A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
OF THE WRITTEN ENGLISH USED IN 1969 AND 1970
BY ENGLISH I STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TUTORIAL SCHEME AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

M. L. FIELDING

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for the degree of M.A. of the University of Cape Town.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The essay has, for many years, been an important method of testing pupils' and students' knowledge of their subjects, as well as their ability to write effectively. Essays are, therefore, extremely important in examinations in a wide variety of subjects, both in the arts and the sciences. But the essay is important, not only because it is a useful means of displaying a well-organised body of knowledge, but also because it is the only adequate indication of a student's knowledge of spelling, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure, and grammar.

Any course in English language, in order to give students the knowledge and skills necessary for their varied university courses, and to ensure that they are well equipped professionally, has to concern itself not only with the so-called mechanical skills such as spelling, punctuation, and sentence and paragraph structure, but also with problems of vocabulary, idiomatic expression and grammar. It should, in addition, be concerned with the acquisition and spread of ideas.

In order to establish whether students are competent in the aspects of language work mentioned above, tests of three general types have, in the past, been devised: (a) those intended to measure mechanical skills, (b) those intended to test the students' ability to think of the correct word in a given context, and (c) those intended to measure the students' ability to write long passages of connected English.

The first two tests are, however, unsatisfactory, because they do not test the students' ability in written English as a whole. A student's knowledge of punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, idiom, vocabulary and grammar may be evaluated by means of objective tests, but, even though he may obtain high marks in these tests, his ability to write effective English is not automatically proved.

The only adequate indication of a student's ability to express himself in an organised way is the essay. The ability to assimilate, organise and evaluate critically on a considerable scale can be tested only through the essay. Short-answer tests may be used to judge a student's knowledge of facts, but they will make no demands on the group of mental processes that is involved in writing essays. At its best the essay can stimulate mental processes that are difficult to approach by other means and that are important in many educational situations. In the words of J. N. Britton and others: 'thinking and talking (and even writing) about ideas and experiences are the purposes /...

purposes for which we most need our mother tongue and ... these activities resemble essay writing far more closely than they do the working of multiple-choice questions\(^1\).

In the broadest terms, the essay reveals the complex interplay of all the principles and techniques that underlie the working of language. It is in the writing of essays that the student indicates, not only his knowledge of the basic requirements enabling him to write clear and correct English, and to manipulate and control it in accordance with his aims, but also his ability to observe and organise his experience so that his ideas may be effectively shared with others.

As a communicator, the student must subordinate the many and varied aspects of his written work to the needs of a specific audience addressed for a specific purpose. He has to consider, not only the mechanical aspects of writing, but also the judicious use of words and detail, thus revealing the interplay between concrete and abstract expression. He has, in addition to plan his work, keeping in mind the varied purposes, practical, social, commercial and literary, to which his writing has to be adapted.

The essay enables a student to express and communicate the flavour of some personal experience and to display any natural powers of imagination or creation that he may have. It will enable him, in addition, to display his ability to think in an orderly and consecutive way, to formulate and develop an argument and to be relevant, clear and exact.

To sum up, the essay is valuable in indicating (a) whether the students' knowledge of the fundamental aspects of writing, such as punctuation, sentence structure and paragraphing, grammar and vocabulary, is sound; (b) whether the student is able to produce and follow a well-arranged plan; (c) whether the student is able to think about a problem accurately and intelligently; (d) whether the student is able both to observe and record these observations vividly and effectively; (e) whether the student is able to write vividly and vigorously, showing a sound grasp of the needs of emotive writing; and (f) whether the student is able to write effectively for a set purpose and audience.

As the essay is so important to the student in his obligation to communicate with his fellow students, his tutors, lecturers and examiners, a great deal of stress has been laid, in the English Language Tutorial Scheme at the University of Cape Town, on the

teaching of written English. Students are required to write a minimum of three essays during their year of study, and have, in addition, to write an essay as part of their final examination in English.

Because of the importance of essays, both in the Department of English and in many other departments, it was decided, three years ago, to undertake an examination of a large number of essays written by first-year students participating in the English Language Tutorial Scheme in an attempt to ascertain the difficulties encountered by the students and whether the approach of the Scheme was adequate. It was decided to choose an equal number of students from two separate years so that the findings in both years could be compared in order (a) to find out whether the trends in each year were the same, so that the findings could be checked, one year against the other, and (b) to ensure a uniform method of noting errors. It was also decided to use, as a basis for comparison, the numbers, types and seriousness of certain grammatical and stylistic errors found in the essays. (See Chapters Two and Three.)

The thesis falls into two parts, namely, the Introduction with Chapters Two to Four inclusive, and Chapters Five to Ten inclusive. The first part, containing introductory material and the detailed statistical findings, deals separately with each year examined, i.e. 1969 and 1970, in order to compare the findings to see whether there were any major or minor differences between each year. Once the results had been compared in a large number of categories it was felt that no further purpose would be served by keeping the two years apart, and there is, therefore, no separation in the discussion of errors in the two years examined from Chapter Five onwards. All errors have, however, been marked either '69' or '70' to indicate the year in which they were made.

The errors from Chapter Five onwards have been listed with three aims in mind:

(a) to list as many examples as possible in order to give an idea of the proportionate numbers of errors made in each category and sub-category of error in each year;

(b) to give an idea of the range of errors made in each year; and

(c) to record the errors made by means of quotations from the students' essays so that additional remedial steps may, if necessary, be taken to improve students' writing.

The errors in most categories are only a selection of the very large number originally found, but it is felt that this selection will show clearly the errors as a whole, indicating the major, as well as minor weaknesses. All the quotations are recorded exactly as they appeared / .....
appeared in the original, with an indication of the year, the time of the year when the error was recorded and the number of the student who made the error.

Chapters Two and Three contain a detailed description of the aims, methods and approach of this examination, and Chapter Four gives the results of the detailed statistical examination into the numbers of errors made; the numbers of errors of varying degrees of seriousness, here called 'Gravity'; the numbers of errors in the major categories of error, as well as in the sub-categories of the major categories; and the numbers, types and gravity of the errors made by the five school-leaving groups chosen. (See Chapter Three.)

Once the statistical results had been discussed the errors made in each year were amalgamated and recorded, with discussion, in six chapters entitled 'Spelling', 'Vocabulary', 'Idiom', 'Punctuation', 'Sentence Construction' and 'Grammar', each one with its own general introduction, as well as introductions to each sub-category. The results have been summarised in a final Chapter entitled 'Summary and Conclusion'. 
CHAPTER 2
THE PURPOSE OF THE INVESTIGATION

The English Language Tutorial Scheme, started in 1966, has focused attention on the great difficulty that students, entering the University of Cape Town for the first time, have in expressing themselves clearly and concisely. Because classes are smaller, tutors are now able to devote more attention to individual problems in expression. In addition, students have been given a great deal more detailed written work to do. This detailed work, coupled with individual attention, has meant that students have had to concentrate on problems of expression that they have not had to face before.

Much of the time spent on English by matriculation students is being taken up by the study of literary works in which emotive language plays a dominant part. Essays written at school are frequently emotive in aim, and so senior pupils have little time to spend on writing the kind of English demanded of them by the English Language Tutorial Scheme. In the Scheme, tutors concentrate on the problems encountered when students have to write clearly, concisely and unambiguously in order to convey ideas and information to other people. Tutors concentrate, therefore, on the conventional demands of formal writing, in which vocabulary, grammar and syntax, sentence structure and paragraphing play an important part.

The text-books used in the Scheme were chosen, therefore, with the above aims in mind, and have been used by tutors to emphasise the aspects of style and composition that they have thought necessary and relevant to the capabilities of their students.

Much of the teaching has been based on the conviction that first-year students studying English need help with vocabulary, grammar (to a lesser degree), syntax, paragraphing and sentence structure, but there has been no large-scale examination of students' writing at first-course level to find out where their weaknesses, as a whole, lie.

This examination of students' writing, based on essays written by selected groups of students who participated in the English Language Tutorial Scheme in 1969 and 1970, is aimed at establishing what the stylistic, lexical, grammatical and syntactical difficulties of students are. In this way, the approach of tutors may be confirmed or adapted, so that the general weaknesses of students can be concentrated on and the satisfactory aspects of their written composition can be ignored. In this way valuable time need not be wasted on unnecessary teaching.
There have been indications that the symbols obtained for English in the various school-leaving examinations may not be a good guide to the students' capacity to write the kind of English demanded of them in their language tutorials. The school-leaving examinations seem to examine aspects of English different from those considered in the English I and English Special language examinations at the University of Cape Town. One purpose of this investigation is to establish, through a large number of students, whether the school-leaving symbols obtained for English are generally reliable or not. It will be explained in the next chapter how the various school-leaving groups were selected for this study.

The English Language Tutorial Scheme had been in operation for three years when it was decided to begin this investigation. It was (and is) important to establish whether the teaching methods and the material presented to the students enabled them to improve their writing of English by the end of their academic year. It was therefore decided to examine the written English of a group of students representative of those participating in the Tutorial Scheme in 1969 and 1970.

Because the essay is regarded as the best medium for testing a student's ability to assimilate a large body of material, and to plan and develop a theme logically, it was decided to examine four essays from each student chosen in each year. It was felt, too, that the essay would be the best medium for examining the students' knowledge of vocabulary, syntax, punctuation, sentence structure and paragraphing.

During the year each student wrote four essays on various topics. The first essay was intended to be diagnostic, the second was specifically on an aspect of language, the third on an aspect of Chaucerian study that the students were required to undertake in the third quarter, and the fourth essay was written as part of the final examinations. The teaching conditions, the timing of the essays, the text-books used and the tutors themselves were generally the same in 1969 and 1970. It was hoped that the results of the examination of essays written in 1969 would be much the same as in 1970, and that the results of the second year would help to confirm the validity of the results obtained in the first year of the investigation. An adequate comparison of the results for 1969 with those for 1970 was therefore important. The same methods used to select students and mark their work were applied in both years, and tutors were asked to set the same kinds of essay topics in each year.

It is very difficult / ...
It is very difficult to judge whether a student's written English has improved during a year, because the assessment of an essay as a whole is generally such a subjective matter. It was therefore decided to find criteria for judging essays that were as objective as possible. For this reason the emphasis, in the examination of essays, was on the errors made by students rather than on their content. It was decided not to allocate marks because it would have been impossible adequately to judge whether there had been any improvement or not. When batches of essays, written at different stages of a student's development, are simply allocated a mark it is very difficult to judge whether this mark is at all significant. An essay written at the beginning of a year is generally marked more leniently than one written at the end of a year. In addition, one's criteria change as students become more experienced and more aware of what is expected of them. A mark on an essay usually tells one only if a student has passed or failed, what his tutor thinks of his work in general, and how his work compares with that of the others in the same group.

It was therefore decided to judge the essays according to criteria that would be as objective as possible. The trend, in judging English today, is moving away from a transcendental standard of 'correct' English, for it is now recognised that different situations demand different kinds and levels of English, and that different criteria should be applied in judging these kinds of English.

As the students were expected to write formal essays, the criteria applicable to formal essays had to be formulated and applied. In answer to the general question: 'What is reasonable English under formal conditions?' it was decided to mark the essays in accordance with the following divisions: spelling, vocabulary, idiomatic expression, sentence structure, grammar and syntax. Criteria for judging these categories of error were based on the definitions and criteria of modern linguists in Britain and America. These criteria will be explained in detail in the next chapter.

The partial purpose of the examination of essays in accordance with the above criteria was an assessment of the progress of students in terms of the errors made in four essays written by each student. But simply counting errors would have been misleading because of the varying length of the essays written, and because of the changing conditions throughout the year, especially those of the final essay, which was written under examination conditions. It was therefore decided to grade the errors in terms of gravity so that the patterns of error could be seen. It was hoped that, by examining the changing gravities of error during the year, it would be possible to tell whether / ...
tell whether students had improved during the year or not.

The major problem, however, in using the number of essays made in the essays together with the number of errors of different gravities is that the essays vary considerably in length during the year. The average number of words in each essay is given in this chart below, and will give an idea of the great variety in length that had to be contended with.

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<th>AVERAGE NUMBER OF WORDS PER ESSAY</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Lowest number of words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Essay</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Essay</td>
<td>764,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Essay</td>
<td>616,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Essay</td>
<td>379,4</td>
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Because of this disparity in length indicated above it was decided to count the number of types of error (in terms of gravity) expressed as a weighted mean (1), per 100 words in each essay. This meant that all the essays could be measured at the same level and the great variety of length could be overcome.

The examination of errors would, it was hoped, also indicate the progress of the various school-leaving groups selected. It was hoped that changing numbers of errors and changes in the gravity of errors made would indicate whether the school-leaving symbols awarded for English are a useful indication of the students' ability to write English. In addition, it was hoped that the progress of the various school-leaving groups could be measured so that it could be established whether certain groups, especially those that were awarded a 'C' or a 'D' symbol, had progressed more rapidly than others.

As has already been said, the examination of errors was also undertaken because it has become essential to establish scientifically the kinds of errors made by students. The aims of this thesis can, therefore, be summarised as follows:

1. To find out whether selected students participating in the English Language Tutorial Scheme in 1969 and 1970 made any progress.

(1) The method used to arrive at this weighted mean will be explained in detail in the next chapter.
progress in written composition from the beginning of the particular academic year to the end;

2. To find out whether the school-leaving symbols obtained by the selected students have any bearing on their performance in written English in their first year of English at the University of Cape Town;

3. To find out how the various school-leaving groups selected progressed during the relevant year, and to see whether certain groups made better progress than others;

4. To find out how the selected students, as a whole, performed in written English composition under different conditions and with different essay titles to contend with;

5. To establish the kinds of error made by the selected students in both years so that additional remedial steps may, if necessary, be taken.

It is now necessary to give a detailed account of the conditions under which the students worked during the years chosen for this investigation. The English Language Tutorial Scheme was started at the University of Cape Town in 1966. (1) There had been considerable concern over the high rate of failure of first-year students at universities throughout South Africa. As a result of this the language section of the Department of English was asked to start an experimental scheme, whereby, it was hoped, students' ability to write English would be improved. As it was felt that large tutorial groups were detrimental to students' progress because the students could not be given the necessary attention by tutors, students were divided into a large number of small groups. The courses that were brought into the Scheme were English I (Morning), English I (Evening) and English Special. (2)

The maximum / ......


(2) All these are first-year courses offered either at different times or for different purposes. English I (Morning) is taken by far the largest number of full-time students. This course, together with English I (Evening), leads to English II and III. English I (Evening), (changed to afternoon in 1971), is taken by those students who are unable to take English I (Morning) because of a clash in their timetables. In addition, this course was, until 1970, taken by part-time students. These two courses are equivalent.

English Special is taken by those students who wish to take only one course in English, and does not normally lead to English II or III. The syllabus, excluding the Tutorial scheme, is not the same as that for English I (Morning) or English I (Evening/Afternoon).
The maximum number of students in each tutorial was fixed at twelve, but special arrangements for Interview Tutorials were also made. In these interviews, tutors are able to advise individual students, or small groups of students, who have particular problems, so that these can be solved without impeding the progress of the tutorial groups as a whole. To accommodate the interests of the wide variety of students in the Scheme an attempt was made to arrange tutorials according to the students' school-leaving symbols in English. This arrangement has not, however, been altogether successful because of students' time-tables and the limited number of staff available. In addition, it was felt by tutors, during the first three years of the scheme, that the school-leaving symbols obtained by students did not always give a true reflection of their capacity to write the kind of English demanded in the tutorials. It was partly for this reason that this study was undertaken.

Tutorial groups meet once a week throughout the academic year, and students are expected to discuss the various problems encountered in writing formal English. The course was designed to give students the command of written English that they would need during their university careers and in their professions.

Students were expected frequently to do, on their own, exercises that would force them to come to grips with the problems of writing adequate formal English, and, in addition, were expected to write a minimum of three essays during the year, essays in which, it was hoped, students would apply their knowledge of grammar and syntax, extend their application of English usage and improve their ability to write formal English. Students were also given the opportunity of writing under the sort of pressure they would experience in their examinations and in their professional careers. In the tutorials students were required to discuss problems, to assess their progress after each exercise had been returned, and to question their tutors, who served as guides rather than lecturers. Students were expected to read their prescribed books in advance so that they had the necessary background for discussion of problems during the tutorials.

