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THE EFFECTS OF PEER EDITING/GRADING ON THE
GRAMMAR-USAGE AND THEME-COMPOSITION
ABILITY OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN



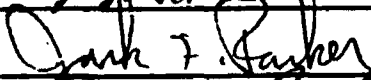
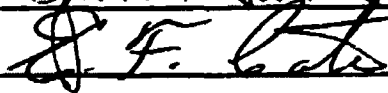
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degree of
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BY
BOB WAYNE FORD
Norman, Oklahoma

1972

THE EFFECTS OF PEER EDITING/GRADING ON THE
GRAMMAR-USAGE AND THEME-COMPOSITION
ABILITY OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN

APPROVED BY

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

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CHAPTER I

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

No subject matter area lies more at the heart of education than the language arts, an inclusive term for all language activities, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Power in the use of one's mother tongue is developed gradually, beginning in infancy and continuing in natural sequence: first the ability to listen, then to speak, later to read and, finally, to write.

When the child enters school, he brings habits of listening and speaking acquired from his home and community. In school it is expected that he will acquire the skills of reading and writing. Formal instruction in these skills continues from his first year of elementary school through at least his first year of college.

One of the primary aims of American education is to develop the potentialities of each individual to live a satisfying personal life, and to assume an effective role in the

American society. The language arts program is basically attuned to contribute much to the individual's growth in acquiring intellectual stature. Hopefully, he learns to listen and read with understanding, to speak and write effectively, to find and interpret relevant data, to organize ideas logically, and to relate personally to the significant ideas and values embodied in our literary heritage.

This study was conducted to concentrate upon one specific facet of the language arts curriculum to determine if there were a significant difference between the grammar improvement in written compositions made by college students of freshman English who edit each other's themes cooperatively and the grammar improvement made by students all of whose themes were edited by the course instructor.

Need for the Study

The need for such a study was two-fold. First, the results of teaching English grammar and composition are not deemed adequate by many representatives of business and industry as well as a number of teachers in secondary schools and colleges; second, there was a need to find ways of inspiring students to develop writing skills, since students living in an age of advanced communication techniques have different attitudes, interests, fears, and aspirations than their counterparts of a generation ago. Technical changes have made increasing demands in many areas. Teachers must be aware of the constantly changing needs in communication to meet these

new demands. They must try to capitalize in every way possible on learnings from television, movies, tapes, films, and other media. Many teachers strive to combine the teaching of grammar principles and rules rather than to compartmentalize them to encourage students to recognize a purpose in grammatical use and expression. In addition, students must realize more fully the value of studying the grammar of our language. The primary value is that such studies provide knowledge of structure which is basic in effective speaking, reading, and writing. A second value of studying grammar is to furnish a framework and vocabulary for analyzing problems in oral and written composition. Finally, well-ordered written and verbal communication comprises an important part of our intellectual heritage, being symbolic of the way our minds and society behave.

The teaching of grammar usually follows one of two extremes. One, the traditional approach, views English as a Latin-derived, inflected language with its analysis of the sentence based upon meaning. The alternative approach, modern linguistics, views English as a distributive language with its own characteristics, and sentence analysis is based upon word order, or structure. Structural linguistics is presently providing major insights into grammatical composition. Many teachers of English anticipate that in the near future generative grammar will provide similar insights.

Many linguists agree that all systems of grammar, old and new, contribute perceptive descriptions of the way our language behaves. Regardless of source, the principles of grammar used in the classroom should be realistic, vital, and objective. In the following paragraphs, a review of the related research efforts in the linguistics will reveal the general background of the teaching problems.

Review of Related Research

Because language is the medium for thinking, communicating, and learning, many teachers share with language arts teachers the responsibility for maintaining high linguistic standards. Teachers establish an example by using appropriate English grammar in the classroom, by exacting correct spelling, legible handwriting, and clear, understandable expressions from the student, and by teaching the communication skills peculiar to each subject. On the other hand, the language arts teacher shares with other educators a certain responsibility for developing an environment in which the student develops, for himself, desirable social patterns, responsible citizenship, good work habits, and powers of individual thinking--logically, creatively, and critically. While most educators will give mental assent to these ideals, the present methods used to teach language arts have failed to some extent to produce evidence of such goals.

Two groups, representatives of business and industry, and teachers, who challenge the adequacy of present teaching

methods, have defined certain knowledges, skills, attitudes, and understandings of the language arts as vital to the future of democracy.

The goals of teaching the language arts are as old as the ideals of Western Civilization. Yet each generation faces the task of interpreting these goals anew in the light of the conditions of its own age. To think clearly and honestly, to read thoughtfully, to communicate effectively, and to listen intelligently have always been basic to the perpetuation of democratic ways of living. Men and women who have gained most from literature through the ages have been those who could see in it the reflection of human experience and could yield to its power to quicken the understanding and to sensitize the feelings.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the challenge to develop such skills with the attendant insights upon which their value depends is peculiarly vital to the future of democracy.¹

Teachers find many problems involved in the task of teaching children, youth, and adults to think more clearly and honestly, to read more thoughtfully, to communicate more effectively, and to listen more intelligently. The problem most pertinent to this study was that of training students to express themselves as clearly and adequately as possible in written compositions. Not all high school graduates are expected to be competent in mathematics, history, biology, or typing. Different competencies can be related as varying with individual interests and abilities. But every person reveals his competence in English grammatical structure simply through

¹National Council of Teachers of English, The English Language Arts (New York, 1950), p. 31.

verbal communication. Differing ability or interest is seldom an acceptable excuse for incompetence, not to mention illiteracy.

In a time of increasing standards and emphasis upon subject matter related to curriculum development and improvement, language arts teachers must accept their share of the responsibilities. There are few delusions as to the ineffectiveness of present teaching methods. The fact is that present methods will not always work and results are often less than adequate. At the same time language arts instructors need to realize that they can improve their teaching effectiveness. "Learning to express oneself in writing is a long process, probably the most difficult area of language growth," writes Lou Labrant.¹ Writing requires the combined ability to talk, to spell, to form letters and sentences, and to punctuate. It is not strange then that many students find writing difficult, and that complaints are heard frequently about the quality of writing done by elementary, secondary, and college students. Because writing is the record of individual thought, there can be, perhaps, no single formula that will insure effective writing for all individuals. As interpretation varies, so must the form of written and oral composition vary. Yet, there are certain fundamentals that contribute to the clarity and completeness of the recording of thoughts.

¹Lou Labrant, "Composing in English," Readings on Contemporary English in the Public Schools. Edited by Teidt. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1967), p. 138.

Some of these fundamentals lend themselves to objective treatment; for example, use of detail to support an idea, correct use of words, and punctuation. Others, such as style and effectiveness, are more subjective in nature.

One subjective element is the definition of effective writing. Barriss Mills of Purdue University, defines writing as a process with purpose at its center--"the purpose of the writer and the purpose of the reader."¹ This dual purpose is said to govern the selection and the rejection of material, the arrangement of the material, and the style of writing. Accompanying these necessities for clear and correct writing are the more nearly objective mechanics of correct usage in such things as grammar, spelling, and punctuation. To Mills' definition, members of the Commission of the English Curriculum added: "The emphasis should be on language as an important factor in the larger concerns of social living with its attendant problems of human relations."²

Language, in the broadest sense, is widely recognized as a vital link between the individual and the world in which he lives. Through language the individual both shapes his environment and is shaped by it . . . To discover order in life and to distinguish meaningful patterns in this mass of symbols, the citizen of the future must have conscious training, not only in reading, writing, and speaking, but also in

¹Barriss Mills, "Writing as a Process," College English, XV (October, 1953), p. 20.

²National Council of Teachers of English, op. cit., p. 327.

listening, observation, and demonstration. And he must have an understanding of the function of communication in the culture of which he is a part.¹

This process, with a dual purpose of communication and with its roles of shaping the individual and his environment and of contributing to the solution of human relations problems, has been the subject of much research since the beginning of the twentieth century. The research began with the colleges. College entrance requirements between 1870 and 1900 had caused English to be included in the high school curriculum. Literature and textbook rhetoric, however, were stressed and pieces of English literature "were dissected after the fashion of the Latin and Greek classics."² Such a method, although it was the best known at the time for preparing students for college, did not meet the individual needs of students in the high schools. Therefore, the methods of developing language as a link between the student and his world came under reproach at both the secondary and college level. Because of this reproach, research was begun by both college and secondary personnel and will be reviewed in the forthcoming paragraphs.

¹Lamar Johnson, General Education in Action (Washington, 1952), p. 40.

²Edna Hays, College Entrance Requirements in English: Their Effects in the High Schools (New York, 1936), p. 71.

Historical Beginnings of Research Efforts

Since 1900, many agencies have attempted to improve English teaching. College teachers faced a monumental task in trying to give freshness and new significance to matters which the freshman felt he had already accomplished. Teachers usually met the challenge by trying to increase the student's perceptiveness as he moved from the supervised life of childhood and early adolescence into the more independent adult life. If he came to appreciate that there were more important things for him to understand through reading and listening, and to communicate through speaking and writing, as he began to enhance his sophistication in the adult world, he became more concerned about his deficiencies in the details of expression. It was essentially a question of maturation; at this point the practice of grammar and composition took on concepted dimensions, and reading became more revealing, as the student's mental outlook expanded. The result, it was hoped, would include greater maturity of thought as well as more acceptable and effective forms of expression, whether written or oral.

In 1910, at the Boston meeting of the National Educational Association, a committee was appointed to study the problem of college entrance requirements in English and the problems of high school needs in English. The committee found a need for a National Society of Teachers of English. Representative and permanent in character, it would have as

its objective, increasing the effectiveness of school and college work in English.¹ The society was formed, and a sub-committee was added to the National Education Association to form the National Joint Committee of Thirty with James F. Hosis as chairman. By 1920, the Hosis committee had stated concisely the aims of English courses. These were as follows: (1) to give pupils command of the art of spoken and written communication, and (2) to teach pupils to read thoughtfully and with appreciation, to encourage a taste for good reading and to teach them how to locate worthwhile books.² The Committee had also made the following statement:

It would be the purpose . . . every English teacher, first to quicken the spirit and kindle the imagination of his pupils, open up to them the potential significance and beauty of life, and develop habits of weighing and judging human conduct and of turning to books for entertainment, instruction, and inspiration as the hours of leisure will permit; second, to supply the pupils with an effective tool of thought and expression for use in their public and private life, i.e., the best command of language which, under the circumstances, can be given them.³

These early efforts were primarily concerned with the shaping of high schools into finishing schools rather than fitting schools; providing subject matter for English

¹The society was the National Council of Teachers of English. It was to accomplish its purpose through the pages of the English Journal.

²J. F. Hosis, Reorganization of English in Secondary Schools, U. S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin No. 2, 1916, p. 30.

³Ibid.

activities that would develop ideals, attitudes, skills, and habits; and regarding English as an art to be learned by practice rather than a science to be learned by generalization since students are communicating at home, at school, or in social groups. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are not to be considered ends within themselves, but tools used by society for thinking and communicating ideas whether written or oral. By 1955, the National Council of Teachers of English had expanded its purposes. The new purposes were as follows:

. . . to improve the quality of instruction in English at all educational levels; to encourage research, experimentation, and investigation in the teaching of English; to facilitate professional cooperation of the members; to hold public discussions and programs; and to integrate the efforts of all who are concerned with the improvement of instruction in English.¹

There was still lack of satisfaction with the results of English teaching, but efforts were being made to correct the matter.

Not all research was conducted by the organizations named above. Schools and colleges conducted independent studies to seek better methods of teaching English. Some of those pertinent to written English provided interesting data.

¹Constitution of the National Council of Teachers of English.

Three studies conducted and published by Harvard University concerned individual instruction in English grammar and composition,¹ an approach to composition through psychology,² and the English examination.³ The first study was a recommendation of individual instruction with a task, a plan, and freedom to make the learning situation more like real life situations. The second study was an analysis of works and criticisms of literature and pictures demonstrating the inner workings of the human mind in expressing ideas, feelings, and opinions through facial expression, actions, and words. The third study was a historical account of college entrance examinations developed between 1901 and 1934 which concluded with the following statement:

. . . The College Entrance Examination Board is interested only in testing the candidate's powers-- power to think through and to organize the material contained in the books the student has read, power to read intelligently poetry and prose that he has not seen, power to think independently and to express his own thought in an effective way.⁴

Easton's study of technical incorrectness in the writing done by graduates of Tennessee's county high schools was

¹Stephen D. Stephens, Individual Instruction in English Composition (Cambridge, 1938).

²Phyllis Robbins, An Approach to Composition Through Psychology (Cambridge, 1929).

³The Commission on English, Examining the Examination in English (Cambridge, 1931).

⁴Ibid., p. 222.

published by Peabody College in 1929. The data indicated the following:

. . . little relationship between the number of years spent in professional training, the degree held, the length of service, tenure in the present position, and even majoring in the subject taught, and the achievement records of the students taught.¹

At about the same time, Lowrey was comparing the sentences written in freshman themes with those found in popular literature. He made an interesting observation:

. . . the freshman college student may reach or approximate contemporary literary prose usage in sentence length, percentage of simple and compound sentences, and frequency of inversions; but in the use of prepositional phrases, verbals, appositives, and absolute constructions he is likely to be deficient.²

Beck studied the conference method of teaching freshman grammar and composition. He interpreted the results as showing that "the conference method of teaching written composition to college freshmen is 'truly better' than the non-conference method."³

¹Joshua Lawrence Eason, A Diagnostic Study of Technical Incorrectness in the Writing of Graduates of Tennessee County High Schools (Nashville, 1929), p. 80.

²Rosewell Graves Lowrey, "The English Sentence in Literature and in College Freshman Composition," George Peabody College for Teachers Contributions to Education, No. 50 (Nashville, 1928), p. 25.

³E. C. Beck, "A Study of the Conference and Nonconference Methods of Teaching Freshman Written Composition in a State Teachers College," George Peabody College for Teachers Contributions to Education, No. 49 (Nashville, 1928), p. 42.

At Teachers College, Columbia University, four investigations were conducted in search for ways to improve the teaching of written composition. Vaughan found slight articulation between the high school student and the college student, but much overlapping of text book material.¹ He found themes to be longer and more frequent in college, and with more attention given to the fundamentals of composition. He also found that more students failed in college, that high school teachers had been better prepared for the subject they were teaching, and that little practice and training in the use of library facilities was given in either place.

Hwang made a study of the errors involved in rating themes by means of composition scales.² Jencke studied the precis as a technique for teaching Freshman composition,³ and Hinton examined in detail the nonmechanical aspects of English composition which "outstanding" English teachers cite in their criticism and grading,⁴ such as elegance, force, coherence, emphasis, choice of words, and paragraphing.

¹William Eugene Vaughan, Articulation in English Between the High School and College (New York, 1929).

²Pu Hwang, Errors and Improvement in Rating English Compositions by Means of a Composition Scale (New York, 1930).

³Grace Elizabeth Jencke, A Study of Precis Writing as a Composition Technique (New York, 1935).

⁴Eugene Mark Hinton, An Analytical Study of the Qualities of Style and Rhetoric Found in English Compositions (New York, 1940).

