

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 181 464

CS 205 361

TITLE Teaching of Writing: Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in "Dissertation Abstracts International," July through December 1979 (Vol. 40 Nos. 1 through 6).

INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, Ill.

PUB DATE 79

NOTE 22p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; Annotated Bibliographies; Communication Skills; \*Composition (Literary); \*Doctoral Theses; Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; English Instruction; \*Evaluation Methods; Grammar; Higher Education; Success Factors; \*Teaching Methods; \*Writing Skills

IDENTIFIERS \*Composition Process; \*Writing Research

ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 34 titles deal with a variety of topics, including the following: an evaluation of college-level dictionaries for use in freshman composition; peer feedback during the writing process; the effects of formal, traditional grammar study on writing ability; the impact of teacher/student interaction on the remediation of writing deficiencies; the therapeutic benefits of free or informal writing; writing behavior of students in an open classroom; the relationship of the concept of audience to the teaching of composition; treatment of writing apprehension and its effects on composition; personal writing; the effect of relaxation and guided imagery on creative thinking and writing; teacher verification of improvement in student writing generated through the addition of free modifiers; teaching deductive logic in a college composition class; writing centers; audience awareness; the effect of knowledge of results on the maintenance of writing skills; a workshop/tutorial experiment in developmental writing; the relationship between the reading and writing abilities of underprepared college students and implications for the teaching of writing; the teaching of composition in the English classroom and in the content areas of social studies and science; paragraph analysis for teaching composition; and the effect of visual perception training on specificity in writing. (FL)

\*\*\*\*\*
\* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made. \*
\* from the original document. \*
\*\*\*\*\*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,  
EDUCATION & WELFARE  
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRO-  
DUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM  
THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGIN-  
ATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS  
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT  
OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Teaching of Writing:

Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in Dissertation  
Abstracts International, July through December 1979 (Vol. 40  
Nos. 1 through 6)

Compiled by the staff of the  
ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS  
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

University Microfilms

International

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES  
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The dissertation titles contained here are published with permission of the University Microfilms International, publishers of Dissertation Abstracts International (copyright © 1979 by University Microfilms International), and may not be reproduced without their prior permission.

This bibliography has been compiled as part of a continuing series designed to make information on relevant dissertations available to users of the ERIC system. Monthly issues of Dissertation Abstracts International are reviewed in order to compile abstracts of dissertations on related topics, which thus become accessible in searches of the ERIC database. Ordering information for the dissertations themselves is included at the end of the bibliography.

Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

Arnold, Donna Ialongo

AN EVALUATION OF COLLEGE-LEVEL DICTIONARIES FOR USE IN FRESHMAN COMPOSITION

Benson, Nancy Louise

THE EFFECTS OF PEER FEEDBACK DURING THE WRITING PROCESS ON WRITING PERFORMANCE, REVISION BEHAVIOR, AND ATTITUDE TOWARD WRITING

Bowden, Sandra Pope

THE EFFECTS OF FORMAL, TRADITIONAL GRAMMAR STUDY ON THE WRITING ABILITY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Bowles, Callie Ellen Reid

A CASE STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION ON THE REMEDIATION OF WRITING DEFICIENCIES IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Boyer, Lawrence Barton

THE GENERAL STUDIES PROGRAM: A PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERDISCIPLINARY CLUSTER COLLEGE AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE FEATURING THE USE OF SMALL GROUPS FOR COURSES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN POTENTIAL AND ENGLISH COMPOSITION

Brand, Alice Glarden

THE THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS OF FREE OR INFORMAL WRITING AMONG SELECTED EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Bynum, Henri Sue Dearing

A STUDY OF THE PERCEIVED NEED FOR EMPHASIS ON WRITING SKILLS AMONG FACULTY AND GRADUATE STUDENTS AND OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A MODEL FOR INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION IN WRITING IMPROVEMENT AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL

Cartwright, Patricia Jean

WRITING BEHAVIOUR OF SELECTED FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS IN AN OPEN CLASSROOM

Cochran, Janet Fyne

BETWEEN WRITER AND READER: THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE CONCEPT OF AUDIENCE TO THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION

Collins, James Leonard

TEACHING WRITING: AN INTERACTIONIST APPROACH TO ABBREVIATED AND IDIOSYNCRATIC LANGUAGE IN THE WRITING OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Fox, Roy F.

TREATMENT OF WRITING APPREHENSION AND ITS EFFECTS ON COMPOSITION

Hashimoto, Irvin Yuichi

THREE PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNICATION AND THEIR APPLICATION TO ASSIGNING AND EVALUATING STUDENT WRITING

Heyda, John Francis

CAPTIVE AUDIENCES: COMPOSITION PEDAGOGY, THE LIBERAL ARTS CURRICULUM, AND THE RISE OF MASS HIGHER EDUCATION

Hill, Edward Thomas

PERSONAL WRITING: A DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING PROGRAM FOR CLARITY OF COMMUNICATION THROUGH SELF-DIRECTION

Kearns, Phyllis Keeseey

THE EFFECT OF RELAXATION AND GUIDED IMAGERY ON THE CREATIVE THINKING AND WRITING OF FOURTH, FIFTH, AND SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS GIFTED

Kemp, Jan Hammock

A COMPARISON OF TWO PROCEDURES FOR IMPROVING THE WRITING OF DEVELOPMENTAL WRITERS

King, Harriet Lowry

TEACHER VERIFICATION OF IMPROVEMENT IN STUDENT WRITING GENERATED THROUGH THE ADDITION OF FREE MODIFIERS

McCleary, William James

TEACHING DEDUCTIVE LOGIC: A TEST OF THE TOULMIN AND ARISTOTELIAN MODELS FOR CRITICAL THINKING AND COLLEGE COMPOSITION

Myers, Charles Frederick

TEACHER AND PEER EVALUATIVE FEEDBACK IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TWO COMPOSITION SKILLS: PUNCTUATION AND PARAGRAPH UNITY

North, Stephen Michael

WRITING CENTERS: A SOURCEBOOK

Nugent, Harold Elmer

THE ROLE OF AUDIENCE AWARENESS IN THE WRITING OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN

Pitts, Marcella Rosalie

THE RELATIONSHIP OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND WRITING PERFORMANCE IN REQUIRED COMPOSITION CLASSROOMS

Rubin, Joseph Bernard

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE AS AFFECTING THE DECISION-MAKING IN PLANNING AND EVALUATING STUDENTS' WRITING IN GRADES FOUR, FIVE AND SIX

Schleicher, John Gordon

THE EFFECT OF KNOWLEDGE OF RESULTS ON THE MAINTENANCE OF WRITING SKILLS

Self, Warren Pratt

A DESCRIPTION, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION OF COMPOSITION FOR PERSONAL GROWTH: AN APPROACH TO TEACHING WRITING

Shine, Richard Augustine

THE REMEDIATION CONUNDRUM: A WORKSHOP/TUTORIAL EXPERIMENT IN DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING

Sussna, Sylvia

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SELF-ADMINISTERED ANALYTIC GUIDE FOR USE BY GRADUATE STUDENTS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF WRITING AND THE EVALUATION OF ITS ASSISTANCE IN IMPROVING WRITING SKILLS IN RESEARCH PAPERS

Tang, Melanie

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE READING AND WRITING ABILITIES OF UNDERPREPARED COLLEGE STUDENTS

Tierney, Patricia O'Neill

A STUDY OF THE COMPOSITION OBJECTIVES OF THE PITTSBURGH SCHOLARS PROGRAM IN ENGLISH, GRADES 10 AND 11

Tight, Mary Ann

A SURVEY OF THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM AND IN THE CONTENT AREAS OF SOCIAL STUDIES AND SCIENCE

Trageser, Susan Gail  
THE STUDENT IN THE ROLE OF SPECTATOR-  
OBSERVER-COMMUNICATOR: THE RELATION-  
SHIP BETWEEN VISUAL PERCEPTION AND  
SPECIFICITY IN WRITING

Walpole, Jane Raymond  
PARAGRAPH ANALYSIS FOR TEACHING  
COMPOSITION

Wilson, Jack Howard  
THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION IN STATE  
TWO-YEAR TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS IN  
THE UNITED STATES

Young, Eugenia Woolard  
AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY TO DETERMINE  
THE EFFECTS OF INDIVIDUALLY PRE-  
SCRIBED INSTRUCTION ON ACHIEVEMENT  
IN, AND ATTITUDES TOWARD A WRITTEN  
COMMUNICATION COURSE

**AN EVALUATION OF COLLEGE-LEVEL DICTIONARIES  
FOR USE IN FRESHMAN COMPOSITION** Order No. 7924366

ARNOLD, Donna Alongo, Ph.D. Northern Illinois University,  
1979. 342pp.

The study is an evaluation of how well college-level dictionaries do serve the market they are primarily designed for-- freshman composition. An examination of past criteria for dictionary evaluation shows that there is no consensus among evaluators on criteria and that many evaluations are highly impressionistic, a quality difficult to avoid when judging something that is both an art and a science. The criteria for evaluation in this study, specifically designed with freshman composition students in mind, are: 1) Authority; 2) Quantitative Factors; 3) Front Matter; 4) Qualitative Factors; 5) Synonym Treatment; 6) Usage and Label Treatment, and 7) Appendices. Several of these criteria have not been emphasized or even used in other studies. Front Matter receives emphasis because it may be used effectively to familiarize students with facts concerning dictionary use, and because it gives important clues to whether the dictionary is predominantly descriptive or prescriptive. An enlightened balance between these two positions is needed for composition students. Synonym treatment is important because writing students often have problems choosing the right word for a given context. Fully discriminated synonymies aid the student in precise use of language; indiscriminate synonym lists, however, do not. Usage and label treatment has become more important since the storm of protest over Webster's Third New International Dictionary. Composition students need usage guidance which is fully descriptive of usage in formal writing. The results of the evaluation showed that no dictionary was truly ideal for use in freshman composition; but one, Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, came closest to that ideal. The American Heritage Dictionary was eliminated for use because of its narrow prescriptive pronouncements on usage, best indicated by its use of the highly unreliable but much publicized Usage Panel. Funk & Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary should not be used because it is out-of-date and no longer reflects the contemporary language. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary does not give students much guidance on usage, but it does give them hundreds of indiscriminate synonym lists which will only serve to confuse them. The Random House College Dictionary also lists synonyms indiscriminately, so it should not be the first choice of the writing instructor. Webster's New World Dictionary can be used effectively in the classroom by instructors who spend some part of each writing course familiarizing students with their dictionaries.

**THE EFFECTS OF PEER FEEDBACK DURING THE WRITING PROCESS ON WRITING PERFORMANCE, REVISION BEHAVIOR, AND ATTITUDE TOWARD WRITING**

Order No. 7923212

BENSON, Nancy Louise, Ph.D. University of Colorado at Boulder, 1979. 143pp. Director: Professor Ruth Cline

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of peer feedback during the writing process on the writing performance, revision behavior, and attitude toward writing of junior high school students. Two types of feedback, different in the amount of information and reinforcement provided, were compared to a control situation.