Through an insistence on regular attendance, a carefully planned time-table, and regular written work it was hoped that students would improve their written English through a process of slow maturation. Tests and examinations were set in such a way that students were unable to pass simply by 'spotting' questions or by learning and repeating their notes. They either benefited from their tutorial discussions and exercises, or they did not.

The two text-books used for the Tutorial Scheme in 1969 and 1970 were chosen with the conditions set out above in mind. English in Practice / ...
English in Practice contains the following sections: 'Precision', 'Clear Thought', 'Comprehension', 'Faulty English', 'Composition' and 'Appreciation'. Tutors concentrated on these sections in turn, but used the sections on 'Composition' and 'Faulty English' throughout the year as the need arose.

The section on 'Precision' concentrates on the use of words under the sub-sections 'Definitions', 'Derivations', 'Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases', 'Distinctions' and 'Alternatives'. Here students are asked to concentrate on the precise use of words through the study of definitions, the use of synonyms and on a close examination of subtle distinctions between pairs or groups of words that are similar in meaning. In addition, students had to study malaprops, words whose meanings have changed over the centuries, and words with several meanings. The chapters on words in The Complete Plain Words were read at the same time in order to reinforce what the students were learning.

Under the general heading of 'Clear Thought' students then had to study the English used in arguments. Here students had to study inductive and deductive reasoning, misleading analogies, and dishonest arguments, including arguments involving the use of emotional language. These studies, it was hoped, would enable students to write more logically and to choose their words with greater understanding.

The section on 'Comprehension' was intended to give students further practice in writing clearly and simply for a particular purpose. Here students were expected to read extracts from good books and, by answering questions on these extracts, to get practice in crystallising their ideas on a particular topic and then in writing answers as efficiently as possible. It was hoped that the students would appreciate the good writing of the extracts chosen, and so would learn both by reading and writing.

With the final topic, 'Appreciation', the students were asked to examine many examples of different styles and to analyse their characteristics, the aim being to give them greater appreciation of the possibilities of English and to make them more sensitive to nuances of style.

In addition

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In addition to the exercises mentioned above, students were expected to read almost the whole of *The Complete Plain Words* in detail. This book contains chapters dealing with the drafting of letters, discipline in official writing, precision in the choice of words, verbosity, jargon, problems arising from the use of abstract nouns, clichés, grammar and syntax, and punctuation. A short reading-list, containing books relevant to the students' work in style and composition was handed to every student. (1)

Because of the approach towards the teaching of English in South African schools the terms of traditional grammar and usage have been retained in the Tutorial Scheme. Although the writings of modern linguists have been kept in mind and the attention of students has been drawn to them, the approach to teaching and marking has been conservative. The same approach has been followed in this thesis, and the works of grammarians such as Nesfield, Jespersen, Onions and Zandvoort have been consulted. In addition, the guidance of H. W. Fowler's *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* (2), (second edition) and E. Partridge's *Usage and Abusage* have been sought on problems of usage.

Although the traditional approach to the teaching of English usage, as well as the traditional terminology, has been retained, the marking of the essays for this thesis has, where necessary, been adjusted with the arguments of contemporary linguists in mind. Some of these arguments will be mentioned in the following pages.

Any tutor involved in the teaching of effective English expression has to decide what 'acceptable' English is, both for the purposes of his teaching and for his marking. He is at once involved in the issues that are raised by the prescriptive or descriptive approach / ...


approach to English usage. He must, in practice, take up an attitude to usage that will avoid 'on the one hand a seeming abdication of responsibility' and on the other hand a rigid 'insistence on linguistic practices not endorsed by contemporary society ...'(1) A completely descriptive approach seems very difficult because tutors are bound to exercise some influence on their students, whether it be intentional or not. On the other hand, total prescription, at a time when attitudes towards usage are so fluid, would be very difficult, if not impossible. If a tutor is to decide what, for his purposes, is 'acceptable' English, he has to be well informed about current usage and attitudes to usage.(2) In addition, if tutors are to teach effectively, they have to decide what standards to adopt. All the text books used by the students describe a type of English that conforms with what might be called 'Standard English', and so it is essential that they be able either to define or to describe this kind of English.

'Acceptable' English, for the purposes of this thesis, is the form of Standard English that achieves the desired effect with the least friction and difficulty for its user(3), and which a listener or a reader can assimilate with the least difficulty. Such English will be free from verbiage and affectations, and will convey its meaning clearly and effectively.(4) In the words of L. W. Lanham, acceptable English will communicate 'something to somebody with the maximum of clarity and effect in a manner which suits a given context.'(5) 'Acceptable' English will vary according to the situation in which it is used. In very formal writing, for example, colloquialisms such as 'we don't' or 'I'll go' are generally avoided because readers may well raise objections to such forms. If they do, then communication has not been achieved with the maximum of clarity and effect. In a situation in which informal writing is acceptable the forms quoted could be used because readers would be unlikely to raise objections. In general we choose our forms, whether they be written or spoken, with a / ......

(2) W. H. Mittins, et al., op.cit., p.3.
with a particular audience or group of readers in mind.

The definition of 'acceptable' English, vague though it is, was chosen because of the serious doubts that have been cast on the prescriptive approach to English grammar and usage. In addition, because of the great changes in our social structures, attitudes towards language are changing so rapidly that it would be very difficult to formulate a definition that would allow for all these changes. The difference between what forms are accepted and what are not has generally to be learnt through experience, a knowledge of social attitudes and through teaching. This is where definitions are important. As far as some linguists are concerned, there is no such thing as good or bad in language. They are concerned, not with prescribing what is correct but with describing, and as far as possible explaining, what exists and what they believe to have existed in the past.\(^1\) When languages change conservative speakers may be tempted to say that they have become 'corrupted' or have 'decayed', but these may be subjective views, and other criteria must be found to judge the appropriateness of linguistic forms.

What, then, makes some forms incorrect and others not? This problem is not a matter of legal authority, or of universal condemnation or of incomprehensibility, but is really a question of acceptability by certain classes of our society: 'those classes which are socially dominant and which set the tone for others'.\(^2\)

The acceptance or rejection of a form depends, not on any inherent merit or on any official approval (English is not controlled by an academy such as the Académie Française), but on whether the hearers or readers like it or not. 'Correct' can only mean 'socially acceptable', and, apart from this, has no meaning as applied to language.\(^3\) These attitudes towards forms or words vary from person to person and from social class to social class, and change within a period of time. It should, of course, be kept in mind that the level of usage regarded as acceptable for this thesis is that of 'Standard English', which will be discussed later in this chapter. Forms such as 'the boys is going home' may be socially acceptable in particular groups or in particular places, but would obviously not be acceptable for this thesis.

Many of the so-called rules of grammar and usage, it has been claimed, bear little resemblance to the facts of language. This problem has arisen for four major reasons: (a) the fact that many English grammar-books are, and have been, based on Latin grammar; (b) the belief / ....

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(3) R.A. Hall, *loc. cit.*
(b) the belief that all grammatical forms should obey the rules of logic; (c) that the usage of great writers should always be accepted as a norm when disputed points are decided; and (d) the view that there is a set of transcendental 'rules' by which the 'correctness' or 'incorrectness' of grammatical or other forms can be judged.

Although many of the 'rules' governing Latin usage may well cover English usage, it is a mistake to assume that the facts of Latin grammar and syntax are the same as those of English. Grammarians, for example, tell us that the verb 'to be' never takes a direct object, and we should say 'It is I' rather than 'It is me'. This 'rule' could be found in many grammar-books of the early part of this century, but it is quite clear that the form 'It is I' is regarded as pompous to-day, and that the form 'It is me' is now widely used. This 'rule' is an accurate reflection of Latin usage, but no longer describes English usage. Many used to think, and some may still, that Latin should be a universal model for language because of the pre-eminence of Latin in Western Europe as the language of learning and religion. People concluded that, because Latin was the language of education, intellectual activity and the use of Latin were inseparable.

Many people make the mistake of saying that all rules of grammar should be logical, and therefore condemn the following usage as illogical: 'Everyone washed their hands before the meal'. It is claimed that, as 'everyone' is singular, 'their' should be changed to 'his'. But this ignores the fact that 'everyone' is frequently regarded as a plural form, both in spoken and written English. (1) The mistake here is that linguistic usage cannot be equated entirely with ordered systems such as mathematics or symbolic logic. No language can be strictly logical in these terms, for usage varies according to what is socially acceptable rather than to logic. Double negatives could well, for example, be condemned as 'illogical' in English and therefore 'incorrect', but in Spanish, French and Italian double negatives are essential in accepted usage. The forms used are a matter of what is accepted, not a matter of logic.

Although it can be said that, once a form of English is accepted by writers of repute, it can be regarded as good English, we are faced with the problem of deciding who these writers are. In addition, we should ask ourselves how much bearing great literature has on the type of / ......

type of usage expected of students. Are authors such as Hardy, James, Carlyle and Meredith, for example, to be held up as writers to be emulated? Their writing, and the content of their work, may well be unsuited to normal, non-literary usage.

We have, then, to ask ourselves which great writers, present or past, are to be held up as examples? If the writers are no longer contemporary, their language can be regarded as archaic; if we are too close to the present, it is difficult to decide who is a great writer and who is not. We may find, for example, that forms condemned by us, are used by very recent writers in such a way that we could call them 'mistakes'. Without appropriate warnings, the work of great writers, should then, not be held up as examples for those writing non-literary English.

As was said earlier, many people condemn certain forms such as 'It's me' as 'ungrammatical' on the assumption that there is a set of transcendental rules of grammar and usage, fixed and unchangeable, with which English must conform. Such a set of rules does not, of course, exist. Linguists, today, recognise that usage varies from situation to situation, and from social context to social context, and that no one set of 'rules' can be drawn up to describe all usage.

What has, in the past, been called 'grammar' is really a set of rules based on Latin grammars, but there is no reason why Latin should be taken as the model for the grammar and usage of other languages.

To use English freely and effectively, therefore, students need to understand the nature of language and the principles behind so-called rules. They will then be able to judge whether their English is acceptable or not, for what they write is very often a matter of intelligent choice: students will then choose English that is effective, because, in the circumstances, it suits their purpose. In order to judge whether his English is suitable or not the student should have a knowledge of Standard English, for the acceptable English that he will be using will encompass the forms that are recognised as 'standard'.

When we think of standard English we are really dealing with an ideal, for, although there is an 'accepted' standard of spelling, pronunciation, syntax, punctuation and sentence construction, we should remember that this 'accepted' standard is not fixed and that, in addition, there is a wide variety of accepted standards among various social groups. Students are, therefore, expected to express themselves within a linguistic framework that has been fashioned by custom in the past and has a certain 'shape' in the present, a shape which, in more literal terms, we define as 'modern usage'.

(2) G. H. Vallins, Good English, How To Write It, Pan, London, 1959, p.7.
(3) G. H. Vallins, op.cit., p.10.
'Standard' English is, historically, a local dialect that was used as early as Middle English times, to carry on the major affairs of English life, and which thus gained social prestige. Many changes occurred in this dialect, and these were reflected in the usage of the younger rather than the older generations in the centres of fashionable social life. Thus the continued use of the older forms, rather than the newer changes, always suggested a lack of direct contact with those who were active in the conduct of important matters. Here lay the power of 'Standard' English to compel the ambitious to conform to its practices. (1)

Anyone who cannot use the language in which the major affairs of a country are conducted, the language of the socially acceptable, may be handicapped. Thus schools have taught this 'standard speech'. (2)

'The use and consequent spread of "standard languages" outwards and downwards in the social scale, as it were, is often encouraged in modern states by their employment in official broadcasts', (3) as well as in official papers and school text-books. (4) It should, however, be noted that regional dialects, other than 'Standard English', are being increasingly heard over the British Broadcasting Corporation's transmissions and are becoming increasingly accepted. This 'standard' English can be defined as 'normal English'; that kind of English which draws least attention to itself over the widest area and through the widest range of usage, .... , this norm is a complex function of vocabulary, grammar, and transmission, most clearly established in one of the means of transmission (spelling), and least clearly established in the other means of transmission (pronunciation). (4) This idea of a 'standard' is associated especially with written English.

'Formal' or 'standard' written English is used by well-educated people in formal situations. One finds examples of this kind of English in scholarly articles, theses, in formal lectures and public addresses, in some technical and scientific writing, in many textbooks, sermons, essays, novels and poetry. Some characteristics of formal English are a tendency to use long and involved sentences, (although shorter sentences are being increasingly used), a wide and exact vocabulary, often a technical and an impersonal, rather than a personal style, and a conservative approach to grammar and usage. (5) Contractions such as 'can't', 'won't' and 'shouldn't', as well as other colloquial expressions, are avoided.

Tutors in / ......

(2) C.C. Fries, op. cit., p.215.
Tutors in the Tutorial Scheme have applied the standard of good modern usage in all their teaching and marking, and expect their students to have a knowledge of written 'Standard English' at the formal as well as informal levels. In their essays students are expected to write good formal English that reflects a knowledge of the best modern usage for the occasion. Students have been made aware of the problems outlined in this chapter and have been encouraged to form their own views through the reading of books recommended by their tutors. They have been made aware of levels of usage and social acceptability, as well as the problems arising from the rapid changes in attitudes towards language that are now taking place.

Finally, because of the approach to the teaching of grammar, syntax, and sentence structure in South African Schools and the fluid state of modern studies in linguistics, a conservative approach has been adopted by tutors in their teaching and discussion of punctuation, vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure and paragraphing.
CHAPTER 3.

METHOD OF APPROACH AND PROCEDURE

In order to select the students for this enquiry, the record forms of all the students taking English I (Morning)(1) who participated in the English Language Tutorial Scheme in 1969 and 1970 were examined and sorted separately. It was decided that, as there were inadequate criteria for equating the symbols awarded to those leaving schools outside the Republic of South Africa with those who had finished school in the Republic, only those who had completed their schooling in the Republic would be chosen. In addition, it was decided to choose only those students who had passed English in the higher grade.

In order to get as representative a sample of students as possible from each batch it was decided to keep three criteria in mind when the final selection was made. These were: school-leaving(2) symbols obtained, the school attended and (if this could be gauged at all) the socio-economic groups to which the students belonged. The third criterion could not be applied with any accuracy as the information supplied on the students' record forms gave only the schools that they had attended and their home addresses. (It was felt, therefore, that the criteria of 'school' and 'socio-economic group' need not be applied too rigorously as the major interest in the thesis lay in the school-leaving symbols obtained by the selected candidates, related to the English that they had written. As long as a representative sample of students was obtained from the large number participating in the Tutorial Scheme, these two criteria did not matter a great deal.)

As precisely the same criteria for selection were applied in each year it will be necessary only to give the exact procedure followed for the selection of students in 1969.

The record forms were counted and then sorted into those students/......

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(1) It was decided to select students from English I (Morning) only because it was felt that they were the most representative group in the Tutorial Scheme, and it was much easier to collect essays from them than from the students taking English I (Evening).

(2) The term 'school-leaving symbol' has been used to cover the symbols obtained in all the final school examinations written by the students in this investigation, before they came to the university. This term avoids confusion between Matriculation and Senior Certificate examinations.
students who had attended schools in South Africa and those who had not. The forms of those who had attended schools in South Africa and South-West Africa were then sorted into those who had passed English at the 'higher' and 'lower' levels. The forms of those who had attended schools outside South Africa and South-West Africa and of those who had passed English on the 'lower' level were discarded, leaving 280 forms out of a total of 335. The forms were then sorted according to school-leaving symbol. The division was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School-leaving Symbol</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was decided to take approximately one third of the total as the sample to be examined, and, on this basis, the following numbers were selected:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School-leaving Symbol</th>
<th>Number of Students Selected</th>
<th>Extras</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>91</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL = 108.

Extra students were selected because it was essential to obtain four essays from each student during each year, and past experience had shown that many students leave the course during the year. In addition, it was felt that quite a few students might not hand in all four of the essays during the year, and so would have to be eliminated from this examination.