Perrin made the following statement:

The most conspicuous progress just now is being shown in the renewed activity in composition, both elementary and advanced. Although most freshman courses are still pitched too low, they are moving rapidly from a passive to an active rhetoric, so that the once usual course that opened with a "review of grammar" is beginning to look rather quaint. The change is partly due to the pressure of general education and other curriculum reorganizations that have brought the course out of its departmental hiding place; partly to the rediscovery of communication as an aim whether or not in courses labeled with that magical word; and partly from the plain good sense of people trying to plan an effective course. Teachers of composition are now being promoted on nearly an equal footing with teachers of literature and there are more positions for composition specialists than there are people to fill them. A parallel development is going on in advanced composition.¹

Efforts Since 1955

Although changes made between 1900 and 1955 were significant, results were not yet satisfactory to school people or to the business and professional world at the middle of the century. There were still varying guesses as to what was wrong and as to what should be done. However, teachers in higher education agreed that college freshmen generally had a definite need for the following attainments:

1. Ability to observe the conventions of English usage.
2. Understanding of grammatical terminology (either traditional, structural, or transformational) to facilitate discussion of sentence structure.

¹Porter G. Perrin, "Sample Trends in the College Teaching of English," College English, X (February, 1949), p. 253.

3. Acquaintance with a variety of sentence structures, so that he can choose the most effective of several possible ways to express his thoughts.
4. Spelling ability sufficient to enable him to write without undue distraction or giving the impression that he is illiterate.
5. Ability to read classics comprehendingly, with a vocabulary adequate for this purpose.
6. An understanding of literary forms and some appreciation of the multi-level nature of literary communication.
7. Familiarity with literary materials which constitute a vital part of our cultural heritage, such as fable, myth, legend, Bible stories, and such historical and literary figures as represent the main streams of human achievement in Western culture.

Leverett conducted a comprehensive literature search and found therein evidence to indicate that traditional programs in language arts:

. . . have not been successful because they have not achieved their objectives; many programs do little or nothing to remove deficiencies or develop and strengthen skills; they show little regard for individual differences; and learning consists largely of isolated rules, with no practical application made of them in relation to the needs of the students.¹

Leverett's generalized interpretation may not have given a completely accurate picture of the situation. However, it is assumed to be true in far too many instances. Often students are required to write before they have the ability to express

¹Ernestine Leverett, A Program in Language Arts for Teaching Those Students Who Make Low Grades on College English Entrance Tests (Unpublished dissertation at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1952), p. 98.

themselves orally. Written expressions are more difficult to compose than oral expressions. It may generally be stated that, whether it be a primary student or an adult, learning to express oneself through oral composition usually precedes his ability to write effectively.

In a later study, Sterling reported that to have students writing experiences was not enough, but that what students did with what they received was the real measure of their growth. Equally important to language development was the student's ability to think. He could not talk until he had the opportunity to mentally symbolize what he was going to say. Likewise, he could not write effectively unless he was given "reasonable" time and opportunities to experience and assimilate what he was going to write. In essence, critical thinking was essential to effective writing. Sterling stated that after the student had first acquired, recognized, and realized significant experience and had something to communicate, then he must know how, when, where, and what to do with the experience and thought to be communicated. He stated:

He must learn to use what he has learned. He must learn how to think. He must learn how to sort, classify, rearrange, and evaluate. He must acquire ability to interpret and use what he has learned, if he is to be effective in the use of the expressive phases of speaking and writing.¹

¹Edna L. Sterling, "The What, When, Where, How of the Communication Arts," Education, LXXXII (March, 1952), p. 459.

Luella Cole pointed out the following weakness of the present program in written composition as it appears in freshmen students' writing ability:

Clearly many freshmen have not learned the elements of grammar. In recent years the trend of teaching written English in elementary and high school has been away from such formal items. The public schools have perhaps swung too far in the direction of complete informality, with the result that students do not know how a sentence is constructed and therefore have understandable difficulties in either writing or revising sentences of their own. While one cannot recommend a return to formal discipline, it does seem absurd that children should practice writing from the fourth through the twelfth grades without finding out, for instance, that verbs have subjects and objects.¹

Lawson of Coalgate University, suggested two other possible causes for the poor writing done by college students:

1. Writing is like any other skill: the way to learn to do it better is by doing it, subject to the judgment of peers and superiors. Do we give students enough such practice even in English courses? Direct instruction about the English language is not substitute for using it. Beyond a certain point, indeed, isolated instruction in forms, conventions, and grammar of English merely bores, is resented, and paralyzes the will to write.

2. Besides being a skill, writing is also a form of behavior. In behavior we normally respond to the requirements of a community whose opinion we respect, cherish, or fear . . . Specifically, if we want acceptable writing to become habitual

¹Luella Cole, The Background of College Teaching (New York, 1940), p. 245.

behavior, teachers who are not English teachers must care about it.¹

Contributions of Business and Industry

At the spring meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication at Cleveland, Ohio, March 28, 1952, representatives from business and industry were invited to make presentations on "What do Employers Expect of Freshman Courses in Composition and Communication?" T. R. Schellenberg said at this meeting:

What we should like if it were possible would be to have employees come to us with an attitude that facilitates continued improvement in writing--an attitude that recognizes that no writer ever writes perfectly, that the best writers write badly when they don't take pains, that every writer can improve his skill until his mind begins to fail, that the product of our first frenzy seldom has anything to commend it except its frenzy. We should like them to regard the job of writing as one of the major parts of every assignment they undertake. In estimating time for the completion of a job, they should combat the tendency to suppose that when the material has been studied and notes taken, the job is virtually done and that all that remains is to "throw their notes together" and "write them up." One of our most common failings is to allow no time for studying the problem of how best to present our conclusions, or for the tedious process of reorganizing, rephrasing, and redrafting.

I should like to see ready-developed in all of our new employees the habit of self-criticism with respect to writing, and a readiness to accept in good spirit any criticism with respect to writing, and a readiness to accept in good spirit any criticism of their writing offered by others . . .

¹Strang Lawson, "The Coalgate Plan for Improving Student Writing," Association of American Colleges Bulletin, XXIX (May, 1953), p. 288.

Finally, I should like to see them reconciled to the inescapable conditions that are attached to government service, which I have reviewed for you. These are that the writing of an individual is submerged in that of his office, that it is reviewed for content as well as for grammar, and that it will appear anonymously.¹

At the same meeting, W. K. Bailey, vice president of the Warner and Swassey Manufacturing Company of Cleveland made the following comments:

We want and need people who can think--who have had some training in thinking--who can distinguish between cause and effect both in the concrete and in the abstract, and who can so express their conclusions that they are accepted by others, and so that others will follow their leadership . . .

It is my observation that, in business, the oral presentations are much better than the usual written presentations. . . . However, the usual procedure in written presentations is at some point near the end of the written communication Before writing the report, why shouldn't the individual definitely decide the question to be answered, and answer it, and then give the supporting data?

In addition to the difficulty in developing the ability to express complex situations in simple terms, there is also the difficulty of developing an art in the use of words. And I know that you, of the teaching profession, can help students in this art. Most communications are written with the idea of getting somebody to do something, and while the use of individual words is important, there is a principle of presentation that is even more important.

¹T. R. Schellenberg, "What Employers Expect from College Courses in Composition and Communication," College Composition and Communication (Bulletin of CCCC), IV (No. 1, February, 1953), pp. 10-11.

The man who can influence people will succeed in any organization. What he says and how he says it is all important.¹

Thus, not only did representatives of business and industry agree with certain school personnel concerning inadequacies pertinent to the outcomes of the teaching of English, but also that they had specific ideas as to what was wrong with the present learning procedures. If, as the preceding reports indicated, there was agreement between school and industry concerning the unsatisfactoriness of present methods of teaching English, then there was a genuine need for improvements based on well controlled research efforts.

Efforts to Develop Achievement Motivation

The growing concern about the outcomes of the teaching of grammar and composition was accompanied by another concern; namely, the need for more effective ways and means of inducing achievement motivation for developing efficient writing skills in students. This need for achievement was implied by the National Joint Committee of Thirty.² Hasic defined motivation thus:

The first step toward efficiency in the use of language is the cultivation of earnestness and sincerity; the second is the development of

¹W. K. Bailey, "The Importance of Communication for Advancement to Industry," Ibid., p. 11-13.

²See p. 5.

accuracy and correctness; the third is the arousing of individuality and artistic consciousness.¹

Many efforts have been made to arouse "individual consciousness." The most recent have included drills based on the individual's own usage and mechanical errors,² writing clinics and writing laboratories,³ organized writing experiences in non-English classes,⁴ student publications, and various types of group projects. A report from the University of Southern California claimed great success in using group dynamics. As a result of the group method used, "lagging pupils improved by writing 'A' themes."⁵ The class was organized with five chairmen and an observer. At the end of each class period, the observer made suggestions for doing better work next time. Speech and writing were studied together. The main functions of the groups were to carry on panel discussions and to act as theme reading and tutorial groups for their members. Themes were handed in on Monday and were taken by other students for

¹J. F. Hosic, op. cit., p. 54.

²Harry A. Greene, "English--Language, Grammar and Composition," Encyclopedia of Educational Research (New York, 1950), p. 392.

³Robert H. Moore, "The Writing Clinic and the Writing Laboratory," College English, XI (April, 1950), pp. 388-393.

⁴Strang Lawson, "The Coalgate Plan for Improving Student Writing," College English, XXXIX (May, 1953), pp. 288-290.

⁵Harold E. Briggs, "Applications of the Principles of Group Dynamics in the College Classroom," College English, XXI (November, 1950), pp. 84-90.

constructive criticism. On the following Friday, the themes were returned to their owners for rewriting. After themes had been submitted the second time, they were graded and returned by the instructor. "Buzz" groups met to discuss better writing, and pupil-instructor conferences were held often. Consequently, the best approach to editing was determined to be the teacher-student conference method, currently referred to as teacher-student dialogue, which allowed for an interchange of ideas related to style, content, mechanics, and purpose. By using this technique, ideas were clarified without changing meaning, and a student could better control his intent in writing if he were present to defend his point of view. He also developed further skills in the proper use of writing mechanics. This process of editing was applicable to writers at all levels of language proficiency. However, the elementary child, the freshman in college, and the graduate student profited most from their writing when they had the personal reaction of another person, be it a teacher, a classmate, or a member of their family. A concentration upon less red ink on the student's paper is the admonition of today's modern teacher of English. Once during the semester, all classes and teachers met together. At City College of New York¹

¹Arthur Waldhorn, "The Term Paper: An Experiment in Group Enterprise," College English, XII (March, 1951, pp. 341-44

and at Milwaukee State Teachers College,¹ the investigative paper was made into a group enterprise. Watson's study of small group work in large classes suggested that:

Students who will enjoy and profit from small group participation could not be identified on the basis of: their own expressed preference; their level of mastery of the course material; their general level of enthusiasm for course topics; or response to clusters of questions apparently indicating sympathy, hostility, self-reliance, or intellectualism. No advantage was demonstrated for groups which worked cumulatively on a single topic all semester over groups which discussed different issues each week.²

Students who rated the group-work low, rejected all questionnaire ideas indicative of authoritarianism. They were also disappointed in the lack of intellectual stimulation from their fellow-members.

Whether group or individual methods were employed, there seemed to be some agreement that proper motivation of writing involved the actual process of writing. Mills summarized the implications of this agreement thus:

1. We cannot teach purposeful grammatical writing without giving students plenty of practice in purposeful writing.
2. The writing should have some realistic purpose for both the student and the reader.
3. If related to the concept of purpose, the selection and organization of material can be

¹Elizabeth Kerr, "The Research Paper as a Class Enterprise," College English, XIII (January, 1952), pp. 204-215.

²Robert H. Moore, op. cit.

made much more meaningful as part of the process of communication rather than as means in themselves.

4. Much of the inarticulateness of students come from their having no realistic purpose for communicating in writing, no real notion of what they can or will say about the subject, and no working outline of the material to be dealt with.

5. To teach grammar and punctuation usages for their own sakes, independent of the writing process as a whole, is useless and insufferably dull for most of our students.

6. Learning to communicate effectively is very much an individual affair; mass methods simply will not work.¹

Increased Numbers of Compositions
as a Means of Teaching
Composition Ability

Mills' summary also struck a note of warning against the use of group methods, although he highly recommended the laboratory method of teaching composition. Mason's summary included other motivational techniques: namely, using good salesmanship, and proper materials, stressing thought before writing, and marking themes helpfully.² This last technique marked a point of great difficulty in the crowded schools and colleges of the nineteen fifties, sixties, and seventies.

¹Barris Mills, "Writing as a Process," op. cit., pp. 23-25.

²James Hooker Mason, "Motivation in Liberal Arts and/or Communication Courses," College Composition and Communication, III (February, 1952), pp. 7-10.

From ten¹ to fifteen minutes² was considered the average amount of time required to read a short theme; a fifteen-minute conference every other week was minimum; "the weekly themes should be read with all possible care;"³ composition teachers should also write;⁴ "the student must be given problems in writing which 'force' him to bring into focus the most difficult material available to him;"⁵ the student must be motivated in order to write in this manner. These were only a few of the advocated minimum essentials. Although each essential seemed small, the total time required to attain the aggregate became prohibitive as the number of pupils per teacher increased.

To read additional themes than those already required in freshman English would only increase the already heavy load of college instructors. Additional themes would also lessen the amount of student conference time and the amount

¹George S. Wycoff, "Suggestions for the Reading of Themes," College English, XI (January, 1950), pp. 210-214.

²A. F. Coward, "Comparison of Two Methods of Grading English Composition," Journal of Educational Research, XLVI (October, 1952), pp. 81-93.

³George S. Wycoff, "Toward Achieving the Objectives of Freshman Composition," College English, X (March, 1949), pp. 319-323.

⁴"Reading and Grading Themes," College Composition and Communication, V (October, 1954), pp. 33-37.

⁵Barriss Mills, op. cit., p. 25.

of preparation time needed by the teacher. It would preclude some of the work done on students' themes before and after their writing to show them examples of "poor," "good," and "mediocre" writing so that they could see what they had done and what they needed to do.¹ Yet, more experience in writing, more attention to the writing after it had been done, and more conferences of teacher and student are said to be necessary. At the same time more students and more classes are assigned per teacher. The length of a week remains the same. If more themes are to be read for more students and more conferences are to be held with more students, then a way needs to be sought to get the reading and conferring done in a manner beneficial to the students.

Student-Peer Editing of Theme Compositions

One possibility for resolving the above dilemma has been found in the attempts to provide more meaningful activities in grammar and composition classes. With the growth of interest in group enterprise, clinics, and writing laboratories, there is much encouragement of the editing of themes by students. It is highly important to place proofreading and editing responsibilities with the student. When the teacher marks errors on a student's paper and returns it for his perusal and rewriting, little learning may take place.

¹Delmar Rodabaugh, "Assigning and Commenting on Themes," College English, XVI (October, 1954), pp. 33-37.

Furthermore, the incentive to improve the thought and organization of student compositions is stifled when the teacher misinterprets the student's writing. From the elementary schools of Los Angeles¹ to Chamblee High School in Georgia² reports of student-peer editing have been submitted. Walcott reported that a plan for teaching students to edit their classmates' themes brought significant improvement to the students with great relief to the teachers. He defined the functions of proofreading, revising, and sentence checking for clarity and economy of thought as one "that belongs to the writer; one improves by doing it oneself, not by having it done by a convenient expert who, presumably doesn't need the discipline as much."³ Walcott also expressed his conviction of a great need for further experiment with the technique, especially by groups of teachers over an extended length of time. At the college level the group enterprises mentioned⁴ involved student-peer editing of themes individually and by groups.