Three classes each of six volunteer teachers were involved. Each teacher taught both feedback treatments and the control treatment in separate language arts classes. Data from 288 students were analyzed with a balanced design using three factors: treatment, sex of the student, and teacher. Analysis of covariance was used with writing performance variables and attitude toward writing; analysis of variance was used with the revision variables. There were nine dependent variables: quality of writing, total words, words per t-unit (a measure of sentence subordination), paragraph revision, sentence revision, word revision, cosmetic revision, total revision (a sum of the four revision types), and attitude toward writing.

The ten-week experiment was preceded and followed by a writing sample and an attitude toward writing assessment. All students completed a core composition curriculum, consisting of five formal assignments. All students were instructed to revise at least twice during the two weeks given for each assignment. In the two feedback treatments, students met in small groups and exchanged papers with fellow students. Following the reading, students completed the feedback instrument provided. A highly structured scale for five aspects of writing was used to give and receive information feedback; a loosely structured form was used to elicit positive comments about the draft in the reinforcement feedback treatment. The control group was given teacher-directed revision activities; no group interaction during the writing took place. Following the experiment, a posttest writing assignment was administered over a two-day period. Both pens and pencils were used to distinguish revision behavior. The attitude measure used initially was administered again. Each pretest and posttest essay was scored holistically by trained raters. Revision was identified by a comparison of the pencil and pen drafts written on successive days.

The findings show statistical support for the effect of peer feedback. The experimental treatment achieved statistical significance at .05 or beyond for five dependent variables: quality of writing, paragraph revision, sentence revision, word revision, and total revision. For attitude toward writing, the effect of the treatment was evident in a significant treatment by sex interaction.

Sex of the student had a significant main effect on quality of writing, total words, paragraph revision, and attitude toward writing. Correlations of quality of writing with other variables suggest that composition teachers should encourage length in the number of words, extensive revision, and positive attitudes toward writing.

**THE EFFECTS OF FORMAL, TRADITIONAL GRAMMAR STUDY ON THE WRITING ABILITY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Order No. 7920025

BOWDEN, Sandra Pope, Ph.D. University of South Carolina, 1979. 101pp.

This study investigated differences in achievement in writing skills of students who were taught composition with the study of traditional grammar and those who were taught composition without the study of traditional grammar. The second purpose was to investigate differences in the attitudes toward their writing of those students who studied composition with grammar and those who studied composition without grammar.

Four ninth-grade English classes in a large high school in the midlands of South Carolina were studied for a nine-week period. A pretest/posttest control group design was implemented to assess changes in student writing performance and attitudes from the beginning to the end of the study.

The pretest and posttest materials administered to them were the following: (1) Student compositions rated on several criteria and (2) A semantic differential test to assess attitudes toward perception of writing skills, of instruction, and English study.

The hypothesis on writing achievement was tested by using correlated t tests comparing mean scores for both groups on the eight variables for assessing writing ability. The hypothesis on student attitudes toward their own writing, the instructional method, and the subject matter was tested by analyzing the data from correlated t tests comparing the mean scores for both groups on the semantic differential.

On the basis of this study, the investigator concludes that, for students such as those described in this study: (1) The benefit of studying formal, traditional grammar to improve student composition is doubtful and (2) The benefit of studying formal, traditional grammar to improve student attitudes toward their own writing skills, the instructional method, or the subject matter is doubtful.

**A CASE STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION ON THE REMEDIATION OF WRITING DEFICIENCIES IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Order No. 7925361

BOWLES, Callie Ellen Reid, Ed.D. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1979. 166pp.

The purpose of this research study was to provide insight into the impact on basic writing skills remediation of individual teacher-student interaction in a community-college remedial English setting. The study dealt with such affective and cognitive variables of this interaction as pedagogical techniques, teacher sensitivity to the behavioral cues of students during interaction, use of positive and negative comments about students' writing, and student traits like motivational level and capacity to tolerate stress. Since the goal of this study--understanding of human behavior--required qualitative rather than quantitative data, case study methodology was more appropriate than experimental-design methodology. Participant observation, teacher-student interaction in the classroom, interviews with subjects, and perusal of the student subjects' compositions and permanent records were data-collection devices. The unit of data analysis was the "interact," defined as a chain of at least two alternate behavioral exchanges of teacher and student.

Nearly seventy "interacts" involving two female remedial English teachers and nine students provided the following information. Neither teacher was empathic, for neither seemed to put herself into the place of the students who felt insecure, apprehensive, and distressed about their inability to write competently. Both teachers seemed to have narrow vision, failing to understand the psychological pain that students underwent when the teachers negatively criticized the students' writing. The teachers did not perceive the compositions as extensions of the students' selves which should be handled respectfully and carefully. The teachers did not perceive themselves as maternal figures who should tend to the psychological needs of students. Instead, the teachers perceived their roles as didactic in the narrow sense of the word "didactic," and one teacher was not even didactic with students whom she judged unworthy of her help. Nor did either teacher realize the cruelty of her own behavior, but such insensitivity was apparent to an observer of the interaction. The students' unpleasant experiences in the remedial classroom strengthened the students' bad feelings and made students less likely to accept their own shortcomings--academic and psychological--as part of the cause of their failure to remediate basic writing flaws. Perceiving the teachers as having little genuine faith in the students' chances of successful remediation, the students were more likely to condemn the teachers as the sole cause of the problem.

Nor did either teacher use any diagnostic techniques to determine the entry-level behaviors of students related to the instruction that they were to undergo. All students had to complete the same writing assignments and the grammar text reading and exercises regardless of their individual basic writing problems. Likewise, the teachers did not relate the grammar exercises to the learning objectives of the course, instead treating the exercises as isolated units in the study of formal grammar. Neither teacher explained the relevance of the grammar exercises to the students' writing deficiencies. Also, neither teacher devised specific learning tasks that when completed would lead students to attainment of an overall learning objective. The teachers did not concentrate on helping students master small, discrete units of material, the mastery of which would function as positive reinforcement and therefore as an incentive to continued effort.

**THE GENERAL STUDIES PROGRAM: A PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERDISCIPLINARY CLUSTER COLLEGE, AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE FEATURING THE USE OF SMALL GROUPS FOR COURSES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN POTENTIAL AND ENGLISH COMPOSITION**

Order No. 7916650

BOYER, Lawrence Barton, A.D. The University of Michigan, 1979. 389pp. Co-Chairmen: Timothy G. Davids, Walter Clark

This project can be divided into two parts. The first part, chapters one through four, describes the existentialist-humanist orientation of the cluster college described in this project; the rationale for creating it and others like it; several aspects of trying to establish it on the campus of a community college; and the general nature of it, including its courses, operation, methodology, and interdisciplinary approach. In the text of this project, the terms cluster college, self-contained program, and the General Studies Program are used somewhat synonymously. These terms denote an educational program which shares many resources of the college at which it is located but also has its own philosophy, educational goals and objectives, teaching-learning methodology, course content, full-time staff, student selection criteria, student population, housing, budget, and administrator.

The second part of the project, chapters five and six, describes the courses in the development of human potential and English composition. The course in the development of human potential contains a series of structured exercises for small groups to be used for a semester to enhance the psychological development of the students in the General Studies Program. It is included because one of the major assumptions of the Program is that improved psychological functioning supports improved academic performance. The English composition course, based on the concepts of linguistic security and dialect acceptance and on the principles of humanistic psychology and education, also uses small groups. Among other things, it employs small groups to present some pre-writing experiences, to provide an audience for student writers, and to teach editing and proofreading skills in the service of increasing students' written fluency. In this project these courses are described separately, but they would be taught in an integrated way if the General Studies Program were established. The reason for this is that the English composition course also employs structured exercises to help the small groups develop rapport among its members to provide a good climate for their work. The groups in the composition course would be the same ones used for the human potential course, thus making more efficient use of the students' and staff's time and energy.

This second part can also be viewed as a separate course in English composition in which several small-group activities from the human potential course are combined with group methods for teaching writing. This combination has been used as a composition course which was successfully taught in the regular curriculum at a community college. (The evaluation data, for this course, including some before and after writing specimens, are included in the appendix of this project.) This course can be taught more effectively, though, in a self-contained program where it can be separated but integrated with the human development course. This arrangement not only allows more time for the writing and editing experiences; it also increases the chances for a more comprehensive and intensive human development experience, since more time becomes available for structured group activities, professional facilitation, and peer-group interaction. These advantages are just some of the many reasons for the creation of a cluster college, an educational structure that can offer more effective educational experiences at the community college than those gained in the traditional structure in regard to developing students as people in their own right and consequently developing them as fluent writers.

**THE THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS OF FREE OR INFORMAL WRITING AMONG SELECTED EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS**  
Order No. 7917903

BRAND, Alice Glarden, Ed D Rutgers University The State University of New Jersey (New Brunswick), 1979. 337pp.  
Chairperson: Robert P. Parker

Purpose

Because expository writing has long been considered as making a major contribution to cognition, the contributions of more personal modes of writing to individual development and well-being have been largely ignored. Literature drawn from theory and past practices in English education, psychotherapy, and school-sponsored mental health, supports personal writing as capable of effecting positive psychosocial outcomes as a unique tool which English teachers may employ toward therapeutic ends. The present study evaluates the therapeutic effects of a school-based, intensive free or informal writing program on selected eighth graders.

Hypotheses

Two principal hypotheses guided this study. The major hypothesis concerns the relationship between the treatment and therapeutic gains:

1. Students participating in the intensive, personal writing program will show greater gains in self-information than non-participants.
2. Experimental subjects will show greater positive changes in their self-concept.
3. They will experience fewer problems.

The minor hypothesis concerns the relationship between the treatment and the student writing itself:

1. The writings of experimental subjects will show greater gains in qualitative features than those of control subjects.
2. Their writings will show greater gains in technical features.

Methodology

The basic design was a pre/posttest, experimental/control group investigation carried out over a five-month period. The school chosen for the study was a racially-mixed, urban-suburban intermediate facility. A group of 16 students, equally divided between females and males, was selected from a heterogeneously grouped eighth-grade English class. Eight students served as the experimental group. The other eight students, matched with respect to sex and general academic status but taking English in a regular class setting with another teacher, served as the control group.

At the beginning and conclusion of the program, the Mooney Problem Check List and Tennessee Self Concept Scale were administered to all subjects. Student self-descriptions and two writing samples were also drawn pre- and posttreatment. Three trained readers evaluated the writings according to Categories of Personal Information, the Evaluation Scale for Personal Writing, and the Composition Evaluation Scales. An analysis of variance for repeated measures was computed on all measures.

Results

The major hypothesis was partially and inconsistently confirmed. The program appeared to have a mixed therapeutic effect on student self-information, self-concept, and felt problems, and negative therapeutic effects on the self-concept of its female participants.

The minor hypothesis was unconfirmed. The program had no significant effect on qualitative or technical features of writings of participants. Apart from the intervention, females generally perceived themselves less positively than males over time. They reported more concerns particularly with their personal selves and relations to others. Last, females demonstrated greater control over surface features of writing than males.