The five original school-leaving groups were then divided into male and female. The results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School-leaving Symbols</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the basis of the proportions above it was decided to select the final school-leaving groups as follows:
The students were then selected on the basis of the schools they had attended. In order to get as wide a sample as possible an attempt was made to select schools from various parts of the country and schools attended by various socio-economic groups. (The earlier remarks on the selection of socio-economic groups should be noted here.) The map below shows the cities and towns of South Africa and South-West Africa in, or near which the selected schools are. The numbers next to each town or city show the number of schools from which pupils' essays were selected.

The sample covered the following types of schools, and was representative of the schools attended by the students in 1969 and 1970.

1. Schools attended by White pupils.
2. Schools attended by Coloured pupils.
3. A school attended by Chinese pupils.
4. Schools / ....
4. Schools intended mainly for Jewish pupils.
5. Government schools.
6. Private Church schools of several denominations.
7. Convents.
8. A college for advanced technical education.
10. Schools attended mainly by English-speaking pupils.
11. Schools attended mainly by Afrikaans-speaking pupils.

It was decided to examine four essays from each student, three written during the year and one written as part of the final examination in English Language, and so, once this selection of students was complete, all the tutors of the students whose essays were to be examined, were approached and asked to hand in three essays written by the selected students. These essays were handed in as the students wrote them without their being told that their work was to be used for research. The essays were then photocopied and returned to the students immediately. The essays were photocopied because it was felt that the students would not write naturally if they knew that their work was being used for research.

It was not possible to control, to any degree, the conditions under which the essays for this investigation were written, except those written under examination conditions, but in general the policy followed by tutors was the same.

The first three essays were set by individual tutors and were written by students in their own time. Tutors were given general themes for each of the three essays and were allowed to set their own titles within these themes. The length of the essays was left to the discretion of each tutor. The first three essays were written in the first three quarters of the academic year, one essay being set in each quarter. The general themes for each quarter were as follows: first quarter, imaginative or descriptive; second quarter, linguistic problems; third quarter, the literary appreciation of the two Middle English set-works by Chaucer. The themes in the essays for the final examination covered linguistic problems and literary appreciation of the Middle English set-works.

Although no restrictions were placed on the length of essays, it was generally understood that the first essay, set in the first week of the academic year, would be short (400 to 600 words) and regarded as diagnostic. Fairly difficult titles, many of them

only one / .......

(1) Please see Appendix II for a list of all the topics set.
only one word, for example, 'Clouds' or 'Bars', were thus set, in order to make the students realise immediately the difficulties that they would have to face in writing essays at university level. The topics set covered descriptions, some of them demanding less imagination than others, such as 'Clouds', 'A Battle at Sea' and 'The Effects of an Atomic Bomb Explosion'; discussions and arguments such as 'The Cinema has become almost the last refuge of the Hero: in Real life we have virtually killed him off', or 'Advertising is a Public Menace'; and discussions of abstract concepts such as 'Vastness', 'Sloth' and 'Freedom'.

These topics demanded a wide knowledge of formal written English, both referential and emotive. Students were expected to have some knowledge of the denotations and connotations of words, and, in addition, their knowledge of grammar and syntax, punctuation, sentence structure and paragraphing was tested. In general, students were expected to write their first essays without the help of reference books, as it was felt that they should draw, as far as possible, on their own resources without the temptation to copy out phrases, sentences and even paragraphs from books. It was important that their first essays reflected their own efforts as far as possible so that tutors could obtain a good idea of their capacity to write formal English.

All tutors were asked, for the second essay, to set topics dealing with aspects of language, especially the English language. These topics, set at the beginning of the second quarter, demanded a referential approach in the discussion of such topics as 'Correct Grammar and Syntax are of no Importance as long as one makes one's Meaning Clear'; 'English To-day shows various levels of style, especially noticeable in the difference between Spoken and Written English'; 'Is the Standard of English Declining?'; 'It is Worth studying a language not only because it is a Useful Tool in so many ways, but also because Language is so Fascinating in Itself'; and 'The Levels of Usage Vary not only in Spoken English, but also in Regional, Social and Commercial Contexts'. In addition, students were asked to describe, dispassionately, English in a particular context when they were given such topics as 'English in South Africa', or 'The Use and Abuse of English as a Language, used by People of Varying Education and Culture', or 'The Language of Advertising'. In these essays students were expected to use text-books, because it was felt that, by this time, they would have had some practice in writing imaginatively and in drawing on their own linguistic resources without help. Students were told to acknowledge their resources and not to rely on the language of the text-books for the substance /
substance of their essays. These essays, expected to be about double the length of their first essays, gave students practice in setting out facts in a systematic way and in developing an argument. In general, students were expected to write dispassionately at the formal level, relying on the denotations, rather than the connotations of words.

The third essay, written during the University vacation in July and the first two weeks of the third quarter was written on topics concerning the two Middle English set works, The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, and The Nun's Priest's Tale. Students were expected to examine these texts in detail and to write essays on topics considered important for an understanding of these works. They were expected to use critical works to aid them, but were, again, expected to acknowledge their sources of information so that they would not be tempted to lean too heavily on the work of others. In general, students were expected to write at greater length than the first essay. They were expected to write on such topics 'Chaucer's Characterisation is both Varied and Subtle', 'Chaucer's use of Colour in The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales', 'How does Chaucer Achieve Characterisation in the Nun's Priest's Tale?', 'The Comic Effect of the Nun's Priest's Tale', and 'Satire in the Nun's Priest's Tale'. These topics demanded a detailed and carefully planned approach with all statements supported by evidence from the texts. To write successfully students had to have a thorough control of vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, paragraphing and planning in order to pursue successfully a train of thought. In addition, students were expected to know when to write referentially, and when to write emotively and when to combine the two modes.

The fourth essay was the only one written under strictly controlled conditions as it was written as part of the final three-hour examination in English language. Students were given six topics, all set by one person, two covering aspects of language and four covering The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales and The Nun's Priest's Tale. The linguistic topics covered such discussions as 'The Short, Plain word is not, under all Circumstances, the Most Effective Word'; or 'George Orwell went so far as to say that "correct grammar and syntax are of no importance as long as one makes one's meaning clear." ... Sir Ernest Gowers in The Complete Plain Words'; and the discussions on the Middle English set works covered / ......


covered such topics as 'Describe and Illustrate the Personalities of Chauntecleer and Pertelote', 'Show how Chaucer uses Detail to Achieve his Effects in The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales', and 'In what ways can the Relationship between Chauntecleer and Pertelote be Regarded as an Amusing Comment on Marriage?'. Students were asked to write not more than a page and a half of their examination books (approximately 51 lines) on one of the six topics set. These essays tested the students' capacity to write under pressure and demanded a ready vocabulary, an ability to plan effectively and an ability to crystallize their thoughts rapidly and to write them down effectively in good formal English.

During 1969 a number of the selected students left the Course and others did not hand in their essays. It was decided, therefore, to select a much larger group of students in 1970. The total number of complete sets of essays was calculated at the end of 1970, and it was found that, in order to obtain an equal number of sets in 1969 and 1970, only 80 sets of four from each year (a total of 640 essays) could be taken for this examination. The essays were then divided into those written in 1969 and 1970, and then into the four batches for each year. The year in which each essay was written and the time of the year were then written on each essay. In addition, each essay was numbered. The categories were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1969:</th>
<th>1st Quarter</th>
<th>2nd Quarter</th>
<th>3rd Quarter</th>
<th>Final Examination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 80</td>
<td>1 - 80</td>
<td>1 - 80</td>
<td>1 - 80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1970:</th>
<th>1st Quarter</th>
<th>2nd Quarter</th>
<th>3rd Quarter</th>
<th>Final Examination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 80</td>
<td>1 - 80</td>
<td>1 - 80</td>
<td>1 - 80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, for example, the first essay in each batch written in 1969 was described as follows: 69,A1; 69,B1; 69,C1; 69,D1; and the last essay in each batch written in 1970 was described as follows: 70,A80; 70,B80; 70,C80; 70,D80. These designations will be used throughout this thesis when essays are referred to, or when quotations from essays are given.

These essays were then marked according to the errors made in the following broad categories: vocabulary, idiom, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation and spelling. Errors in each category were marked in different colours so that they would stand out better and so that they could be easily recorded. The colours were as follows: vocabulary - green; idiom - yellow; sentence structure - red; grammar - blue; punctuation - orange; spelling - purple.

These errors were then recorded in columns on sheets under the broad categories given above. Each error was numbered and marked in red / .......
red on the recording sheet so that it was clear what the error was. The following sheet will serve as an example of the method followed. It should be noted (a) that the categories of 'sentence construction' and 'punctuation' were recorded in one column, hence the letters 'p' and 'c' against the examples recorded: (b) that the numbers in red next to each error will be explained later in this chapter; and (c) that all names of students have been omitted from sample sheets in order to preserve anonymity.

SAMPLE SHEET TO SHOW THE METHOD USED FOR RECORDING ERRORS
As it was important that errors should be easily distinguishable when they were counted it was essential to decide what an error was and how to indicate one error on the recording sheets. If a word was incorrectly spelt, for example, it counted as one error, but if a whole idea was clumsily expressed, then the relevant words were underlined and counted as one error. In the same way, phrases regarded as colloquialisms, or clichés, counted as one error. Any words incorrectly used, as in: 'but it is the weary (sic), the mundane elements of society ...' (69,A60), counted as one error. In the same way unidiomatic phrases such as the one in: 'However, in the event of a country (sic) realizing its doom at the hands of another country...' (69,A67) counted as one error. Commas, colons, and semi-colons omitted or inserted incorrectly counted as one error; and parenthetical phrases such as the one in: 'That was a second aspect of U.C.T.(.) and I was utterly downcast, but (,) as usual (,) empty vessels make the most noise ...'(69,A24), also counted as one error. If a sentence was regarded as clumsily constructed as a whole it, too, counted as one error, for example: 'Clouds avoid the endless piece of sky and seek companionship with the distant mountain peaks which stand rounded in a blue velvet mass and have no outstanding features.' (70,A1). In addition a clumsy series of short sentences such as: 'Sometimes, over the weekends, hops (sic) are held in Jameson Hall (sic). During the intervals people sit on "Jammie" steps to admire the beautiful view. From the top of Jammie steps the view stretches for miles. This is especially beautiful at night when all the lights of the city can be seen.' (70,A41), also counted as one error. In addition, verbless sentences, sentences lacking a main clause, and sentences lacking unity also counted as one error each. Question and exclamation marks left out counted as one error each. Errors in the category of 'grammar', such as incorrect verbs, pronouns whose antecedents were not clear, incorrect defining and non-defining relative clauses and unrelated and misrelated participles counted as one error each. In addition, errors of number as in: '... the man of routine in their aims to attain ...' (60,A39), and errors in the sequence of tense, where several verbs were involved, as in: 'In a house down the road, a little girl is practising her singing. ...The sound of her clear yet somewhat tremulous voice carried across the street and followed me as I moved on.' (69,A36), counted as one error. Mistakes in word order, as in 'This is only limited to a small number of people.' (69,A29) and clumsy inversions, as in: 'Their trades they taught him and fashioned him into their moulds until he became as they were.' (70,A53), also counted as one error each. In general, all words or closely linked pairs or groups of words that were in some way incorrect counted as one error.

Once all / ......
Once all the errors had been recorded, 8,165 in all, the major
categories were divided into various sub-groups. Each sub-group was
numbered so that the numbers of errors could later be recorded on a
sheet for statistical purposes. In addition, each error was graded
in terms of 'gravity' on a scale running from one to five, trivial
errors being given one mark and very serious errors five marks.
Other errors fell between these marks. This grading, which will now
be explained in detail, was felt to be necessary because it was
essential to measure the number of errors per hundred words in each
essay in order to be able to compare the essays. This would,
however, have been a very crude measurement of change (improvement or
no improvement) because of the wide variety of errors made and
because of the controversial nature of some of them, ('that' and
'which' introducing adjectival clauses, for example). A measure of
'gravity of error' per hundred words (1) was felt, therefore, to be a
more reliable method of assessing change in performance. It would then
be possible to compare each type of error (from one to five) made in
each batch of essays.

The following table shows how the errors were subdivided and
numbered for reference, and how they were then graded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Gravity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A  SPEELLING</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 or 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B  VOCABULARY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate words</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 to 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circumlocution</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redundancy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 or 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaprops</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clumsy Expression</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3 or 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colloquialisms</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clichés</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambiguity</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3 to 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregularity</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretentious language</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jingles</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Metaphors</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C  IDIOM</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D  PUNCTUATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comma omitted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question mark or exclamation mark omitted</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyphen omitted</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostrophe 's' omitted</td>
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Colon / .........

(1) It was decided to use the unit of 100 words as a basis for
comparison because of the considerable variation in the length
of the essays.
As the numbering of the 41 items was done in random order, it has no significance and need not be commented on. The marks given for gravity of error must, however, be commented on in detail.

When each error was given a number to indicate its gravity, general principles of intelligibility and knowledge expected of students were applied. This meant that, although an error of 'number', for example, might not have impeded intelligibility, it was given a rating of five because students, even at first-year level, are expected to have a thorough knowledge of the rules of concord. In general, however, most of the errors that were regarded as five in gravity were those that either impeded intelligibility or caused it to break down altogether.

The following table shows what errors fell into each grade.
ERRORS LISTED ACCORDING TO GRAVITY

GRAVITY ONE

Clichés
Comma omitted
Non-defining clause without comma
Defining clause introduced by 'which'.

GRAVITY TWO

Pretentious language
Jingles
Hyphen omitted
Comma incorrectly inserted
Incomplete correlatives
Indefinite 'one' incorrectly used
Incorrect word order
Split infinitives
Confusion between 'less' and 'fewer'.

GRAVITY TWO OR THREE

Spelling
Redundancy

GRAVITY THREE

Circumlocution
Exclamation or question mark omitted
Apostrophe 's' omitted
Omission of quotation marks
Errors in case
Wrong sequence of verbs
'It's' used as a possessive form
Noun-adjectives
Wrong relative pronouns
Clumsy inversion
'Like' and 'as' confused
Incorrect adverbs

GRAVITY THREE TO FIVE

Inappropriate words
Ambiguity
Unidiomatic usage

GRAVITY THREE OR FOUR

Clumsy expression

GRAVITY FOUR

Malaprops
Colloquialisms
Mixed Metaphors
Incorrect conjunctions
Two sentences that should have been joined as one
Sentences lacking unity
Sequence of tense
Unrelated or misrelated participles
Incorrect tense or mood of verb
Wrong degree of comparison
Wrong prepositions

GRAVITY FIVE

Illogicality
Colon or semi-colon omitted
Colon or semi-colon incorrectly inserted
Clumsy sentence construction
Not a sentence

Number / .....
Gravity Five continued:

Number
Reference of pronoun obscure
Apostrophe denoting a plural form
Wrong possessive adjective

Those errors that were regarded as trivial or controversial, in that they are not regarded as errors by some people, were given one mark. A sentence such as 'Then the sea is dangerous and often terrifying as their ships are tossed about and to be swept overboard means almost certain death.' (70,A3) without a comma after 'about', could be acceptable to some, but the omission of a comma before co-ordinating conjunctions was regarded as an error for the purposes of this thesis. In addition, the omission of commas to mark off parenthetical words, phrases or clauses, was regarded as an error; for example: 'The storm may last for hours or days(,) but eventually (,) when it clears up(,) the sky is clear and blue once more.' (70,A48).

It is quite clear from what the students in this examination wrote that there is great confusion about defining and non-defining relative clauses. 'That' introducing a defining clause was rare, 'which' as in: '...it is this falseness which (that) causes me to dislike this character who was not content with his unobtrusive goodwill.' (70,A2), being preferred for both defining and non-defining clauses. (1) In addition, commas before non-defining clauses, as in: 'Clouds avoid this endless piece of sky and seek companionship with the distant mountain peaks(,) which stand rounded in a blue velvet mass and have (sic) no outstanding features.' (70,A1), were frequently omitted.