¹Ethel I. Salisbury, "Children Learn to Edit," Elementary English, III (November, 1953), pp. 434.443.

²Emily Betts Gregory, "Managing Student Editing," The English Journal, XLIV (January, 1955), pp. 18-25.

³Fred G. Walcott, "Experiments in Composition," reprint from The University of Michigan School of Education Bulletin, p. 16.

⁴See pp. 18-19.

Literature reviewed to this point has been an attempt to show: (1) that writing is a process vital to society both as a tool of communication and as a means of linking the individual to his world by helping him to solve problems of human relations; (2) that the many efforts made during the past half century to improve English teaching are still inadequate; and (3) that students must be motivated to develop more acceptable grammar and writing skills. Samuel Roddan, a successful short story writer, and at one time the head of an English department in a British Columbia secondary school, said "One cannot learn to write from a textbook any more than he can learn to ski from looking at a travel poster from the Alps."¹ The best preparation for writing, he said, is to read, to listen, to take part in life, and to be curious about oneself and his fellowman. Examples of motivational techniques have also been cited. Among them is the practice of having students do much of the editing of themes. This practice is one means of solving two problems at once, namely, of insuring that all themes are read by someone other than the writer before succeeding themes are written and of stimulating student interest in the improvement of writing. The practice makes it possible to have more themes written with less danger of having pupils practice their errors.

¹The English Quarterly, Canadian Council, Summer, 1968.

The reason for writing is to convey a message.¹ Therefore, the writer should determine who his audience is and what he is to say to that audience. It is also important that the written message reach the intended audience in order for the purpose of the writing to be fulfilled. When a student's writing is to be evaluated by an instructor, the instructor should make some positive comment regarding the student's communication; when the instructor presents written materials for his class, then they should perceive his message and react to the ideas he has attempted to convey through grammatical communication.

If student-peer editing of themes can be shown to be a more effective means of facilitating learning than conventional methods, then the practice could be functional as well as educationally sound. The method, when properly implemented, provides more possibilities for writing experiences by expediting the grading/editing procedures. If students could write, correct, and rewrite compositions during one class period, they could avoid practicing many uncorrected errors which sometimes result when students write additional themes before the results of the first themes are known. In addition, student-peer editing can be a motivating force for more effective learning experiences.

¹Ibid.

The emphasis in teaching grammar and composition may concentrate on process learning rather than product learning. Such questions as: How does one write? Where does one get ideas for writing? How are clarity, vividness, and precision achieved? lead to analysis of writing techniques. Thus, for all practical purposes, classrooms become writing laboratories where discussion is considered a prerequisite to writing, and where the instructor serves as a facilitator for reluctant writers, helping others find the right words and expressing enthusiasm and positive support for well-formed expressions. Quite often, students share a cooperative spirit and support each other in their writing efforts. Katherine Andrews observed that in a student-peer editing group, an abundance of writing may not result, but the student learned more about himself and his needs as a writer.¹

Statement of Problem

This study was conducted in consideration of the two-fold need delineated above: (1) the present results of teaching English grammar are not adequate and (2) more effective ways and means of inspiring and encouraging students to develop grammar skills are needed.

¹Katherine Andrews, "New Concepts in Composition," English Journal, (January, 1969), p. 30.

Hypotheses Tested in the Experiment

Two hypotheses were tested in this experiment. The null proposition of these hypotheses was stated as follows:

- Ho1 There is no significant difference between the pretest-posttest Language Knowledge Test change scores as recorded for the experimental and control groups as a result of the two different systems of editing English theme compositions.
- Ho2 There is no significant difference between the pretest-posttest (Theme I - Theme VII) change scores recorded for the experimental and control groups resulting from their use of different systems of editing English theme compositions.

Scope of the Study

This study was limited in students, in facets of written composition to be tested, in genres of writing to be done, and in length of experimental time. Only those students who were enrolled in the first semester course of freshman English at Central State University were included in the experiment. The writing was expository in nature. It involved primarily, choosing a main idea about a given subject and then collecting and organizing relevant readings and class discussions. Experiment time was sixteen weeks during which the instructor conducted a control section and an experimental section of 51 class meetings. All participants wrote seven (7) themes during the course of the semester.

Definition of Terms

ACT (English) Scores. The 75-item, 40-minute test that measures the student's understanding and use of the basic elements in correct and effective writing, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, style, and organization.

Control Group. The class in which the teacher did the editing of all seven of the themes/compositions.

Experimental Group. The class in which the teacher graded Themes I and VII and Themes II through VI were graded by class peers in groups of usually four.

Grading/Editing. The term was broadened for purposes of pupil and teacher procedure in this experiment. Editing did not include the usual concept of grading, ranking, and the like. It was interpreted to include the following factors:

- A. Pointing out necessary revisions in such mechanics as grammar usage, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence form.
- B. Pointing out such necessary revisions as definition, organization, classification, relevance, logic, choice of language, and illustration, etc.
- C. Pointing out incidence of excellence or of improvement in grammar usage in writing.

Grammar. This term described the study of the structure of the language and the way our language system works, irrespective of the levels or varieties of usage. Language which is grammatically correct is not necessarily good usage

in all social situations, but the educated student should know correct, cultivated grammar as our language now functions and be able to use it effectively. Language "becomes good as the student develops a feeling for the bright, sparkling word or phrase, the exact word for his needs, the sentence which says exactly what he wants to say as economically and clearly as possible."¹

Language Knowledge Test (LKT) Change Scores. The difference in the score obtained on the Language Knowledge Test, Form A, and Language Knowledge Test, Form B.

Student-Peer Editing. The reading and marking of papers cooperatively by small groups or committees of experimental subjects. The teacher acted in an advisory capacity only.

Teacher-Editing. Teacher editing meant any marking of papers by the teacher alone.

Theme I - Theme VII (pretest-posttest) Grade Change Scores. The difference in the numerical value assigned to Theme I and the numerical value assigned to Theme VII.

Purpose and Procedure of the Experiment

The purpose of the experiment was to find the difference, if any, between the improvement made in written grammar

¹Robert C. Pooley, Teaching English Grammar (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957), p. 106.

composition by students who edited their themes cooperatively and the improvement made in written grammar composition by students whose themes were edited by the teacher. If differences were observed, it was also purposed to interpret these differences.

The design for the experiment included one teacher and two sections of college students enrolled in freshman English Grammar and Composition. Each section met three times per week. The instructor had one control section and one experimental section. For the first two weeks of the semester all activities, materials, tests, assignments, and subjects were matched for both sections. Themes one and seven were read and marked by the instructor and returned to the writers. After the first theme was written, the procedure in the control section was to continue as in the first two weeks with all the themes to be edited by the teacher. In the experimental section, students edited themes two through six. Both the control and experimental sections wrote themes on the same day over the same topics. Subjects were decided by the teacher in advance, but students were not given the theme topics until they came to class. All students were to correct their errors when the themes were returned.

Rewriting was at the option of the teacher; but if themes were rewritten by one section, those of the other section were also rewritten. Grades were not considered part of the experiment, but if grades were placed on a set of themes

for one section, then grades were also awarded to the corresponding set in the other section. If such aids as overhead projectors and other media were used for one section, then such media were also used for the other section. Data to ascertain the amount of improvement in grammar usage and writing were obtained by means of a pretest and posttest (Form A and Form B¹) accepted by the Department of English of the Central State University in which the experimentation was conducted.

¹See Appendix for Copy.

CHAPTER II

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Fifty college students randomly chosen from three classes enrolled in English Composition at a State university acted as the experimental and control subjects in determining their ability to compose essays based on two different methods of grading seven (7) essays written during the duration of the English course. The experimental group, composed of 25 students, had their essays/themes edited by their peers, under the supervision of the course instructor. The control group, composed of 25 students, had their essays/themes edited and graded by the course instructor. The students' first and last themes were used to determine the amount of pretest-posttest change experienced during the course.

The methods and procedures employed in the conduct of the study were divided into three phases: the pre-experimental; the experimental; and the data analysis procedures. Each of these phases is further reduced to steps or tasks which made up each phase. Each of the individual phases and its tasks is presented later in this chapter. All three phases and their steps were then synthesized and included at the end

of the chapter in a Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT) chart.

Phase I: The Pre-Experimental Procedures

The pre-experimental procedures consisted of all those procedures or tasks which were necessary to complete prior to the actual conduct of the study. Included in these procedures were such tasks as choosing the research design, selecting the proper statistical tests, developing and/or selecting the proper data collection instruments, and training the experimental subjects (students) to edit themes.

Selection of an Experimental Design

The first pre-experimental procedure was to choose the proper research design for the conduct of the study. This was done after considering several factors such as the hypotheses to be tested, the number of subjects in each group, the types of measures to be taken, etc. The researcher is using the words "research design" to mean the plan, structure, and strategy of investigation conceived to obtain answers to research questions and to control external sources of variation. The Plan is the overall scheme or program of the evaluation problem; the Structure is much more specific and is the structure or paradigm of the operation of the independent variables; the Strategy as used here is even more specific than the structure--it is the actual method to be used in the gathering and analysis of the data.

An evaluation design has two basic purposes: (1) to provide answers to research questions; and (2) to control external sources of variance. In other words, it is through the design of a study that research is made effective. Kerlinger (1964) makes the following statement in regard to research and evaluation designs:

. . . How does design accomplish this? Research designs set up the framework for 'adequate' tests of the relations among variables. The design tells us, in a sense, what observations to make, how to make them, and how to analyze the quantitative representations of the observations. Strictly speaking, design does not 'tell' us precisely what to do, but rather suggests the directions of observation-making and analysis. An adequate design 'suggests,' for example, how many observations should be made, and which variables are active variables and which are assigned. We can then act to manipulate the active variables and to dichotomize or trichotomize or otherwise categorize the assigned variables. A design tells us what type of statistical analysis to use. Finally, an adequate design outlines possible conclusions to be drawn from the statistical analysis.¹

The design chosen for the study was a pretest-posttest, control group design with several observations being taken during the course of the experiment. The design paradigm is shown in Figure 1.

¹Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavior Research (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964), pp. 196-197.

Group ₁	O--X--O--X--O--X--O--X--O--X--O--X--O--X--O
Group ₂	O-----O-----O-----O-----O-----O-----O-----O-----O

O = Observation taken; test given

X = Experimental treatment

Group₁ = Experimental Group

Group₂ = Control Group

Fig. 1.--Paradigm of Research Design

Choice of Data Collection Instruments and Scoring Methods

The lack of a desirable device for measuring writing ability change has been a problem since composition first gained its place in the curriculum. Many efforts have been made during the past half century to develop an instrument which would be a suitable measure of the quality of written compositions, but none has been found to possess a satisfactory degree of validity and reliability. Nearly all of these efforts have taken one of three directions: composition scales, indirect testing of composition ability, and multiple-reader evaluation of compositions.

Composition Scale Procedures

One of the earliest efforts "to reduce the variability in scoring the mechanical and structural aspects of

composition"¹ was made by J. W. Rice in 1903. Rice read a story to pupils in various schools and had them reproduce the story in writing. The first drafts were arranged in five piles; averages were computed and sample papers were selected to serve as scoring guides for other themes. These crude scales were not very objective, but they marked a step toward the scientific measurement of composition.

The first "scientific" measuring device for quality of writing was the Hillegas Scale of 1912. Hillegas adopted a zero point and an unit of difference in quality based upon the scores submitted by 200 experienced judges. The scale consists of ten compositions arranged in ascending order from zero to ten. It is long, complex, and very difficult to use.²

In 1914, F. W. Ballou made the second attempt at scientific measurement of the quality of writing when he devised the Harvard-Newton Scales. These included one scale for each of the four discourses (narration, description, exposition, and argumentation). Each scale was made for six compositions written by eighth grade pupils and graded by 25 teachers. The Harvard-Newton Scales are said to be easier to use than

¹National Society for the Study of Education, The Twenty-Second Yearbook, Part I: English Composition (Chicago, 1923), p. 42.

²Ibid., pp. 43-44.

the Hillegas Scale, but they make unusual restrictions and are limited in their scope.¹

E. L. Thorndike extended the Hillegas Scale in 1915 by substituting new samples for some of the old and by adding other samples near the middle of the scale.²

The next year, Trabue at the Columbia University made another attempt "to derive one or more scales for the measurement of ability along certain lines closely related to language."³ This effort involved the testing of pupils in two New York schools over a period of three months in 1914. The test began with a list of 45 sentences. By selecting from this second list two sentences from each grade, each sentence difficult enough that only 50 percent of that grade could complete it successfully, Trabue compiled Language Scale A for use from grade two through the freshman year of college. Pupils from several states were given the new scale using the time limit of 15 minutes for the 24 sentences. It was found that there was no difference in the abilities of children of the same grade in different states. Trabue rated the scale as of little value except as an "illustration of how improvement

¹Ibid., pp. 45-47.

²Ibid., pp. 47-49.

³Marion Rex Trabue, Completion-Test Language Scales (New York, 1916), p. 1.

may be measured now that we have scales on which the consecutive steps are equal."¹

In the early 1920's, M. J. Van Wagenen made the Minnesota English Composition Scales, in which he employed the desirable features of

. . . coarsely diagnostic scales without including their inherent disadvantages. He has devised separate scales for narration, description, and exposition, and has furnished careful instructions for estimating composition merit analytically. Separate values have been assigned to each specimen in each scale for Thought, Content, Structure, and Mechanics. The three qualities are not evaluated in equivalent terms in the same scale, but each quality is each scale furnished practically an equivalent scale for the same quality in either of the other two discourses. That is, a 72 in Thought Content is not equivalent to a 72 in either Structure or Mechanics within the same scale; but 72 in Thought Content on any one of the scales is practically equivalent to a 72 in Thought Content on either of the other two scales.²

Other devices for measuring the quality of written composition were the Breed and Frostic Scale for sixth grade, the Hudelson Scales, the Lewis Narration Scale, and Lewis Letter-Writing Scales. Of Hudelson's Typical Composition Ability Scale it has been said that

the scale suffers from two very serious disadvantages which seem to be inherent in all scale making. In the first place, scales are not diagnostic. If a pupil gets a low score

¹Ibid., p. 26.

²National Society for the Study of Education, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

the teacher has no means of knowing what is lacking or what to do about it. The second disadvantage is lack of reliability. The correlation of median judgments of the eight experienced judges on the paired compositions ranged from .69 to .84. Had there been only one judge (as is the case when one teacher uses the scale) the reliability coefficient could hardly have been more than .40. This is not much better than sheer guessing.¹

Indirect Procedures

During the 1930's, the indirect method of measuring written composition ability was developed in "a number of ingenious objective techniques for measuring various aspects of the ability to write correctly."² These "objective" techniques were concerned with such items as grammar, usage, and punctuation. They were used to predict ability to write correctly. Trabue's sentence completion scales were among the earliest of these objective tests. By 1947, the new technique was being used in the English Composition Test by the College Entrance Examination Board, but not without skepticism.³

Although the objective tests traditionally yielded higher reliability and validity coefficients than the composition scales, they also received more criticism. The chief criticism was as follows:

¹Oscar Krisen Buros (Ed.), The Fourth Mental Measurements Yearbook (Highland Park, New Jersey, 1953), p. 180.

²Ibid., p. 117.

³Ibid.