Discussion

The findings support the work of life-cycle theorists that identifies adolescence as a predictable crisis point in which negative emotions may be necessary for positive, long-term growth. This research supports the precocity of females in entering this transitional period.

The findings also support the application of personal construct theory of psychotherapy which suggests that the benefits of therapy may depend upon initial negative changes. Though the hypothesized therapeutic benefits were not indicated, it is possible that the intervention did stimulate self-inquiry by female participants that would ultimately lead to positive maturational changes.

Conclusion

The research suggests that the mental health model for education may be imperfect within present educational structures. In particular, writing undertaken for its therapeutic benefits and typical secondary school English instructional programs seem currently incompatible. Restudies should be guided by especial consideration of developmental and sex factors, individuals' preferred modes of expression, and methodology.

**A STUDY OF THE PERCEIVED NEED FOR EMPHASIS ON WRITING SKILLS AMONG FACULTY AND GRADUATE STUDENTS AND OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A MODEL FOR INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION IN WRITING IMPROVEMENT AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL** Order No. 7919686

BYNUM, Henri Sue Dearing, Ph.D. University of Southern Mississippi, 1979. 131pp.

The research was designed to investigate the perceptions of need for emphasis on writing skills at the graduate level among faculty and students. A second facet of the research was designed to investigate the efficiency of a model for individualized instruction in writing improvement at the graduate level.

Perception of need for emphasis on writing skill was assessed by means of a questionnaire composed of 39 Likert-type items. Possible responses for the items ranged from strong agreement to strong disagreement. Responses on section 1 were summed to yield an index of perceived need for emphasis on writing skills; responses on sections 2 and 3 were used to collect percentage data on perception of need for a program of remediation in writing skills at the graduate level and on self-evaluation of writing skills.

Subjects consisted of graduate faculty in subject areas listed as possible minors for advanced degrees in education (n = 94), graduate faculty of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction (n = 25), graduate students currently enrolled in advanced degree programs in Curriculum and Instruction (n = 72), and graduate students who, due to deficiencies in writing skills, were asked to participate in the Writing Skills Program (n = 15). The study was made at the University of Southern Mississippi during the academic year 1978-1979.

The model for individualized instruction in writing improvement consisted of diagnosis, prescription, and instruction based on the kinds of writing required of professional educators. Samples of writing were taken at the beginning of the program and again at the end of the program for each individual in the program. These samples were compared to determine whether a significant increase in writing skills had resulted.

Major conclusions based on the findings were as follows:

1. There is no significant difference in the perception of need for emphasis on writing skills at the graduate level among graduate faculty and graduate students.
2. The apparent lack of consistency among faculty and student perceptions as demonstrated by the wide variance in indices of perceived need for emphasis on writing skills indicates

that writing is not emphasized to a great extent in graduate courses. Faculty attitudes are probably reflected in student attitudes.

3. The variables of sex, level of advanced degree sought, subject area specialization, and years of teaching experience were shown to have no significant relationship to perceived need for emphasis on writing skills.

4. Blacks are significantly more in favor of emphasis on writing skills than are whites. This is possibly due to pressure on blacks to speak and write standard English.

5. GRE Verbal scores are significantly related to the perception of need for emphasis on writing skills. Those with higher scores tend to be more in favor of emphasis on writing.

6. Among graduate faculty, those in History, Communications, and Early Childhood were found to be most in favor of emphasis on writing skills. Those in Mathematics and Physical Education were in the middle range, and those in Chemistry, Science Education, Theatre Arts, and Geology were found to be least in favor of emphasis on writing skills. It must be noted, however, that of the subject areas listed, none were against emphasis on writing skills. The rankings reported are a matter of degree of perceived need for emphasis.

7. The model for individualized instruction in writing improvement was found to be effective. Students who participated in the programs made significant gains and had significantly greater perceptions of need for emphasis on writing skills than did students who had not received such instruction.

#### WRITING BEHAVIOUR OF SELECTED FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS IN AN OPEN CLASSROOM

Order No. 7921550

CARTWRIGHT, Patricia Jean, Ph.D. The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1979. 181pp. Supervisor: Professor John M. Kean

By investigating and answering two questions 1) what are the writing experiences of selected fifth grade students and 2) how do these students interact with their classroom environment, it was possible to define a classroom written language process. The researcher used a participant observer method to collect data. Data were collected on seven students specifically and the entire class generally during twelve weeks of daily classroom observation. The data included observer's notes on student writing activities and classroom environment, interviews with selected students and the teacher, samples of the students' writing and tape recordings of selected writing activities. An analysis of the data showed that students engaged in nine different types of writing activities and five different environmental interactions. It was concluded that these students engaged in a combination of cooperative and individual activities as they composed and wrote; that the writing experiences of these students were based on their cooperation with the elements within the classroom such as peers, teacher, aids, textbooks, reference books and the cooperation was made possible by the flexible schedule in the classroom.

#### BETWEEN WRITER AND READER: THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE CONCEPT OF AUDIENCE TO THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION

Order No. 7922402

COCHRAN, Janet Fyne, Ed.D. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1979. 179pp. Director: Dr. Dale L. Brubaker

Traditionally the term rhetoric has been applied to the education of speakers on public occasions. Modern rhetoric has been characterized by a shift from spoken to written discourse and another shift from emphasis on the rhetor to emphasis on the audience.

The purpose of this study is two-fold: to synthesize the major contributions to the study of audience, assessing their usefulness in the teaching of composition, and to analyze rhetorical action by presenting a model which will illuminate the relationship between writer and reader.

The heritage of the rhetorical concept of audience can be traced back to the Rhetoric of Aristotle. The analysis of audience found in the Rhetoric can be of great value to students and teachers of written discourse. Aristotle treats rhetoric as an art which can be systematized, and is therefore teachable. Although Aristotelian rhetoric can be useful, it also has limitations for twentieth-century studies.

The three elements of discourse with which Aristotle deals -- rhetor, audience, and discourse -- constitute a curricular cornerstone for the teaching of composition. The attempt to integrate modern rhetoric with contemporary curriculum theory leads to a discovery of many principles which can be mutually beneficial. They reveal ways in which the concept of audience functions in the context of the composition classroom.

The teaching of English has long been dominated by a content-centered approach. James Moffett proposes instead a "student-centered" approach, which views the dimension of growth from the self to the world. L. S. Vygotsky suggests that the development of written speech is rather from the social to the self, which seems more closely related to the developmental lag of many students of writing.

Different kinds of rhetorical action have certain things in common; therefore it is possible to construct a model which will reveal the component parts and their relationship to each other. The model has its origin in a situational context. Writer and reader fictionalize each other according to inferences each has made. They make choices based on common materials or characteristics: Culture, Education/Information, Syntactic Repertoire, Power, and Values. The materials are the basis of covenants formed between writer and reader. Encompassing all of these factors is the writer's purpose which is ultimately determined by the intended audience. Certain qualities of discourse emerge which are discussed as Selection, Symbol System, and Structure.

The rhetorical action of classroom discourse presents its own audience categories. They can be classified according to three kinds of writing which may be said to belong to the Thematic Domain, the Interpretive Domain, or the Affective Domain, in order of their relationship to the development of written speech. As decisions are made about the audience category, the writer experiences new insights and thus undergoes change as a result of his own rhetorical action.

The model can be said to generate its own heuristic procedure, and can be used in specific ways in the composition classroom. Knowledge of the dynamics of the model can enable the writer to understand more fully the process of producing meaningful discourse directed at a particular audience.

#### TEACHING WRITING: AN INTERACTIONIST APPROACH TO ABBREVIATED AND IDIOSYNCRATIC LANGUAGE IN THE WRITING OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Order No. 7920828

COLLINS, James Leonard, Ed.D. University of Massachusetts, 1979. 126pp. Director: Professor Earl Seidman

The purpose of this inquiry is to challenge conventional answers to this question: "Why is so much of the writing of secondary school students abbreviated and idiosyncratic?" That objective is accomplished by contrasting a conventional understanding of inexplicit and subjective student writing with an interactionist understanding. The interactionist approach is constructed by synthesizing key concepts from language study, especially semantics, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics. The writing of urban secondary school students is used to exemplify the meaning of those concepts.

The inquiry characterizes a dominant perspective on writing and its teaching as assuming that communication is the primary function of writing. That perspective addresses the problem of abbreviated and idiosyncratic writing by emphasizing norms governing the presentation of logic and language in writing. Foremost among those are norms related to the avoidance of error and to meeting the informational needs and orthographic, syntactic, and semantic expectations of readers. That perspective, it is argued, favors social, transpersonal, and objective meaning in writing and in classroom language.

From the interactionist perspective, abbreviated and idiosyncratic student writing is causally related to the formation of meaning in writing and to teacher dominance of patterns of classroom language interaction. The cognitive dynamics involved in writing are based in the symbolic and linguistic operations of comparison, the primacy of the familiar, and condensation, the reduction of reality through symbols and words. The formation of meaning in writing requires interaction between personal and social levels of word meaning. Inexperienced writers show a bias toward personal meaning because of a necessary dependence on the phonetic system of speech and on the syntactic and semantic forms of spoken language and verbal thought.

The inquiry uses a distinction between the autonomy of the writer and the autonomy of the teacher to argue that abbreviation and idiosyncrasy may be reinforced by conventional strategies for teaching writing. Those strategies show a dichotomy between subjective and objective tendencies in writing and a dominance of social and objective meaning, inspired and most often formed by teachers, in oral and written classroom language. That dominance results from teacher expectations for language that accompany advanced literacy and from the role of the teacher as agent of socialization in the school. By emphasizing conventions of language and logic and by doing most of the talking in classrooms, teachers might prevent students from identifying, structuring, and explicitly writing what is really on their minds.

The inquiry concludes that teachers must understand the role of language in the psychological dynamics involved in writing, in the social dynamics involved in the composition classroom, and in the interaction between those. The pattern of teacher dominance in the teaching of writing can and should be replaced by collaboration between teachers and student writers. Spoken and written language interact in the inexperienced writer's production of writing, and speech and writing should therefore interact in the composition classroom. That interaction of talk and writing must preserve the student's personal level of meaning, related to the student's own perception, experience, thought, and feeling. That interaction must also preserve the autonomy of the writer.

#### TREATMENT OF WRITING APPREHENSION AND ITS EFFECTS ON COMPOSITION

Order No. 7915233

FOX, Roy F., Ph.D. University of Missouri - Columbia, 1978. 243pp. Supervisor: Dr. Ben F. Nelms

##### Nature of the Study

This study was designed to investigate the effects that two methods of teaching composition had on writing apprehension. One method was conventional instruction and the second method was student centered and workshop oriented. The study also investigated the effects these two methods had on three language factors: (1) overall quality of student writing, (2) length of student writing, and (3) degree of qualification in student writing.

##### Methodology

Six classes of university freshmen (106 students) were involved in the study. During a period of sixteen weeks, students in three of the classes received conventional instruction in which all student writing, instructed to adhere to traditional rhetorical modes, was exclusively instructor-evaluated. With these students, writing instruction also included writing exercises, lecture, discussion, and question-answer sessions. The other three classes received instruction that included large-group interaction exercises, paired-student and small-group language problem solving activities, intensive practice writing, practice responses, structured peer response to student writing, specific writing objectives for each essay, and two instructor-student conferences.