It was felt that, although these omissions should be regarded as errors and recorded, usage was clearly changing and so they should not be heavily weighted. In addition, clichés such as 'one has such a wide range to pick and choose in (sic)..' (69,A24), and '... in this modern age ..' (69,A78), because they did not impair intelligibility, were given one mark.

All those errors that were graded as two were regarded as slightly worse than one, but did not impair intelligibility to any great extent. In general, they were not very serious errors, but were regarded as unacceptable in a formal essay. Pretentious language, as in: 'Most of these changes are observed as being those in standard / ....

(1) 'The two kinds of relative clause, to one of which that and to the other of which which is appropriate, are the defining and the non-defining; and if writers would agree to regard that as the defining relative pronoun and which as the non-defining, there would be much gain both in lucidity and in ease. Some there are who follow this principle now; but it would be idle to pretend that it is the practice either or most or of the best writers.' H. W. Fowler, op.cit., pp.625-626.
in standard or formal, written English ...' (70,B1), and 'Hundreds of clocks are, laboriously, cutting up the passing of time into concise segments, in hundreds of mass-produced, glass-and-concrete buildings, in the city awaiting its death.' (This refers to the rush-hour exodus) (70,A12), for example, cannot be regarded as bad, but students are expected to have some idea of how to express themselves clearly and simply. In the same way, jingles(1) such as 'His conceit can be seen in the scene with the wily fox ...' (70,D21), are not serious mistakes, but show a lack of sensitivity in style that should be penalised in some way. Commas incorrectly inserted, as in: 'The word, is the basis of the English language...' (70,D2), were regarded as worse than commas omitted because they showed the same lack of sensitivity mentioned above. The other errors in this category, which were incomplete correlatives, as in: 'Not only has pride been hurt but Pertelot has accused him of being ... unmanly.' (70,C52); the indefinite 'one' incorrectly used, as in: 'If happiness is determined by what you do not want, then personal experiences may influence one in ...' (69,A3); incorrect word order, as in: 'They have both the quality of human beings and of fowles ...' (70,26); split infinites, as in: 'It is impossible to fully understand what the writer ...' (69,B13); and confusion between 'less' and 'fewer', as in: '... using much less words ...' (69,B61), were also regarded as minor and so were graded as two.

Spelling errors such as 'erradicated' (69,A9), counted as two in gravity, but if errors were so bad, as in: 'usely' (69,A4), or 'their' for 'there' (69,A5), that the words became incomprehensible or intelligibility was impaired, then they were graded as three. In the same way, redundant words, as in 'The reader is consequently personally involved in the fable.' (70,C5) were not graded more than two unless students had shown particular insensitivity, as in: 'He had already long ago decided to major (sic) in this subject...' (69,D8).

Those errors that were graded as three, with the exception of 'circumlocation', fell into the category of punctuation. All these errors were regarded as fairly serious because they showed a lack of basic knowledge of punctuation as well as of concise writing. Such errors did not impair intelligibility to any great extent, but were, nevertheless, bad enough to disrupt the flow of the writing. Circumlocation, as in: 'When someone says "a woman's place is in the home," what he means is either that it is not becoming in a girl or woman to be seen outside of her home too much, ...' (69,A44) will illustrate the type of /

(1) See H. W. Fowler, op.cit., p.317.
type of error placed in this category. Errors in punctuation such as 'apostrophe "s" omitted', 'exclamation or question mark omitted', 'omission of quotation marks' and the grammatical error 'it's' used as a possessive form need not be illustrated because they are clear cut, but the other errors in this category will now be illustrated.

Errors in case occurred mainly when gerunds were used. Nouns and pronouns associated with gerunds should be in the possessive case to avoid ambiguity (1), or to preserve subtle distinctions that would be lost if this case were not used, but examples such as; 'I for one cannot see it being so...' (70,A43) show that many students were not aware of this convention. In addition, there were mistakes with the subjective case, as in '... and the gods and goddesses whom man believed ruled them.' (70,A5). In addition, there were errors when elliptical sentences occurred, as in '... that she knows better than him.' (69,C16), and where the objective case was not recognised, as in '... with people who we have come into contact with ...' (70,D38).

Errors called 'wrong sequence of verbs' included examples such as 'They are depicted as upright persons who have and will continue to do the duty expected of them.' (69,C14), where the auxiliary 'have' cannot go with 'continue' and where another completing verb would have to be included if the sentence were to be acceptable in a formal essay. There were a few errors involving the use of nouns as adjectives, as in '... if their work is going to be of any value as reference sources ...' (70,B17), and these were graded only as three because noun-adjectives (2) are widely used in informal writing and increasingly in formal writing. As a result many students might not have been aware of the conventions of formal English. A conservative approach would, nevertheless, regard noun-adjectives as unacceptable in formal writing and so they were regarded as errors in the essays examined. 'Wrong relative pronouns' are exemplified by '... in a country which is content with its political situation. However, in a country who has struggled...' (69,B21), and 'clumsy inversion' by 'Their trades they taught him and fashioned him into their moulds...' (70,A53). The confusion of 'like' and 'as' in '... and walks round the yard like his wife told him to.' (69,C7) merited only three in terms of gravity because, although a conservative approach would condemn the use of 'like' as a conjunction, colloquial use, where 'like' is freely used as a conjunction, exerts a considerable pressure on formal written English, and so students might have been confused. The incorrect adverb in 'I flattered him and asked /

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(2) See H. W. Fowler, op.cit., p.398.
and asked him to come down to a lower perch so that I could hear him clearer.' (69,D3), also merited only three because it did not impede the intelligibility of the sentence.

The errors that merited a gravity from three to five were those that varied from not very bad to so bad that a sentence was difficult or impossible to understand. The phrase 'inappropriate words' covered the large numbers of words found in the essays that were, in some degree, inappropriate. An example such as: 'She was looking exquisite as usual and Mr. X. was almost drowned by the perfume.' (69,D13) was graded as three because 'drowned' seemed inappropriate when associated with someone else's experience of perfume, but did not make the sentence incomprehensible. On the other hand, the following sentence is hard to understand because of a poor choice of words: 'Casual speech is, I believe, the strongest criterion which has influenced the change of the English language.' (69,B4). It was, therefore, graded as five. Other words fell between these two grades.

Ambiguity was also graded from three to five because it varied in seriousness. A sentence such as 'A public summer school is run for two weeks in February while the winter school is well attended.' (69,A45) was graded as three, whereas 'filmstars captivated audiences and satisfied their every whim.' (69,A2), which is impossible to interpret one way or another, was graded as five. In the same way unidiomatic usage, as in 'If language reflects the state of the society we can expect that...' (70,B3) was graded as three, but 'The statesman has much to consider and he also has to propagate (sic) with excellency.' (70,B6) was graded as five.

Clumsy expression varied in grade from three to four according to to the degree to which intelligibility was impaired. It was felt that, as the worst type of error made in this category did not make sentences incomprehensible, a gravity of five was not necessary. An example such as 'It may be seen as a three-tier cake, with influence starting from the bottom layer, slang; and eventually to reach the top layer, Written English.' (70,B1) was graded as three, and a sentence such as 'There are however and always will be some writers who will try to preserve and enrich the language with beauty.' (70,B3), which contains the vague and meaningless phrase 'to preserve and enrich the language with beauty', was graded as four.

Malaprops, as in '... whereas Latin still retains the inflexive endings.' (70,B16), were graded as four because they did make sentences difficult to understand, but were not among the worst errors. Colloquial forms such as 'It is a fabulous casual pants-suit... '(64,B4), and mixed metaphors, such as 'All strive to the ultimate "bag of gold" at the top of the pyramid of achievement.' (69,B2), were also graded as four because it was felt that students, even in their first year, should be / ......
should be able to avoid such errors in a formal essay. Included among the errors called 'incorrect conjunctions' were the use of 'e.g.' as a conjunction, as in '... but displays a great deal of knowledge in supplying remedies for combating bad dreams eg (sic) diet of worms ..' (70,C46), and 'These are all presented to the reader in a comic style but which has a deep, rich sense of its own - satire!' (69,C4), in which the co-ordinating conjunction 'but' was incorrectly inserted before the relative clause. These errors also showed an insensitivity in writing formal English, and so were regarded as serious.

The next two errors considered as four in gravity were in the general category of 'sentence structure'. A sentence such as 'The Monk is fat, bald, ruddy, shining-faced, has large bulging furtive eyes and his resentment against the world and his pomposity are deftly implied.' (69,C9) lacks unity because too much information is included in it. Pairs of sentences such as 'Words, stockphrases and clichés of common usage are woven into modern writings. In plays, essays and letters and even in our everyday scripts.' (70,B49) should have been written as one sentence.

The remaining errors that were graded as four were all grammatical errors. These were: 'sequence of tense', as in 'She had a rather affected manner or so I thought. She always speaks in an over bright manner...' (70,A26), in which there has been a change in tense, for no good reason; 'unrelated participles', as in 'When comparing him with the Parson he falls very short of a true (sic) religious man.' (69,C51), and 'misrelated participles', as in 'Being a "man of the world", as Chaucer has been described, one is able to accent ...' (69,C51); 'incorrect tense or mood of verbs', as in 'At home you will speak as you know your parents would have you speak.' (70,B80), and 'He would be astounded by the cars that crowd the campus each day until it seems as though the campus was really a junkyard.' (69,D52); 'wrong degree of comparison' as in 'I flattered him and asked him to come down to a lower perch so that I could hear him clearer.' (69,D3) or '... make English Spelling much more simpler...'. (70,B34); and 'wrong prepositions', as in '... a matter of personal choice tempered with the nature of the recipient.' (69,B47).

The remaining errors were all regarded as the worst, either because they showed a lack of sensitivity towards formal written English, or because they showed a serious lack of knowledge of grammar and syntax. An illogicality such as 'Another factor lacking in my style is that there is an abundance of superfluous words ...' (70,B68), for example, showed a serious lack of sensitivity and was, therefore, graded as five. The remaining errors in this group fell into the general...
general categories of 'Sentence Structure', 'Grammar and Syntax' and 'Punctuation'. Clumsy sentence structure, as in: 'The miller has indeed become richer through stealing - "thumb of gold" - and so at a level of double irony Chaucer ironically equates a surface appearance of honesty "thumb of gold" with money, again "thumb of gold", for not only was the miller rich enough to have a "thumb of gold"; acquired through dishonest means, and he was also "honest" from the actual idiom i.e. by equating honest with dishonesty, Chaucer assumes that there are no honest millers.' (69,C59) also merited five in gravity, as did verbless sentences such as 'Articles with basically the same intention are written in entirely different emotions. In newspapers for example.'(69,B18), and sentences lacking main clauses such as 'Chaucer's sunny zest and his extraordinary comic insight into human relations, particularly the relationship between husband and wife, which, in the Nun's Priest's Tale, we are shown in a rooster and a pullet.' (69,C67).

The grammatical errors that were graded as five were those of number as in: 'A column of black army ants are vigorously at work ..' (70,A35); those where the antecedents of pronouns were obscure, as in: 'The ambiguity of his statement may cause a speaker much embarrassment (sic) and his hearers much mirth. For this wishing to produce good and attractive English it enables them to write sentences correctly and not to loose (sic) his readers by the sheer absurdity of his work.' (70,B19); those where an apostrophe was used to indicate a plural form, as in: '...communications between different peoples...'. (69,D5); and those where the wrong possessive adjective was used, as in: 'Each group would have his own way of ..'(69,D72).

The remaining errors graded as five were 'colon or semi-colon omitted', as in: 'Well to begin with my story (;) I entered the chicken-run and heard Chaunticleer singing.' (69,D3), and 'Language is like a living organism (;) it needs nourishment and plenty of space within which to grow.' and 'colon or semi-colon incorrectly inserted', as in 'His own library consists of fifty paperbacks bought from second hand (sic) book shops, when he can borrow money from friends (;) on a non return (sic) basis.' (69,D43), and 'What is also important is that we get certain types of oils, example (sic)(:) cod liver oil and whale oil.'(70,A74).

Once the gradings for the errors had been decided upon, every error recorded was given two numbers. The top number indicated the category of the error and the bottom number the gravity of the error. Thus an error would be recorded as follows: 5 '... high powered programes (sic) of advertising that all but pays (number) for the advertised / ....
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advertised article ..1 (69,A60). The top number indicated that the error fell into sub-division two of the major category, 'Grammar', and the bottom number indicated that the error was five in gravity.

To obtain a clear idea of the numbers of errors made, the kinds of errors made and the stage of the year during which they were made, large sheets were drawn up, one for each year of the investigation. The following sheet will give an idea of the appearance of the originals.
The completed charts gave the following information about each student in 1969 and 1970.

1. The school attended.
2. The school-leaving symbol obtained for English.
3. The number of spelling errors made in each essay.
4. The number of errors in each of the following categories:
   - Vocabulary (with 12 sub-categories)
   - Idiom
   - Punctuation (with 8 sub-categories)
   - Sentence construction (with 5 sub-categories)
   - Grammar (with 16 sub-categories)
5. The number of errors in each essay in each of the five categories of 'gravity'.
6. The total number of errors made in each essay.
7. The number of errors made by each of the five school-leaving groups.
8. The number of words in each essay.

The entries for each essay were in different colours so that they could be easily distinguished from each other. Thus the colour for all entries connected with the first essay was red, the second essay black, the third essay green and the fourth essay blue.

Once the statistics had been completed it was decided to use a computer to make the various calculations necessary to establish whether there had been any improvement in the essays from the beginning of each year to the end, in terms of errors made and the 'gravity' of the errors made. In addition, it was hoped to be able to calculate how well each of the five matriculation groups had done in relation to each other, also in terms of the 'gravity' of the errors made.

The following information (here a sample for one student) was, therefore, punched on to computer cards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Number</th>
<th>School-leaving symbol (1)</th>
<th>Number of words in each Essay</th>
<th>Gravity of Errors in each Essay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>784 272 1083 777</td>
<td>5 1 3 7 14</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Gravity of Errors in each essay (continued)

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2 3
3 5 4 14 6 1 1 2 3 1 2 2 1 0
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The computer was then programmed to calculate the following:

1. The 'total error score' for each of the four essays written in 1969 and 1970, which was calculated in the following way: errors of 'Gravity One' were multiplied by one, those of 'Gravity Two' by two.

(1) The school-leaving symbols A, B, C, D, E were given the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, for the purposes of the calculations by the computer.
by two, those of 'Gravity Three' by three, those of 'Gravity Four' by four, and those of 'Gravity Five' by five. All these results were added up and the total was called the 'total error score'. Thus the 'total error scores' for each essay written by Student Number One, above were 114 for the first essay, 113 for the second essay, 60 for the third essay and 15 for the fourth essay.

2. The 'error density' for each essay written in 1969 and 1970. This 'density' was obtained by dividing the number of mistakes by the number of words in each essay. If a student, for example, made twenty mistakes in an essay of 1000 words, then the error density would be $\frac{20}{1000} = 0.020$. From this the number of mistakes per hundred words was calculated by multiplying the error density by 100. (1) In the above example the number of mistakes per hundred words was $0.020 \times 100 = 2$ mistakes per hundred words. Thus, the error density per hundred words in the first essay written by Student Number One above was 0.145.

The computer 'print-out' for Student Number One was thus as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student No.</th>
<th>Total Error Score for Essay</th>
<th>Error Density for Essay</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>114 113 60 15</td>
<td>0.145 0.049 0.055 0.039</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. The averages or 'means' for the 'total error scores' and the 'error densities' for each essay written in 1969 and 1970, as well as the standard deviations for those means. Thus the average or 'mean' 'error score' for Essay One in 1970 was 40.1 and the standard deviation from the mean was 22.78. The average error density for essay one in 1970 was 0.0684 and the standard deviation from the mean was 0.0416. The part of the computer 'print-out' giving this information looked like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Error score for essay</th>
<th>Error Density for Essay</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEANS</td>
<td>0.0684 0.0569 0.0451 0.0644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STANDARD DEVIATIONS</td>
<td>0.0416 0.0295 0.022 0.0338</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) It was necessary to use, as a basis for all calculations, the unit of 100 words because of the great variety in length of the essays. The essays would thus be more fairly compared, and any change in the number of errors per 100 words could, more reasonably, be taken as an improvement or lack of improvement.
4. Whether there was any significant difference between the 'means' of each 'gravity' of error in each of the four essays written in 1969 and 1970.