They (the objective tests) do not yield direct evidence of the ability to use English effectively in speech and writing. Instead, objective type tests, such as the Comparative Tests of mechanics of expression, do measure directly such skills as proofreading, error location, and criticism of written materials. Two points should be made. One is that such skills may be important in their own right and as such constitute legitimate educational objectives. If so, then progress in these skills should be appraised periodically in order to determine the effectiveness of those parts of the program that are designed to promote these skills. The other is that such skills may be related to the ability to use English effectively in speech and in writing. If so, then measures of proficiency in these skills may provide an important index of the "real" ability. The Validity of these Cooperative tests of mechanics of expression must be considered from both these points of view.¹

The above criticism by Chester Harris of the validity of objective language tests is supported by Harry A. Greene, thus:

Most objective language tests introduces certain elements of invalidity. The invalidity arises from the fact that such tests rely on the pupil's ability to recognize, identify, and correct errors as evidence of mastery. The ability to recognize and correct certain types of errors is not in itself a convincing evidence of the fact that the usage in question is a part of the individual's own habits of expression. Pupils frequently respond correctly in objective tests to items which they do not use correctly in their own expression.

Error counts based upon a pupil's written expression are not practical substitutes for other more objective measurement of language abilities.²

¹Ibid., p. 155.

²Encyclopedia of Educational Research (New York, 1950), p. 392.

Multiple Reader Procedure

The third method of measuring writing ability, that of multiple readers of essays written on assigned subjects, has been championed by the College Entrance Examination Board and, consequently, by many individual colleges. The method is used extensively in experimental situations. Two examinations, the College Placement Test in English (CPIE) and the College Entrance Examination Board Achievement Test in English Composition (CEEB) combine the objective scoring techniques with essay composition methods. The CPIE yeilds eight scores: grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, reading, syntax, vocabulary, theme and total. The second half of the test consists of writing, in 60 minutes, an impromptu theme on one of ten selected topics. The CEEB is prepared especially for the College Entrance Examination Admissions Board and is varied in form from year to year. In 1947, findings of the Board indicated that "a full-length (60 minute) test composed of essay material would have markedly less predictive value of teachers' ratings of ability to write expository prose and course grades in English than a full-length test composed entirely of objective material."¹

By 1950, the College Entrance Examination Board English Test could be completed in one hour divided into three

¹Buros, op. cit., p. 176.

twenty-minute sections. Three types of questions in each section required writing composition; three other types were to be answered by choosing the correct answer from several alternatives. Thus, the College Entrance Examination had come to include both "objective and written answer, designed to be fair to all candidates."¹ There was already some reason to believe that the new test might "overcome many of the difficulties of setting question, scoring, administration, and low validity"² of the past.

At a workshop of the Conference on College Composition and Communication in 1951, it was agreed that "the paper written at the final examination should demonstrate the objectives of the course."³ A year later, the report from a similar workshop stated that "the non-objective examination seems to be most commonly used in promoting students in freshman composition."⁴ Student ranking was considered a secondary purpose; tests were said to require validity for both the course material and the learning process. The workshop

¹William C. Fells, "The College Board English Composition Test--Present and Future," Education, LXXI (September, 1950), p. 5.

²Ibid., p. 10.

³"Reading and Grading Themes," College Composition and Communication, II (December, 1951), pp. 14-15.

⁴"The Relevance of Tests to the Communication Course," College Composition and Communication, III (December, 1952), pp. 21-23.

concluded that a consensus of several raters was preferred to a single-reader method. Members of the workshop also agreed that the essay examination measured facets of learning not measurable in any other way. At a 1954 workshop,¹ there was little agreement on a specific list of minimum evaluation essentials, and doubt concerning their real value. All members agreed, however, that content was more important than mechanics but much more difficult to assess. They also agreed that theme structure was an important aspect of grading.

A synthesis of workshop results would be as follows:

1. Grammar ability is best shown by samples of the student's writing.
2. An hour is sufficient writing time.
3. Topics should be within the student's understanding and experience.
4. Testing should follow the course objectives.
5. Evaluation should be as objective as possible.
6. Pre-training of the judges increases the reliability of the final evaluation.
7. It is best to give both objective and non-objective types of tests.
8. Multiple scores are desirable, but they probably cannot be added because of the level of measurement at which they are taken.

Because of the lack of valid and reliable tests for measuring general writing ability, an attempt was made to

¹"Reading and Grading Themes," College Composition and Communication, V (October, 1954), pp. 108-109.

use specifically defineable course objectives as criteria for evaluation. Knowledge and skill objectives were also included, but measure was taken of attitudes. It was presumed that if knowledge and skill are used, then understanding exists.

Three criteria were chosen for evaluating themes, but their scopes were treated separately. These criteria were language knowledge, correctness of performance, and organization of content. It was assumed, however, that these criteria were as objective as possible and that subjectivity was held to a minimum. Writing is a subjective exercise in which any one of many forms may be correct and in which the comprehension depends upon the experience of the reader as much as the experience of the writer. These criteria were not intended to measure all of the writing skills.

Training of Experimental Subjects to Rate Themes

Another step in the pre-experimental procedures was to train the experimental subjects to edit themes. The 25 members of the experimental group edited Themes II, III, IV, V, and VI, using the evaluation checksheets shown in Appendices D and E. Two training sessions were held for the students of the experimental group. Obviously, it was not necessary to train the students of the control group since they did not edit any of their peers' work.

Statistical Tests

It was also necessary to choose the proper statistical tests for treating the data, before the actual data collection had occurred. Five (5) criteria were used in making the selection of a statistical test: (1) the nature of the hypotheses stated; (2) the level of measurement of the data collected; (3) the number of groups and subjects within the groups; (4) the assumptions underlying the various statistical tests, in light of the descriptive statistics of the samples being compared; and (5) the ability of certain statistical tests to control the effects of independent variables through mathematical calculations. In other words, it was necessary to choose a statistical test which would compare the experimental and control subjects' composition scores and equate the two groups of subjects on such variables as ACT score (English), class meeting time, class size, grade, major, age, sex, and size of graduating senior class in high school. When these considerations had been made, the Analysis of Covariance was selected as being most appropriate. The analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) is specifically designed to compare the means of multiple samples of subjects, and simultaneously control the effects of independent variables which could not be accounted for in any other way.

Phase II: Experimental Procedures

The second phase of the methods and procedures was known as the experimental procedures phase. The experimental procedures consisted of the actual procedures used in collecting the data used in testing the hypotheses. Included in these procedures was the collection of certain biographical data as well as the collection of data from the pretest (Form A) and the posttest (Form B) instruments. In addition, each student's first and seventh themes were scored for grading purposes as well as testing the hypotheses.

Collection of Biographical Information

It was necessary to control the effects of certain variables which could seriously affect the results of the overall experiment. For example, it was anticipated that an English major would normally score higher than a non-English major since the composition of themes is one of the major areas of concern for an English major. The independent variables which were controlled in the study are shown in Figure 2.

It was necessary for each participant to have the data criteria enumerated in Figure 2 in order for him to participate. As expected, many of the students enrolled in the English Composition Course failed to provide the information needed for their inclusion in the study. At the same time, the experimental and control groups were large enough to allow several students to drop out and still have sufficient

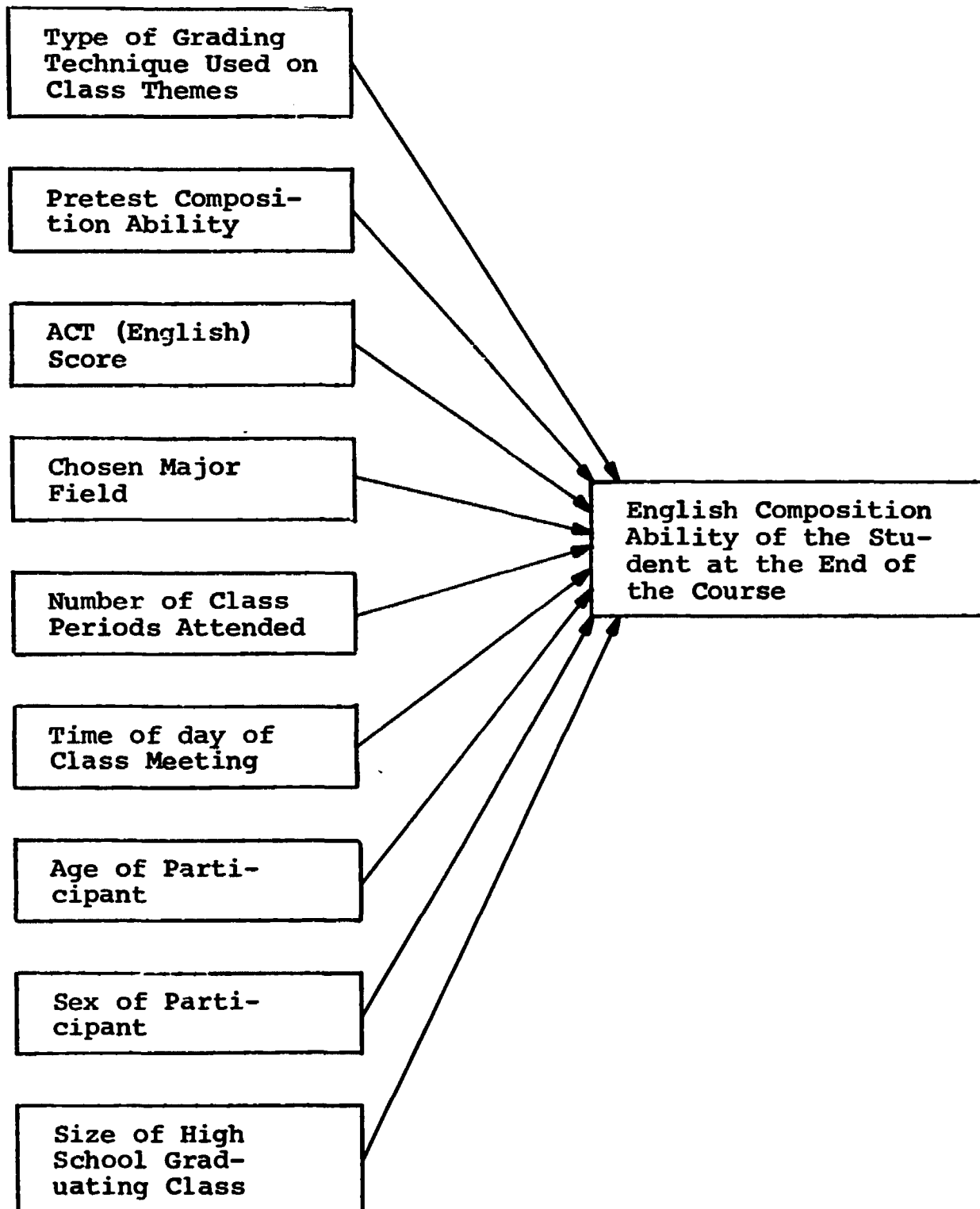


Fig. 2.--Independent Variables Controlled in the Study

numbers for an adequate testing of the hypothesis. A group of 25 was randomly drawn for each of the experimental and control groups. These 50 students had complete profiles and were considered to be the major comparison groups of the study.

Collection of the Pretest Data

Two different measures were taken at the beginning of the study to serve as pretest data. The first of these measures, the Language Knowledge Test, shown in Appendix A, was administered during the first week of the class session. This instrument yielded six subscores for each student: (1) classification of sentences and parts of speech, (2) verb usage, (3) use of nouns, pronouns, and verbs, (4) use of modifiers, connectives, and pronouns, (5) use of all eight parts of speech in sentences, and (6) capitalization and punctuation.

In addition to the Language Knowledge Test, the students' first themes, written during their second week of classwork, served as a pretest measure for comparing gains in composition ability. The first theme was edited by the instructor for both the experimental and the control groups. The themes were scored using the criterion lists and the composition evaluation checklist shown in Appendices C, D, and E. The various components of the evaluation and the number of points allotted to each are shown in Table 1.

The scores recorded on the Language Knowledge Test and the first theme were used as the comparison data in determining the amount of gain experienced by the experimental

TABLE 1

THE COMPONENTS OF THE THEME EVALUATION AND
THE NUMBER OF POINTS ALLOTTED TO EACH

Evaluation Component	Points Allotted
Content	30
Organization	35
Presentation	15
Appearance	6
Mechanics	<u>14</u>
Total	100 points

and control groups as a result of the two different theme grading methods. The analysis of covariance was computed to determine differences between the pretest and posttest measures of these instruments.

Collection of Posttest Data

Near the end of the course, the researcher collected posttest measures on all the participants in the experimental and control groups. A second version of the Language Knowledge Test, Form B, shown in Appendix B, was administered during the final week of classes. The subscores taken from this instrument were compared to the subscores recorded for the administration of Form A. The overall score taken from theme number seven was used as the posttest measure of the students' composition ability. The score from Theme VII was

compared to the score taken from Theme I. A comparison of these scores was made for the experimental and control groups. The actual procedures followed in making these comparisons are presented in the data analysis section.

Phase III: Data-Analysis Procedures

The third phase of the methods and procedures was known as the data-analysis procedures phase. The data analysis procedures consisted of the actual tasks which had to be performed after the data had been collected in order to test the hypotheses stated. These procedures required the actual processing of the data through computer facilities since the statistical manipulations needed made hand computations prohibitive.

After the data had been collected and checked for completeness, they were submitted to a data processing center for further analysis. Personnel at the data processing center entered the data on IBM cards for computer processing. The card format used to enter the data is shown in Figure 3.

Procedural Narrative

The procedures followed in the actual conduct of the study may best be presented in narrative form. It should also be noted that the procedural narrative should be interpreted in conjunction with the PERT chart shown in Figure 4.

The study began with the assignment of Freshman students to two different sections of college-level grammar

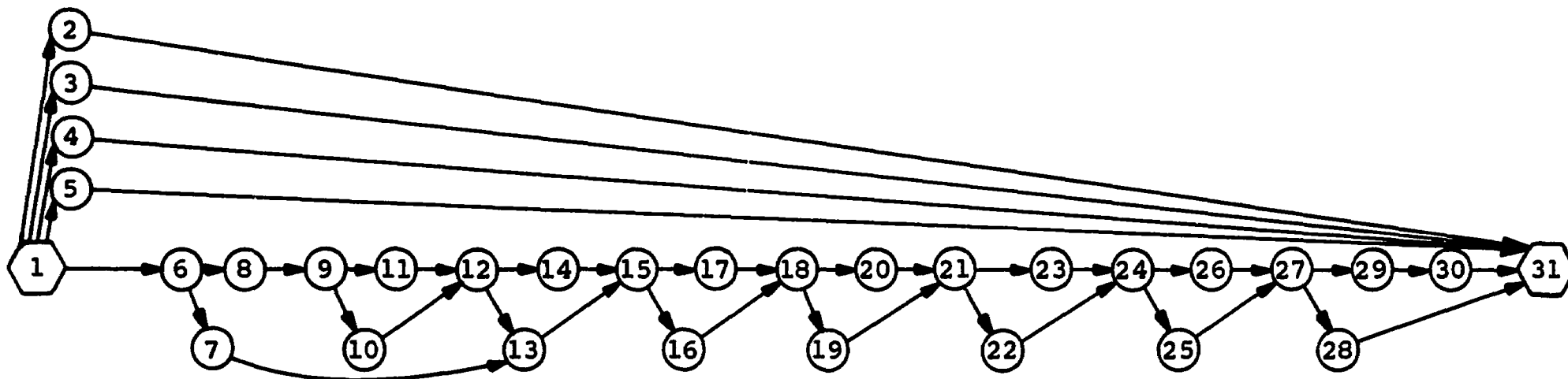
Information	cc*
1. Student Number	1- 3
2. Group; Experimental or Control	4
3. Major Chosen	5
4. ACT (English) Score	6- 7
5. Time of Day of Class Meeting	8
6. Age of Participant	9-10
7. Sex of Participant	11
8. Size of High School Graduating Class	12-14
9. Pretest Scores on Language Knowledge Test	15-26
10. Scores of Theme I	27-37
11. Posttest Scores on Language Knowledge Test	38-49
12. Scores on Theme VII	50-60

*Card Co.umn(s)

Fig. 3.--Card Format Used to Enter Data

courses. As the scheduled classes began, the researcher made the necessary preparation for completing the research prospectus. This included the choice of the research design, choice of statistical tests, selection/development of data collection instruments, and determining the method to be used in presenting the final results. At the same time, the experimental subjects were being trained to edit theme compositions. Later they graded/edited Themes II, III, IV, V, and VI which had been written by their peers.