Two instruments were used to gather data: (1) The Writing Apprehension Test, given both before and after the sixteen weeks of the study, to measure changes in students' apprehen-

sion about writing, and (2) a two-hour writing sample used as a measure of writing proficiency at the end of the semester.

Two-way analysis of variance was the primary statistical tool. Two of the hypotheses used an analysis of variance with repeated measures design.

##### Findings

The findings revealed significant differences on five of the study's ten hypotheses. By the end of the sixteen week period, a significant reduction in writing apprehension occurred for all students in the experimental group and for all students in the control group. The experimental group's high apprehensive writers reported significantly lower levels of writing apprehension than the control group's high apprehensive writers. At the end of the experiment, all experimental group students reported significantly lower levels of writing apprehension than all control group students. In addition, all students in the experimental group wrote significantly longer post test compositions than all students in the control group. The differences in length of post test compositions between the two groups of students occurred at the .056 level of significance. All other differences existed at the .01 and .05 levels of significance. No significant differences were found between the two groups on the qualification and overall quality measures of writing, as well as on the length of post test compositions of high apprehensive writers only. All statistically non-significant hypotheses revealed means that consistently favored experimental groups.

##### Conclusions

The following general conclusions may be applied to college freshmen of similar backgrounds:

- (1) Exposure to either conventional or student centered methods of teaching composition significantly reduces writing apprehension.
- (2) Exposure to this particular student centered method of instruction reduces writing apprehension to a significantly lower level and at a faster rate than does conventional writing instruction. This applies to all students, including high apprehensive writers.
- (3) Writing instruction that is similarly structured produces writing that is at least as proficient in overall quality as writing produced by conventional instruction.
- (4) Writing instruction that is similarly structured produces compositions that are significantly longer than compositions written under conventional writing instruction (at the .056 level of significance).
- (5) Exposure to either conventional or student centered writing instruction produces writing that does not differ in its use of qualification.

#### THREE PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNICATION AND THEIR APPLICATION TO ASSIGNING AND EVALUATING STUDENT WRITING

Order No. 7925162

HASHIMOTO, Irvin Yutichi, Ph.D. The University of Michigan, 1979. 278pp. Chairman: James W. Downer

Composition teachers have often been exhorted to look to other fields for ways to improve their teaching. However, they have often found it difficult to make findings from other fields useful to their teaching. One way composition teachers might make such findings useful is to look to other fields for analogies that might prove helpful for recognizing teaching problems, organizing them, and recognizing solutions that perhaps have gone unnoticed. One source of such analogies is the field of communication research.

Three distinct communication perspectives can be described: a) communication as stimulation with an emphasis on a sender's manipulations of a message in order to control specific communication "effects"; b) communication as information processing with an emphasis on the ways a receiver is said to

"decode," "analyze," or break down a "message," and of communication as subjective-participation with an emphasis on the total "transaction" that takes place between sender, message, receiver, and situation of context and each participant's awareness of the subjective aspect of such a transaction.

An important application of such communication perspectives is in the analysis of assignment-making as a communication problem. The teacher must communicate his assignment to his students; if there is no communication, his students will not do the assignment or will do the assignment incorrectly. However, to say that the problem of giving assignments is a communication problem is not enough. Communication problems appear differently, depending on perspectives teachers can have concerning "communication." An analysis of typical assignment-making practice shows that certain kinds of assignments and assignment-making procedures are more common within particular communication perspectives: lists of "sure-fire assignments" and discussions of "free writing" are typical of a perspective of communication as stimulation; discussions of "imitation," lists of assignment in "psychological sequences," and discussions of "essential types" of assignments commonly appear within the perspective of communication as information processing; and open-ended assignments and "games" are typical of a perspective of communication as subjective-participation. A further conclusion that can be drawn is that there is no such thing as a "good assignment" unless that good assignment is viewed through a particular communication perspective.

How teachers give assignments should establish the perspective through which they evaluate what their students write. A survey of the literature shows that, in fact, the major problems of evaluating student writing can be viewed as problems that come from different communication perspectives. In order to isolate further implications of viewing assignment-making and evaluation as related communication problems, three selected topics are considered: use of peer evaluation with particular emphasis on the work of James Moffett and Mary Beaven; use of analytic scales with emphasis on the work of Paul Diederich; and application of research to improve composition teaching with emphasis on the work of Richard Lloyd Jones and James Britton. For each selected topic, different communication perspectives are shown to have different implications on the way teachers can view problems, talk about problems, and suggest solutions to problems; yet those who write about these topics are often inconsistent about how they perceive communication and account for communication. This inconsistency makes what they say hard to understand and even harder to apply in practical, teaching situations.

By recognizing different communication perspectives, teachers have a better chance to become theoretically consistent and in becoming consistent, they are much more likely to make their teaching effective and explanations of their teaching comprehensible and helpful to others.

**CAPTIVE AUDIENCES: COMPOSITION PEDAGOGY, THE LIBERAL ARTS CURRICULUM, AND THE RISE OF MASS HIGHER EDUCATION**  
Order No. 7924660

HEYDA, John Francis, Ph.D. University of Pittsburgh, 1979. 192pp.

On December 8, 1975, *Newsweek* carried, as its over story, an article from the magazine's "Education" section entitled "Why Johnny Can't Write." Drawing on a welter of recently released statistics, all suggesting a steady, decade-long decline in the verbal skills of college-aged youth, the article succeeded in provoking considerable public alarm over the prospect of a "literacy crisis" spreading uncontrolled through American high schools, colleges and universities.

As a consequence of the emergence of this "literacy crisis," institutions of higher education have found one of their most secluded and hallowed retreats, their departments of English, suddenly opened up to increasing public scrutiny. For, as a result of the extraordinary amount of publicity lavished on the decline in reading and writing skills by the news media, increasing numbers of undergraduate students have begun to take

the "warning signs" of crisis seriously, and have enrolled in large numbers, in college composition courses. The surprising enrollment figures for such courses have, in turn, altered composition's status within the nation's departments of English. The flurry of activity generated by the rise to prominence of composition in English education, when combined with a steady decline in the enrollments in traditional literature courses, has brought an air of respectability, for the first time, to the teaching of writing at the college level. This new respect accorded composition in English departments, however, ignores the fact that, for centuries, composition instruction has been slighted by educators.

The neglect of composition by English departments, which reached new heights in the 1950s and 1960s, has, in fact, a long history within such departments. The English teaching profession's disparagement of composition is examined, in the dissertation, by breaking this long history of neglect into four major periods. The first period, composition's "pre-history," focuses on the writings of early "theorists" on composition and its relation to the curriculum, chief among them John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, which first advanced the study of the mother tongue as a character-building exercise capable of replacing classical studies at the core of the curriculum.

The second period, which begins with the establishing of English as a subject fit for study within higher education and runs up to about 1825, examines the failure of early composition teachers to integrate grammar study with formal instruction in written composition and explores the reasons why grammar study, from the beginning, was never brought into a closer and more fruitful relation to the teaching of writing. As a consequence, highly prescriptive notions concerning "correctness" in English usage became a permanent and damaging feature of composition pedagogy.

The third period, which runs to the end of World War II, concerns the rise of the departmental system in higher education and the role to which composition instruction was assigned in departments of English. From the beginning, composition was subject to the administrative control of such departments; its relation to English became equivalent to the relation of a colony to its mother country.

The fourth period, covering the years following World War II, addresses the uses made of composition instruction in "training" students to accept semi-skilled and sub-professional, white collar work as fulfillment of the "promise" of higher education. The rise of a liberal arts curriculum based almost entirely on electives, which was supposed to represent a radical solution to the many problems associated with the decline of liberal arts studies, has succeeded only in weakening composition's ties to the rest of the curriculum. Dropped as a required course at many schools, composition has redefined itself as an elective. This underscores the extent to which the acquiring of literacy skills has become an "option" for college students today.

**PERSONAL WRITING: A DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING PROGRAM FOR CLARITY OF COMMUNICATION THROUGH SELF-DIRECTION**  
Order No. 7916651

HILL, Edward Thomas, A.D. The University of Michigan, 1979. 221pp. Chairman: Alan Howes

Many entering community college students, because of poor self concepts and weak academic backgrounds, have difficulty writing clearly. My intention in this study is to identify some of the kinds of students now attending community colleges and suggest one method for composition teachers to help these students improve their writing.

In this method students are encouraged to become fluent by writing from their own experiences. Students first look at themselves--their needs, values--and then work outwardly to their environment. They are asked to look at their experiences and identify what forces have shaped them. As students look at their experiences honestly, they begin to write more clearly. As they move through the course, students free write, write journals, impromptu essays, and longer pieces of writing they work on at home. They present much of their writing to small

groups of five to seven students for their comments, and I often function as a tutor/editor. At the end of the course, students evaluate themselves.

By the end of the term, most of my community college students write more clearly than at the beginning. They look at themselves honestly, and they try to write lucidly about their experiences. And finally, they seem to enjoy this whole process of learning about themselves as they write about themselves.

#### THE EFFECT OF RELAXATION AND GUIDED IMAGERY ON THE CREATIVE THINKING AND WRITING OF FOURTH, FIFTH, AND SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS GIFTED

Order No. 7915174

KEARNS, Phyllis Keasey, Ph.D. Kansas State University, 1978. 107pp

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of relaxation exercises and guided imagery on the creative thinking and writing ability of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students identified and receiving education in a program for the gifted. All students met the requirements for placement in a program for the gifted.

The subjects were randomly assigned to two experimental groups. One group received eight one-half hour weekly sessions of relaxation exercises and guided imagery and the other group received eight one-half hour weekly sessions of mathematical recreations. Two investigators alternated between the two groups during the eight weeks. At the ninth session, the subjects were administered the Torrance Tests for Creative Thinking, Verbal Form A as a measure of creative thinking ability. All subjects were requested to complete a one-page writing assignment that began with, "If I had wings, I would."

Subjects for the study were the students assigned to self-contained classrooms for the gifted. These classrooms were located in a school that was selected as the gifted program site for that area of the city. All students in that area identified as gifted were assigned to the gifted education classrooms. All students assigned to this particular school's gifted education program became subjects for the study. Fifty-one subjects were randomly assigned to two experimental groups. Forty-three of the subjects were present and took the tests at the ninth session.

The experiment was conducted with students who were identified as gifted to investigate the effect of nurturing creativity among a student population with the potential for outstanding accomplishments and leadership. Nurturing creativity is generally not designed into curriculum for the gifted. The greater emphasis is usually placed on the creative product. This investigation was concerned with the direct effect on creativity by a nondirect technique. Guided imagery allowed the subjects in the experimental group to examine their own imagination and experiences while listening to a story that could evoke a great deal of visual imagery. The mathematical recreations were chosen as an activity for the control group because of its similarity to routine classroom instruction. The mathematical recreations were conducted in the same manner as other classroom instruction.