Because of the limited time available and the pressure on staff in the Department of Mathematical Statistics at the University of Cape Town it was not possible to arrange for computer-based tests on means of the 'error densities' to see whether there was a significant variation between them. In addition, it was not possible to test whether there was any significant difference between the performance of the five school-leaving groups because the numbers in the groups varied considerably and because there were too few students in two of the groups.

It was decided, therefore, to apply a computer-based test only to the averages of the five 'gravities' of error. This test was devised in order to obtain the answers to three questions: for each type of mistake:

1. Are the trends in both years the same?
2. Is the average number of mistakes per 100 words in a given essay the same for both years? (i.e. are any differences observed due to random fluctuations?)
3. Assuming that both years are the same, are the population (i.e. group) means of the essays different? (i.e. does the mean number of mistakes increase or decrease over the academic year?)

In order to test these hypotheses a test called a 'profile analysis for two independent groups' (1) was applied by means of the computer. (2) Assuming that the mean profiles for each year are as shown in the figure below:

```
Profile for 1969

Profile for 1970

ESSAY 1  ESSAY 2  ESSAY 3  ESSAY 4
```

the three questions above can be re-framed as follows:

(1) Are .....
(1) Are the population mean profiles similar in the sense that the line-segments of adjacent tests are parallel?

(2) If the line-segments are parallel, are they also at the same level? (i.e. could the two separate profiles for 1969 and 1970 be replaced by a single profile for both groups combined? See dotted line above.)

(3) Assuming parallel profiles, does the population mean number of mistakes in each essay differ?

For the purposes of the computer-based tests the number of mistakes per hundred words was described by a four-dimensional multivariate normal vector \( X \). A typical value of the vector \( X \) was the number of errors made in each gravity in the four essays by any one student. An example of this vector \( X \) for 'Gravity One' obtained by a student in the four essays is \( 0.3604; 0.4902; 0.8117; 1.5474 \).

Over the two years under investigation the respective mean vectors of \( X \) were expressed as \( \mu_1 \) for 1969 and \( \mu_2 \) for 1970. A separate profile analysis was made for each 'gravity' of error.

When all the calculations had been completed it was decided, as far as possible, to show the results by visual means in three ways: namely, by graphs, histograms and numerical tables.

Graphs were drawn to show the following results:
1. To show the changes in the averages of the total error densities in 1969 and 1970.
2. To show the changes in the averages of the number of errors in each of the five 'gravities' of error in 1969 and 1970.

Histograms were drawn to show the following results:
1. To show the number of errors in each of the five 'gravities' in 1969 and 1970.
2. To show the number of errors in each major category in 1969 and 1970.
3. To show the number of errors in each of the sub-categories under 'Vocabulary', 'Punctuation', 'Sentence Construction' and 'Grammar'.
4. To show how many errors were made in 1969 and 1970, and to show how many errors were made in each essay.
5. To show the average of the average of each of the five 'gravities' of error made in the four essays in 1969 and 1970.
6. To show the average error density in the four essays written by each of the five school-leaving groups in 1969 and 1970.

7. To show / ...

(1) The analysis was based on Hotelling's \( T^2 \) statistic, a full discussion of which can be found in D. F. Morrison, *op.cit.*, pp.141-143.
7. To show the average error scores of the five school-leaving groups in each essay in 1969 and 1970.

8. To show the number of errors made by each of the school-leaving groups in each of the major categories of error in 1969 and 1970.

9. To show the average number of errors made by each school-leaving group in each major category of error in 1969 and 1970.

10. To show the number of errors in each sub-category, under the major categories of 'Vocabulary', 'Punctuation', 'Sentence Construction' and 'Grammar' made by each school-leaving group in 1969 and 1970.

11. To show the average number of errors made in each category of 'Gravity' by each school-leaving group in each essay in 1969 and 1970.

Numerical tables were appended to some of these graphs and histograms, where it was thought necessary, in order to show how they had been arrived at.
Because of the large number of figures that resulted from this investigation, and because of the variety of the calculations undertaken, it was decided to present the statistical findings, not only by means of tables, but also by means of graphs and histograms that would show the results in an easily identifiable form so that important information could be seen at a glance and so that comparisons between the four essays, the five 'gravities' of error and the five school-leaving groups could be made more easily.

Far greater attention was paid to calculating the various statistics applicable to the five school-leaving groups and to presenting histograms to show what each group had achieved in relation to the other, because it had not been possible, in the limited time available, to devise computer-based tests to compare their achievements. It was hoped that, by making a large number of calculations of their relative performances, it might be possible to gain a clearer idea whether their school-leaving symbols accurately reflected their achievements, in terms of errors made, in the essays written in English I at the University of Cape Town.

The results of the investigation will now be discussed in the order in which they were listed in Chapter Three. It should be noted that, when histograms were drawn, the same sequence of colours was, where possible, kept in order to provide contrasts. This sequence is: red, black, dark green, yellow, light blue, orange, purple, pink, dark blue, light green, pencil, brown, red stripe, black stripe, green stripe and yellow stripe. It should be noted, however, that the colours may not always be identical because the original colours were applied to white paper, whereas the copies of the originals were black, and were then coloured. When graphs were drawn the results for 1969 were shown in red, and those for 1970 in blue. The results of the two years, 1969 and 1970, were always put side by side for comparison. Where keys to the y-axis are not given the figures represent numbers of errors.

1. Figures and graphs to show the final average error densities for the four essays written in 1969 and 1970.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Essay 1</th>
<th>Essay 2</th>
<th>Essay 3</th>
<th>Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>0.1122</td>
<td>0.0726</td>
<td>0.0557</td>
<td>0.0730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>0.0684</td>
<td>0.0569</td>
<td>0.0451</td>
<td>0.0644</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It was felt that the most reliable method of judging whether the selected essays had improved or not during the years under investigation, in terms of the number and the gravity of the errors made, was by comparing the average error densities of the four essays written in each year. A decrease in the average error density of the essays could be taken as an improvement, whereas an increase could be taken as...
taken as a deterioration. The results of the two years were taken together to see whether the trends for both years were the same.

The accompanying graphs show the changes, during 1969 and 1970, of the average error densities of the four essays written in each year. The lines show (a) that the trends were the same for both years; (b) that the average error densities in both years became steadily less from the first to the third essay; (c) that the average error densities of the fourth essay in each year, which was written under examination conditions, were higher than those of the third essay in each year. In general, these results suggest that, although there was a steady improvement during the year, when students were writing at their leisure, they tended to make more errors per hundred words when they were writing under pressure and had to write an essay of a specified length on a topic that they had not been able to think about beforehand.

In 1969 the improvement from the first to the third essay written during the year was considerable, for the red graph shows a steep drop from Essay One to Essay Three. It then moves upwards to approximately the level of the second essay. The blue graph shows the same trend as the red, except that the fall is less steep and the deterioration during the final examination is much greater. The average error density for the fourth essay written in 1970 is almost at the same level as that of the first essay.

The fact that the trends in both years are the same suggests that the marking of the essays has been consistent, and that the students selected in 1969 wrote in much the same way as those in 1970.

2. Figures and graphs to show the changes in the averages of the number of errors in each of the five gravities in the four essays written in 1969 and 1970.

In order to test whether the changes in the average number of errors in each of the five 'Gravities' in each of the four essays written during 1969 and 1970 were statistically significant, it was decided to apply the 'Profile Analysis for two Independent Groups' described in Chapter Three.

It should be noted that the accompanying graphs indicate observed differences only, and that the results of the tests show whether these observed differences are statistically significant or not, and whether differences are significant at the 5% or the 1% level.

The findings / ..... 

(1) A detailed list of errors and their 'gravities' will be found in Chapter Three, pp.28-29.

(2) If a figure is significant at the 5% level, there is a 5% probability that it is a random figure, and if a figure is significant at the 1% level, there is a 1% chance that it is random. The test of significance at the 1% level is most rigorous, and any figures that are significant at this level may be taken to be highly important.
The findings for each gravity will now be given separately. Figures with one star are significant at the 5% level and those with two stars are significant at the 1% level. Where the profiles for any one 'Gravity' are not parallel, each year has been tested separately.

The tests to establish whether the profiles are parallel or not can be summarised as follows:

Tests to Establish whether the Profiles of each 'Gravity' in 1969 and 1970 are Parallel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gravity</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>F Statistic (1)</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.56</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>Not parallel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>Not parallel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td></td>
<td>Parallel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td></td>
<td>Parallel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.89</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>Not parallel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Test to establish whether the observed differences in the average number of mistakes of 'Gravity One' are significant or not.

The critical value of $F_{3;156}$ at the 1% level is 3.91.
The profiles are not parallel and so each year has been analysed separately. The results of the analysis are as follows:
The 1% Critical Constant, $T_{37;77} = 3.52$.
The 5% Critical Constant, $T_{37;77} = 2.89$.
These Critical Constants refer to 'Gravity One' and 'Gravity Two'.

**1969**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Essay 1</th>
<th>Essay 2</th>
<th>Essay 3</th>
<th>Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.6048</td>
<td>0.3669</td>
<td>0.3416</td>
<td>0.6854</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comparisons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absolute Difference of the Means</th>
<th>Standard Error of the Difference</th>
<th>Test Statistic</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1 &amp; Essay 4</td>
<td>0.0806</td>
<td>0.0855</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>Essay 4 = Essay 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2 &amp; Essay 4</td>
<td>0.3185</td>
<td>0.0715</td>
<td>4.46**</td>
<td>Essay 4 &gt; Essay 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 3 &amp; Essay 4</td>
<td>0.2938</td>
<td>0.0716</td>
<td>4.16**</td>
<td>Essay 4 &gt; Essay 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2 &amp; Essay 3</td>
<td>0.0247</td>
<td>0.0427</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>Essay 3 = Essay 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These tests show that, in 1969, the average number of errors in 'Gravity One' is the same for Essay One and Essay Four, and that the average for these two essays is significantly higher, at the 1% level, than that of Essay Two and Essay Three, which have the same average of errors. These results suggest that there was an improvement only between Essay One and Essay Two, and that the average for Essay Four was the same as that for Essay One.

**1970**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Essay 1</th>
<th>Essay 2</th>
<th>Essay 3</th>
<th>Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.3262</td>
<td>0.5318</td>
<td>0.4051</td>
<td>0.5076</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comparisons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absolute Difference of the Means</th>
<th>Standard Error of the Difference</th>
<th>Test Statistic</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1 &amp; Essay 4</td>
<td>0.1773</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>3.47**</td>
<td>E4 &gt; E1 at 5% level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2 &amp; Essay 4</td>
<td>0.0282</td>
<td>0.0699</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>E2 = E4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 3 &amp; Essay 4</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.0521</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>E3 = E4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1 &amp; Essay 2</td>
<td>0.2056</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>3.24**</td>
<td>E2 &gt; E1 at 5% level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 3 &amp; Essay 2</td>
<td>0.1267</td>
<td>0.0697</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>E3 = E2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These tests show that, at the 5% level only, there was no significant difference between the average number of errors of 'Gravity One' in Essay Two, Essay Three and Essay Four, but that average number of errors in these three essays was higher than the average number in Essay One. There was no significant difference between any of the averages at the 1% level. These results suggest that there was a deterioration between Essay One and the other essays.

(b) Test / ....
(b) Test to establish whether the observed differences in the average number of mistakes of 'Gravity Two' are significant or not.

Graph to show the changes in the means of the number of mistakes of Gravity, in the four essays.

Key: 1969
1970
PLAN
The profiles were not parallel, and so each year was tested separately.

### 1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Essay 1</th>
<th>Essay 2</th>
<th>Essay 3</th>
<th>Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.4783</td>
<td>0.4345</td>
<td>0.2707</td>
<td>0.6980</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>Absolute Differences of the Means</th>
<th>Standard Error of the Difference</th>
<th>Test Statistic</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 1</td>
<td>0.2198</td>
<td>0.0865</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>( E4 = E1 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 2</td>
<td>0.2635</td>
<td>0.0724</td>
<td>( 3.64^{**} )</td>
<td>( E4 &gt; E2 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 3</td>
<td>0.4273</td>
<td>0.0697</td>
<td>( 6.13^{**} )</td>
<td>( E4 &gt; E3 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2 &amp; Essay 3</td>
<td>0.1638</td>
<td>0.0417</td>
<td>( 3.95^{**} )</td>
<td>( E2 &gt; E3 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These tests show that the average number of errors in Essay Four was the same as that in Essay One, but that, at the 1% level, the average number of errors in Essay One was significantly greater than the average number of errors in Essay Two, and that the average number of errors in Essay Two was significantly greater than in Essay Three. These results suggest that there was a significant improvement from Essay One to Essay Three, but that the average number of errors increased in Essay Four to the level of Essay One. This is the same trend that was observed in general results discussed in (a) above.

### 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Essay 1</th>
<th>Essay 2</th>
<th>Essay 3</th>
<th>Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.4847</td>
<td>0.3805</td>
<td>0.4301</td>
<td>0.8932</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>Absolute Differences of the Means</th>
<th>Standard Error of the Difference</th>
<th>Test Statistic</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 2</td>
<td>0.5127</td>
<td>0.0759</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>( E4 &gt; E2 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 1</td>
<td>0.4085</td>
<td>0.0771</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>( E4 &gt; E1 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 3</td>
<td>0.4631</td>
<td>0.0806</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>( E4 &gt; E3 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1 &amp; Essay 3</td>
<td>0.0546</td>
<td>0.0580</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>( E1 = E3 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1 &amp; Essay 2</td>
<td>0.1042</td>
<td>0.0406</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>( E1 = E2 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These tests show that, at the 1% level, the average number of mistakes in Essay Four was significantly higher than all the other essays. There was no difference between the average number of errors in Essay One, Essay Two and Essay Three. In conclusion, there was no improvement in the first three essays, and a deterioration in Essay Four.

(c) Test / .....
(c) Test to establish whether the observed differences between the average number of mistakes of 'Gravity Three' are significant or not.

The 1% Critical Constant, T3; 157, is 3.45.
The 5% Critical Constant, T3; 157, is 2.84.
These Critical Constants refer to Gravities 3, 4 and 5.

As the profiles are parallel and at the same level, both groups have been combined for this analysis.

1969 and 1970 /
### Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essay 1</th>
<th>Essay 2</th>
<th>Essay 3</th>
<th>Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.4410</td>
<td>0.4976</td>
<td>0.4266</td>
<td>0.5795</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Difference of the Means</th>
<th>Standard Error of the Difference</th>
<th>Test Statistic</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 1 0.1385</td>
<td>0.0506</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>Essay 4 = Essay 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 2 0.0818</td>
<td>0.0453</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>Essay 4 = Essay 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 3 0.1529</td>
<td>0.0448</td>
<td>3.41*</td>
<td>E4 &gt; E3 at the 5% level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This test shows that there was no improvement during the year in terms of the average number of mistakes made. At the 5% level the average number of errors in Essay Four was greater than the average in Essay Three. There was no change in the average number of errors in Essay One, Essay Two and Essay Four. There were no significant differences at the 1% level.

(d) Test to establish whether the observed differences between the average number of mistakes of 'Gravity Four' are significant or not.
As the profiles are parallel and at the same level both groups have been combined for this analysis.

1969 and 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Essay 1</th>
<th>Essay 2</th>
<th>Essay 3</th>
<th>Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0,4954</td>
<td>0,3446</td>
<td>0,3478</td>
<td>0,4385</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons  Absolute Differences of the Means  Standard Error of the Difference  Test Statistic  Conclusion

Essay 4 & Essay 1  0,0610  0,0458  1,33  Essay 4 = Essay 1
Essay 4 & Essay 2  0,0897  0,0416  2,16  Essay 4 = Essay 2
Essay 4 & Essay 3  0,0866  0,0410  2,11  Essay 4 = Essay 3
Essay 1 & Essay 2  0,1508  0,0412  3,66^*  Essay 1 > Essay 2
(Essay 1 (Essay 2 (Approx.))
(Essay 4 (Essay 3

This test shows that, at the 1% level, there is a significant difference between the average number of errors in Essay One and Essay Two. Essay Two shows an improvement over Essay One, but the average for Essay Three is the same as the average for Essay Two. The average for Essay One and Essay Four is the same. There has thus been a deterioration between Essay Two and Essay Four. At the 5% level the average for Essays One and Four taken together is higher than the average of Essays Two and Three taken together.

