a program, even if their writing skills have not improved very much" (204).

In retrospect, the author believes that a 17-week semester was indeed too short of a time to measure change in the seven factors examined. As Witte and Faigley suggested, even if the treatment accelerated students' writing skills or began to change their attitudes about writing, the growth was not enough to be significant over the course of one semester. This, in fact, seemed to be the case. In three areas, students in the treatment group showed more improvement than the control groups. Students in the treatment group showed a greater decrease in anxiety (1.50 versus 0.86 for the control groups), more improvement in their scores on the English 3200 test (5.33 points to 4.46) and more improvement in their scores on the writing exercise (.7500 versus .5263). These results, although seeming to indicate a trend, were not significant, or in Witte and Faigley's words so small as "to not be meaningful" (91).

At the start of the semester, the author was aware that one semester was a short time to measure writing, but went ahead with the study for two reasons. First, he believed--perhaps naively--that despite this limitation, students would view the treatment they received as being "so significant" (i.e., useful, practical, non-traditional) that all seven hypotheses would be confirmed. Second, there was

really no other option. It was a little difficult to get BWC's administrators to agree to random assignment of students during the fall semester. It would have been much more difficult to get permission and to arrange to continue the treatment during the second semester because the content and course emphasis in English Composition II changes significantly and the various sections do not meet at the same time.

Although this study did not reveal any meaningful differences in writing skills, attitude, anxiety, and motivation, it did reveal a significant difference in how students' in the treatment and control groups viewed the practicality of the writing instruction they received for work after college. Evidently, the practicality factor was obvious to the students, whereas other factors measured (anxiety, attitude, motivation) were either less obvious, or they may require longer periods of time for changes to occur.

On Questionnaire B, students had the opportunity to respond in writing to "Name two things in this course that were new to you" and "Name two things you considered a waste of time." The students' responses supported the significant results of sub-hypothesis 4 on practicality. Eleven of 18 students (61%) in the treatment group said the emphasis on news and technical writing was new. None of the students said it was a waste of time. In the control groups, students listed a variety of topics that were "new" to them

(although it seems likely that students were exposed to most of these areas prior to college). The "new things" students in the control groups mentioned most often were how to write essays (the basic essay pattern), how to write different kinds of essays (such as a descriptive essay), and persuasive writing techniques.

### Conclusion

This study did not prove that more diverse writing instruction (i.e., news writing instruction) in English Composition I has a positive effect on students' attitudes about writing and their writing performance. The results of this study, however, do not necessarily squelch the idea that more diverse writing instruction may be useful in combating some of the weaknesses of traditional composition instruction.

The author believes the idea that more diverse writing instruction is desirable is still alive for two reasons. First, some solid literature supports this view (see especially pages 28-31 and 33-35). The fact that articles which discuss the weaknesses of traditional composition instruction and suggest changes continue to appear regularly in professional journals (the most recent is Tebeau's "The Trouble with Employee's Writing May be Freshman Composition" in Teaching English in the Two-Year College February, 1988) seems to reveal that this issue is alive and well. The weaknesses of traditional composition instruction are

not going away despite increased nation-wide concern for writing skills in the "back to basics movement."

Second, the idea of the need for more diverse writing instruction is still alive because common educational sense tells us that students who are motivated to learn usually do better than those who are less motivated. Thus, it seems only logical (especially based on the literature review) that if students receive less traditional, more diverse, and more practical writing instruction, they will be more motivated to learn to write, will have better attitudes about writing and writing instruction, will show more improvement, and will perhaps even be less anxious about writing.

Different research techniques, particularly longitudinal studies, are necessary to ground this idea in solid research and determine whether more diverse writing instruction is valid, necessary, and useful.

#### Recommendations

If the author could redo this study, he would alter three things; if another researcher wishes to conduct a similar study, the author would suggest one major change.

First, although the author believes strongly that students receive useful and valuable skills from news writing instruction, in further research he might emphasize technical writing instruction with a sub-unit of news writing instead of emphasizing news writing with a sub-unit

of technical writing as done in this study. News writing style and technical writing style are closely related (as indicated on pages 44-45), but students would perhaps perceive the practicality of technical writing instruction more readily than they did the practicality of news writing instruction. (Most students do not anticipate becoming news writers or writing public relations releases after college; however, they do expect to write letters, reports, proposals, and other typical technical writing assignments.) A technical writing emphasis would perhaps accelerate the progress in the seven factors measured.

Second, the author would also "tighten up" the questionnaire. For instance, seven items dealt with students' self-assessment of their writing ability for sub-hypothesis 1. None of these seven research questions revealed significant differences between the treatment and control groups, so the hypothesis was rejected. When the author created the questionnaire, however, he did not consider the complications in analyzing the data that could occur with multiple research questions for four of the hypotheses. Thus, the author would have had difficulty knowing what to do if, for instance, four of the seven items on self-assessment showed significant results and three did not. Would sub-hypothesis 1 be accepted or rejected?

Third, the author would conduct the post-testing at the end of the eight-week section of more diverse, news writing instruction, or would have taught traditional composition

the first half of the semester, and ended the semester with the experimental instruction.

Last, if other writing researchers wish to conduct a similar study, the author would recommend longitudinal studies of at least two semesters. The treatment could be continued a second semester with the same students in the same groups, or the researcher could "follow" the students into another course and try to determine if the first semester treatment affects student performance. Longer studies would reveal more clearly if diverse writing instruction has a positive effect on students' writing ability and attitudes.

Even though writing research is difficult to conduct, researchers, especially those who feel that traditional composition instruction is narrowly-focused, must continue their efforts to prove that more diverse writing instruction does indeed combat the weaknesses of traditional composition instruction and improve students' attitudes and writing performance.