A Two-way analysis of variance was used to determine differences in mean scores of the subjects for both the creative thinking and creative writing assessments. The Torrance Tests for Creative Thinking were professionally scored and the writing assignments were rated by five independent readers on a seven point scale. The rating scale was designed to assess for fluency, flexibility, and originality as set out in criteria that were consistent with the Torrance Tests.

The two-way analysis of variance showed a significant difference between the two groups in mean scores for creative thinking ability. This difference was consistent across grade level and in the three areas of fluency, flexibility, and originality. The fourth grade subjects were found to have the greater mean scores in all areas of creative thinking.

Inter-rater reliability was not established with the five independent raters who were asked to rate the creative writing assignments. One training session proved to be not sufficient

in developing reliability among the raters. Therefore, the findings for the writings are inconclusive. The residual value of this portion of the study revealed the urgent need of assessment measures that are more reliable in evaluating products of a subjective nature. The difficulty in establishing inter-rater reliability among five people who have similar experiences with students that may well be found in the population regarded as gifted, talented, or creative should prompt educators to be more cautious in making subjective evaluations of all students.

#### A COMPARISON OF TWO PROCEDURES FOR IMPROVING THE WRITING OF DEVELOPMENTAL WRITERS

Order No. 7921131

KEMP, Jan Hammock, Ed.D. University of Georgia, 1979. 151pp. Supervisor: Roy C. O'Donnell

The purpose of this study was to determine the relative effectiveness of two methods of teaching composition to remedial freshmen. One approach, the traditional models approach, stresses imitation of good products and trying to improve "for next time." Its effectiveness was compared with that of an approach called the behavioral approach, one that asks students to imitate the processes rather than the products of good writers. It stresses prewriting and rewriting, stages of the composing process which good writers engage in for a longer period of time and the use of rhetorical questions before beginning a draft. The approach is based upon recent research defining actual behaviors of good writers, primarily Stallard's and Planko's findings, upon prewriting strategies of Kytte, Odell, Pike, and Rohman and Wlecke, upon the new rhetoric, and upon the Talk-Write pedagogy of Zoellner.

The 4-week study involved 80 students, 40 who underwent the models treatment and 40 who underwent the behavioral treatment. The sample was the entire population of Special Studies students enrolled in a second remedial writing course at the University of Georgia. All had had one remedial course and were still judged unable to compete with regularly admitted freshmen in English 101. Each of three teachers taught one models class and one behavioral class. Pre and post essays were analyzed for overall quality by a panel of three raters and for number of words per clause.

Gains on each of these independent variables were compared statistically. A separate analysis of covariance was computed for each of the following hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference in the average overall quality of the writing of students taught in the behavioral group and that of students taught in the models group.
2. There is no significant difference in the average syntactic complexity, as measured by words per clause, of students taught in the behavioral group and that of students taught in the models group.

Neither hypothesis was rejected. The investigator did, however, find a significant difference in the teacher effect on post ratings. A study of class means showed that Teacher A was more effective than either of the other two teachers both in his models class and in his behavioral class. There was not an interaction effect, so superiority of one treatment over another could not be claimed. However, both Teacher A's and B's behavioral students did outperform their models classes on post ratings. If Teacher C's results had been like those of Teacher A, significant differences favoring the behavioral group would probably have been shown. Since a teacher effect was revealed, a Tukey honestly significant difference test was calculated. The test determined that Teacher A's and Teacher B's products were not significantly different on post rating means. Teacher C's results were unlike either A's or B's. Both groups of Teacher C's declined slightly on post ratings. The teacher variable appears to be crucial in determining the effectiveness of the varied treatments; research determining what characteristics of teachers are most effective with developmental students is needed.

**TEACHER VERIFICATION OF IMPROVEMENT IN STUDENT WRITING GENERATED THROUGH THE ADDITION OF FREE MODIFIERS**

Order No. 7914373

KING, Harriet Lowry, Ph.D. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1978. 189pp. Supervisor: R Sterling Hopie

The purpose of this descriptive study is (1) to measure the quality of student writing through teacher ratings, and (2) to investigate the relationship of quality in student writing and the technique of sentence additions, specifically the addition of free modifiers. The free modifier can be defined as any addition to a sentence which is loose, additive, non-essential, and non-restrictive and which modifies a word, another free modifier, or the entire sentence. The compositions rated in this study are drawn from an earlier experiment by William S. Palmer and represent quantitative gains based on the additive property of the free modifier.

In the present study eight teacher raters evaluated nine pairs of student compositions, arranged randomly. The rating instrument consisted of instructions, nine criteria for evaluation, eighteen compositions, and four rating sheets. Each rater first evaluated each composition on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being the highest point on the scale), using a quick general impression method. Next the rater chose the highest and lowest compositions in each of three groups and noted verbally his reasons for each choice. Finally, the rater chose the highest and lowest compositions in the entire set, again noting his reasons.

The raters gave higher ratings to ninety-four percent of the revisions than to the drafts of the same compositions. A clear relationship was established between improved quality and those compositions which contained the greatest number of free modifiers. The technique of sentence addition, specifically the addition of free modifiers, through the process of group revision was verified as a possible way to improve student compositions. This study suggests that sentence composing, based on the addition of free modifiers which elaborate and clarify through expansion, may offer a viable mode of improving competence in student writing.

**TEACHING DEDUCTIVE LOGIC: A TEST OF THE TOULMIN AND ARISTOTELIAN MODELS FOR CRITICAL THINKING AND COLLEGE COMPOSITION**

Order No. 7920168

McCLEARY, William James, Ph.D. The University of Texas at Austin, 1979. 243pp. Supervisor: James L. Kinneavy

This study was designed to discover whether teaching formal deductive logic in a composition class has a significant effect on the critical thinking and argumentative writing of students. The experimental curricula were constructed so as to give logic instruction a reasonable chance of making a contribution to writing skills.

The sample for the experiment consisted of 252 students distributed among 15 second-semester freshman composition classes at a community college. Three experienced teachers of logic and composition each taught five of the classes, one class for each of the treatment groups.

The classes were divided into five groups with three classes in each group. All groups were taught to write formal deductive arguments about ethical problems. In addition, two groups learned traditional, or Aristotelian, deductive logic, and two learned Stephen Toulmin's version of logic. Within each of these two categories of logic, one group was taught the logic meristically, in isolation from writing instruction, and the other was taught it holistically, as an applied skill. The instruction lasted for ten clock hours, or about one month of classes.

The dependent variables were administered both pretest and posttest. One test was the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal (WGCTA), Form Ym, and the other was an in-class essay. The two different writing assignments for the essay variable were randomly distributed to whole classes for pretest and then reversed for the posttest. The two es-

says of a stratified-randomized sample of 75 students were chosen for grading.

The results were, first, that only one group achieved a significant and meaningful gain in critical thinking. Secondly, all groups achieved significant gains on the essay variable, but no group outgained the control group.

Results were analyzed primarily by means of analysis of covariance, with pretests used as the covariate, and by one-way analysis of variance computed with gain scores. Comparisons of WGCTA gain scores indicated that the gains and losses of four groups could be attributed to regressions toward the mean. Only the group taught traditional logic meristically achieved a significant gain that surpassed the grand mean of all groups. There were no significant differences among groups when single-impression grades of the essays were compared.

Multiple regression analysis showed that only one of eleven factors on a rating scale accounted for a significant portion of the differences among essay grades. This was the student's willingness or ability to consider opposing arguments.

An accidental discovery was that researchers in composition have apparently been paying too little attention to the test-retest reliability of writing-test assignments, a critical factor for well-defined assignments that may be novel to many students. This problem, plus the small size of the sample, prevented adequate comparisons of the essays written by the various groups. However, it seems likely that no improvements in methodology or in the power of the experiment would have resulted in any group outgaining the control group in the present study.

**TEACHER AND PEER EVALUATIVE FEEDBACK IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TWO COMPOSITION SKILLS: PUNCTUATION AND PARAGRAPH UNITY**

Order No. 7920953

MYERS, Charles Frederick, Ed.D. St. John's University, 1979. 121pp.

This study was conducted to determine the relative effectiveness of teacher and peer feedback in the junior high school student's acquisition of two specific composition skills, punctuation and paragraph unity. The theoretical basis was Moffett's interaction theory of discourse and proposal for peer evaluation of student writing.

The experiment used a sample population of 168 seventh and eighth graders in a Long Island, New York, junior high school; students reflected a low-middle class, white background. Two groups of students, the experimental peer group (N=84) and the control teacher group (N=84), were randomly assigned to their seventh and eighth grade classes. Two men and two women teachers of comparable experience were randomly assigned to each grade's classes. All students were judged as of average ability on the basis of IQ scores (California Short Form Test of Mental Maturity) and reading scores (California Test of Basic Skills).

Experimental and control groups completed composition writing pretests and posttests. These were scored for punctuation using the error frequency count technique and for paragraph unity using the SPUR scale. The researcher's SPUR scale ranked paragraphs for paragraph unity using specific criteria; the validity and reliability (.91) of the scale had been attested. Two outside scorers scored all the mixed pretest and posttest compositions, one for punctuation and the other for paragraph unity.

During the two week experiment, students and teachers followed a carefully controlled identical program of instruction and writing. Three treatment compositions, however, received teacher evaluation and feedback in the control classes, and peer evaluation and feedback in the experimental classes.

A factorial analysis of covariance, using IQ and pretest scores as covariates, compared the mean scores of the two groups. This analysis showed no significant differences between the achievement levels of the control and experimental method groups in either punctuation or paragraph unity. Although there was no significant difference in the mean scores

of the sex main effect, there was a significant difference ( $F = 14.731, p < .01$ ) in paragraph unity achievement between the two grade levels, with the eighth grade showing higher achievement. The only significant interaction was between group and sex ( $F = 4.552, p < .05$ ) on the punctuation mean scores; here the girls using the peer method gave evidence of slightly lower achievement than the boys, while the girls using the teacher method tended to show higher achievement than the boys using that same method.

The findings of this study indicate no significant difference in the effectiveness of the teacher and peer evaluative feedback methods as instructional techniques to raise student achievement in two specific composition skills punctuation and paragraph unity.

It was concluded that English teachers, in view of the no-significance findings of this and other studies, should judge carefully the two methods as to teaching efficacy and learning effectiveness. Teachers might well devote the time and energy expended in teacher correction to the development of instruction and student criteria for a peer program with more frequent writing opportunities.

Implications for further research included studies to assess the effectiveness of (1) a peer evaluation program with increased writing opportunities over an extended period of time, (2) the traditional teacher correction method vs. the peer correction method in conjunction with another composition program, either less or differently structured, and (3) the two methods as they relate to the many composition skills other than punctuation and paragraph unity. It was also suggested that studies investigate (1) more effective measuring techniques for the many skills and areas of writing, (2) the differences in junior high school boy and girl writing abilities as they relate to different methods of composition instruction, and (3) the conclusions of this study in other socio-economic settings and on other grade levels.

**WRITING CENTERS: A SOURCEBOOK** Order No. 7918235

NORTH, Stephen Michael, D.A. State University of New York at Albany, 1979. 195pp.