(e) Test to establish whether the observed differences between the average number of mistakes of 'Gravity Five' are significant or not.

(Please see graph on next page.)
Graphs to show the change in the means of the number of errors of gravity 5 in the four essays.

**Key:**
- 1969
- 1970
- 1971
- 1972

**Essays 1969 and 1970**
As the profiles are not parallel each year has been tested separately. It should be noted, however, that, although the profiles are not parallel, both groups show the same trend.

1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Essay 1</th>
<th>Essay 2</th>
<th>Essay 3</th>
<th>Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Means</td>
<td>1,2120</td>
<td>0,5556</td>
<td>0,2818</td>
<td>0,2800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absolute Difference of the Means</th>
<th>Standard Error of the Difference</th>
<th>Test Statistic</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 1</td>
<td>0,9320</td>
<td>0,0893</td>
<td>10,44**</td>
<td>Essay 1 &gt; Essay 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 2</td>
<td>0,2756</td>
<td>0,0592</td>
<td>4,66**</td>
<td>Essay 2 &gt; Essay 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 3</td>
<td>0,0081</td>
<td>0,0127</td>
<td>0,63</td>
<td>Essay 3 = Essay 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1 &amp; Essay 2</td>
<td>0,5564</td>
<td>0,0872</td>
<td>7,53</td>
<td>Essay 1 &gt; Essay 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This test shows that, at the 1% level, there was a significant difference between the average number of errors in Essay One, Essay Two and Essay Three. There was a considerable improvement from Essay One to Essay Three, but the average for Essay Four was the same as that for Essay Three.

1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Essay 1</th>
<th>Essay 2</th>
<th>Essay 3</th>
<th>Essay 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Means</td>
<td>0,5098</td>
<td>0,3814</td>
<td>0,1845</td>
<td>0,2070</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absolute Differences of the Means</th>
<th>Standard Error of the Difference</th>
<th>Test Statistic</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 1</td>
<td>0,3028</td>
<td>0,0557</td>
<td>5,43**</td>
<td>Essay 1 &gt; Essay 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 2</td>
<td>0,1744</td>
<td>0,0470</td>
<td>3,70**</td>
<td>Essay 2 &gt; Essay 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4 &amp; Essay 3</td>
<td>0,0225</td>
<td>0,0345</td>
<td>0,65</td>
<td>Essay 3 = Essay 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2 &amp; Essay 1</td>
<td>0,1284</td>
<td>0,0528</td>
<td>2,43</td>
<td>Essay 2 = Essay 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This test shows that, at the 1% level, there was a significant difference between Essay Two and Essay Three. The average number of errors in Essay One was the same as the average in Essay Two and these averages were greater than the averages for Essay Three and Essay Four, which were the same. There was, thus, a significant improvement between Essay Two and Essay Three.

In general, the results of the tests for 'Gravity Five' were the best. There was a significant improvement, both in the observed results and in the tested results, which suggests that, by the third essay, students were making far fewer serious errors. There was, however, no improvement between the Third and the Fourth essays. This trend is much the same as the trend of the general results discussed in Section 1, and reinforces the view that there was a general improvement from the first to the third essays in both years, but that the results of the essays written in the final examination showed a deterioration.
3. Histograms to show the numbers of errors in each 'Gravity' in 1969 and 1970.

These histograms show the results for each year side by side for comparison, and the numbers of errors in each essay are shown in different colours. The significance of these results can be gauged by comparing the relative heights of the columns in each group.

It should be kept in mind that there has been no correction of the figures to take into account the changes in the numbers of words in each essay, but that these histograms are, nevertheless, useful as a comparative study.

---

(1) A detailed account of the errors in each 'gravity' is given in Chapter Three, pp. 28-29.
Histograms to show the number of errors in each GRAVITY in 1969 and 1970.

**Key**
- Essay 1
- Essay 2
- Essay 3
- Essay 4

**GRAVITY in 1969 and 1970**

- **GRAVITY 1969**
  - Essay 1: 600
  - Essay 2: 500
  - Essay 3: 450
  - Essay 4: 400

- **GRAVITY 1970**
  - Essay 1: 700
  - Essay 2: 650
  - Essay 3: 600
  - Essay 4: 550
In general, the columns showing the numbers of errors made in 'Gravities One, Two and Three' do not show any really significant trends. There seems, therefore, to have been little or no improvement in terms of numbers of errors made. The numbers of errors in 'Gravity Four' begin to show a reduction over both years, but there is no regularity in the reduction of the length of the columns. The best results are those for 'Gravity Five', where, in both years, there has been a considerable drop in the number of errors made in the four essays in both years.

A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) The errors of 'Gravity One' show no particular trend from the beginning to the end of each year, except that, in both years, there has been a reduction in the number of errors made in the final essay compared with those of the third essay. In addition, the number of errors made in the fourth essay in each year was less than the number made in the first essay. In general, then, the numbers of errors fluctuated in such a way that little or no significance can be drawn from them. There was, however, a slight improvement between the first and the last essays.

(b) The errors of 'Gravity Two' show a deterioration between Essay One and Essay Two in 1969. In addition, the numbers of errors in Essay Four in 1969 are much higher than those in Essay One. In 1970 there has been virtually no change in the numbers of errors made over the year, but, again, the numbers of errors made in Essay Four are higher than those in Essay One. There has thus been a deterioration during both years in terms of the number of 'Gravity Two' errors that were made.

(c) In terms of the number of 'Gravity Three' errors made, there has been a deterioration from the first to the third essay, and the numbers of errors made in Essay Four are much the same as those in Essay One. There has, thus, been no improvement from the beginning of the year to the end.

(d) Errors of 'Gravity Four' show an improvement if the numbers of errors in Essay One and Essay Four in 1969 are considered, but no improvement if the numbers of errors in Essays One, Two and Three are considered. In 1970 there is a steady reduction of errors if the numbers of errors in Essays One, Two and Four are considered, and there are fewer errors in Essay Three than there are in Essay One. An improvement can thus be noted in both 1969 and 1970, being more marked in 1970.

(e) In terms of errors of 'Gravity Five' there has been a considerable improvement from the beginning of each year to the end. In 1969 there has been a drop from a total of 492 errors in Essay One to a total of 80 in Essay Four, and in 1970 a drop from a total of 240 errors /
240 errors in 1969 to a total of 62 errors in 1970. It should be noted that the trends in both years are the same, and that there has been a regular drop in the number of errors in each essay.

The results discussed in (d) and (e) above are significant, because they show that the worst errors were steadily eliminated during the years under consideration. These results suggest that the teaching methods and close personal supervision in the English Language Tutorial Scheme resulted in an improvement in terms of the worst errors made. These errors, described in detail in Chapter Three, were the ones that were concentrated on in tutorials, resulting in some success, whereas many of the errors (including spelling) of Gravities One to Three were not concentrated on to nearly the same extent, hence the lack of improvement over the years under examination.

4. Table and histograms to show the number of errors in each major category of error(1) in each essay in 1969 and 1970.

The following table, from which the histograms were derived, gives the number of errors in each major category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Idiom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109 104 99 114</td>
<td>455 444 339 250</td>
<td>220 130 50 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119 123 152 118</td>
<td>321 279 216 171</td>
<td>81 87 51 35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Punctuation</th>
<th>Sentence Construction</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>333 241 305 261</td>
<td>134 126 145 64</td>
<td>142 129 130 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230 300 243 184</td>
<td>126 174 147 97</td>
<td>129 195 193 59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) A detailed description of the errors and their 'gravities' is given in Chapter Three, pp. 28-29.
In general, it will be seen that errors in vocabulary and punctuation are by far the commonest in both the years under consideration, and that errors in spelling, sentence construction and grammar are approximately equal. Errors in idiomatic expression are the lowest number of errors recorded in each year.

A detailed examination of the figures shows the following:

(a) That there is no improvement over the four essays in terms of numbers of spelling errors, graded as 'Gravity Two or Three', made, and that there is a slight increase in the number of spelling errors in the final essay in 1969, in spite of the fact that this essay was not as long as the other essays. In 1970 there is no improvement if only the first and the fourth essays are considered, and an increase in the number of errors made in the third essay.

It seems that some students made no effort to improve their spelling during the years under examination, in spite of the fact that all spelling errors in the first three essays were indicated to them by tutors.

(b) That, although there are large numbers of errors in vocabulary in the first essay of each year, especially in 1969, there is a considerable reduction in the fourth essay. In 1969 there is very little change between the first and the third essay, there being a difference of only sixteen errors between Essay One and Essay Three. There is, however, a drop of 89 errors from Essay Three to Essay Four. There is a much steadier drop in 1970, but the trend is the same in both years. Although there has been no adjustment to allow for the differences in the lengths of the essays, it can be said that there has been some improvement between Essay One and Essay Four in each year.

Much of this success can be ascribed to the Tutorial Scheme because a major part of the tutorial work was concentrated on the elimination of errors in vocabulary.

(c) The histograms giving the number of errors in idiomatic expression show a change during each year, the change in 1969 being greater and more regular. In 1969 the difference between the number of errors in Essay One and Essay Four is 179 errors, there being more than five times as many errors in Essay One as there are in Essay Four. This suggests that there has been a considerable improvement in 1969, but the results for 1970, although indicating an improvement, do not differ as significantly as those for 1969. These changes in the numbers of errors suggest that the marking of essays in tutorials has had a beneficial effect, in that errors in idiomatic expression have been reduced in each year.

(d) / ....
(d) The histograms giving the numbers of errors in punctuation show that, in 1969, there is little change between the essays, but that there has been a little improvement between the first and the fourth essays. There is a more regular drop in the number of errors made in 1970, which suggests that there has been an improvement during the year in terms of errors made. In both years, it should be noted, there has, then, been an improvement between the first and the fourth essay. These results are disappointing because the students had their errors in punctuation drawn to their attention throughout each year. There was, however, no formal teaching of punctuation.

(e) The histograms giving the numbers of errors in sentence construction show that there has been little change in both years, if the first and the third essays are considered, but that there is a reduction in the number of errors in the fourth essay in both years. These figures suggest that there has been a fair improvement, if the first and the fourth essays in each year are considered.

(f) The histograms giving the numbers of grammatical errors made indicate that, although there has been no change between the numbers of errors in the first, second and third essays in 1969, and there has been an increase in 1970, there has been a decrease in the number of errors if the first and the fourth essays in both years are considered. This suggests that there has been some improvement in both years, but more in 1969 than in 1970.

4. Histograms to show the numbers of errors in each of the sub-categories of the major categories 'Vocabulary', 'Punctuation', 'Sentence Construction' and 'Grammar'. (There were no statistical sub-categories of the major categories 'Spelling' and 'Idiom'.) These histograms show not only how many errors were made in each sub-category, but also what kinds of errors were made in each essay, how many of them were made in each sub-category in each essay, and whether the same errors recurred in each essay or not. Where there is a blank, no errors were made in that category. The results of the two years have been put side-by-side for comparison.

(Please see histograms on next page).
A detailed examination of the histograms shows the following:

Sub-categories under 'Vocabulary'.

(a) That the commonest error in all the essays, except the first essay in 1970, is 'clumsy expression' (blue column), graded as 'Gravity Three or Four', followed very closely by 'inappropriate words' (red column), graded as 'Gravity Three to Five', and 'colloquialisms' (orange column), graded as 'Gravity Four'. Errors in these three categories are in the majority in all the essays in both years.

(b) That there are comparatively few errors in the other sub-categories in all the essays, the largest number being 38 in 'redundancy' graded as 'Gravity Two or Three', in the second essay of 1969, compared with 168 in 'clumsy expression' in the same essay.

(c) That much the same trend in the numbers and types of errors made can be noted in all four essays written in 1969 and 1970.

(d) That there is a steady diminution in the use of inappropriate words from the first to the fourth essay in each year.

(e) That there is a reduction in the number of clumsy expressions and colloquialisms between the first and the fourth essays.

(f) That there is no particular trend noticeable in the numbers of the other errors made in each essay.

Sub-categories under 'Punctuation'.

A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That by far the greatest number of errors is in the sub-category 'omission of commas' (red column), graded as 'Gravity One', and that this is followed by 'omission of hyphens' (green column), graded as 'Gravity Two', and 'omission of apostrophe "s"' (yellow column), graded as 'Gravity Three'.

(b) That almost as many commas have been omitted in the fourth essay of each year as have been omitted in the first.

(c) That there is no noticeable trend in the numbers of hyphens and apostrophes omitted from the beginning of each year to the end.

(d) That there is no noticeable trend in the numbers of the other errors from the beginning of each year to the end.

It should be noted that the omission of commas can be regarded as a trivial error, and that, if this sub-category were ignored, comparatively few errors in punctuation were made. What is noticeable, however, is that the vast majority of sentences were so constructed that semi-colons, colons and dashes were not necessary. The essays examined showed that students tended to avoid sentences needing careful internal punctuation, preferring simple sentences or short compound sentences.
Sub-categories under 'Sentence Construction'.

**Histograms to show the number of errors in each of the sub-categories under 'Sentence Construction'.**

**KEY:**

1. **Clumsy construction**
2. **Incorrect construction**
3. **Not a sentence**
4. **Two sentences that should be**
5. **Inverted as one**
6. **Sentence lacking unity**

**Histograms to show the number of errors in each of the sub-categories under 'Sentence Construction'.
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That by far the largest number of errors in every essay in both years has been made under the sub-category 'clumsy construction' (red column), graded as 'Gravity Five'.

(b) That these errors are followed in number by the sub-categories 'not a sentence' (green column), graded as 'Gravity Five', and 'sentences lacking unity' (blue column), graded as 'Gravity Four', but that the numbers of errors in these categories were far fewer than those under 'clumsy construction'.

(c) That there is a reduction in the number of clumsy constructions between the first and the fourth essays in each year.

(d) That there is, in general, a slight reduction in the numbers of errors in the categories 'not a sentence' and 'sentences lacking unity' from the beginning of each year to the end.

(e) That there is no noticeable trend in the numbers of errors made in the other sub-categories of error.

Sub-categories under 'Grammar'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clumsy construction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a sentence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences lacking unity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sub-categories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Histogram showing the number of errors in each of the sub-categories under 'Grammar']
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That errors in number (1) (black column), graded as 'Gravity Five', are in the majority in all the essays. There is an increase in the number of mistakes in both years from Essay One to Essay Two, and a further increase to Essay Three in 1969. There is then a considerable decrease to Essay Four in 1969. In 1970 there has been a decrease from Essay Two to Essay Three, and then a slight increase to Essay Four. There has thus been an improvement in 1969, if the first and the fourth essays are compared.

(b) That errors in number are followed by errors in the sub-categories 'pronouns with obscure antecedents' (green column), graded as 'Gravity Five', 'sequence of tense' (red column), graded as 'Gravity Four', "defining clauses introduced by 'which'', (purple column), graded as 'Gravity One', 'case' (yellow column), graded as 'Gravity Three', 'wrong prepositions', (2) (yellow striped column) / ....

(1) The types of error included in the sub-category 'number' will be described in detail in a later chapter.

(2) It should be noted that, although the results for 'wrong prepositions' have been included in the sub-category of 'Grammar', they will be discussed in detail in the chapter on 'Idiom' as it was felt that they fall into both categories.
column), graded as 'Gravity Four'.

(c) That, in general, there are fewer of the errors mentioned above in the fourth essay of each year compared with the third essay, but that there is no noticeable trend in any of these subcategories in any of the other essays.

(d) That, apart from what has already been said, there are no noticeable trends in the grammatical errors from the beginning of each year to the end.

5. Histograms to show how many errors were made in the essays written in 1969 and 1970.

(The numbers of errors in each essay have been shown separately, with the results for 1969 and 1970 side-by-side.)