The Language Knowledge Test (Form A, shown in Appendix A) was administered to all experimental and control subjects



Explanation of Number Codes

1. Begin project
2. Selection of research design
3. Choice of data
4. Collection of biographical information
5. Choice of statistical tests
6. Language Knowledge Test (pretest)
7. Train experimental subjects to edit
8. First week of class
9. First theme written
10. Scoring of Theme I by instructor
11. Second segment of classes
12. Second theme written
13. Scoring of Theme II by students and instructor
14. Third segment of classes
15. Third theme written
16. Scoring of Theme III by students and instructor

17. Fourth segment of classes
18. Fourth theme written
19. Scoring of Theme IV by students and instructor
20. Fifth segment of classes
21. Fifth theme written
22. Scoring of Theme V by students and instructor
23. Sixth segment of classes
24. Sixth theme written
25. Scoring of Theme VI by students and instructor
26. Seventh segment of classes
27. Seventh theme written
28. Scoring of Theme VII by instructor
29. Language Knowledge Test (posttest)
30. Final selection of experimental and control subjects
31. Data analyzed

Fig. 4.--PERT* Chart of Methods and Procedures Employed in the Study

*Program Evaluation and Revue Technique

during the first week of classes. During the second week of classes the students wrote their first themes. All of these themes were marked by the instructor and returned to the students for study and correction. Some students rewrote their themes; others made the necessary corrections on the original paper. After all corrections had been made, the students resubmitted the themes. Again, the compositions were scored, graded, and filed for further reference. At the end of the experiment, these themes with a copy of the evaluation checklist attached, were compared with the final theme, Theme VII, compositions.

The remainder of the regular semester consisted of regular classroom activities for the control subjects. These activities consisted of studies in grammar, literature, and reading. Themes were composed every two weeks based on pre-assigned literary works. Activities for the experimental subjects differed in only one way, they were allowed to grade/edit their peers' theme compositions and to hold group discussions concerning the errors committed. Open discussion sessions, monitored by the instructor, were conducted and students were afforded ample opportunity to question any corrections made on their papers.

The second theme followed the reading and discussion of Jonathan Swift's narrative poem, "Baucis and Philemon," which extolled the virtues and rewards of kindness. The students were asked to apply the poem to everyday life in the

twentieth century. The control students' themes were edited by the course instructor. This same procedure was followed for the control students for the remainder of the course. The experimental subjects began their grading/editing duties with Theme II and continued to correct each others' compositions through Theme VI. Experimental students had been previously trained for such grading/editing by using the instruments shown in Appendix C, "How to Check a Theme," Appendix D, "A Guide for the Review of Basic Grammatical Principles and Common Errors," and Appendix E. "Composition Evaluation." Students of the experimental group were allowed to ask questions about the three instruments and then asked to make practice critiques of several compositions. In the actual scoring of theme compositions, experimental students were divided into groups of four students each. Papers were freely exchanged among groups in order that no student would have his own composition. Each student was responsible for marking the errors, completing a copy of the composition evaluation sheet, and adding any comments which he believed to be constructive and helpful to the author of the paper. After all papers had been edited and returned to their owners, corrections were discussed with the group and the author. The instructor moved from group to group, monitoring the activities when he was not involved in explaining materials or advising about procedures. Each writer further edited his work and rewrote the theme. Both the original and rewritten

copies of each theme were submitted to the instructor who discussed the results in class. Thus, the students' writing difficulties became the subject matter for many of the experimental subjects' class sessions. These same procedures were followed in the writing, editing, rewriting, and discussion of Themes III, IV, V, and VI.

Theme VII was the final test of the students' grammar and writing ability. This final theme, written in class, was an attempt by the students to use information taken from several of Robert Frost's poems and essays to write a "unified" composition relating to a chosen aspect of nature. After Theme VII had been written, scored, and returned, the Language Knowledge Test (Form B, shown in Appendix B) was administered to all participants. The pretest-posttest scores on the Language Knowledge Test (LKT) were used to determine the amount of gain experienced by the two groups. The differences in the scores assigned to Themes I and VII depicted the amount of gain experienced by the two groups in their ability to compose themes on given subjects.

The students from the experimental and control groups furnished the data used in testing the two hypotheses. Two samples of 25 subjects each were chosen from the two populations of students who had met the necessary requirements for inclusion in the study. These requirements consisted of biographical data such as English ACT scores, age, sex, major, etc., pretest and posttest scores on the Language Knowledge

Test, and scores on Themes I and VII. The scores of the 25 control subjects were compared to the scores of the 25 experimental subjects in testing the stated hypotheses.

The data collected from the participants were entered on IBM cards and processed through the Merrick Computing Center located on the campus of the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma. The researcher used an analysis of covariance and a product-moment correlation to test the hypotheses and conduct ancillary findings. The analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was effective in testing the null hypotheses and controlling the effects of the extraneous variables at the same time. The results of the data analysis were synthesized, tabled, and entered into the final dissertation format. The final results are presented in Chapter III. A summary of the entire study, the conclusions drawn from the results, and the implications for further research are presented in the final chapter (Chapter IV).

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

A one-way analysis of convariance was used to compare pretest-posttest gain scores on the Language Knowledge Test and pretest-posttest theme composition scores of 50 (25 experimental and 25 control) college Freshmen enrolled in an English 103 composition course during the Spring semester of the 1971-72 academic year. The analysis of convariance (ANCOVA) statistic tested the stated hypotheses and allowed the experimenter to control the extraneous independent variables of sex, age, major, time of class meeting, class attendance record, English ACT scores and size of the hometown high school in determining the effects of two different methods of grading/editing on the students' ability to compose quality themes. The experimenter had hypothesized that the experimental subjects, whose themes were edited by their peers with assistance from the instructor, would show more improvement in their ability to compose good themes as a result of the editing technique than the control subjects, whose themes were edited by the instructor alone. The results of testing the

null proposition of the two hypotheses are presented in this chapter along with the necessary descriptive statistics.

Descriptive Statistics of Participants

The descriptive statistics of the 25 experimental and 25 control subjects are presented in Table 2. Means (\bar{X}) and standard deviations (SD) are presented for the continuous data, but frequency counts are shown for the dichotomous variables.

TABLE 2

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL SUBJECTS (N=50)

Variable Being Measured	Experimental		Control		t-Value
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	
1. Pretest Language Knowledge Test	118.7	32.3	130.7	24.7	1.45
2. Posttest of Language Knowledge Test	159.0	28.2	154.6	30.4	0.51
3. Gain Scores on LK Test	40.2	20.7	24.0	21.6	2.75**
4. Age	22.0	6.3	21.3	4.8	0.41
5. Number in High School	1,648	1,036	1,661	908	0.05
6. Days in Attendance	44.8	6.8	46.6	5.6	0.51
7. English ACT	14.3	5.3	15.8	6.1	0.87
<hr/>					
8. Sex	16M	9F	17M	8F	
9. Major	23-*	2+*	2-*	0+*	

*; "-" = Non-English majors, "+" = English majors.

**Significant beyond the .01 level.

The descriptive data of the two groups, shown in Table 2, indicate that the experimental and control groups were statistically equal in all areas, at the beginning of the semester. However, by the end of the semester, the experimental subjects had made significant gains on the Language Knowledge Test while the control subjects had not.

At the beginning of the semester the experimental and control subjects' Language Knowledge Test (LKT) scores were statistically equal. The mean values for the two groups were 118.7 and 130.7, respectively. This was not a significant difference, however ($t = 1.45$, $df = 48$; $p > .05$). At the end of the semester the experimental subjects' had surpassed the control subjects' even though they had started with lower scores. The posttest scores on the LKT were 159.0 and 154.6 for the experimental and control groups, respectively. Again, this was not a significant difference ($t = 0.51$, $df = 48$; $p > .05$). At the same time, the experimental group showed significantly higher gains than the control group. While the two groups were statistically equal at the beginning and statistically equal at the end of the study, the experimental subjects started with the lowest scores on the LKT and finished with the highest scores. The mean gains experienced by the experimental and control groups were 40.2 and 24.0, respectively. When these two figures were compared statistically, a significant difference resulted ($t = 2.75$, $df = 48$; $p < .01$). While this t -value was significant beyond the .01 level of

significance, the results of the experiment were still inconclusive because the effects of the other independent variables had not been taken into account. This was accomplished by using the analysis of covariance statistic.

A comparison of the groups' scores on the first theme showed the control group to have a slightly higher average score, 2.85 for the control as opposed to 2.76 for the experimental group, but the difference was not statistically significant ($t = 0.354$, $df = 48$; $p > .05$). At the end of the semester, however, the experimental subjects had earned higher scores on their seventh theme than the control subjects, but the differences were not significant in this case either ($t = 0.410$, $df = 48$; $p > .05$). The posttest scores for the experimental and control groups' Theme VII were 3.04 and 2.96 respectively. As in the case of the LKT scores, the comparison of the gain scores noted between Themes I and VII showed a significant difference. The experimental group showed a mean gain score of 0.28, while the control group showed a mean gain score of only 0.11. A t-test between these two means was significant beyond the .05 level ($t = 2.109$, $df = 48$; $p < .05$).

The remainder of the variables being measured showed very little difference between the two groups. The averages for the two groups were as follows: (1) The experimental subjects were a little older than the control subjects, 22.0 vs. 21.3 years, but not significantly so ($t = 0.41$; $p > .05$).

(2) The hometown high schools of the control subjects were slightly larger than the high schools of the experimental subjects, 1,661 students for the control subjects and 1,648 students for the experimental subjects, but the difference was not significant ($t = 0.049$, $df = 48$; $p > .05$). (3) The control group had a better attendance record than the experimental group, control students averaged 46.6 days in attendance and the experimental students averaged 44.8 days in attendance, but the difference was not significant ($t = 0.51$, $df = 48$; $p > .05$). (4) The control group had an average English ACT score of 15.8, and the experimental groups' English ACT scores averaged only 14.3, but the difference between the two means (averages) was not significant ($t = 0.871$, $df = 48$; $p > .05$). (5) The racial composition of the two groups was fairly homogenous. The experimental group had 16 males and 9 females, while the control group was made up of 17 males and 8 females. A statistical comparison of the two groups showed no significant difference ($\chi^2 = 0.146$, $df = 1$; $p > .05$). (6) A comparison of the two groups according to choice of major, showed that the experimental group was composed of 23 non-English majors and two English majors. The control group was composed of 25 non-English majors. Again the statistical comparison of the two groups' data showed no significant difference ($\chi^2 = 0.357$, $df = 1$; $p > .05$). A Chi Square Test was used to make the last two comparisons since the data were collected at the nominal level of measurement.

Summary of Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive data presented for the two groups of subjects can be summarized by saying that a preliminary comparison of the two groups' gain scores on the Language Knowledge Test (LKT) and theme writing ability showed a significantly higher gain for the experimental subjects than for the control subjects. These results have to be considered inconclusive, however, since the effects of the other independent variables being controlled in the study had not yet been taken into consideration. The effects of these extraneous influences was statistically controlled in the actual testing of the hypotheses, but such manipulations were beyond the capability of the t-test used in making the preliminary comparisons.

The remainder of the descriptive data showed the two groups of subjects to be statistically equal as far as age, the number in their hometown high school, days in attendance, English ACT scores, sex, and choice of major was concerned. These equalities made further comparisons of the two groups' LKT and theme scores theoretically defensible, and the researcher proceeded to test the two hypotheses.

Results of Testing Hypothesis Number One

The null proposition tested in hypothesis number one was as follows:

There is no significant difference between the pretest-posttest Language Knowledge Test gain scores as recorded for the experimental and

control groups as a result of the two different systems of editing English theme compositions.

Pretest scores on the Language Knowledge Test (LKT), Form A, shown in Appendix A, were subtracted from the posttest LKT scores, Form B, shown in Appendix B. The resulting difference scores were the actual unit of measure used in the study. The means (\bar{X}) and standard deviations (SD) of the LKT pretest, posttest, and change scores are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF PRETEST, POSTTEST AND
CHANGE SCORES RECORDED FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL
AND CONTROL GROUPS ON THE LKT

Dependent Measure	Experimental		Control	
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
1. LKT (Pretest)	118.72	32.25	130.65	24.66
2. LKT (Posttest)	158.96	28.16	154.61	30.35
3. LKT (Change)	40.24	20.68	23.96	21.61

An analysis of convariance (ANCOVA) was used to compare the two groups' gain scores and control the effects of the other independent variables at the same time. The results of the ANCOVA computations are presented in Table 4.

The results shown in Table 4 indicate that there was a significant difference between the amount of LKT score gain experienced by the experimental and control groups. The

TABLE 4

**RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE COMPARING THE
LKT GAIN SCORES OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND
CONTROL SUBJECTS**

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value
Between Groups	1	280.16	4.127*
Within Groups	48	67.88	
Total	49		

Final Results of the ANCOVA adjustment of the Sum of Squares

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value
Between Groups	1	265.03	4.113*
Within Groups	47	64.44	
Total	48		

*Significant beyond the .05 level

t-value for the LKT gain scores, shown in Table 2, indicated that such a result had occurred, and the ANCOVA results supported this presupposition.

The first part of Table 4 shows a comparison of the two groups' scores before the effects of the additional independent variables had been accounted for. The first F-value, 4.127, would have been significant at the .05 level. The lower part of Table 4 shows a comparison of the two

groups' scores with the effects of the additional independent variables statistically controlled. The second F-value, 4.113, was only slightly less than the original figure. This small difference between the two F-values indicated that the additional independent variables had very little effect on the LKT gain scores of the two groups. The final F-value reflected a significant difference between the two groups of students ($F = 4.113$, $df = 1/47$; $p < .05$). Thus, the researcher rejected the null proposition of hypothesis number one, and concluded that a significant difference had occurred between the two groups' LKT gain scores as a result of the two different theme-editing procedures used with each.

Results of Testing Hypothesis Number Two

The null proposition tested in hypothesis number two was as follows:

There is no significant difference between the pretest-posttest (Theme I - Theme VII) change scores recorded for the experimental and control groups resulting from their use of different systems of editing English theme compositions.