This dissertation deals with facilities called, variously, writing labs, writing places, writing clinics, writing skills workshops, and so on, under the single generic term "writing centers." A writing center is defined as any facility which offers, as its primary service, individualized instruction in writing.

The dissertation was begun in response to the questions: (1) What do writing centers do? (2) What can writing centers do that no other means of teaching writing can do as well? The answers to these questions were based on three kinds of research: the author's visits, during the 1977-78 academic year, to some thirty writing centers geographically spread from Massachusetts to Utah; a review of literature relevant to both the theory and practice of writing centers, including a good deal of unpublished material (grant proposals, position papers, annual reports, etc.) borrowed from the centers visited; and the author's experience as a tutor in a writing center.

The resulting text is aimed mainly at writing center directors or directors-to-be, and is intended to embody the year of research any such person should have as preparation for designing his or her own center. Given this aim, and as a result of its three-part research base, the text blends features from three genres -- a travelogue, a how-to manual, and a tutor's reflections -- and includes both theory and practice. Under theory are sections describing the conceptual history of writing centers (Introduction) and "Picking a Pedagogy," which proposes a theory for writing center instruction. More practical sections include "Staffing," "Introduction to Tutor Training," "Diagnosis," "Prescription," "Public Relations," and "Evaluation." In short, this dissertation combines an overview of the varied practices of real writing centers with a unified perspective on the idea of a writing center that derives from but also extends and refines the best work already taking place.

**THE ROLE OF AUDIENCE AWARENESS IN THE WRITING OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN**

Order No. 7927103

NUGENT, Harold Elmer, Ph.D. Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 1979. 351pp. Chairperson: Marilyn S. Sternglass

The specific objective of this study was to create a systematic, integrated, and accessible procedure for increasing audience awareness in the writing of college freshmen. The audience heuristic incorporated life-style factors, knowledge, and values for both the writer and the reader, and was intended to sensitize the student to consideration of shared and unshared features between the writer and the intended audience.

These procedures were incorporated into a pedagogical model of the composing process which used the Odel heuristics as an information-generating instrument. The integrated pedagogical model was examined through four perspectives: the use in a freshman composition course, a statistical analysis incorporating both quantitative and qualitative change, interviews and questionnaires, and in-depth case studies of three participating students.

The major significance of the study is that a set of procedures for increasing audience awareness that is comprehensive, efficient, and accessible can be developed, used, and evaluated in the freshman composition classroom. Quantitative measures reveal that the audience awareness procedures increased the student writer's ability to produce certain intellectual strategies in the expository mode. This increase achieved statistical significance. A shift of grammatical focus to the reader was found in both the persuasive and expository themes. These changes also achieved statistical significance. The qualitative measurements using the Diederich scale gave no evidence of any significant change in the class as a whole as a result of the use of the audience awareness procedures.

The case study analyses revealed that the procedures helped the writers to integrate the essential rhetorical elements of subject, writer, reader, and purpose. The researcher believes that the students were beginning to internalize the procedures, but the findings indicate a need for a longer exposure to the concepts underlying the procedures. This study provides clear implications for refining and developing audience awareness heuristics, for the teaching of composition, and for subsequent research in related cognitive processes.

**THE RELATIONSHIP OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND WRITING PERFORMANCE IN REQUIRED COMPOSITION CLASSROOMS**

Order No. 7915676

PITTS, Marcella Rosalie, Ed.D. University of California, Los Angeles, 1979. 175pp. Chairman: Professor Eva L. Baker

Public concern over an apparent decline in students' writing skills has prompted educators to examine two central issues: 1) the design of composition curricula and 2) the valid and reliable assessment of students' writing performance. This study addressed these issues by describing instructional characteristics in a specific composition course and their relationships to a measure of writing performance. The curriculum selected for study was a required high school composition course in Los Angeles City Schools. Nineteen classrooms in five high schools participated in the study.

Students' writing performance was measured by their combined scores on two narrative/descriptive writing tasks. An analytic rating scale, developed for the study and appropriate for the narrative/descriptive mode, was employed by three high school teachers to rate the writing samples. The teachers, all of whom had rated essays previously, were trained in the use of the narrative/descriptive rating scale. The final mean inter-rater reliability for 228 students essays, calculated from the variance components of an ANOVA, was .94.

Information concerning instructional practices in the classrooms in the sample was obtained from teachers and students for each of the following variables: 1) communication of instructional outcomes to students (task description); 2) writing

practices; 3) feedback; 4) instructional time use; and 5) teacher expectation. In addition, papers previously assigned and graded by the teachers supplied information about the usual emphases and specificity of correction provided students.

Results of a descriptive analysis of the self-report data supplied by teachers and students showed that important differences may exist in instruction between classrooms in different tracking levels. The data suggest that teachers teach to the competency level of their classes. The pattern of instruction in classrooms designated by the schools as above average classes seemed to rely upon and extend students' initial writing skills. Students wrote more often, wrote longer essays, had more individual conferences with their teachers, and received more instructive feedback than did students in average level classes. The mean performance of students in classes designated as above average was consistently higher than the performance of students in average level classes for each of the subscales on the narrative/descriptive analytic rating scale. Further, teachers' expectations concerning the amount of improvement in students' writing performance over the semester was positively and significantly correlated with school-designated competency level.

The powerful influence of competency levels was also apparent when the relationships between the independent variables and students' writing performance were examined. A series of multiple regressions was performed in which students' writing performance was regressed on teachers' reports for each of the independent variables, students' reports, and the discrepancy between their perceptions. Although instructional practices tended to vary for classes in different tracking levels, the regression analyses revealed no significant relationships between the independent variables and students' writing performance. Classroom competency level was the single variable significantly related to students' writing performance.

These results may derive from constraints imposed by the curriculum, a one-semester course which provided instruction in four separate domains of writing, and from limitations in the design of the study. Nevertheless, the results provide descriptive information for several dimensions of the independent variables examined in the study, and thereby, provide data relevant to current concerns about composition curricula. Furthermore, generalizable procedures for constructing and field testing an analytic rating scale and for training raters in its use obtained from the study may contribute to solutions of current problems in the assessment of writing performance.

#### A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE AS AFFECTING THE DECISION-MAKING IN PLANNING AND EVALUATING STUDENTS' WRITING IN GRADES FOUR, FIVE AND SIX

Order No. 7911192

RUBIN, Joseph Bernard, Ph.D. Michigan State University, 1979. 191pp.

The question of this qualitative study emanates from the reality that teachers, while planning, instructing and evaluating, make decisions and judgments about the writing process and product of students. On what do teachers base their decisions and judgments of student writing? Is the nature of language as conceived by the teacher one criterion? Specifically, this study focuses on the teacher's conception of language, the conception's compatibility with the "self-awareness" or "back-to-basics" language movements and its influence on the teaching of writing.

Purposes of this field study were threefold: (1) to ascertain the level of awareness of a teacher's conception of language; (2) to identify and explain teacher's conceptions of language and; (3) to describe if and how a teacher's language conception influences decision-making in planning and evaluation of student writing in grades four, five and six.

In-depth interviews with ten teachers of grades four, five and six were conducted to discuss the teacher's conception of language and their classroom writing experiences. Card-sorts were used as a means of facilitating teachers' identification, discussion and explanation of ideas. Questions were asked by

the researcher to determine the reasons or rationale for what teachers said, as well as what they did not say. Following the interviews, each teacher was given four samples of writing by youngsters in grades four, five and six. Each teacher was asked to read and assess each piece of work according to whatever criteria s/he chose and to make comments directly on the writing samples. Upon completion of this assessment, the teacher was directed to indicate in writing what next steps should be taken for each student's writing development. The procedures followed were observed and recorded on tape by the interviewer. From these transcripts, a description of each teacher's language conception and its effects upon student writing using the card-sort categories as a guideline were developed. Key-informant interviewing and interpersonal process recall were the techniques used for acquiring teacher responses to the study instruments. These data were used to generate a set of ten protocols, one for each subject. A protocol contained a teacher's response to the three card-sorts, assessment of the four student writing samples by the teacher and suggestions of follow-up writing activities for the author of each sample of writing.

The major findings of this qualitative study indicate that these ten teachers did not have clearly defined conceptions of language. Most were not aware of how their language beliefs affected their decisions about student writing. Although they were somewhat consistent in what they did in evaluating student writing samples, their evaluation was not based on a language conception and was often inconsistent with what these teachers stated as being important in the card-sorts.

The researcher assumed that teachers have a conception (understandings and beliefs) about language and its instruction and that this language conception influences decisions teachers make about teaching and evaluating student writing in grades four, five and six. The data of this study indicates that this assumption is not valid for these teachers. However, generalizing to other samples or populations of teachers is not inferred since this was a field study.

#### THE EFFECT OF KNOWLEDGE OF RESULTS ON THE MAINTENANCE OF WRITING SKILLS

Order No. 7917782

SCHLEICHER, John Gordon, Ph.D. Michigan State University, 1976. 131pp.

##### Overview

This research tested the effect of knowledge of results on the maintenance of writing skills. The 121 writers used in the study were employees of the Michigan Department of Social Services. Their primary job was writing procedural material for various manuals used by other employees. Over a five-month period knowledge of readability level of their writing was provided to half the writers as knowledge of results. It was hypothesized that writers who knew how well their writing matched the levels of the reader would be better able to maintain acceptable writing levels. Writing levels were measured using a computer adapted readability formula.

Three treatment groups were used according to whether writers received (1) training only, (2) training and knowledge of results, or (3) only knowledge of results. A fourth control group received neither training nor knowledge of results.

##### Methodology

Readability levels were based on sentence length and syllable-count, the most widely recognized means for measuring clarity in writing. A computerized readability program called STAR, Simple Test Approach for Readability, was used. The computer printout resulted in providing writers with a copy of the text analyzed, words of three or more syllables, average sentence length, average syllables per word, and the grade level equivalent of the writing. Opposite each of the last three was a goal or standard that each writer was asked to compare his/her score to. This printout became the knowledge of results and the means for measuring the performance level of each group.

A nonequivalent control group design was used because experimental groups constituted intact groups of writers. Despite the unmatched nature of the groups, control for internal validity was increased by confirming the similarity between the groups. Analysis was accomplished using an analysis of variance and the Greenhouse-Geisser correction factor to account for the violation of score independence within groups. Significant difference was tested at the .05 level of confidence.

### Results

The results showed that the trained group provided with knowledge of results maintained acceptable readability levels (between 10-14) throughout the test period. The group receiving only knowledge of results reduced their high readability levels from an initial score of seventeen to a low of fourteen. The extent of the limit of reduction can be attributed to this group's not having had the skills the trained group had. The training only group went from a low of twelve to a high of seventeen (their pre-training level). This increase occurred entirely within the first two months and was not distributed over the five-month period as anticipated.

### Conclusions

The particular fluctuations of both groups received knowledge of results lends support to goal setting theorists which identify the impact of difficult goals on knowledge of results. These theorists have identified better performance with difficult goals. The readability analysis printout presented a goal for those groups receiving knowledge of results. For the trained group the goal of a grade level equivalent of 12 would not be considered difficult since that group was already writing at level 12. However, for the untrained group receiving knowledge of results that goal would be considered sufficiently difficult since they began the experiment at level 17.