It should be noted that, along the y-axes, errors are grouped in fives, and that the numbers along the x-axes show how many essays there are containing, for example, five to nine errors, or twenty to twenty-four errors. In general the increase in the height of the columns has moved to the left, showing that, in the third and fourth essay in each year, there were progressively fewer essays containing a large number of errors. This is a favourable result, suggesting that the teaching methods and the approach in the Tutorial Scheme have resulted in a reduction of errors by the end of each year.
Histograms to show how many errors were made in the essays written in 1969 and 1970.

**ESSAY 1**

**ESSAY 2**

A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That there is very little difference in the numbers of errors made in the first and second essays. Most of the essays have between five and twenty-four errors.

(b) That there are comparatively few essays, in the results for Essay One and Essay Two, containing 25 to 30 errors. There are, for example, only five essays in 1969 containing 25 to 29 errors, and there is only one essay containing between 35 and 39 errors in 1969.

(c) That in the results for Essay Three there are more essays with fewer errors than there are in Essay One and Essay Two. Most of the essays now have between five and nineteen errors, but, on the other hand, the number of essays containing no errors to four errors has remained much the same as in Essay One and Essay Two, as has the number of essays containing 30 to 39 errors.

(d) That there is a significant change in the fourth essay, where the number of essays containing no errors to four errors has increased. Most of the essays now contain from five to fourteen errors, by far the most (34 in 1969, and 39 in 1970), containing five to nine errors. There are no essays containing more than 29 errors, and very few, (5 in 1969), containing twenty to 29 errors.
6. Histograms to show the average of the means of the numbers of each of the five kinds of error made in the four essays in 1969 and 1970.

The figures in the accompanying table were obtained by adding the average numbers of each type of mistake in the four essays and dividing by four.

Table to show the Average Means of the Five 'Gravities' of Error in the Four Essays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gravity 1</th>
<th>Gravity 2</th>
<th>Gravity 3</th>
<th>Gravity 4</th>
<th>Gravity 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>0.512</td>
<td>0.470</td>
<td>0.480</td>
<td>0.582</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>0.441</td>
<td>0.547</td>
<td>0.471</td>
<td>0.350</td>
<td>0.320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results for each year have been entered side-by-side.
These histograms show that there is no change from 'Gravity One' to 'Gravity Five' in 1969. There is, however, a slight reduction between 'Gravity One' and 'Gravity Two' and 'Gravity Three' and 'Gravity Four' in 1969. 'Gravity Four' in 1969 is lower than 'Gravity One', which suggests a slight improvement. There is, however, a clear downward trend in the averages from 'Gravity Two' to 'Gravity Five' in 1970, which suggests that there has been an improvement.

B. TABLES AND HISTOGRAMS TO COMPARE THE RESULTS OF THE FIVE SCHOOL-LEAVING GROUPS.

As it was not possible to arrange for computer-based tests on the various results of the five school-leaving groups under consideration, for reasons already given, it was decided to present as many of their results as possible in the hope that some conclusions could be reached on whether the school-leaving symbols awarded were a fair reflection of the students' achievements in terms of errors made in the essays under consideration. In the following tables and histograms, then, a constant attempt will be made to compare the relative performance of the five school-leaving groups selected.

1. Tables and histograms to show the average error density(1) in the essays written by the five school-leaving groups.

Table to Show the Average Error Densities of the Five School-Leaving Groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>0.0925 0.031 0.0355 0.0343</td>
<td>0.0982 0.0649 0.0551 0.0504</td>
<td>0.116 0.0631 0.0425 0.0625</td>
<td>0.1028 0.0922 0.0687 0.1001</td>
<td>0.189 0.0958 0.056 0.1012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>0.0523 0.0386 0.0313 0.0521</td>
<td>0.0448 0.0458 0.0338 0.0423</td>
<td>0.0678 0.0542 0.0437 0.0624</td>
<td>0.0873 0.0689 0.0512 0.0753</td>
<td>0.0686 0.0564 0.0618 0.0878</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please see histograms on next pages).

(1) See Chapter Three, p. 39, for the way in which the error densities were calculated.
Histograms to show the average error density in the essays written by the five school leaving groups.

Key:
- Essay 1
- Essay 2
- Essay 3
- Essay 4

Average error density:
- 0.04
- 0.05
- 0.06
- 0.07
- 0.08
- 0.09
- 0.10
Histograms to show the average error density in the essays written by the five school-leaving groups.
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That the average error density in the first essay (red columns) shows little significant change if the results of the first four school-leaving groups are compared, but that, in 1970 only, the average for those with an 'E' symbol is at the same level as the average obtained by the Cs. The columns showing the results for 1969 become progressively higher, which suggests that the school-leaving symbols are an accurate reflection of the students' ability to write English. The results for 1970 are, however, erratic. The column for the Bs is lower than that for the As, which is unexpected. There is, then, a steady rise from the Bs to the Ds and a drop to the Es, whose results are the same as those achieved by the Cs. This would suggest that, in the first essay in 1970, the Es have done better than the Ds and are as good as the Cs.

(b) That the results for Essay Two in 1969 suggest that the school-leaving symbols are a fair reflection of the students' ability to write English, as the black columns are seen to rise steadily (with the exception of those for the Bs and Cs, which are roughly the same height). The columns giving the results for 1970 show a steady rise as far as the Ds, but the column for the Es shows a drop to the level of the Cs, as in the results for Essay One in 1970. This again suggests that the C, D, and E symbols may not be a fair reflection of the students' capacity to write English. It is, however, impossible to be certain because the results for both years are not the same.

(c) The columns for the third essay (green) show, in 1969, a rise from the As to the Bs, then a drop to the Cs, a further rise to the Ds and, lastly, a fall to the Es, whose results are approximately at the level of the Bs. These results do not indicate very much, but they do suggest that, again, the 'E' symbol may not be quite accurate. The columns showing the results for 1970 indicate a steady rise from the As to the Es, suggesting that, here, the results follow the symbols accurately.

(d) The columns for the fourth essay (yellow) show a steady rise from the As to the Es in 1969, and a steady rise from the Cs to the Es in 1970. The average for the Bs is, however, slightly lower than that for the As. In general the trends are much the same in both years, and suggest that, here, the symbols do reflect, more or less accurately, the students' capacity to write English.

In general, these results, with the exception of some of the essays, suggest that the A and B symbols are accurate, but that the C, D and E symbols are not always accurate.
If the four essays written by each school-leaving group are examined the results are as follows:

(a) With the exception of the second essay, the columns for the As show a steady reduction during 1969. In 1970 there is a steady diminution during the year, but the final essay is as bad as the first essay. This trend is much the same as the general trend for the total results, and suggests that, in 1970, the As tended to make more mistakes in the essay written as part of the final examination, as did the other school-leaving groups.

(b) The columns for the Bs show a steady improvement over the year in 1969, but an erratic performance in 1970, except that the results for Essay Three are well below the others. Not much can be inferred from these results as a whole.

(c) The columns for the Cs show the same trend in both years, which is a steady improvement from the first to the third essay and then a deterioration in the final essay, to the level of the second essay in 1969 and almost to the level of the first in 1970.

(d) The columns for the Ds show much the same trend in both years as those for the Cs, with a deterioration in the final essay almost to the level of the first essay in both years.

(e) The columns for the Es show a steady improvement over the first three essays in 1969, but an erratic performance in 1970. In 1969 the results for the final essay are almost as bad as those for the first essay, and in 1970 they are far worse than those of the first essay.

In general, the group showing the greatest improvement is the As, and the group showing the greatest deterioration is the Es. The group with the most even results in both years is the Cs. These results are not, however, conclusive, and no really significant conclusions can be inferred from them.

2. Table and histograms to show the average error scores (1) obtained by the five school-leaving groups in the four essays written in 1969 and 1970.

Table to Show the Average Error Scores obtained by the Five School-Leaving Groups in the Four Essays Written in 1969 and 1970.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27,7</td>
<td>32,3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47,1</td>
<td>40,2</td>
<td>42,6</td>
<td>21,8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>26,3</td>
<td>29,3</td>
<td>22,2</td>
<td>19,8</td>
<td>30,6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>27,2</td>
<td>16,2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

for C, D, E, P.T.O.

(1) See Chapter Three, p.38, for the way in which the error scores were calculated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td></td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td></td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That the results of the first essay (red columns) show that, in 1969, there is a steady increase from the As to the Cs, a decrease to the Ds and an increase to the Es almost to the level of the Cs. In 1970 there is a steady increase from the As to the Ds, and then a decrease to the Es almost to the level of the Bs. The trends in both years are much the same, and suggest that, in general, the symbols awarded are a fair reflection of the students' ability /...
ability to write English, but that the results for the Ds and Es might not be quite accurate.

(b) That the results obtained in the second essay (black columns) show that, in 1969, there is very little difference between the results of the Bs, the Cs, the Ds and the Es, but that the results obtained by the As are better than those obtained by the other groups. In 1970 there is a steady increase in the heights of the columns, with the exception of the column for the Cs, which is as high as the column for the Bs, and then a decrease to the Es. The decrease from the Ds to the Es is the same in both years, and suggests that the 'D' and 'E' symbols might not be quite accurate as an indication of these students' ability to write English.

(c) That the results for the third essay (green columns) show that, in 1969, there was an increase from the As to the Bs, a decrease to the Cs, to the level of the As, an increase to the Ds above the level of the Bs, and then a decrease to the Es. The columns in 1970 show a steady increase from the As to the Es. These results suggest that, on the whole, the symbols are a fair reflection of the students' capacity to write English. There is, however, a little doubt about the Ds and the Es.

(d) That the columns for the fourth essay (yellow) indicate that, in 1969, there was a steady increase in the height of the columns to the Ds, and then a drop to the Es, and in 1970 much the same trend. The drop from the Ds to the Es again suggests that these two symbols might not be quite accurate.

The results of the school-leaving groups taken separately suggest that the As' performance is the best, but that the Cs are almost as good. The most consistent performance in both years is the Ca' and the worst performance is the Ds'.

These results are much the same as those for the error densities, and suggest that the 'D' and 'E' symbols may not be quite accurate. They also suggest that the Cs have made the steadiest progress during each year.

3. **Histograms to show the number of errors made by each of the school-leaving groups in each of the major categories of error.**

(Please see histograms on next pages.)

---

(1) A detailed description of the errors and their gravities is given in Chapter Three, pp. 28-29.
Histograms to show the number of errors made by each of the school-leaving groups in each of the major categories of error.

Key:
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That the trend over all the major categories is much the same. Contrary to expectation, the numbers of errors made by the As (red) and the Es (blue) is much the same throughout, but the Es have made many more grammatical errors than the As in 1969.

(b) That the numbers of errors made by the Cs and Ds are much the same in all the categories in both years, except that, in 1969, the Cs made many more errors in punctuation than did the Ds.

(c) That the numbers of errors made by the Bs do not fluctuate a great deal.
great deal if the two years are compared, except in the categories 'Vocabulary' and 'Punctuation'.

(d) That the greatest numbers of errors made by all the groups are in 'Vocabulary' and 'Punctuation'.

(e) That the smallest numbers of errors made by all the groups are in 'Idiom', closely followed by 'Sentence Structure' and 'Grammar'.

In general, these results suggest that there is little difference between the As and the Es, and between the Cs and the Ds in terms of the numbers of errors made in different categories. As in previous findings, these results cast some doubt on the accuracy of the 'C', 'D' and 'E' symbols awarded.

4. Table and histograms to show the average number of errors made by each school-leaving group in each major category of error in 1969 and 1970.

Table to Show the Average Number of Errors Made by Each School-Leaving Group in Each Major Category of Error in 1969 and 1970.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1969</th>
<th>1970</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5,3</td>
<td>4,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4,1</td>
<td>18,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>4,8</td>
<td>17,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>7,5</td>
<td>19,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>7,4</td>
<td>19,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(For histograms please see next page).
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That, in the major category of 'Spelling', the averages for all the school-leaving groups in 1969 are much the same, but that the averages for the Ds and Es are higher than the others. In 1970 there is a steady increase, with the slight exception of the Ds, whose average is lower than the Cs. These results suggest that the school-leaving symbols are accurate.

(b) That in the major category of 'Vocabulary', there is, in 1969, a rise in average to the Bs, a slight fall to the Cs, a rise above the Bs to the Ds and then a slight fall to the Es. There is very little difference between the averages of the Bs, Cs, Ds and Es. In 1970 there is virtually no difference between the As, Bs and Cs. There is then a rise to the Ds and a further rise to the Es. The general trend in both years is the same, and the results suggest that, because of the small differences between some of the groups, the symbols may not always be accurate.

(c) That in the major category 'Idiom' there is, in 1969, a rise to the Bs, an exceptional rise to the Cs, a considerable fall to the Ds and then a small decrease to the Es. In 1970 there is very little difference between any of the groups. In general, there has been very little change between the groups, with the exception of the Cs in 1969.

(d) That in the major category 'Punctuation' the movement in 1969 is erratic. The Es are only slightly higher than the Bs, and the Cs are higher than the Ds. In 1970 there is very little difference between the groups, as in the results for 'Idiom' in 1970. These results, together with the results for 'Idiom', suggest that the school-leaving symbols may not be quite accurate.

(e) That the results in the major category 'Sentence Structure' show very little difference between the groups in 1969, and a rise only from the Cs to the Ds in 1970. Again, these results suggest that some of the symbols may not be quite accurate.

(f) That the results in the major category 'Grammar' show a steady rise in 1969, but very little change, with the exception of the Ds, in 1970. The results for 1970 show the same trend as results, in 1970, in the major categories of 'Idiom', 'Punctuation' and 'Sentence Construction'.

(g) That the highest overall average is in the major category of 'Vocabulary', closely followed by 'Punctuation'.

(h) That the lowest overall average is in 'Idiom', closely followed by 'Sentence Construction'.

In general, the erratic results in some categories and the lack of change from the average of one group to that of another in other categories, suggest that not all the school-leaving symbols are an accurate reflection of the students' ability to write English.
5. Histograms to show the number of errors in each sub-category of the major categories 'Vocabulary', 'Sentence Structure', 'Punctuation' and 'Grammar'.

As the general results of the major categories of error made by the five school-leaving groups have already been discussed in detail, these histograms are useful only to show (a) how many errors have been made in each sub-category, and (b) what kinds of mistakes predominate among the five school-leaving groups.

Histograms to show the number of errors in the sub-categories under the major category 'Vocabulary'.
Histograms to show the number of errors in each sub-category under 'vocabulary' made by each school-leaving group in the four essays written in 1969 and 1970.

Histograms to show the number of errors in each sub-category under 'vocabulary' made by each school-leaving group in the four essays written in 1969 and 1970.
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That the commonest error made by all five school-leaving groups is 'Clumsy Expression', graded as 'Gravity Three or Four', followed by 'Colloquialisms', graded as 'Gravity Four', and 'Inappropriate Words', graded as 'Gravity Three to Five'.

(b) That relatively few other errors have been made.

(c) That there is very little difference between the numbers of errors in all the sub-categories made by the As and the Es.

(d) That there is very little difference between the numbers of errors in all the sub-categories of error made by the Cs and Ds.

It should be noted that errors under 'Clumsy Expression' are graded as 'Gravity Three' or 'Gravity Four', errors under 'Colloquialisms' as 'Gravity Four', and errors under 'Inappropriate Words' are graded as 'Gravity Three' or 'Gravity Five'.

6. Histograms to show the number of errors in the sub-categories under the major category 'Punctuation'.

[Graphs showing the number of errors in sub-categories of punctuation for different time periods and school-leaving groups.]
Histograms to show the number of errors in each sub-category under 'Punctuation' made by each school-leaving group in the four essays written in 1969 and 1970.

Histograms to show the number of errors in each sub-category under 'Punctuation' made by each school-leaving group in the four essays written in 1969 and 1970.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>1969</th>
<th>1970</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C Punctuation</td>
<td>15345678</td>
<td>15345678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1</td>
<td>15345678</td>
<td>15345678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2</td>
<td>15345678</td>
<td>15345678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 3</td>
<td>15345678</td>
<td>15345678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 4</td>
<td>15345678</td>
<td>15345678</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Histograms to show the number of errors in each sub-category under 'Punctuation' made by each school-leaving group in the four essays written in 1969 and 1970.**
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That the largest number of errors made by every school-leaving group is 'Comma Omitted', an error graded as 'Gravity One'. This type of error is followed by 'Apostrophe 's' Omitted', graded as 'Gravity Three', 'Hyphen Omitted', graded as 'Gravity Two' and 'Comma Incorrectly Inserted', graded as 'Gravity Two'. In general then, the errors under 'Punctuation' are not very serious.