The second hypothesis was also tested with an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) statistical test. The letter grades assigned to Themes I and VII were given a numerical value using the following scale of values:

A = 4.00	C = 2.00
A- = 3.75	C- = 1.75
B+ = 3.25	D+ = 1.25
B = 3.00	D = 1.00
B- = 2.75	D- = 0.75
C+ = 2.25	F = 0.00

The numerical value assigned to Theme I (pretest) was subtracted from the value assigned to Theme VII (posttest), and the difference scores compared for the experimental and control groups. The means (\bar{X}) and standard deviations (SD) computed for Theme I, Theme VII, and the change scores are presented in Table 5. The mean values are truncated to two decimal places and the standard deviations are truncated to three decimal places for simplicity of computations.

TABLE 5

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THEME I, THEME VII AND
CHANGE SCORES OF EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Dependent Measure	Experimental		Control	
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
1. Theme I (pretest)	2.76	0.912	2.85	0.848
2. Theme VII (posttest)	3.04	0.624	2.96	0.723
3. Change Scores	0.28	0.241	0.11	0.312

The descriptive statistics of the experimental and control groups' scores on Theme I, Theme VII, and the amount of change indicate that the experimental subjects had the lowest overall scores on Theme I, 2.76 for the experimental as opposed to 2.85 for the control, but surpassed the control groups' scores on Theme VII, 3.04 for the experimental and 2.96 for the control. These pretest-posttest results showed

a mean change of 0.28 for the experimental group and a mean change of only 0.11 for the control group. The comparisons of these mean values indicated that there were no significant differences between the two groups at the beginning or end of the study, but the gain scores did show a significant difference.

An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was performed on the change scores. The results are presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6

ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE RESULTS COMPARING THE THEME I -
THEME VII CHANGE SCORES OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND
CONTROL SUBJECTS

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value
Between Groups	1	396.25	8.358
Within Groups	48	47.41	
Total	49		

Results of the ANCOVA with the Adjusted Sum of Squares

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value
Between Groups	1	357.18	8.230**
Within Groups	47	43.40	
Total	48		

**Significant beyond the .01 level of significance

The final ANCOVA results presented in Table 6 indicate that there was a significant difference between the amount of grade-point gain experienced by the experimental and control groups. Based on these results, the researcher was able to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that a significant difference had occurred between the grade-point scores of the two groups as a result of their using different methods of scoring/editing English theme compositions.

Anci'lary Findings

The results of the two hypotheses indicated that the additional independent variables; age, sex, class meeting time, major, the number in their hometown high school, number of days in attendance, and English ACT score, had very little effect on the Language Knowledge Test Scores or the grades assigned the individual themes. Expressed in another way, the ANCOVA results indicated that the product-moment correlations among the LKT and grade-point change scores were very low. Thus, accounting for the slight change between the ANOVA F-values and the ANCOVA F-values shown in Table 4 and 6. In order to determine the exact amount of relationship (correlation) among the various measures taken, a correlation matrix was computed using a Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation to make the necessary calculations. The values assigned to each of the variables were intercorrelated with the numbers assigned to all other variables. While this

resulted in a "packed" intercorrelation matrix, it also resulted in some uninterpretable correlations. For instance, the correlation of the group numbers, either a 1 or a 2, with class meeting time, also a 1 or a 2, has to be regarded as uninterpretable.

The results of the calculations are presented in two tables. Table 7 shows the entire correlation matrix of all variables. Table 8 shows only the correlations which were significant at or beyond the .05 level.

The results of the intercorrelations shown in Tables 7 and 8 indicate that some significant correlations did occur among the measures taken. These significant correlations occurred among the variables of ACT, age, the pre and post LKT scores, and the Theme I - Theme VII scores.

Significant correlations were computed between the ACT scores and the following measures: (1) pretest (LKT), $r = 0.47$, $p > .05$. (2) Theme I, $r = 0.53$, $p < .05$. (3) posttest (LKT), $r = 0.54$, $p < .05$. (4) Theme VII, $r = 0.49$, $p < .05$. These significant correlations indicate that the students having the highest ACT scores also had the highest scores on the Language Knowledge Tests and the highest grades on the two themes, Themes I and VII. The converse of this statement relating to the lowest scores is also true.

There were five significant correlations between the ages of the students and the other measures recorded; (1) pretest (LKT), $r = 0.71$, $p < .01$. (2) Theme I, $p < .05$.

TABLE 7

INTERCORRELATION MATRIX OF THE TWELVE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES
MANIPULATED IN THE EXPERIMENT

Variables	Group	Major	ACT	Class Time	Age	Sex	Size of H.S	LKT (Pre)	Theme I	LKT (Post)	Theme VII	Att.
Group												
Major	0.03											
ACT	0.14	0.01										
Class Time	0.01	0.03	0.13									
Age	-0.13	0.11	0.02	0.04								
Sex	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.09	0.21							
Size of H.S.	0.13	0.12	-0.01	0.06	-0.14	-0.02						
LKT (Pre)	-0.02	0.06	0.47*	0.01	0.71**	-0.03	0.19					
Theme I	0.06	0.15	0.53*	0.02	0.54*	0.14	0.22	0.86**				
LKT (Post)	-0.11	0.10	0.54*	0.04	0.62*	0.17	0.31	0.84**	0.49*			
Theme VII	-0.12	0.04	0.49*	0.11	0.56*	0.14	0.09	0.82**	0.92**	0.81**		
Attendance	0.14	0.02	0.17	0.21	0.82**	0.21	-0.02	0.31	0.19	0.24	0.17	

*Significant beyond the .05 level

**Significant beyond the .01 level

TABLE 8

INTERCORRELATION MATRIX OF THE TWELVE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES
MANIPULATED IN THE EXPERIMENT

Variables	Group	Major	ACT	Class Time	Age	Sex	Size of H.S.	LKT (Pre)	Theme I	LKT (Post)	Theme VII	Att.
Group												
Major												
ACT												
Class Time												
Age												
Sex												
Size of H.S.												
LKT (Pre)			0.47*		0.71**							
Theme I			0.53*		0.54*			0.86**				
LKT (Post)			0.54*		0.62*			0.84**	0.49*			
Theme VII			0.49*		0.56*			0.82**	0.92**	0.81**		
Attendance					0.82**							

*Significant beyond the .05 level

**Significant beyond the .01 level

(3) posttest (LKT), $r = 0.62$, $p < .05$. (4) Theme VII, $p < .05$. and (5) attendance, $r = 0.82$, $p < .01$. The same interpretation of significantly high correlations applies to these results as presented in the previous section. However, one additional correlation between age and attendance indicated that the older students attended class more often than the younger students.

As expected, the LKT scores and the Theme I - Theme VII grades were highly rated. The first LKT was significantly related to; (1) Theme I, $r = 0.86$, $p < .01$. (2) posttest (LKT), $r = 0.84$, $p < .01$. (3) Theme VII, $r = 0.82$, $p > .01$. Theme I was significantly related to; (1) posttest (LKT), $r = 0.49$, $p < .05$. (2) Theme VII, $r = 0.92$, $p < .01$. The posttest of the Language Knowledge Test (LKT) was significantly related to Theme VII, $r = 0.81$, $p < .01$. All other correlations shown in Table 7 were not statistically significant at the .05 level.

The ancillary findings shown in Table 7 and 8 support the results presented in previous tables. The analysis of covariance computations indicated that the additional independent variables manipulated and measured in the study had very little influence on the LKT and Theme I - Theme VII scores. This was reflected in the small differences between the ANOVA F-values and the ANCOVA F-values. If the additional measures of major, sex, age, group, class time, etc., had been highly related to the LKT scores or the theme scores, it would have

been reflected in a larger change between the ANOVA F-values, the first part of Tables 4 and 6, and the ANCOVA F-values, the lower half of Tables 4 and 6. Since there was little change reflected in either of the tables' F-values, it was presumed that low correlations (relationships) existed among the various measures taken. An intercorrelation matrix of all variables supported this assumption. The data presented in Tables 7 and 8 are actually a verification of the results presented in Tables 4 and 6.

Summary of Results

Two hypotheses were tested concerning the effects of two different systems of grading/editing English theme compositions on the pretest-posttest Language Knowledge Test (LKT) change scores (hypothesis number one) and the effects of the different systems of grading/editing theme compositions on Theme I - Theme VII grade-point changes (hypothesis number two). The results of testing the two hypotheses indicated that when the students were allowed to grade/edit English theme compositions of their peers in a College-Freshmen English class, it not only made significant improvements in their ability to compose quality themes, but also caused significant increases in their knowledge of grammatical concepts and rhetoric. A comparison group, the control group, had all themes graded by the instructor, and were not given the opportunity to hold discussion sessions with peers about theme composition errors as were the members of the

experimental group. Since several key factors were controlled in the experiment, significant differences between the experimental and control groups' scores were attributed to the differences in grading/editing English theme compositions. Based on these results, the researcher was able to reject both null hypotheses tested and to conclude that having student-peers grade and edit English theme compositions in college Freshmen courses is an effective method of teaching theme composition at the four-year college level.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study consisted of a pretest-posttest comparison of grammar and writing (theme composition) ability of college students who had been exposed to two different systems of teaching Freshman-level English. Fifty randomly selected college students enrolled in a Freshman-level English course acted as the experimental and control groups in determining the effects of a system of student editing of peers' themes on their ability to compose more acceptable themes and on their ability to assimilate the mechanics of English composition (rules of grammar). Increased grammatical ability was determined by comparing scores from a pretest-posttest administration of the Language Knowledge Test (LKT), given during the first and last class sessions of the semester. Increased composition ability was measured by comparing the scores recorded for Themes I and VII, written during the third and fifteenth weeks of the semester.

The researcher had predicted that the 25 students in the experimental group who had their themes edited by their

peers would show significantly higher gains in their grammar and composition abilities as a result of the theme-editing process. The specific null hypotheses tested were as follows:

- Ho₁ There is no significant difference between the pretest-posttest Language Knowledge Test change scores as recorded for the experimental and control groups as a result of the two different systems of editing English theme compositions.
- Ho₂ There is no significant difference between the pretest-posttest (Theme I - Theme VII) change scores recorded for the experimental and control groups resulting from their use of different systems of editing English theme compositions.

An analysis of covariance statistic was used to test the two hypotheses which had been stated concerning the two areas of English. The analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) statistic tested the stated hypotheses and controlled several extraneous variables at the same time. The extraneous variables controlled in the study were as follows: sex, age, academic major, time of class meeting, class attendance record, English ACT scores, and size of hometown high school. The data were processed through a data-processing center. Center personnel entered the data on IBM cards and made the necessary calculations with a digital computer. Several secondary statistical calculations were made at the same time the hypotheses were tested. The results of the final calculations are presented in Chapter III.

The results of the hypotheses indicated that when students were allowed to grade/edit English theme compositions

of their peers, this process not only demonstrated significant improvements in their ability to compose good themes, but also caused significant improvements in their usage of grammatical concepts and rhetoric. The comparison (control) group had all themes graded by the course instructor instead of their peers, and were not given the opportunity to grade/edit each others' themes. Apparently, the two systems of grading themes did make a significant difference in the two groups' skills. Other sources of variation were controlled either statistically or incorporated into the research design, thus eliminating any alternative explanations for the group differences.

Conclusions and Related Findings

The researcher was able to reject both null hypotheses based on the results of the analysis of covariance calculations shown in Tables 4 and 6. Rejection of these null hypotheses, in turn, allowed certain conclusions to be drawn. The essence of these conclusions were as follows:

Conclusion Number One. It was concluded that having student-peers grade/edit English theme compositions in Freshman English courses was a more effective method of teaching Freshman theme composition than by having the course instructor grade/edit all theme compositions as was the case with students comprising the control group.

Conclusion Number Two. It was concluded that having student-peers grade/edit English theme compositions in Freshman

English courses was a more effective method of teaching English grammar and rhetoric than by having the course instructor grade/edit all theme compositions as was the case with students comprising the control group.

While the results of this study were both encouraging and enlightening, a word of caution should be extended concerning the outcomes. It is always tempting to generalize research findings beyond their defensible perimeters. However, the results of any research effort cannot be safely generalized beyond the sampling population used in the initial data-collection process. For this reason, the results of this study apply only to the population of students used in collecting the data, and should be generalized to other students at other colleges only when the necessary conditions of experimentation have been met. These conditions along with knowledge gained from the overall conduct of the study are presented in the following statements.

1. The student-edited themes should be re-edited by the course instructor before the final grades are awarded.

2. Course instructors who plan to utilize the student-peer editing technique need to be trained in directing and motivating small group discussions.

3. Extreme caution should be exercised to safeguard the integrity of the student editors. Information transmitted to control group members could confound the entire experiment.

4. Activities should be planned in such a way that the editing of themes does not consume too much of the students' time.

5. Student editors should be trained in the process of grading/editing themes prior to the conduct of the study and not after it begins.

6. Students should not be allowed to assign grades to the themes, only numerical values.

7. An attempt should be made to equate the control and experimental groups as much as possible at the beginning of the study. While this is a near impossibility, the best method for accomplishing this purpose is to randomly assign students to the experimental and control groups. If this is not possible, an analysis of covariance statistical test should be used in an attempt to equate the two groups in as many ways as possible.

Implications for Further Research

In most experimental efforts, there are more questions posed than answered. This experiment was no exception to that rule. A multitude of additional studies suggested themselves during the conduct of the research effort. For the most part, they seemed to group themselves into three areas, studies relating to other populations, studies relating to other instruments, and studies relating to other experimental conditions. The specific implications for further research are as follows:

1. Other research efforts could include a population of high school students. The same types of training could be conducted, but the high school students could serve as a control group.

2. Other research efforts could include a population of students from private and junior colleges. This would allow the results of this study to be generalized to a larger population.

3. Other research efforts could include students from other class levels. For instance, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior levels could be used for making a multiple-group comparison of the teaching techniques used in this study.

4. Other research efforts could include college level courses in the more advanced stages of the educational experience. While the two techniques of grading/editing did prove to be effective during this study, this might have resulted because of the students' lack of such writing skills in high school. The two techniques might prove to be ineffective with the second and/or third courses in English composition.

5. Other research efforts could include a different test for determining grammar ability. The Cooperative English Test has been an effective evaluation instrument in many research efforts.

6. Other research efforts could include a different system/techniques for grading or editing the English compositions. Even though the present method proved to be satisfactory,

it could be improved a great deal by giving the experimental students more previous training with the evaluation instruments.

Concluding Remarks

The results of this experimental study have shown that there is some merit to the technique of having students enrolled in English Composition grade/edit their peers' compositions. While the results were not as generalizeable as they would have been had the subjects been randomly chosen from a larger population, they do suggest a need for further study. If such studies are conducted on similar populations, they could prove to be a boon for overworked English professors. The participating students would become more a part of the learning experience by actually suggesting corrections and changes to be made on written compositions.

This study was not intended to be a panacea for all the scheduling and teaching problems currently being experienced by college professors of English. It was intended, however, to be an attempt to shed some light on the way students learn to write English compositions and to suggest some possible alternatives for teaching English compositions at the college level. If the results of the study serve as an impetus for further research efforts, it will have served its purpose well.

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APPENDIX A
LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE TEST (FORM A)

Form A

Name _____

Part I. Classifying Sentences and Parts of Speech

On the first line before each sentence classify it as to form by writing S for simple, Cd for compound, Cx for complex. On the second line tell the part of speech of the word underlined by using symbols: n, noun; pron, pronoun; v, verb; adj, adjective; adv, adverb; prep, preposition; conj, conjunction.

Example: Cd n Ruth sang a song and Eleanor gave a reading.