## NOTES

### Chapter I

<sup>1</sup>Maxine Hairston discusses the changes that have occurred in the teaching of writing in the past two decades in "The Winds of Change: Thomas Kuhn and the Revolution in the Teaching of Writing," College Composition and Communication, 33 (1982): 76-88.

<sup>2</sup>For two articles that discuss weaknesses of a freewheeling emphasis on the writing process, see Daniel Horowitz' "Process, Not Product: Less Than Meets the Eye," TESOL Quarterly, 20 (1986): 141-144, and Raymond Rodrigues' "Moving Away from Writing Process Worship," English Journal, 74 (Sept. 1985): 24-27.

<sup>3</sup>Works that explain the writing process include John R. Hayes and Linda Flower's "Identifying and Organizing the Writing Process," in L.W. Gregg and Erwin Steinberg, eds. Cognitive Processes in Writing (Hillsdale, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1980), pp. 3-29, and Donald Murray's "Teach Writing as a Process, Not a Product" in Richard L. Graves, ed. Rhetoric and Composition (Rochelle Park, NY: Boyton Cook, 1984), pp. 88-92.

<sup>4</sup>One issue of Current Issues in Higher Education (Vol. 3, 1983-84) was dedicated solely to Writing Across the

Curriculum and provides a useful overview of the movement. Two especially helpful articles by Barbara Leigh Smith are "Writing Across the Curriculum: What's at Stake?" and "An Interview with Elaine Maimon," a leading figure in the WAC movement.

<sup>5</sup>Holistic scoring evaluates and responds to student writing as a unit without separate subscores or separable aspects. White (18-19) says this approach opposes "multiple-choice testing on the one hand and analytic approaches to writing on the other." Holistic scoring, he says, is the most obvious example in English of the "attempt to evoke and evaluate wholes rather than parts, individual thought rather than mere socialized correctness."



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bain, Robert. "Journalism and Composition." Freshman English News 4.1 (1975): 1-3.
- Bennett, James C., and Robert J. Olney. "Executive Priorities for Effective Communication." The Journal of Business Communication 23.2 (1986): 13-22.
- Berdie, Douglas R., and John Anderson. Questionnaires: Design and Use. Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1974.
- Berlin, James A. "Contemporary Composition: The Major Pedagogical Theories." College English 44 (1982): 765-777.
- Blumenthal, Joseph C. English 3200. 2nd ed. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972.
- Brand, Alice G. "The Why of Cognition: Emotion and the Writing Process." College Composition and Communication 38 (1987): 436-443.
- Britton, W. Earl. "The Trouble with Technical Writing is Freshman English." Directions in Technical Writing Communication. Ed. Jay Gould. Farmingdale, NY: Baywood Publishing Company, Inc., 1977. 131-135.
- Cleveland, Harlan. The Knowledge Executive: Leadership in an Information Society. New York: Truman Talley

Books, 1985.

- Connolly, Paul. "Writing to Learn: A Taxonomy of Different Forms and Uses." Institute on Cognitive Strategies and Writing: A Dialogue Across Disciplines. University of Chicago. 11 May 1986.
- Corbett, Edward P. J. "Teaching Composition: Where We've Been and Where We're Going." College Composition and Communication 38 (1987): 444-452.
- Crump, Spencer. Newsgathering and Reporting for the '80s and Beyond. Corona del Mar, CA: Trans-Anglo Publishing, 1980.
- Dovorak, Jack. "Journalism's Role in the Secondary School Language Arts Curriculum in the Context of the Educational Reform Movement." Paper submitted for mid-winter meeting of the Secondary Education Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. Indianapolis, January 1985.
- Felker, Daniel B. Guidelines for Document Designers. Washington, DC: American Institute for Research, 1981.
- Flower, Linda. Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing. 2nd ed. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985.
- Gardiner, John J. "Building Bridges Between the Disciplines: Collaboration in an Information-Processing University." Paper presented at the Twelfth International Conference on Improving University Teaching, Heidelberg, Germany, 15-18 July 1986.
- Geer, James H. "The Development of a Scale to Measure

- Fear." Behavior Research and Therapy 3 (1965): 45-53.
- Hach, Clarence W. "How Journalism Instruction Meets the 10 Imperative Needs." NASSP Bulletin 59.388 (1975): 24-31.
- Hairston, Maxine. "The Winds of Change: Thomas Kuhn and the Revolution in the Teaching of Writing." College Composition and Communication 33 (1982): 76-88.
- Hake, Rosemary L., and Joseph M. Williams. "Style and Its Consequences: Do as I Do, Not as I Say." College English 43 (1981): 433-451.
- Harwood, John T. "Freshman English Ten Years After: Writing in the World." College Composition and Communication 33 (1982): 281-283.
- Hayes, John R., and Linda Flower. "Identifying and Organizing the Writing Process." Cognitive Processes in Writing. Eds. L.W. Gregg and Erwin Steinberg. Hillsdale, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1980. 3-29.
- Hester, Mary. "The Press Release as a Beginning Assignment in Technical Writing." The Technical Writing Teacher XIII (1986): 291-295.
- Hillocks, George, Jr. Research on Written Communication: New Directions for Teaching. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1986.
- Holden, Walter. "Why Don't They Like English?" English Journal 73 (March 1981): 16-19.
- Horowitz, Daniel. "Process, Not Product: Less Than Meets