The conclusions affirmed the effect of knowledge of results as an effective means for maintaining readable writing after training. The specific effect of the goal portion of knowledge of results would be identified by a replication of the experiment with two additional groups, one given knowledge of results and the other training and knowledge of results but without the goal statements accompanying the knowledge of results.

### A DESCRIPTION, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION OF COMPOSITION FOR PERSONAL GROWTH: AN APPROACH TO TEACHING WRITING

Order No. 7925382

SELF, Warren Pratt, Ed.D. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1979. 257pp.

Composition for personal growth was contrasted with the older, more established literature-centered and skills-centered approaches to teaching writing. Dissatisfactions with those two approaches were partly responsible for some English teachers' developing an alternative approach. The Anglo-American Conference on the Teaching of English held at Dartmouth College in 1966 gave formal expression to many of the concepts that undergird this newer approach. The participants in the Dartmouth Seminar, examining recent scholarship in linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics, asserted that the relationships among language, personal identity, and a person's representational world were so complex and interdependent that the teaching of composition must consider these interrelationships and contribute to students' personal growth. The emphasis on personal growth to help students more fully realize their potential selves significantly shifted the purpose for and the methods of teaching composition from what they were in the older, established approaches.

Through the application of content analysis to eight college textbooks presenting composition for personal growth, to two books reporting on the Anglo-American Conference, and to a handbook presenting this approach to teachers of grades seven through twelve, an inferential description of the themes of this approach was developed. Themes expressing the approach's methodologies, and attitudes toward language were identified.

This description made it apparent that values-clarification education, an inherent part of this approach, was the primary means of promoting personal growth. The description also allowed the approach to be classified as a manifestation of the neo-progressivist philosophy of education, to be seen as a form of open education, and to be understood as an expression of existentialism. Moreover, the description made apparent the approach's assumptions that language is essentially a creative medium through which people shape their identities and their perceptions of the world and that experiences with rather than knowledge about language should be emphasized.

The study examined the controversy surrounding values-clarification education, pointing out the deficiencies in that strategy and describing its relativistic moral point of view. The study also examined the approach's attitude toward language, stressing the similarities between that attitude and the attitude expressed in the statement, Students' Rights to Their Own Language (1974), issued by the Conference on College Composition and Communication. The description of the controversy surrounding this attitude toward dialects of American English showed that the proponents of composition for personal growth take a position between the conservatives who insist that everyone needs to learn Standard English and the liberals who insist that no one needs to learn Standard English.

The study concludes that composition for personal growth should be included in any curriculum only as an elective course because its inherent moral point of view is incompatible with many Americans' values. The study does, however, suggest that teachers might borrow attitudes toward language and teaching methods characteristic of this approach and apply them to their teaching of composition.

### THE REMEDIATION CONUNDRUM: A WORKSHOP/TUTORIAL EXPERIMENT IN DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING

Order No. 7920897

SHINE, Richard Augustine, Ph.D. University of Massachusetts, 1979. 231pp. Director: Walker Gibson

The purpose of this dissertation is to design a practical developmental writing course that will meet the needs of a diverse group of students who, based on admissions tests and past performance, sorely lack the writing skills necessary to meet the requirements of traditional freshman English programs and to succeed on the college level. After a brief discussion of the causes of the sudden presence of these students at all institutions of higher learning as well as the rapid decline in college level student writing ability in the late 1960s and early 1970s, selected pedagogical assumptions of how these students may most effectively be taught to compose are analysed. Emerging from this discussion is a description of these students' writing deficiencies beyond the sentence and a set of pedagogical priorities which, based on my experience and that of a number of writing theorists, seem to most nearly meet these students' needs.

A principal focus of this dissertation is the design of a curriculum and a teaching method based on these derived assumptions and priorities. This curriculum includes: a sequence of carefully phrased assignments that builds cumulatively in complexity on the cognitive, stylistic, linguistic, and rhetorical levels; a set of specific, delineated goals and objectives which taken together define what I consider to be the basic skills; a rationale for each assignment; a detailed discussion of the major problems students encountered writing under this program and the techniques used to resolve them; and a presentation and analysis of student writing samples.

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SELF-ADMINISTERED ANALYTIC GUIDE FOR USE BY GRADUATE STUDENTS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF WRITING AND THE EVALUATION OF ITS ASSISTANCE IN IMPROVING WRITING SKILLS IN RESEARCH PAPERS**

Order No. 7917444

SUSNA, Sylvia, Ph.D. University of Pittsburgh, 1978. 227pp.

There is mounting concern, both within the education community and among the general public, over the decline in students' writing skills which has taken place in recent years. Currently, educational institutions at all levels are undergoing intense, nation-wide self-examination in a far-reaching effort to alleviate this problem. The writer, concerned about the need to make graduate students more aware both of specific writing problems and strategies to correct these problems, developed a self-administered analytic writing guide for student use. The guide was implemented by selected students completing a research paper requirement for the Master of Education degree at the University of Pittsburgh.

The classification system of the analytic guide itself was devised through the documentation of the most common types of errors made by graduate students in education. Three sets of writing samples were used as sources of data on graduate students' writing problems. After a review of these papers, the writer selected as the basis for the guide the components of content, organization, paragraph development, style (sentence structure, parallel structure, sentence fragment, word choice), and mechanics (grammar, punctuation, spelling). In designing the analytic guide, the writer attempted to be useful and practical instead of comprehensive, since the scope of the guide was necessarily restricted to the most troublesome writing problems confronting graduate students.

In an orientation session, students in several school of education graduate programs were given specific instructions for using the guide and completing a student evaluation form. It was explained to the students that the writer was not concerned with judging the quality of their research papers but was concerned with evaluating the guide's assistance in improving their writing skills.

To help evaluate the effectiveness of the guide and its parts, two teaching assistants in the Language Communications Department read the research papers and noted students' writing errors made in relation to the guide. Procedures were devised by the investigator for establishing inter-reader reliability and for monitoring scoring consistency.

An analysis of the research papers of those students who had used the guide showed that there was no direct relation between the number of items used in the guide and the rate of error made by the students. However, when particular items within individual categories were further analyzed, it was determined that those students who had checked a particular item had less errors in that item than those who had not checked the item. If some specific items had been checked more by guide users, fewer errors might have been made in those items and, as a result, the total rate of error in the particular category might also have been lower. Of utmost significance, though, are the overall findings brought out when a comparison was made between the research papers of those students who had used the guide and those who had not. The users of the guide had a lower rate of error than the non-guide users in six out of the ten categories. When the total error rate for all of the categories was computed, it was found that guide users also had a lower total error rate than non-guide users.

Based on the general findings and overall conclusions drawn from the analysis of students' papers and analysis of student evaluation forms, it is felt the study is sufficient to warrant the statement that, as a whole, the guide was effective in helping graduate students in education improve writing skills in research papers. It is recommended that analytic guides of this type be incorporated into other courses in which students--foreign students, graduate education students and graduate students in general--are writing papers.

**A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE READING AND WRITING ABILITIES OF UNDERPREPARED COLLEGE STUDENTS**

Order No. 7926897

TANG, Melanie, Ph.D. University of Missouri - Kansas City, 1979. 125pp.

The general purpose of this descriptive study was to examine the validity of the assumption that college students with poor reading skills cannot be taught to write. This is a popular assumption among writing educators, and it is a plausible explanation for the apparent failure of college writing instruction with many underprepared college students. These are the students without traditional academic preparation for college who have entered higher education institutions in increasing numbers over the last decade because of changing admission policies. Underprepared college students typically have poor reading and writing skills, and often they are severely deficient in both of these basic skills.

In order to shed light on the important issue of whether or not poor readers in college can be taught to write, this study assessed the reading and writing ability of 49 underprepared college students enrolled in an intensive basic writing workshop in a small private college. Reading ability was assessed at the beginning of writing instruction with the Nelson-Denny Reading Test; writing ability was assessed before and after instruction with the Test of Standard Written English and a writing sample rated by a team of graders. The data from reading and writing assessment were analyzed to answer two specific questions: (1) Did the subjects, almost all of whom were poor readers by college standards, gain in writing ability? and (2) Was the amount of gain a function of reading ability? The answers to these questions for the population studied were examined in the context of an analytical review of other research findings relevant to the issue addressed in this study.

As expected, it was found that there was evidence of gain in writing ability by all subjects after writing instruction. On both types of writing tests, subjects were found to be better writers after participation in the writing workshop. Also, it was found that the amount of gain increased as reading ability increased. These findings were interpreted as indicating that the assumption that the poor reader cannot be taught to write has questionable validity although there does appear to be a relationship between the reading and writing ability of college students. This study provided some evidence that the reading ability of underprepared college students is a factor in the amount of progress made by such students in learning to write.

When the popular assumption addressed in this study was closely considered in the light of all of the evidence provided in this study, including the specific research findings of the study and the relevant prior research, it was clear that while there is substantial evidence that reading and writing are related, there is no solid basis on which to conclude that this relationship implies that a certain level of reading ability must precede the acquisition of writing skill by college students.

**A STUDY OF THE COMPOSITION OBJECTIVES OF THE  
PITTSBURGH SCHOLARS PROGRAM IN ENGLISH, GRADES  
10 AND 11**

Order No. 7924742

**TIERNEY, Patricia O'Neill, Ph.D. University of Pittsburgh, 1979. 231pp.**

The Pittsburgh Scholars Program is a college preparatory curriculum designed for gifted and academically talented pupils. This investigation was designed (1) to determine whether there was agreement among a) Scholars pupils, b) their parents, c) Scholars English teachers, and d) other teachers as to the desired composition objectives; (2) to determine whether the objectives as stated by the four groups concurred with the existing Scholars curriculum objectives; and (3) to determine if the pupils were attaining the existing objectives for composition. A parallel study of the literature objectives was carried out at the same time by N. C. Apple.

In order to determine concurrence among the four groups, each participant (N = 644) was given a free-response inquiry. Each was asked to write at least four objectives which he or she thought the pupils should be attaining in composition. Then each was asked to rank the objectives.

The statistical analysis showed a significant concurrence among the four groups using both unweighted and weighted responses. The objectives and their priorities for the composition program in descending order were (1) composing-organizing, (2) expository writing, (3) mechanical skills, (4) expressive/imaginative writing, and (5) vocabulary development. The objectives selected by the four groups corresponded to the ones found in the curriculum except for mechanical skills.

To determine if pupils were attaining the existing objectives for composition, the vocabulary and reading comprehension sections of the Iowa Silent Reading Test were administered. Scholars scores were compared to scores of the reference group of college preparatory pupils. Gifted pupils in both grades scored in the above average range, and academically talented pupils scored in the high average range. Pupils also wrote an expository theme which was graded for content and mechanics by a panel of three experienced English teachers. A t test revealed a significantly higher level of attainment for the gifted pupils compared to the academically talented and the eleventh grade scored higher than the tenth grade pupils. Expository writing scores and course grades also tended to support the higher level of attainment of the gifted and academically talented pupils.