- _____ 1. If Evelyn cannot go with us, we won't go.
- _____ 2. Betty and her parents travel much and enjoy their travels.
- _____ 3. Sarah seldom comes late, but she is late now.
- _____ 4. In an unguarded moment Philip Nolan cursed his native land.
- _____ 5. He soon realized how foolish he had been.

Part II. Using Verbs

Each sentence below contains two underlined verbs. On the lines before each sentence write in proper order the correct forms. If only one verb is incorrect, write C on the second line.

Example: dived C Dick dove into the pool and swam across.

- _____ 1. I done my studying while you were laying down.
- _____ 2. Here comes Betty and Ruth, but they haven't saw us.
- _____ 3. Neither of her sisters were there when she run.
- _____ 4. If I was you, I'd set down.
- _____ 5. Some had went home before Gene give his report.
- _____ 6. Don't Jerry know that you was chosen?
- _____ 7. Was Lorene and her sister there when the play begun?
- _____ 8. I would have wore my blue dress if it hadn't been torn.

- _____ 9. She should leave me learn her the words to the new song.
- _____ 10. After we had ate the hot dogs, we drunk some pop.
- _____ 11. No one knowed who had wrote the letter.
- _____ 12. Has your brother drove the car since the radiator was froze?
- _____ 13. She has took many plane trips but has never rode on a train.
- _____ 14. Someone had broke the lock and had stole the money.
- _____ 15. The pipes had froze, but they hadn't burst.

Part III. Using Nouns, Pronouns, and Verbs

Each sentence below may contain two errors. On the lines before each sentence write in proper order the correct noun, pronoun, or verb. If a sentence contains only one error place C on the second line.

Example: roofs C Were you helping the men to repair the rooves?

- _____ 1. Here is some fat turkies in this pen.
- _____ 2. Before the sun had risen, she had did her work.
- _____ 3. Tom and he seen several of we girls.
- _____ 4. Ruths aunt designs and makes lady's hats.
- _____ 5. The coach and us boys put up shelves.
- _____ 6. Two bucketsful of blackberrys were sold by them.
- _____ 7. Both of her brother-in-laws are jockies.
- _____ 8. You had ought to have seen him when he run.
- _____ 9. She sells womens' clothes in Blair's and Brown's store.
- _____ 10. Us students have been reading mysterys.
- _____ 11. Neither of the boys have paid their dues.
- _____ 12. Why con't you learn Sam and I?
- _____ 13. Sarah and me are sure it is not our's.
- _____ 14. It was him who give the information.
- _____ 15. Beverly and her sang soloes.
- _____ 16. Helens aunt gave we girls some flowers.

- _____ 17. Harry and him sheared the sheeps.
- _____ 18. I asked if he was going with you and she.
- _____ 19. Is there many boy's clubs in your town?
- _____ 20. Each of the girls done what they could.
- _____ 21. Why don't someone fine out who's hat this is?
- _____ 22. Wasn't you and him there with us?
- _____ 23. You and she could of ridden with we boys.
- _____ 24. Jack and Dick's eyes were eager when they set down.
- _____ 25. It was her who arranged the lilies for you and I.

Part IV. Using Modifiers, Connectives, and Pronouns

Each sentence below may contain two errors. On the lines before each sentence write in proper order to correct adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, or pronoun. If a sentence contains only one error, place C on the second line.

Example: nor anything Neither Bob or he knew nothing about it.

- _____ 1. The book that fell off of the table must be her's.
- _____ 2. Randy and he sure need the money bad.
- _____ 3. They were kind of disappointed to learn that their plan was different than ours.
- _____ 4. It seems like Jerry always looks happily.
- _____ 5. If Sue and her were to the game, I didn't see them.
- _____ 6. Neither Jo or I have seen her, but I think she is some better today.
- _____ 7. Tom is the tallest and most handsome of the twins.
- _____ 8. Her and him couldn't do nothing about it.
- _____ 9. He looked like he had been frightened when he walked in the house.
- _____ 10. Jo and Eva are both real pretty, but Jo is the prettiest.
- _____ 11. Neither Fred or Jim had brought their instrument.

- _____ 12. I read in the paper where our town has had less accidents this year.
- _____ 13. Mike feels badly and stayed to home today.
- _____ 14. The girl who sits in back of me talks very slow.
- _____ 15. You should have divided the candy between the six boys like I told you.
- _____ 16. Most of us girls do not like those kinds of boys.
- _____ 17. Our team played real good, and we were all happy.
- _____ 18. We received hardly no letters from you and she.
- _____ 19. Neither of the boys would lend their books to Jo and she.
- _____ 20. The cheapest of the two dresses was the most colorful.
- _____ 21. Those roses smell more fragrantly than these kind of roses.
- _____ 22. Most every driver needs to drive more careful.
- _____ 23. Sarah would not sing without Beverly and me would sing with her.
- _____ 24. I heard that our class had less failures than your's.
- _____ 25. Someone beside Harriet and she should go.

Part V. Using All Parts of Speech

Each of the sentences below contains two errors. On the lines before each sentence write in proper order the corrections for these errors.

Example: us spoken Several of we students had spoke very indistinctly.

- _____ 1. Someone had hidden the candy, and us girls could find it nowheres.
- _____ 2. It seems like Mary and she are both some taller than you.
- _____ 3. The men whom I seen were them.
- _____ 4. Were you there when the boy's team was entertained by the men's club?
- _____ 5. Lloyd and he surely won't arrive safely without they drive slow.

- _____ 6. Nobody was to home beside him and her when I arrived.
- _____ 7. Some of us girls picked up two bucketsful of peaches that had fell during the storm.
- _____ 8. Richard sure looked handsome, and he sang very good.
- _____ 9. Most all the people thought that the smaller of the two flowers was the most fragrant.
- _____ 10. Neither Edna not Iva had given their report.
- _____ 11. Isn't these kind of shoes different than ours?
- _____ 12. If she were him, she would do like she was told.
- _____ 13. She felt badly because the work was not equally divided between the four members.
- _____ 14. Doesn't Bertha know that her sister-in-laws haven't received no invitation?
- _____ 15. When Sam and he came into the room, their dog was laying on the bed.

Part VI. Capitalization and Punctuation

In the sentences below correct the capitalization and punctuation.

Example: Tell me, Mamie, about your summer in ^Colorado.

1. Grandmother likes flowers. Especially roses asters and tulips.
2. My sister majored in french at Stanford university, said Ruth.
3. Do you know major Blevins he is stationed in South carolina.
4. Yes Marie I read "gulliver the great" a story about a dog.
5. The Mississippi river empties into the gulf of Mexico below New orleans Louisiana.
6. My aunt from the south spent christmas with us she had never seen snow before.
7. This is a problem Henry said that we must try to solve.

APPENDIX B
LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE TEST (FORM B)

Form B

Name _____

Part I. Classifying Sentences and Parts of Speech

On the first line before each sentence classify it as to form by writing S for simple, Cd for compound, Cx for complex. On the second line tell the part of speech of the word underlined by using abbreviations.

Example: Cd pron You must tell the truth, or you will be sorry.

- _____ 1. Good stories entertain us and broaden our sympathies.
- _____ 2. When we are discourteous, we are very foolish.
- _____ 3. The boys usually help us, but they have gone home.
- _____ 4. In early times the people had many superstitions.
- _____ 5. No one understood why he did not come.

Part II. Using Verbs

Each sentence below contains two underlined verbs. On the lines before each sentence write in proper order the correct forms. If only one verb is incorrect, write C on the second line.

Example: flown C The birds had flew away as soon as it had grown cold.

- _____ 1. You was chosen, but Martha don't like it.
- _____ 2. Diane would set there quietly if she was you.
- _____ 3. Why don't you leave her learn you that new trick?
- _____ 4. The pony that we had rode has been took to the barn.
- _____ 5. He drunk his milk after he had ate the cookies.
- _____ 6. She swum in the meet, but neither of her parents were there.
- _____ 7. The lock was broke, and the money had been stole.
- _____ 8. If my plaid dress hadn't been tore, I would have worn it.
- _____ 9. While she was laying down, I done the dishes.

- _____ 10. I haven't drove a car since I run into that pole.
- _____ 11. Although the pipes had froze, they had not burst.
- _____ 12. No one knowed when the letter had been wrote.
- _____ 13. There comes Jo and Ed, but each of them is late.
- _____ 14. The game begun early, but Carl and his mother was already in their seats.
- _____ 15. Vera had went to the store as soon as her mother give her the money.

Part III. Using Nouns, Pronouns, and Verbs

Each sentence below may contain two errors. On the lines before each sentence write in proper order the correct noun, pronoun, or verb. If a sentence contains only one error, place C on the second line.

Example: thieves him Weren't the thieves captured by the sheriff and he?

- _____ 1. Roberta and her were invited to both parties.
- _____ 2. Won't you please set here with Ken and I?
- _____ 3. Both of her son-in-laws are attornies.
- _____ 4. George and him are sure that it is their's.
- _____ 5. There was several monkies in the cage.
- _____ 6. Why wasn't you there when Dick run?
- _____ 7. Several of we boys seen Ed and him yesterday.
- _____ 8. It was him who give the instructions.
- _____ 9. Smith's and Blaire's store sells childrens' clothes.
- _____ 10. You could of ridden with we girls.
- _____ 11. She said she had did much work before the sun had risen.
- _____ 12. Don't anybody know who's book this is?
- _____ 13. Jane and I was carrying two bucketsful.
- _____ 14. Each of the girls have brought their lunch.
- _____ 15. It would be nice if I was going with you and he.
- _____ 16. Us students have been writing storys in class.

- _____ 17. There is many girl's camps in this region.
- _____ 18. Neither of the boys done what he had promised.
- _____ 19. This store had ought to sell baby's dresses.
- _____ 20. It was him who picked the daisies for you and I.
- _____ 21. Miss Brewer and us girls talked to Bob and me.
- _____ 22. Was you and her with them at the show?
- _____ 23. Rita and Jane's feet are tired, and the girls have set down.
- _____ 24. Jerrys uncle gave we fellows some tickets.
- _____ 25. Joan and me saw the deers in the park.

Part IV. Using Modifiers, Connectives, and Pronouns

Each sentence below may contain two errors. On the lines before each sentence write in proper order the correct adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, or pronoun. If a sentence contains only one error, place C on the second line.

Example: smarter well Jerry, the smartest of the twins, does his work good.

- _____ 1. Neither of the women would express their opinion of you or he.
- _____ 2. These kind of roses smell more sweetly than those roses.
- _____ 3. I think most everyone tries to drive careful.
- _____ 4. We were real happy because the boys played so good.
- _____ 5. He feels badly because he didn't do like he should.
- _____ 6. I saw in the paper where the money was divided between the five heirs.
- _____ 7. There would be less accidents if people would drive slower.
- _____ 8. There wasn't nothing that John and he could do to help.
- _____ 9. The boy who sits in back of me stayed to home today.
- _____ 10. Neither Betty or Nancy had finished their work.
- _____ 11. No one beside Jane and I is going.

- _____ 12. The longest one of the two books is by far the best written.
- _____ 13. It seems like Lucile always looks beautifully.
- _____ 14. He walked in the room just like nothing had happened.
- _____ 15. Bob and Don are sure tall, but Don is the tallest.
- _____ 16. The paper that fell off of the desk must be your's.
- _____ 17. Sam would not go without Bill and me went with him.
- _____ 18. Her dress is different than the others, but it is kind of pretty.
- _____ 19. Most of all us girls thought the lemonade tasted too sweetly.
- _____ 20. We couldn't see no one except Tom and he in the crowd.
- _____ 21. Weren't Susan and her to the show last night?
- _____ 22. Not many of we students like those kind of pencils.
- _____ 23. Bert and he sure do spell bad.
- _____ 24. I read in the paper where your school has less pupils than ours.
- _____ 25. Which of the twins is the prettiest and most popular?

Part V. Using All Parts of Speech

Each of the sentences below contains two errors. On the lines before each sentence write in proper order the corrections for these errors.

Example: run slowly Bert and he surely must have ran too slow.

- _____ 1. Why doesn't he divide the money between his two daughters and two son-in-laws?
- _____ 2. Neither Harry nor Glen are going to ride their bicycle.
- _____ 3. If I were her, I'd do like I promised.
- _____ 4. Some of us boys raked up two basketsful of leaves that had fell during the night.

- _____ 5. Ann sure looked beautiful, and she played good.
- _____ 6. Ed and he feel badly because they aren't no taller.
- _____ 7. Us girls have looked everywhere for the money that was hidden.
- _____ 8. Your purse was laying there when Nita and I come into the room.
- _____ 9. Were you sure that it was them whom you seen?
- _____ 10. There wasn't anybody to home beside her and me.
- _____ 11. Tom and he won't succeed without they act different.
- _____ 12. Although Ruth is the youngest of the two, most all people think she is the older.
- _____ 13. Those kind of books is different than hers.
- _____ 14. The girl's glee club often sings at the womens' club.
- _____ 15. It seems like Joe and he are both some taller.

Part VI. Capitalization and Punctuation

In the sentences below correct the capitalization and punctuation.

Example: Yes, she spent the winter in ^Florida, Nancy.

1. No Carl I have never read Lone cowboy the autobiography of Will James.
2. The Nile river flows into the Mediteranean sea near Alexandria egypt.
3. Richard likes stories. Particularly stories about sports pirates or animals.
4. After we have finished Ruby said let's go to a show.
5. I saw colonel Sawyer tuesday he asked me about you.
6. My uncle teaches spanish in Harvard College, James said.
7. Didn't you spend easter with your uncle he lives on a ranch in wyoming.

APPENDIX C

GUIDE FOR EVALUATING THEME COMPOSITIONS

HOW TO CHECK A THEME

I. Matters of Form: Check for these characteristics:

1. Is your title centered on the top line (or top two lines) of the first page? (Does the title really fit the theme, and give the reader a true idea of the theme's content?)
2. Have you skipped a line after the title?
3. Have you indented for the first paragraph?
4. Have you left a margin approximately one-half inch wide down the right-hand edge of the paper?
5. Have you left the last line at the bottom of each page blank? Never write on the last line.
6. Have you begun the writing on page two, and all following pages, on the very top line?
7. Have you placed page numbers in the upper right-hand corner of page two and all pages following? Page one is not numbered on ordinary themes. On long papers and research papers, page one is numbered on the last line, centered.
8. Have you indented all paragraphs an equal distance from the left margin line? Whether you indent one-half inch or one inch, be consistent throughout your theme.
9. Have you made all lines (except the first line in a paragraph) begin just at the left margin line?

II. Pitfalls to avoid: Check your theme for these point-losing errors:

1. Have you used the second person pronoun "you" when "one" should have been used? Search your theme carefully for this usage.
2. Have you used contractions such as don't, wouldn't, hasn't, can't, shouldn't, doesn't, and others? DO NOT use contractions. Use the full forms, written out as two words (do not, would not, has not).
3. Have you used "everyone" (which is singular) as an antecedent for "their" (which is plural)? "Everyone brought their coat" is incorrect. "Everyone brought his coat" is correct.
4. Have you used the word "it" excessively, or have you used "it" so that your reader cannot decide what "it" refers to?