- the Eye." TESOL Quarterly 20 (1986): 141-144.
- Hull, Glynda, and David Bartholomae. "Teaching Writing." Educational Leadership 43.7 (1986): 44-53.
- Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force. First in the Nation in Education. Des Moines: Iowa Legislative Council, 1984.
- Jolly, Peggy. "Meeting the Challenge of Developmental Writers." Teaching English in the Two-Year College 14 (1987): 32-40.
- Jones, Dennis R. "The Teaching of Writing in Journalism: Product vs. Process." Diss. The University of South Carolina, 1982
- . "Writing English vs. writing news--is there a difference?" Journalism Educator 41.2 (1986): 28-29.
- Kinneavy, James L. A Theory of Discourse. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1971.
- . "The Basic Aims of Discourse." The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook. Eds. Gary Tate and Edward J. P. Corbett. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981. 88-99.
- Kirkman, John. Good Style for Scientific and Engineering Writing. London: Pitman Publishing Limited, 1980.
- Koziol, Robert V. "Future Trends in Journalism Education." School Press Review 57 (Feb. 1981): 12-13.
- Levinson, Daniel. "Journalism is Not an Academic Joke." Independent School 45 (1985): 31-33.
- Lunsford, Andrea. "Cognitive Development and the Basic

- Writer." Tate and Corbett 257-267.
- . "What We Know--and Don't Know--About Remedial Writing." College Composition and Communication 29 (1978): 47-52.
- McCrimmon, James M. Writing With a Purpose. 8th ed. by Joseph Trimmer and Nancy Sommers. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.
- McLeod, Susan. "Some Thoughts about Feelings: The Affective Domain and the Writing Process." College Composition and Communication 38 (1987): 426-435.
- Mencher, Melvin. Basic News Writing. Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1983.
- Murray, Donald. A Writer Teaches Writing. 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.
- . How I Wrote the Story: A Book for Writers by Writers About Writing. Ed. Christopher Scanlan. Providence: Providence Journal Company, 1983.
- . "Newswriting." Writing for Many Roles. Ed. Mimi Schwartz. Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook, 1985.
- . "Teach Writing as a Process, Not a Product." Rhetoric and Composition. Ed. Richard L. Graves. Rochelle Park, NY: Boynton Cook, 1984. 88-92.
- . Writing for Your Readers. Chester, CN: The Globe Pequot Press, 1983.
- The National Commission on Excellence in Education. A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform. Washington: U.S. Department of Education,

April 1983.

- Nichols, John, and Zelda F. Gamson. Liberating Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1984.
- Olson, Lyle D. "Recent composition research is relevant to newswriting." Journalism Educator 42.3 (1987): 14-18.
- . "Technical Writing and News Writing Share Common Ground." Research paper. Oklahoma State University, Fall 1984.
- Pauly, John J. "Journalism and Business Writing As Ways of Learning to Write." The ABCA Bulletin 40 (Sept. 1983): 6-8.
- Perelman, Les. "The Context of Classroom Writing." College English 48 (1986): 471-479.
- Polanski, Virginia C. "Students from the Work Place Change the Role of the Writing Instructor." Teaching English in the Two-Year College 14 (1987): 217-221.
- Pomerence, Paula J., and JoAnna Stephens Mink. "The Needs of Adult Learns in Composition." Teaching English in the Two-Year College 14 (1987): 205-210.
- Raines, Max R. "Life/Career Transitions for Adults." The Journal of Continuing Higher Education 34.1 (1986): 2-4.
- Raisman, Neal A. "I Just Can't Do English: Writing Anxiety in the Classroom." Teaching English in the Two-Year College 9 (1982): 19-23.

- . "Technical Writing Reduces Writing Anxiety: Results of a Two-Year Study." The Technical Writing Teacher XI.2 (1984): 145-156.
- Rodrigues, Raymond. "Moving Away from Writing Process Worship." English Journal 74 (Sept. 1985): 24-27.
- Rose, Mike. "Remedial Writing Courses: A Critique and a Proposal." College English 45 (1983): 109-128.
- Roy, Emil. "Freshman Composition with a Business Focus." Teaching English in the Two-Year College 14 (1987): 285-293.
- Scott, Patrick, and Bruce Castner. "Reference Sources for Composition Research: A Practical Survey." College English 45 (1983): 756-768.
- Scott, Patrick. "Bibliographic Problems in Research on Composition." College Composition and Communication 37 (1986): 167-177.
- Shaughnessy, Mina. "Basic Writing." Teaching Composition: 10 Bibliographic Essays. Ed. Gary Tate. Fort Worth: Texas University Press, 1976. 137-167.
- . Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- Smith, Barbara Leigh. "An Interview with Elaine Maimon." Current Issues in Higher Education 3 (1983-84): 11-15.
- . "Writing Across the Curriculum: What's At Stake?"

Current Issues in Higher Education 3 (1983-84):

1-3.

Stein, Nancy L. "Knowledge and Process in the Acquisition of Writing Skills." Draft of article to be published in Review of Research in Education. May 1986.

Stewart, Donald C. "Composition Textbooks and the Assault on Tradition." The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook.

Eds. Gary Tate and Edward J. P. Corbett. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981. 180-186.

Stine, Donna. "Teaching Basic Technical Writing in Freshman Composition." The Technical Writing Teacher IX (Winter 1982): 89-94.

Tate, Gary, and Edward J. P. Corbett, eds. The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Tebeaux, Elizabeth. "The Trouble with Employees' Writing May be Freshman Composition." Teaching English in the Two-Year College 15 (1988): 9-19.

Tohtz, Jack E., and John L. Marsh. "Student as Staff Writer, Instructor as Editor: A Situational Context for Teaching Writing." College Composition and Communication 32 (1981): 327-329.

Warren, Thomas L. Technical Writing: Purpose, Process, and Form. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1985.