It was concluded that the objectives and priorities chosen for the Scholars Composition Program as stated by the Scholars pupils, their parents, Scholars English teachers and other teachers, were reliable and concurred with the curriculum. The information provided by this study should be useful to educational policy makers at all levels from the classroom teacher to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

**A SURVEY OF THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION IN THE  
ENGLISH CLASSROOM AND IN THE CONTENT AREAS OF  
SOCIAL STUDIES AND SCIENCE**

Order No. 7924743

**TIGHE, Mary Ann, Ph.D. University of Pittsburgh, 1979. 124pp.**

A decline in student writing skills has been identified by both nationwide surveys and classroom testing, and it has been well publicized by the news media. A return to basics is the most commonly suggested solution to this problem. However, research has indicated that teaching about language, specifically grammar and mechanics, is not a successful approach if the goal is improving writing ability. The teaching of reading in the content areas has resulted in both increased skill in reading and better comprehension of the subject. It is suggested that students will learn to write more effectively if this is a shared responsibility of all teachers and if the teaching and evaluating of writing is not an isolated activity of the English classroom.

The first step in investigating this problem is to identify if and how writing is being taught outside the English classroom. The researcher conducted a survey of English, social studies, and science teachers in grades 7 through 12 throughout Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 in western Pennsylvania. The survey involved the use of a mailed questionnaire which identified teaching preparation, assignments, and experience; the amount of writing required; and what are presumed to be common prewriting strategies, types of writing assignments, skills to be developed through writing, response to student writing, and evaluation.

Results of the survey were analyzed by both subject area and grade level to determine if there was any relationship between these variables and the teaching of writing. The findings were similar for teachers in all three areas in regard to preparation, assignments, and experience. However, the results of the survey did indicate that there is a difference in the way composition is taught in the English classroom and in the content areas of social studies and science. English teachers tend to assign longer compositions and to assign them more often. They use a wider variety of prewriting strategies, encourage more reflexive writing, and emphasize both syntax and rhetorical skills as well as mechanics, organization, and intellectual strategies which are stressed in the content areas. English teachers utilize a wider variety of responses to student writing and evaluate both form and content while social studies and science teachers focus on content and information. The results by grade level indicate that all three subject areas increase teacher constraints as grade level increases. Types of writing assignments vary little by grade level, and all teachers continue to emphasize a variety of writing skills. The teacher remains the predominant audience for student writing across grade levels. Content area teachers focus on summative evaluation while English teachers continue to use both formative and summative evaluation.

The survey confirms the findings of James Britton who analyzed compositions of British school children, ages 11-18. Findings from the survey indicate that the teacher is the predominant audience for most student writing with a strong emphasis on teacher as evaluator. Writing for peers or audiences outside the classroom is rarely encouraged in most classes. The chief focus of most compositions is transactional writing on a classificatory level. Students write expository themes to organize and summarize information with little attempt to speculate as to the meaning or to draw conclusions. There is little emphasis on expressive or poetic writing.

**THE STUDENT IN THE ROLE OF SPECTATOR-OBSERVER-  
COMMUNICATOR: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VISUAL  
PERCEPTION AND SPECIFICITY IN WRITING**

Order No. 7924744

**TRAGESER, Susan Gail, Ph.D. University of Pittsburgh, 1979. 173pp.**

The researcher's purpose in this dissertation was to discover if visual perception training and practice can be used to sharpen students' perception and encourage their search for significant detail in a way that leads to increased specificity in their writings.

Subjects were a part of two heterogeneous Creative Writing English elective classes at North Hills Sr. High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The subjects, consisting of 15 juniors and seniors in each group, were matched according to sex and IQ. A model text group responded to writing tasks which emphasized adherence to form. Students selected topics for writing from their own memories and were then asked to conform their topics to a model text format. A visually oriented group responded to writing tasks which stressed the substance of ideas more so than their form. They responded in a more loosely structured form to writing assignments and had more ideas from which to choose.

On an attitude survey, pre- and post-test differences were measured within each group for each of the following categories: (1) self-assessment of written expression (2) taste

and appreciation of written expression and (3) reasons for writing. On the Daly/Miller Apprehension Test, a post minus pre-test change between scores was computed for each group taken separately. On Primary Trait Scoring, the overall mean score for both groups was computed. The mean category scores between both groups were calculated on vocabulary, elaboration, organization and structure. Mean subcategory scores between both groups were determined. In addition, students were asked to assess the process they go through before and during writing in a written pre- and post-evaluative essay.

Attitude survey gain scores indicate that the visually oriented treatment group gained in their self-assessment of their writing and developed more positive reasons for writing at the .05 level of significance. However, the visually oriented group did not significantly improve their taste and appreciation for written expression. There were no significant pre-test and post-test differences between the visually oriented treatment group and the model text group on the Daly/Miller Apprehension Test. On the Primary Trait Scoring, the overall mean score for the visually oriented group was greater than the overall mean score for the model text group at the .05 level of significance. The mean category scores on Vocabulary and Elaboration were greater for the visually oriented group at the .05 level of significance. The mean sub-category scores on the following categories were greater for the visually oriented group than the model text group at the .05 level of significance: word usage, figurative language, dialogue, emotional quality, supportive details and focus.

Results of this study indicate that students who are presented with writing assignments which call for relatively open-ended language production as a result of guided observation can improve their level of word usage, figurative language, elaboration, emotional quality, supportive details and focus in their writing as well as increase their self-concept about how and why they write.

#### PARAGRAPH ANALYSIS FOR TEACHING COMPOSITION

Order No. 7916255

WALPOLE, Jane Raymond, Ph.D. University of Virginia, 1978. 473pp.

This study of paragraph analysis surveys existing theories of the paragraph as a rhetorical unit and as an object for college classroom instruction. The survey begins with Alexander Bain's 1866 advice on the paragraph and moves to the present, emphasizing recent ideas that have followed Francis Christensen's 1965 seminal paper, "A Generative Rhetoric of the Paragraph." Christensen's concepts and especially his system of paragraph analysis provide the focus for the study.

In order to assess the validity of Christensen's generative rhetoric and the reliability of his analytic system, seven paragraphs are analyzed according to his rules. These analyses reveal questionable points and ambiguities in the system, particularly in locating topic sentences, identifying levels of generality, and distinguishing between subordination and coordination. These problems seem inherent to Christensen's rhetoric; therefore, other theories and systems of analysis are examined for possible solutions. Also, works in linguistics and stylistics as well as relevant empirical research (unfortunately quite limited) are reviewed in an attempt to construct a sounder theory underlying paragraph instruction than is now available.

Because no current method of paragraph analysis seems totally satisfactory, a different approach is offered in this study. A close examination of the characteristics of coherent prose discourse has led to new insights on the concept of sentence functions, on syntactic and lexical cohesion between sentences, and on trans-sentence parallelism. These insights support the development of an analytic system which combines both structural and functional features of discourse. This system--"structural analysis"--is explained in theory and demonstrated in practice, for both individual paragraphs and paragraphs in sequence.

The study concludes with an evaluation of paragraph analysis as an instructional tool and with suggestions for teaching the paragraph and paragraph analysis in college composition courses. It argues that, if any kind of analysis is used in the classroom, structural analysis appears to be less confusing and ambiguous and more convenient and comprehensive than other current analytic systems.

#### THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION IN STATE TWO-YEAR TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

Order No. 7916661

WILSON, Jack Howard, Ed.D. The University of Tennessee, 1979. 189pp. Major Professor: Mark A. Christiansen

This study was designed to provide an empirical data base for composition requirements, courses, methods, and teachers in state technical institutions. Two questionnaires were prepared and sent to personnel in 213 identifiable state technical institutions in the United States. The supervisor's questionnaire, mailed to English department heads and writing center directors, contained eight questions dealing with instructors' degrees, race, sex, and age; instructional loads, cooperation between composition and business-technical instructors, placement tools, required courses, developmental composition, and compositional aids. The instructor's questionnaire, intended for both classroom and writing center teachers, asked five questions about instructors' experience, teaching practices, formal preparation for teaching, membership and participation in professional organizations, and readership of professional periodicals.

A total of 208 questionnaires from 97 institutions was received, for an institutional return rate of 45%. The results of the questionnaires were tabulated, analyzed, and compared with earlier data.

The findings of this study indicate: The formal preparation of the majority of full-time composition teachers is adequate. Most instructors have earned the master's as their highest degree, usually in English, less often in English education or another field. They generally have good formal preparation in composition, education, and language-related courses. Both their age range and employment experience represent a wide diversity. Over 95% of the instructors are white; two-thirds are female. Composition teachers cooperate most often with subject area instructors in planning instructional content, less often in the teaching of composition and reading or grading of papers.

Courses in general composition, discipline-oriented composition, and speech are required by many state technical institutions. The writing sample and standardized tests are the two most frequently used tools for placement in composition courses. Most of these colleges have special developmental composition sections, but few have writing/learning centers.

Traditional aids to composition--such as composition textbooks, grammar workbooks and handbooks--are often used, while other aids--such as newspapers, magazines, and non-programmed audio-visual material--are used less frequently. The frequency with which a practice--e.g., lecture or peer tutoring--is employed is influenced more by how traditional it is than how effective it is. A high percentage of composition teachers may fail to utilize newer practices because they have no working knowledge of them and are unaware of research indicating their effectiveness. A majority of composition teachers are not keeping up adequately with developments in their disciplines because (1) they are not attending professional meetings; (2) they are not reading professional periodicals; (3) the textbooks they are using ordinarily do not include innovations.

**AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTS OF INDIVIDUALLY PRESCRIBED INSTRUCTION ON ACHIEVEMENT IN, AND ATTITUDES TOWARD A WRITTEN COMMUNICATION COURSE**

Order No. 792624

YOUNG, Eugenia Woolard, Ed. D. Oklahoma State University, 1979. 91pp.

**Scope of Study:** The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of teaching a university written communication course by the individually prescribed instruction method. An additional objective was to determine the students' attitudes toward the need for study of business communication processes and to increase their mastery of English fundamentals and writing techniques. To measure entry-level learning of students, the McGraw-Hill Skills System Writing Test, Form A, was given. A bi-polar semantic differential instrument was used to measure the entry-level attitude of the students toward the written communication course. The same bi-polar instrument was again given to measure exit-level attitudes. The McGraw-Hill Skills System Writing Test, Form B, was given to measure exit-level writing abilities. Certain developmental competencies were also judged by instructor experts.

**Findings and Conclusions:** The language mechanic skills of students in the written communication courses were greatly improved by the current method of teaching. The McGraw-Hill Skills System Writing Test, Forms A and B, proved an effective means of evaluating student performance. The bi-polar semantic differential test did not measure any significant change in attitude on the part of the students concerning the importance of studying business communication. Instructors were able to quantify certain characteristics of letters written by students. This quantification allowed instructors to indicate positive changes in several writing skills. Personal development of students was difficult for instructors to assess. The personal development instrument used showed little correlation with other testing instruments.

Copies of the dissertations may be obtained by addressing  
your request to:

University Microfilms International  
300 North Zeeb Road  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106

or by telephoning (toll-free) 1-800-521-3042.