5. Have you used the ampersand (&--the sign for "and") instead of writing out the word "and?" The ampersand is not permitted in formal writing. It is to be used in shorthand note-taking only.
6. Have you used "start" when you mean "begin" or "started to" when you mean "began?"
7. Have you used "human" when you should use "human beings?" Human is an adjective.
8. Have you trimmed all unnecessary words from your sentences? Can you express what you mean in fewer words?
9. Are you sure that you have not used a comma when you should have used a period?
10. Have you used commas to separate words in a series? "He ate steak, potatoes, and peas." "Martha washed the dishes, made the beds, and swept the kitchen."
11. Have you mixed present and past tense of verbs, instead of sticking to one tense throughout?
12. Did you write "dummy sentences?" That is, did you write a series of words lacking a subject or a verb--a "fragment." Any good sentence must express a complete thought even when taking away from all the sentences around it.
13. Are you guilty of using "sort of" and "kind of" when you should be using "rather" or "quite." "He was rather fat." "She was quite disappointed." "The day was somewhat cloudy."
14. Have you pruned slang words and phrases from your ideas?
15. Have you checked your dictionary for correct spelling?
16. Have you used APOSTROPHES TO INDICATE POSSESSION? Jim's clothes, the baby's hands, the crowd's emotions, and executive's ability, etc.

III. Content:

1. Did you decide to begin with what you wanted to get over to your reader? Did you then decide on three or four thoughts or arguments which would get this point over?
2. Did you express only one main thought, with its development and examples of proof in each paragraph? (Did you throw irrelevant thoughts into paragraphs where these thoughts did not fit, or did not add anything to the point?)

3. Did you make broad statements which are not logical, and which you cannot prove? (Did you generalize, and jump to conclusions, without giving good evidence for your conclusion?)
4. Did you use trite expressions (cliches) which are worn out, boring, and like stale jokes, are not in the least interesting?

APPENDIX D
GUIDE FOR REVIEWING BASIC
GRAMMATICAL PRINCIPLES

A GUIDE FOR THE REVIEW OF BASIC GRAMMATICAL
PRINCIPLES AND COMMON ERRORS

Agreement of Subject and Verb

1. When the subject is composed of two or more elements joined by and, the subject is plural and requires a plural verb.

Example: Both the team and the coach (~~is~~, are) to blame.

2. When the subject is composed of two elements joined by neither...nor, the verb agrees with the nearer element in number and person.

Example: Neither the boys nor the coach (~~are~~, is) to blame.

Neither the boy nor his parents (~~is~~, are) to blame.

Neither I nor he (am, was, is) to blame.

3. When the subject is a plural indicating a quantity or sum (regarded as a unit), the subject is treated as singular.

Example: Two dollars (~~are~~, is) too much to pay for a ticket.

Five hours (~~were~~, was) a long time to sit in a lecture room.

4. The subject complement (predicate nominative) does not affect the number of the verb.

Example: The only trouble we had on the trip (~~were~~, was) two flat tires.

5. A parenthetical element between a subject and a verb does not affect the number of the verb.

Example: The mayor, as well as all the members of the city council (~~were~~, was) strongly opposed to the idea.

6. Beware of making a verb agree with an intervening word instead of with the subject.

Example: The result of his accusations (~~were~~, was) to make everybody suspicious of him.

7. There is should be followed by a singular noun; there are, by a plural.

Example: There (~~is~~, are) at least twenty people here.

8. Each, every, either, and neither followed by an of phrase are singular subjects.

Example: Each of the men (~~were~~, was) given something to carry.

9. The number of the subject who is determined by the number of the antecedent.

Example: He is one of the men who (~~is~~, are) on vacation.
He is the only one of the men who (~~are~~, is) taking a vacation.

Troubles with Pronouns

10. A pronoun agrees with its antecedent in gender, number, and person.

Example: Nobody did (~~their~~, his) best.

Everyone had a feeling of regret as (~~they~~, he) (~~were~~, was) handed (~~their~~, his) diploma.

(Note: Everybody, anybody, nobody, anything are singular; the masculine personal pronouns he, his, him, are also used as pronouns of common gender, and are generally preferred to the awkward locutions he or she, his or her, him or her.)

11. All forms of the linking verb be are followed by the nominative case. (predicate nominative or subject complement)

Example: The best players were (~~him~~, he) and Joe.

12. The subject of an infinitive is in the object case.

Example: They thought (~~he~~, him) to be the burglar.

13. When a subordinate clause is introduced by who, or whom, determine whether the pronoun is the subject of the object or the related verb, or the object of a preposition, and then the appropriate case form.

Example: This is a wonderful opportunity for (~~whomever~~, whoever) is willing to work hard. (Subject of verb)

He is the man (~~who~~, whom) I saw leaving the building. (Object of preposition)

Joe, (~~who~~, whom) I was told to accompany, did not appear. (Object of infinitive)

14. When a pronoun is coupled with a noun, use the same form which you would use if the noun were omitted.

Example: Dad would not let John and (~~I~~, me) go to the game.

The only ones who couldn't go were John and (me, I).

15. After than and as in elliptical clauses of comparison, use the case which the expanded form would demand.

Example: He can play tennis better than (me, I).

I like her as well as (~~him~~, he) (likes, her).

I like her as well as (I like) (he, him).

16. When using a pronoun-appositive combination (we boys, us boys) use the form of the pronoun which shows the proper relationship to the verb or to the preposition.

Example: (~~Us~~, We) boys were not allowed to go near.

The scoutmaster took a great deal of interest in (we, us) boys.

Troubles with Verbs

17. Do not use the past-participial form for the past tense.

Example: He wanted to know what I (~~done~~, did) for a living.

18. Do not use the past-tense form for the past participle.

Example: The accident wouldn't have happened if I had (~~took~~, taken) time to clean the windshield.

19. In an if clause stating a condition contrary to fact, use the subjective mood.

Example: If I (~~was~~, were) you, I'd leave early.

20. Use were instead of was in the second person singular.

Example: I didn't know you (~~was~~, were) there.

Confusion of Grammatical Functions

21. Do not use a personal pronoun for a demonstrative adjective.

Example: I had a hard time learning all (~~them~~, those) rules.

22. Use the comparative degree of the adjective when only two persons or things are involved.

Example: Of the two singers, she is clearly the (~~best~~, better).

23. When a modifier follows a verb, be especially careful to determine whether an adjective or an adverb is called for. If the verb is modified, use an adverb; if the subject is modified, use a predicate adjective.

Example: He doesn't hear very (~~good~~, well).

I felt (~~badly~~, bad) when we lost the game.

(Note: Copulative (linking) verbs such as is, seems, becomes, feels, sounds, smells, tastes, and looks are usually followed by a predicate adjective.)

24. Do not substitute a reflexive pronoun for a personal pronoun.

Example: He often told John and (~~myself~~, me) how hard they worked in the old days.

Miscellaneous Errors in Specific Constructions and Words

25. When several items are named in the form of an a, b, and c series, they would have the same grammatical construction.

WRONG: Harold enjoyed reading, to dance, and he also liked athletics.

RIGHT: Harold liked to read, to dance, and to participate in athletics.

26. Avoid dangling modifiers--that is, modifiers which cannot be connected immediately and unmistakably to the words to which they refer.

WRONG: Leaning out the window, the parade was seen coming down the street.

RIGHT: Leaning out the window, I saw the parade coming down the street.

WRONG: When ten years old, my mother died.

RIGHT: When I was ten years old, my mother died.

27. Avoid using more than one negative in a statement.

Example: I didn't have (~~no~~, any) fear about the result.

28. Do not use the expressions is when, is where, or is because.

WRONG: A safety is when a ball carrier is tackled behind his own goal line.

RIGHT: A safety occurs when a ball carrier is tackled behind his own goal line.

WRONG: The reason the roof leaked is because the chimney had cracked.

RIGHT: The reason the roof leaked is that the chimney had cracked.

WRONG: A pentagon is where a figure has five sides.

RIGHT: A pentagon is a figure that has five sides.

29. Abbreviations should be used sparingly, if at all, in formal writing. The following are among the terms which should be spelled out: names of months, days of the week; states, countries, and studies; titles used without proper names.

Example: They called the (~~Dr.~~, doctor).

The (math, mathematics) (~~prof~~, professor) scheduled a lecture on the (~~2nd~~, second) (~~Wed.~~, Wednesday) in (~~Jan.~~, January).

30. The abbreviation etc. should never be preceded by and.

Example: We stuffed the Christmas stockings with candy, pecans, almonds, ~~and~~ etc.

31. Use the possessive case of the pronoun, not the objective, with a gerund.

Example: The principal was not amused by (~~them~~, their) playing poker in class.

32. The possessive case of all nouns is formed with the apostrophe. To form the singular possessive, add the apostrophe and s.

Example: The dog's ear, the man's hat, my boss's car, Mr. Smith's child.

To form the plural possessive, add an apostrophe if the plural form of the noun ends in s. If the plural form of the noun does not end in s, add the apostrophe and s.

Example: All the babies' mothers, the two children's clothes, many soldiers' lives, the mice's nest.

33. Do not use the apostrophe to indicate the possessive case of personal pronouns.

Example: There was the bird on (~~it's~~, its) nest.

(~~Who's~~, Whose) house is that?

34. Do not use the apostrophe to indicate the plural of nouns.

Example: He addressed a meeting of the (~~farmer's~~, farmers).

35. Distinguish between the two verbs lie and lay in their forms and uses. Lie - lay - lain is an intransitive verb meaning to recline or to rest; lay - laid - laid is a transitive verb meaning to put or to place.

36. Distinguish between the two verbs sit and set in their forms and uses. The chief distinction is the same as that between lie and lay.

Example: The flower pot (~~sets~~, sits) in the window.

I decided to (~~sit~~, set) the flowers in the window.

(Note: The common notion that sit and lie are used only with living beings, and set and lay with inanimate things is false.)

37. Beware of the careless substitution of a word for another which sounds like it in rapid speech, such as of for have.

Example: I knew I ought to (~~of~~, have) gone.

I knew I should (~~of~~, have) gone.

38. The objective case is always required in between-phrases.

Example: Just between you and (~~I~~, me), she is jealous.

I think that's a matter between you and (~~he~~, him).

39. Avoid such illiterate expressions as borned, disremember, drownded, hadn't ought, irregardless, kind of tired, plenty good, and theirselves.

40. The indefinite pronoun one should be followed by he, his, or him, instead of they, their, or them. (See number 10 Note)

41. Do not use don't with a subject in the third person singular.

Example: He (~~den't~~, doesn't) know what to do next.

42. Do not confuse like with as or as if. Like should be followed by a noun or pronoun without a verb.

Example: John, (~~as~~, like) most successful hunters, had very good eyes.

As or as if should be followed by a noun or pronoun and a verb.

Example: Children don't look upon these matters (~~like~~, as) their parents do.

That dog howls (~~like~~, as if) he is hurt.

43. Before words beginning with a vowel sound, use the article an instead of a.

Example: She took (a, an) overdose of the drug.

44. Capitalize proper nouns and usually adjectives derived from proper nouns. A proper noun is one which gives a definite name to a person, place, or thing, as opposed to a common noun, which denoted a general group or an indefinite number of that group.

Proper Nouns and
Proper Adjectives

North Star
 History 113
 Mount McKinley
 Mr. Jones
 South (region below Mason
 and Dixon's line)
 Civil War
 Democratic Party
 "Will you come, Father?"
 (Refer to the dictionary when you are in doubt)

Common Nouns and
Common Adjectives

a star
 a history book
 mountain
 man
 south (a direction)
 a civil disturbance
 a democratic person
 "Will your father come?"

45. Capitalize the first words in a quoted sentence.

Example: She asked, "Can you direct me to the English office?"

46. Capitalize the first and all important words in titles.

Example: Best Plays of the Modern American Theater

Punctuation Errors

47. Comma splices, fused sentences, and sentence fragments & appearing in freshman papers are usually accounted in-
 48. fallible signs of illiteracy.

a. A comma splice is the joining of two sentences (or independent clauses) with only a comma between them.

WRONG: Kamchathka is only a few hundred miles from Attu Island, in general appearance it much resembles the Aleutians.

RIGHT: Kanchathka is only a few hundred miles from Attu Islands; in general appearance it much resembles the Aleutians.

b. A fused sentence is two sentences (or two independent clauses) joined without punctuation and without a coordinate conjunction (e.g., and, or, nor, but, yet).

WRONG: He is the finest brain specialist in Oklahoma he has written two texts on brain surgery.

RIGHT: He is the finest brain specialist in Oklahoma; he has written two texts on brain surgery.

c. A sentence fragment is a phrase or clause written as a complete sentence.

1) A phrase

WRONG: A good man

RIGHT: He is a good man.

2) An appositive phrase

WRONG: Mr. Whiteside, the man who came to dinner.
 RIGHT: This is Mr. Whiteside, the man who came to dinner.

3) A participial phrase

WRONG: All this being true.
 RIGHT: All this is true.

4) A gerund phrase

WRONG: In going home.
 RIGHT: In going home, try to be careful.

5) A dependent clause

WRONG: Which was done to hurt our boy.
 RIGHT: This was done to hurt our boy.

49. Non-restrictive modifiers should be set off by commas; restrictive modifiers should not be set off by commas. If the modifier serves to identify the word modified, it is non-restrictive. (It is incorrect to say that a non-restrictive modifier can be left out without changing the meaning of the sentence.)

Example: My oldest sister, who is studying art in Paris, will fly home for the holidays. (non-restrictive)

Cars which have defective brakes should not be allowed on the highways. (restrictive)

50. Parenthetical expressions, nouns of address, yes and no at the beginning of a sentence, and consecutive items of dates and addresses are set off by commas. Ordinarily, appositives are set off by commas.

Example: Yes, I visited Mr. J. W. Smith, the agricultural expert, when I was in Kansas City, Missouri, last year.

To be sure, the child's birthday was celebrated Monday, February 2, 1948, in his aunt's home.

John, please come home.

(Note: Do not use a single comma between a subject and its verb, between a verb and its subject, or between a verb and its predicate nominative.)

51. Use a semicolon to separate an independent clause from a following clause beginning with a conjunctive adverb such as then, thus, however.

WRONG: My brother is left-handed, consequently he is an awkward writer.

RIGHT: My brother is left-handed; consequently he is an awkward writer.

WRONG: You may borrow my lawn mower whenever you need it, however, the blades need sharpening.
RIGHT: You may borrow my lawn mower whenever you need it; however, the blades need sharpening.

52. Quotations marks are used to enclose a direct quotation.

Example: The porter remarked, "There is room for one bag on this truck."

53. Do not use a semicolon to cut off a phrase or dependent clause from the main clause.

WRONG: The dean looked up; a half-smile on his face.

RIGHT: The dean looked up, a half-smile on his face.

APPENDIX E
EVALUATION CHECKLIST USED TO EVALUATE
THEME COMPOSITIONS

Name: _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Student I.D. Number _____ Theme Number _____ Period _____

I. COMPOSITION

Score Possible _____

A. Content		30				
1. Sticking to the subject		5				
2. Selection of material		10				
3. Adequate illustrations and details to justify statements		15				
B. Organization		35				
1. Introductory paragraph						
a. Topic sentence		2				
b. Inclusion of basis for discussion		9				
2. Subsequent paragraphs	2 3 4 5					
a. Topic sentence (premise)	<table><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>					4
b. Development (proof)	<table><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>					12
c. Application to subject (projection)	<table><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>					
C. Presentation		15				
1. Style						
a. Well-chosen words		3				
b. Graphic phrases		3				
c. Economy of words		3				
2. Proper use of words		3				
3. Variety in sentence structure		3				

II. TECHNIQUE		20
A. Appearance		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
1. Neatness		2
2. Legibility		4
B. Mechanics (grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure		14
<hr/>		
TOTAL		100