Weathers, Winston. "Grammars of Style: New Options in Composition." Freshman English News 4.3 (1976):

1-4.



- White, Edward M. Teaching and Assessing Writing. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1985.
- Williams, Joseph. "Plenary Roundtable: Cognitive Research and the Apprentice Writer." Institute on Cognitive Strategies and Writing: A Dialogue Across Disciplines. University of Chicago, 8 May 1986.
- . Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace. 2nd ed. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, and Company, 1985.
- Witte, Stephen P. and Lester Faigley. Evaluating College Writing Programs. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983.
- Zurek, Jerome. "Research on Writing Process Can Aid Newswriting Teachers." Journalism Educator 41.1 (1987): 19-23.

PLEASE NOTE:

Duplicate page number(s); text follows.  
Filmed as received.

U·M·I

**APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A

DO NOT  
WRITE  
HERE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1-3

ENGLISH COMPOSITION I QUESTIONNAIRE A

Dear Student:

This questionnaire is part of a study Professor Lyle Olson is conducting this semester in English Composition I classes at BWC. The purpose of the study is to determine the effectiveness of different types of writing instruction. The results will be used in Professor Olson's doctoral dissertation. Your response will be confidential. Professor Olson greatly appreciates your help with this project.

PART I -- Information about you (circle responses)

- 1. Your sex is:      1. male    2. female 4
- 2. Your age is:      \_\_\_\_\_ years (fill in blank) 5-6
- 3. When was the last time you took a class that dealt primarily with writing instruction? 7
  - 1. Senior year in high school    2. Junior year
  - 3. Sophomore year    4. Freshman year    5. Grade school
  - 6. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)
- 4. Have you ever taken a journalism writing class? 8
  - 1. Yes    2. No
- 5. If yes, how many courses? (check response) 9
  - \_\_\_ 1.    \_\_\_ 2.    \_\_\_ 3.    \_\_\_ 4.    \_\_\_ Other
- 6. Have you ever worked on a student newspaper or yearbook? 10
  - 1. Yes    2. No
- 7. What is your major? \_\_\_\_\_ 11  
(indicate undecided if you are not sure)

PART II -- MOTIVATION (use a check to indicate your response)

- 8. How would you rate your overall writing ability? 12
  - Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Poor
  - (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)

(over)

9. How would you rate your ability to spell?  
 Excellent                                    Poor         
                   (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)
10. How would you rate your ability to use grammar correctly?  
 Excellent                                    Poor         
                   (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)
11. How would you rate your ability to punctuate correctly?  
 Excellent                                    Poor         
                   (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)
12. How would you rate your ability to put on paper what you want to say?  
 Excellent                                    Poor         
                   (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)
13. How would you rate your ability to think up material to write about?  
 Excellent                                    Poor         
                   (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)
14. How would you rate your ability to compile information from various sources into an organized paper?  
 Excellent                                    Poor         
                   (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)
15. How would you rate the writing instruction you received in high school?  
 Excellent                                    Poor         
                   (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)
16. How important is it to you to improve your writing?  
 Very                                    Not at all         
           (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)
17. How willing are you to do out-of-class, non-graded projects to improve your writing?  
 Very                                    Not at all         
           (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)
18. How willing are you to let other students evaluate your writing?  
 Very                                    Not at all         
           (5)    (4)    (3)    (2)    (1)

(next page)

19. How receptive are you to a teacher's evaluation/critique of your writing?

Very                                    Not at all  
 (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

23

20. Do you enjoy writing?

Very much                                    Not at all  
 (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

24

21. How much confidence do you have in your writing ability?

A lot                                    Very little  
 (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

25

22. How easy is writing for you?

Very easy                                    Very difficult  
 (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

26

(next page)

PLEASE NOTE:

Copyrighted materials in this document have not been filmed at the request of the author. They are available for consultation, however, in the author's university library.

These consist of pages:

109-111 Geer Fear Survey-A

U·M·I

## GEER FEAR SURVEY A

The following survey is also part of Professor Olson's study. Again, your responses will be kept confidential.

Listed below are 50 possible fear-producing items. Please rate each item as to how strongly or weakly it generates an anxiety reaction. (Put an X in the appropriate box).

		NONE	VERY LITTLE	A LITTLE	MUCH	VERY MUCH	TERROR
1. Sharp objects	1.						
2. Being a passenger in a car	2.						
3. Failing a test	3.						
4. Looking foolish	4.						
5. Dead bodies	5.						
6. Being a passenger in a car	6.						
7. Worms	7.						
8. Arguing with parents	8.						
9. Rats and mice	9.						
10. Life after death	10.						
11. Hypodermic needle	11.						
12. Being criticized	12.						
13. Meeting someone for the first time	13.						
14. Writing papers for a grade	14.						
15. Being alone	15.						
16. Making mistakes	16.						
17. Being misunderstood	17.						
18. Death	18.						
19. Teachers	19.						
20. Crowded places	20.						
21. Blood	21.						
22. Heights	22.						
23. Being a leader	23.						
24. Swimming alone	24.						
25. Illness	25.						
26. Reading	26.						
27. Illness or injury to loved ones	27.						
28. Being self-conscious	28.						
29. Social disgrace	29.						
30. Meeting authority	30.						
31. Mental illness	31.						

(over please)



## FEAR SURVEY CONTINUED

	NONE	VERY LITTLE	A LITTLE	MUCH	VERY MUCH	TERROR
32. Closed places	32.					
33. Boating	33.					
34. Spiders	34.					
35. Thunderstorms	35.					
36. Not being a success	36.					
37. Spelling words	37.					
38. Snakes	38.					
39. Cemeteries	39.					
40. Speaking before a group	40.					
41. English classes	41.					
42. Death of a loved one	42.					
43. Dark places	43.					
44. Strange dogs	44.					
45. Deep water	45.					
46. Stinging insects	46.					
47. Untimely or early death	47.					
48. Losing a job	48.					
49. Auto accidents	49.					
50. Being with a member of the opposite sex	50.					

Thank you for filling out the questionnaire and survey and helping me with my study.

Lyle D. Olson

APPENDIX B

Name \_\_\_\_\_

ENGLISH COMPOSITION I QUESTIONNAIRE B

Dear Student:

This questionnaire is part of a study Professor Lyle Olson is conducting this semester in English Composition I classes at BWC. The purpose of the study is to determine the effectiveness of different types of writing instruction. The results will be used in Professor Olson's doctoral dissertation. Your response will be confidential. Professor Olson appreciates your help.

PART I -- MOTIVATION (use a check to indicate your response)

1. How would you rate your overall writing ability?

Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Poor  
                  (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

2. How would you rate your ability to spell?

Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Poor  
                  (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

3. How would you rate your ability to use grammar correctly?

Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Poor  
                  (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

4. How would you rate your ability to punctuate correctly?

Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Poor  
                  (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

5. How would you rate your ability to put on paper what you want to say?

Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Poor  
                  (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

6. How would you rate your ability to think up material to write about?

Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Poor  
                  (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

7. How would you rate your ability to compile information from various sources into an organized paper?

Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Poor  
                  (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

8. How would you rate the writing instruction you received in English Composition I this fall?

Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Poor  
                   (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

9. How important is it to you to improve your writing?

Very            \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Not at all  
                   (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

10. How willing are you to do out-of-class, non-graded projects to improve your writing?

Very            \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Not at all  
                   (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

11. How willing are you to let other students evaluate your writing?

Very            \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Not at all  
                   (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

12. How receptive are you to a teacher's evaluation/critique of your writing?

Very            \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Not at all  
                   (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

13. Do you enjoy writing?

Very much    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Not at all  
                   (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

14. How much confidence do you have in your writing ability?

A lot            \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Very little  
                   (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

15. How easy is writing for you?

Very easy    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Very difficult  
                   (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

16. Has your confidence in your writing ability increased as a result of this class?

Very much    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    Not at all  
                   (5)        (4)        (3)        (2)        (1)

(next page please)

## PART II -- PRACTICALITY

17. How valuable do you view the writing instruction you received in English Composition I this fall?

Very                                    Not at all  
 (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

18. How helpful for the world of work do you view the writing instruction you received in English Comp. I this fall?

Very                                    Not at all  
 (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

19. How helpful for college writing tasks was the writing instruction you received in English Comp. I this fall?

Very                                    Not at all  
 (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

20. Name two things you learned in this course that were new to you (things you did not cover in high school):

A. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

21. Name two things you considered a waste of time. Why?

A. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE NOTE:

Copyrighted materials in this document have not been filmed at the request of the author. They are available for consultation, however, in the author's university library.

These consist of pages:

114-115 Geer Fear Survey-B

116-119 Test For English 3200 2nd Edition

U·M·I

## GEER FEAR SURVEY B

The following survey is also part of Professor Olson's study. Again, your responses will be kept confidential.

Listed below are 50 possible fear-producing items. Please rate each item as to how strongly or weakly it generates an anxiety reaction. (Put an X in the appropriate box).

	NONE	VERY LITTLE	A LITTLE	MUCH	VERY MUCH	TERROR
1. Auto accidents						
2. Losing a job						
3. Untimely or early death						
4. Stinging insects						
5. Deep water						
6. Strange dogs						
7. Dark places						
8. Death of a loved one						
9. English classes						
10. Speaking before a group						
11. Cemeteries						
12. Snakes						
13. Spelling words						
14. Not being a success						
15. Thunderstorms						
16. Spiders						
17. Boating						
18. Closed places						
19. Mental illness						
20. Meeting authority						
21. Social disgrace						
22. Being self-conscious						
23. Illness or injury to loved ones						
24. Reading						
25. Illness						
26. Swimming alone						
27. Being a leader						
28. Heights						
29. Blood						
30. Crowded places						
31. Teachers						

(over please)

## FEAR SURVEY CONTINUED

		NONE	VERY LITTLE	A LITTLE	MUCH	VERY MUCH	TERROR
32. Death	32.						
33. Being misunderstood	33.						
34. Making mistakes	34.						
35. Being alone	35.						
36. Writing papers for a grade	36.						
37. Meeting someone the first time	37.						
38. Being criticized	38.						
39. Hypodermic needle	39.						
40. Life after death	40.						
41. Rats and mice	41.						
42. Arguing with parents	42.						
43. Worms	43.						
44. Being a passenger in a car	44.						
45. Dead bodies	45.						
46. Looking foolish	46.						
47. Failing a test	47.						
48. Being a passenger in a plane	48.						
49. Sharp objects	49.						
50. Being with a member of the opposite sex	50.						

Thank you for filling out the questionnaire and survey and helping me with my study.

Lyle D. Olson

APPENDIX C

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS \_\_\_\_\_

PRE-TEST

Write the letter of the word or phrase that completes the meaning of each sentence. [1 point each]

- 1 Adverbs can modify (a) nouns and pronouns, (b) verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, (c) nouns and verbs. 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Many adjectives can be changed to adverbs by adding the suffix (a) -ous, (b) -able, (c) -ly. 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 In a prepositional phrase, the preposition is always followed by (a) a verb, (b) an object, (c) a modifier. 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 A group of words that has a subject and a verb but does not make sense by itself is (a) a clause, (b) a sentence, (c) a prepositional phrase. 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 A clause that begins with *who*, *whose*, *whom*, *which*, or *that* would, in most cases, be (a) an adverb clause, (b) a noun clause, (c) an adjective clause. 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 An adverb clause is a clause that (a) is used as an adverb, (b) contains an adverb, (c) modifies an adverb. 6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 A sentence that contains a subordinate clause is (a) a simple sentence, (b) a complex sentence, (c) a compound sentence. 7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 The kind of sentence that can most easily be divided into two separate sentences is (a) a simple sentence, (b) a complex sentence, (c) a compound sentence. 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 The conjunction in a compound sentence can generally be replaced by (a) a relative pronoun, (b) a semicolon, (c) a comma. 9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 In the phrase *a losing game*, the word *losing* is (a) a participle, (b) an ordinary adjective, (c) an infinitive. 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Eliminate the *and* by changing the italicized statement to the kind of word group indicated in the parentheses. Write the full sentence. [2 points each]

- 11 We live in an exciting period, and *there are rapid changes*. (prepositional phrase) \_\_\_\_\_
- 12 A man entered the office, and *he looked like a detective*. (adjective clause) \_\_\_\_\_
- 13 *The man came closer*, and I noticed a scar on his cheek. (adverb clause) \_\_\_\_\_
- 14 We can move the furniture, and *this will make room for dancing*. (infinitive phrase) \_\_\_\_\_
- 15 Bold colors bring walls closer together, and *they make a room seem smaller*. (present participial phrase) \_\_\_\_\_
- 16 Mr. Hobbs spoke about careers in banking, and *he is the manager of a local bank*. (appositive) \_\_\_\_\_



Identify each word group, using the following letters: [2 points each]  
 F = Fragment    S = Sentence    RS = Run-on Sentence

- |    |   |    |       |
|----|---|----|-------|
| 17 | Inviting me to serve as chairman of the committee.                      | 17 | _____ |
| 18 | The voters elected Corey, a man who had no experience in politics.      | 18 | _____ |
| 19 | Accidents don't just happen, they are usually caused by negligence.     | 19 | _____ |
| 20 | Which is the greatest contributor to air pollution.                     | 20 | _____ |
| 21 | Mr. Bliss listens to everyone's opinion, then he makes up his own mind. | 21 | _____ |

Write the letter of the correct sentence in the space at the right. [3 points each]

- |    |  |    |       |
|----|--|----|-------|
| 22 | a. The road gets smoother as you approach the city.  | 22 | _____ |
|    | b. The road gets more smoother as you approach the city.                                     |    |       |
| 23 | a. When the bus left the station, it was almost empty.                                       | 23 | _____ |
|    | b. The bus was almost empty when it left the station.  |    |       |
| 24 | a. Offered a substantial reward, it was refused by the fireman.                              | 24 | _____ |
|    | b. Offered a substantial reward, the fireman refused it.                                     |    |       |
| 25 | a. A glider is an airplane that flies without an engine.                                     | 25 | _____ |
|    | b. A glider is when an airplane flies without an engine.                                     |    |       |
| 26 | a. The plane was an hour late that we took to Dallas.  | 26 | _____ |
|    | b. The plane that we took to Dallas was an hour late.  |    |       |
| 27 | a. We always have and always will take the <i>Journal</i> .                                  | 27 | _____ |
|    | b. We always have taken and always will take the <i>Journal</i> .                            |    |       |
| 28 | a. My grandmother had the habit of hiding money and then forgetting where she had hidden it. | 28 | _____ |
|    | b. My grandmother had the habit of hiding money and then to forget where she had hidden it.  |    |       |

Copy the correct word in each pair. [1 point each]

- |    |  |    |       |
|----|--|----|-------|
| 29 | We should have ( <i>took, taken</i> ) the newer road.                  | 29 | _____ |
| 30 | The Middle East has more oil reserves than ( <i>we, us</i> ).          | 30 | _____ |
| 31 | I wonder if ( <i>their, they're</i> ) at home this summer.             | 31 | _____ |
| 32 | ( <i>Those, That</i> ) kind of gloves will keep your hands warmer.     | 32 | _____ |
| 33 | We are still looking for ( <i>its, it's</i> ) owner.                   | 33 | _____ |
| 34 | Here ( <i>is, are</i> ) the numbers of my combination lock.            | 34 | _____ |
| 35 | We ( <i>saw, seen</i> ) several deer crossing the highway.             | 35 | _____ |
| 36 | The color of the rug looks ( <i>different, differently</i> ) at night. | 36 | _____ |
| 37 | One of your headlights ( <i>have, has</i> ) gone out.                  | 37 | _____ |
| 38 | To ( <i>whom, who</i> ) will the city appeal for financial help?       | 38 | _____ |
| 39 | It has been raining almost ( <i>steadily, steady</i> ) for two days.   | 39 | _____ |
| 40 | Is there any chance of ( <i>them, their</i> ) arriving early?          | 40 | _____ |
| 41 | A person can carry this camera in ( <i>their, his</i> ) pocket.        | 41 | _____ |
| 42 | It is always ( <i>he, him</i> ) who picks up the tab.                  | 42 | _____ |
| 43 | Sue had ( <i>laid, lain</i> ) her purse on the next seat.              | 43 | _____ |

(Continued on page 3)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS \_\_\_\_\_

### PRE-TEST (Continued)

- |    |   |    |       |
|----|---|----|-------|
| 44 | Since I started exercising, I ( <i>felt, have felt</i> ) better.    | 44 | _____ |
| 45 | I counted the fish I ( <i>had caught, caught</i> ) that afternoon.  | 45 | _____ |
| 46 | Which one of these knobs ( <i>turn, turns</i> ) on the set?         | 46 | _____ |
| 47 | The Hills and ( <i>us, we</i> ) shared the cost of the fence.       | 47 | _____ |
| 48 | Bert bowls ( <i>well, good</i> ) for a beginner.                    | 48 | _____ |
| 49 | A doctor or a nurse ( <i>are, is</i> ) always on duty.              | 49 | _____ |
| 50 | We could have ( <i>eaten, ate</i> ) lunch with you.                 | 50 | _____ |
| 51 | The police did not disclose ( <i>whom, who</i> ) they suspected.    | 51 | _____ |
| 52 | ( <i>Do, Does</i> ) one of his brothers own a ranch?                | 52 | _____ |
| 53 | We planned ( <i>to arrive, to have arrived</i> ) by Monday night.   | 53 | _____ |
| 54 | ( <i>Us, We</i> ) fellows ought to clean up the beach.              | 54 | _____ |
| 55 | The lake was calm but suddenly ( <i>gets, got</i> ) rough.          | 55 | _____ |
| 56 | This is one of those puzzles that ( <i>drive, drives</i> ) one mad. | 56 | _____ |
| 57 | Mrs. Kern taught Doris and ( <i>her, she</i> ) to cook.             | 57 | _____ |
| 58 | I liked this story because it kept ( <i>you, me</i> ) guessing.     | 58 | _____ |
| 59 | We saved two seats for his dad and ( <i>he, him</i> ).              | 59 | _____ |

Write the letter of the item that is correctly punctuated. [1 point each]

- |    |  |          |
|----|--|----------|
| 60 | a. In Lima Ohio, I stayed at Sunset Inn, which a friend had recommended.         |          |
|    | b. In Lima, Ohio, I stayed at Sunset Inn, which a friend had recommended.        |          |
|    | c. In Lima, Ohio, I stayed at Sunset Inn which a friend had recommended.         | 60 _____ |
| 61 | a. Bleriot, a French aviator, flew across the English Channel on July 25, 1909.  |          |
|    | b. Bleriot, a French aviator, flew across the English Channel on July. 25, 1909. |          |
|    | c. Bleriot a French aviator, flew across the English Channel on July 25, 1909.   | 61 _____ |
| 62 | a. "Have you ever played shortstop," asked the coach?                            |          |
|    | b. "Have you ever played shortstop, asked the coach?"                            |          |
|    | c. "Have you ever played shortstop?" asked the coach.                            | 62 _____ |
| 63 | a. She pays no attention to fashion, and keeps her clothes until they wear out.  |          |
|    | b. She pays no attention to fashion and keeps her clothes until they wear out.   |          |
|    | c. She pays no attention to fashion and keeps her clothes, until they wear out.  | 63 _____ |
| 64 | a. The Presidency is a man-killing job, nevertheless it is highly coveted.       |          |
|    | b. The Presidency is a man-killing job; nevertheless it is highly coveted.       |          |
|    | c. The Presidency is a man-killing job: nevertheless it is highly coveted.       | 64 _____ |

- 65 a. Most colleges will not accept students who have mediocre records, but others will give them a chance to prove themselves.  
 b. Most colleges will not accept students, who have mediocre records, but others will give them a chance to prove themselves.  
 c. Most colleges will not accept students who have mediocre records but others will give them a chance to prove themselves. 65 \_\_\_\_\_
- 66 a. "The purpose of cowhide, said the child, is to hold the cow together."  
 b. "The purpose of cowhide," said the child, "is to hold the cow together."  
 c. "The purpose of cowhide," said the child, "is to hold the cow together." 66 \_\_\_\_\_
- 67 a. There are two main sources of air pollution: automobiles and factories.  
 b. There are two main sources of pollution. Automobiles and factories.  
 c. There are two main sources of air pollution; automobiles and factories. 67 \_\_\_\_\_
- 68 a. After you sign the contract it is too late, of course, to change your mind.  
 b. After you sign the contract, it is too late of course, to change your mind.  
 c. After you sign the contract, it is too late, of course, to change your mind. 68 \_\_\_\_\_
- 69 a. Most boys, and girls enjoy the adventure, humor, and suspense of this novel.  
 b. Most boys and girls enjoy the adventure, humor, and suspense of this novel.  
 c. Most boys and girls enjoy the adventure, humor, and suspense, of this novel. 69 \_\_\_\_\_

Write the letter of the sentence in which apostrophes are used correctly. [1 point each]

- 70 a. How did one man's name get on the women's list?  
 b. How did one man's name get on the womens' list?  
 c. How did one mans' name get on the women's list? 70 \_\_\_\_\_
- 71 a. The Price's dog always attacks theirs.  
 b. The Prices' dog always attacks their's.  
 c. The Prices' dog always attacks theirs. 71 \_\_\_\_\_
- 72 a. This girls' job is to check all the members' wraps.  
 b. This girl's job is to check all the members' wraps.  
 c. This girl's job is to check all the member's wraps. 72 \_\_\_\_\_

Write the letter of the sentence in which capitals are used correctly. [1 point each]

- 73 a. There is a fine italian restaurant in the Jackson building on Main Street.  
 b. There is a fine Italian restaurant in the Jackson Building on Main street.  
 c. There is a fine Italian restaurant in the Jackson Building on Main Street. 73 \_\_\_\_\_
- 74 a. My Uncle Ed caught the largest trout ever caught on Pine lake.  
 b. My Uncle Ed caught the largest trout ever caught on Pine Lake.  
 c. My uncle Ed caught the largest Trout ever caught on Pine Lake. 74 \_\_\_\_\_
- 75 a. This spring our minister attended a conference at Cornell University.  
 b. This spring our Minister attended a conference at Cornell university.  
 c. This Spring our minister attended a conference at Cornell University. 75 \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D

English Composition I  
Placement Test: Essay Portion  
Holistic Scoring Guide  
Source: White, Edward. Teaching and Assessing Writing

The student should be rewarded for what he or she does well in response to the question; we need to remember that we are scoring first-draft writing under a pressure situation.

The student is asked to describe one object that he/she values and to explain what values the object represents and to comment on those values.

Essays that misinterpret "objects" as "objectives" and that deal mainly with generalized abstractions (such as life) should be read sympathetically, but they should ordinarily not receive above a score of 2, since they fail to understand and properly respond to the question.

### 6

A superior response will not just name the object but will describe it in some detail, and it will not just identify the values represented but explain and comment on them, their nature, and their source. A superior paper will be literate and orderly.

### 5-4

These scores are useful for a well-handled paper that is deficient in one or two characteristics of the superior response (that is, in description of the object and in explanation of the values represented) but that is otherwise competently written.

### 3-2

These scores will be useful for the following kinds of papers: those in which only one part of the two-part question is addressed; those in which the representativeness of the specific object is ignored; those that treat the subject in superficial or stereotyped fashion; and those in which the writing exhibits several important weaknesses in wording or structure or other aspects.

### 1

This score is be used for papers that are lacking in focus and substance, that depart from the assigned topic, and/or that exhibit consistent, serious writing faults.



## APPENDIX F

### Bartlesville Wesleyan College Course Syllabus Fall 1986

**COURSE:** English Composition I, ENGL 1103  
**INSTRUCTOR:** Lyle D. Olson, office in Mansion Court, ext. 282  
**CLASS TIME:** MWF, 8:30-9:20, S107  
**TEXTBOOKS:** McCrimmon, James. M. 8th ed. Writing With a Purpose.  
Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984. News writing and  
technical writing handouts.

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a study of the fundamental principles of written communication, with extensive expository writing (writing to inform). It will emphasize the writing of clear, coherent, logically organized papers in a variety of writing styles. We will review mechanics and grammar as needed.

#### COURSE GOALS

1. To help each student develop the skills of written expression and critical thinking.
2. To promote clarity, coherence, and precision in written expression.
3. To assist the student in developing writing skills that will be useful in a variety of situations, regardless of the career or chosen profession.
4. To create realistic writing situations that will make the student aware of his or her own voice and of the methods available to effectively communicate an idea in any given situation.
5. To insure that each student has a ready understanding of standard English grammar and usage, and that each can use it with ease and skill.

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

The competencies that class members may attain through this course include:

1. the ability to explain the similarities and differences between business, news, technical, and essay writing styles;
2. the ability to write papers in each of the above writing styles;
3. the ability to write an essay in the basic, five-paragraph essay format;
4. the ability to adapt the basic essay format to a variety of writing situations;
5. the ability to organize a response to essay examination questions;
6. the ability to write effectively developed paragraphs;
7. the ability to achieve sentence variety in papers;
8. the ability to employ various prewriting strategies, such as brainstorming and the 5 Ws;

9. the ability to conduct effective revisions of rough drafts and to produce cleanly-edited final drafts;
10. the ability to conduct a thoughtful and helpful evaluation of another student's paper;
11. the ability to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of your own writing process;
12. (??) the ability to compose a paper on a computer screen.

#### ATTENDANCE

As stated in the college catalog, each student must attend 80% of all class sessions. If the student misses more than 20% of the classes, he or she will be automatically withdrawn from class.

#### EVALUATION

##### Writing assignments (55%)

I will grade eight to 12 writing assignments. Most assignments will require a process of writing a rough draft, a revision (rewriting and polishing), and a final draft. Papers submitted for evaluation should be typewritten if possible.

Papers must be turned in at the start of class on the day they are due. I will penalize late papers up to three days late. I will not accept assignments if they are over three days late, unless you make special arrangements ahead of time.

##### Examinations (20%)

You will take a mid-term and a final essay examination (10% each). We will review for these exams prior to test day.

##### Quizzes (10%)

I will give announced and unannounced quizzes over the textbook, handouts, lectures, and class discussion. I will not give make-up quizzes; however, I will drop your two lowest scores. No low scores will be dropped if you miss two quizzes.

##### English 3200 grammar and usage test (10%)

You took this test during orientation. I will give the same test at the end of the semester and will record the highest score.

##### Participation and attendance (5%)

The classroom experience is vital, and I will take into consideration your faithful attendance and participation in classroom discussion, group work, peer evaluation, and other activities.

VITA

Lyle D. Olson

Candidate for Degree of  
Doctor of Education

Thesis: THE EFFECT OF NEWS WRITING INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION I ON THE ATTITUDES AND WRITING PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS

Major Field: Higher Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Webster, South Dakota, September 12, 1954, the son of Elmer and Elphia Olson.

Education: Graduated from Bristol High School, Bristol, South Dakota in May, 1972; received Associate of Arts Degree from Bartlesville Wesleyan College in May, 1974; received Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism with a minor in English from South Dakota State University in May, 1976; received a Master of Arts Degree in Journalism from the University of Oklahoma in July, 1981; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in May, 1988.

Professional Experience: Professor of English and Journalism, Bartlesville Wesleyan College, August 1981 to present; Director of Publications and Media Services, Bartlesville Wesleyan College, August 1978 to June 1981; Associate Editor and Sports Editor, Ortonville Independent, Ortonville, Minnesota, August 1976 to July 1978.

Professional Organizations: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Association of Professional Writing Consultants, Society for Technical Communication.