(b) That, as with 'Vocabulary', there is very little difference between the numbers of errors in sub-categories made by the As and numbers of errors in sub-categories made by the Bs.

(c) That, as with 'Vocabulary', there is very little difference between the various sub-categories of error made by the Cs and the Ds.

(d) That the greatest number of errors made in any sub-category has been made by the Cs in 'Comma Omitted' in 1969.

(e) That, apart from the four sub-categories of error already listed, there are very few errors in the other sub-categories of error under 'Punctuation'.
7. Histograms to show the number of errors in the sub-categories under the major category 'Sentence Construction'.
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That by far the largest number of errors made by all the school-leaving groups is in the sub-category 'Clumsy Construction', graded as 'Gravity Five'. This is followed by 'Not a Sentence', graded as 'Gravity Five' and 'Sentence Lacking Unity', graded as 'Gravity Four'.

(b) That the best results are those of the As, closely followed by the Bs, but that the As and the Es have made about the same number of errors under 'Clumsy Construction'.

(c) That the Cs and the Ds have made about the same number of errors under 'Clumsy Construction', but that the Ds have made more errors than the Cs in the other sub-categories.
8. Histograms to show the number of errors in the sub-categories under the major category 'Grammar'.

**Key:**
- Sequence of Tense
- Number
- Pronouns with Obscure Antecedents
- Case
- Incomplete Correlatives
- Non-defining Clauses Without Grammar
- Descriptive Clauses Intro, at, which
- Indefinite Pronouns
- Word Order
- Wrong Sequence of Words
- Split Infinitive
- Irregular Tense
- Misclauses
- Missing Preposition

**Histograms to show the number of errors in each sub-category under 'Grammar' made by each school-leaving group in the four essays written in 1969 and 1970.**

- 1969 Essay 1
- 1969 Essay 2
- 1969 Essay 3
- 1969 Essay 4
- 1970 Essay 1
- 1970 Essay 2
- 1970 Essay 3
- 1970 Essay 4
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That, in general, and in comparison with the other major categories, there are not many errors made in the sub-categories under 'Grammar'.

(b) That the largest number of errors made by all the school-leaving groups is in the sub-category 'Number', graded as 'Gravity Five', and that these errors have been made throughout the year. It should be noted, however, that errors of 'Gravity Five' declined considerably as a whole from the first to the fourth essays. These errors are followed by errors in the sub-categories 'Wrong Preposition', graded as 'Gravity Four' and 'Case', graded as 'Gravity Three'. In addition there are quite a few errors in the sub-category 'Defining Clause Introduced by "which"', graded as 'Gravity One'.

(c) That, in general, all the errors tend to diminish in number by the fourth essay. Grammatical errors have, for example, virtually disappeared from the essays written at the end of each year by the As and the Bs. Although the other groups do not show such spectacular results, there is a diminution, especially of serious errors, by the fourth essay.

9. Histograms to show the average number of errors made in each category of 'Gravity' by each school-leaving group in each essay in 1969 and 1970.

(For histograms please see next pages).

(1) For a detailed description of the types of error in each category of 'Gravity', see Chapter Three, pp. 28-29.
Histograms to show the average number of errors made in each category of gravity by each school-reading group in each essay in 1969 and 1970.
Histograms to show the average number of errors made in each category of gravity by each school-leaving group in each essay in 1969 and 1970.
Histograms to show the average number of errors made in each category of gravity by each school-leaving group in each essay in 1969 and 1970.
Histogam to show the average number of errors made in each category of gravity by each school-leaving group in each essay in 1969 and 1970.
Histograms to show the average number of errors made in each category of gravity by each school-leaving group in each essay in 1969 and 1970.
A detailed examination of these histograms shows the following:

(a) That, in the results for 'Gravity One', with the exception of the very high average for the Bs in the second essay in 1969, there is, in general, a steady increase in the averages from the As to the Cs, as might be expected.

(b) That the averages of the Ds and Es suggest that the 'D' and 'E' symbols may not be an accurate reflection of the students' capacity to write English, because they change in an erratic way in relation to each other. For example, in 'Essay Two' in 1970, the column for the Ds (yellow) is far higher than that for the Es (blue). This is repeated in the third essay in 1969.

(c) That the columns indicating the results for 'Gravity Two' show a generally erratic performance. As might be expected, the averages for the Es, with three exceptions, are the highest, but the averages for the Ds are not very different in some essays. This again suggests that these two symbols may not be quite accurate.

(d) That the columns indicating the results for 'Gravity Three' also show an erratic performance. It should be noted that, as for 'Gravity Two', the averages for the Ds are, in three places, well above the averages for the Es. Although the averages for the Es are clearly the worst, the averages for the Ds are very close to them. This suggests, again, that these symbols may not be quite accurate.

(e) That the averages for 'Gravity Four' are beginning to show a clearer pattern. The columns for the As, Bs and Cs show a decline, with exceptions, from the beginning of the year to the end, but the performance of the Ds and Es is erratic, with the averages for the Ds well above those for the Es in places.

(f) That the trend of 'Gravity Four' errors in each essay considered separately shows that there is a generally erratic performance in the first essay, but that there is a steadily emerging pattern through the second, third and fourth essays. The columns, with rare exceptions, become steadily higher, suggesting that, in 'Gravity Four', the five school-leaving groups are performing as might be expected.

(g) That the columns indicating the results for 'Gravity Five' show the clearest pattern in that there is a clearly noticeable trend from the beginning of each year to the end. All the groups, again with a few exceptions, show a steady decline in averages from the beginning of the year to the end, the As, for example, making no 'Gravity Five' errors in the fourth essay in 1969.

(h) That the averages in the errors of 'Gravity Five' made by the Ds and Es show, once more, that these symbols may not be an accurate reflection of the students' ability to write English.
(i) That, in general, the greatest improvement over both years has been in the reduction in the numbers of 'Gravity Five' errors.

These results show, then, that there is little clear pattern in the first three 'Gravities', but that the pattern of improvement, clear in 'Gravity Five', begins to show in 'Gravity Four'. The erratic changes in the averages of the 'D' and 'E' symbols over all the 'Gravities' suggest that these symbols may not be accurate.

Summary and Conclusions.

A. Major findings.

1. In terms of reduction in the numbers of serious errors made, the essays under consideration show an improvement during both years, but a deterioration in each year in the essay written as part of the final examination. This deterioration indicates a return to the level of the second essay in 1969, and almost to the level of the first essay in 1970.

2. The detailed examination, by means of a 'Profile Analysis for two Independent Groups', of the average number of mistakes in each of the five 'Gravities' in the four essays written in each year shows that there was little or no improvement during each year in the first three 'Gravities', but that there was some improvement in the fourth 'Gravity' and considerable improvement in the fifth 'Gravity'. In other words, there was a steady elimination of the really serious errors from the beginning to the end of each year.

3. The histograms showing the numbers of errors in each 'Gravity' indicate much the same results as the ones above.

   They show that the worst errors were steadily eliminated during the years under consideration. There was, therefore, an improvement in terms of a reduction in the worst errors made.

4. There was little or no improvement in the numbers of spelling errors made, but there was a considerable reduction in the numbers of errors in the major categories of 'Vocabulary' and 'Idiom'. There was a small reduction in the numbers of errors in 'Punctuation' and 'Sentence Structure', as well as a slight reduction in the numbers of grammatical errors made.

5. The commonest errors made in both years were in the sub-categories 'Clumsy Expression', 'Inappropriate Words', 'Colloquialisms', 'Omission of Commas', 'Omission of Hyphens', 'Omission of Apostrophe's', 'Clumsy Construction', 'Not a Sentence', 'Sentences Lacking Unity', 'Number', 'Pronouns with Obscure Antecedents', 'Sequence of Tense' and 'Wrong Prepositions'. Of these, the errors graded as 'Gravity Four' were 'Clumsy Expression', 'Colloquialisms', 'Sentences Lacking Unity', 'Sequence of Tense' and 'Wrong / ....
and 'Wrong Preposition'. Those graded as 'Gravity Five' were 'Inappropriate Words', 'Clumsy Construction', 'Not a Sentence' and 'Pronouns with Obscure Antecedents'.

6. The histograms giving the changes in the numbers of errors during 1969 and 1970 show that, in both years, there has been a steady increase in the numbers of essays containing fewer errors from the beginning to the end of the year.

7. The histograms giving the average means of each of the five kinds of error again suggest that there has been an improvement during each year.

B. Findings that compare the relative achievement of the five school-leaving groups.

1. The histograms comparing the average error densities of the five school-leaving groups suggest that, while the 'A' and 'B' symbols are accurate, there is some confusion between the 'C', 'D' and 'E' symbols.

2. The histograms showing the average error scores suggest that the 'D' and 'E' symbols may not be quite accurate.

3. The greatest numbers of errors made by all the school-leaving groups were in the major categories of 'Vocabulary' and 'Punctuation', and the smallest number in 'Idiom'. The results showing the numbers of errors made by the school-leaving groups again suggest that the 'C', 'D' and 'E' symbols may not be quite accurate.

4. The greatest numbers of errors made by each school-leaving group in each major category of error suggest that not all the school-leaving symbols are an accurate reflection of the students' ability to write English. Again the evidence seems to point to the possible inaccuracy of the 'C', 'D' and 'E' symbols.

5. The histograms giving the numbers of errors made by the five school-leaving groups in the major categories of error with subdivisions show that all the groups tended to make the same mistakes. The results for the sub-categories under the major headings 'Vocabulary', 'Punctuation' and 'Sentence Construction' show very little difference between the performance of the As and the Es, and between the Cs and the Ds. There were relatively few grammatical errors made in both years under consideration.

6. The histograms to give the average numbers of errors made in each category of 'gravity' show that there was little change in the students' performance in terms of a reduction, during each year, in errors of 'Gravity One' to 'Gravity Three', but that errors of 'Gravity Four' and 'Gravity Five' show a generally steady reduction from the beginning of each year to the end. The erratic changes in the averages of the 'D' and 'E' symbols over all the 'Gravities' suggest that these symbols may not be quite accurate.
The large number of spelling errors found in the essays examined were divided into six categories: (A) Errors in consonants, (B) Errors in vowels, (C) Consonants and vowels confused, (C) Pairs of words confused, (E) One word written instead of two, and (F) Miscellaneous errors. Categories (A), (B) and (C) were subdivided according to the letters that were wrong.

The most numerous errors in the 23 sub-categories were found in the sub-categories 'single for double consonant', 'double for single consonant', '"c" for '"s" or '"ss"', '"s" for '"c"', 'consonants omitted', 'consonants incorrectly inserted', '"e" for '"a"', '"a" for '"e"', '"e" omitted', '"e" incorrectly inserted', '"e" for '"i"', '"i" for '"a"', '"y" for '"i"', 'pairs of words confused', 'one word written instead of two' and 'miscellaneous'.

(A) ERRORS IN CONSONANTS

1. Single for double consonant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Error</th>
<th>Correction</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>abbreviated</td>
<td>falacy</td>
<td>plainness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accompanied</td>
<td>flatery</td>
<td>possessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accomolations</td>
<td>forgotten</td>
<td>possessive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accomodate (twice)</td>
<td>glas</td>
<td>realy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alusions</td>
<td>gramarians</td>
<td>refering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>annoying</td>
<td>gramatical</td>
<td>referred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Appolo' moon mission</td>
<td>grammatically</td>
<td>revealed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>begining</td>
<td>grammer</td>
<td>secumbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brilliant</td>
<td>hagard</td>
<td>shapers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cluttering</td>
<td>inate</td>
<td>sleeves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colossal</td>
<td>intelect</td>
<td>twizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commands</td>
<td>intelectual</td>
<td>tranquility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication</td>
<td>interrupting</td>
<td>transferred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continually</td>
<td>later = latter</td>
<td>traveler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desolved</td>
<td>marvelous</td>
<td>traveling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dissapointed</td>
<td>necessities</td>
<td>trimmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>embarrassing</td>
<td>occasion</td>
<td>uncontrolables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>embarassment</td>
<td>occurrence</td>
<td>unnecessarily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>embarricing</td>
<td>occurred</td>
<td>vainess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equired</td>
<td>occurrence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exagerated</td>
<td>outspokenness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. / ............
2. Double for single consonant

academic  erased  professors
accross fatt  proficient
accussing florrid  quoting
affraid formallity  reffered
aggenda fulfill (3 times)  ressembles
alive  fulfill (twice)  retalliates
apartment howlling  shinning
'Apollo' moon mission immaciated  skilfull
arround immagination  skillfull
atmosphere immitated  skillfull
auxilliary imitation  smuggy
carresses innane  speciality
colourfull innumerable  staccatto
collosus irrellevant  stelling = stealing
commic knott  symbol
commical meaningfull  synnymous
compilation misquotes  tallors
commedy neccesary  tennants
comming neccessaries  tollerant
deffinetely necessarilly  truly
deroggatory neccasary  trully
dessision occassions  truthfullness
different occassionally  unpalatteble
dissaproved opinion  untill
dissapnearing oppulence  volluble
dissapointed ordinarilly  whett = whet
elaborates passtimes  wommen
ellement personnage  writting
emmigration personal  willful
erradicated profesional

3. 'c' for 's' or 'ss'

assciations  ecstasy  idiosyncrisis
consisely expence  nonesence
concincies hercacy  nnone
of course hiprocacy  sence
desicions idiocyncracies

4. 's' for 'c'

assciations  critisized  sentence
assocations  defense  sited = cited
Chauser (3 times)  desicions  sosial
circumstances  existense
conisciely  intricisies
5. 'sc' for 'ss'
ascerting = asserting

6. Consonants omitted
admires = admirers  hauhtiness  unconcious
aquaintence  knowlege (3 times)  unconciously
aquisition  psycology (3 times)  unselfconcious
arbitary  punctuality  unkept = unkempt
Cantebury (4 times)  rythm  were = where
coaes = coarse  sprinbok  wether = whether
concious  stiches  wordly = worldly
exatly  studing  worring
exellent  subconciously
facinated  suceptible

7. Consonants incorrectly inserted
characteiristic  perpertrated  scource
cheeck = cheek  phrophetic  suprissing
mimick  prescision  tragedy
mirarge  pronunctuation  wheather = weather
neighbourhs  rhymth  whealth

8. 'c' for 'k'
blanc = blank

9. 's' for 't'
intension  unpretensionous

10. 'z' for 's'
analized  surprize
paradize  wize

11. 'c' for 't'
pacient  substanciate

12. 'f' for 'v'
wifes

13. 'v' for 'f'
vacilities = facilities
vively = wifely

14. 'b' for 'd'
undoubtebly

ERRORS IN VOWELS / ......
B. ERRORS IN VOWELS

1. 'ei' for 'ie'
   acheived

2. 'ie' for 'ei'
   concievabe
   deceiutiful
   seizure

3. 'e' for 'a'
   academic
   adjectively = adjectivally
   alter = altar (3 times)
   bluntly
   elegant
   embarresment
   figuretively
   Friar = Friar
   grammar
   greased
   guarenteed
   inseperable
   irrelevent
   naturally
   monestry
   particularly
   peculler
   permanant
   persuaded
   predominant
   resemblences
   separete
   standerd
   suger
   supremecy
   summerized
   unpalletable

4. 'a' for 'e'
   altars = alters
   anciant
   apparant
   catagories
   currantly
   desperatly
   eelements
   euphamisms
   evidantly
   excellant
   feelings
   incompetance
   independant
   indulgances
   inherent
   knowledge
   neccasary
   permanant
   privilaged
   reference
   sentances
   serpent
   sheepard
   tempament (3)
   tendancy (3)
   vehemance

5. 'a' omitted
   adequately
   advertisement
   atmospher
   breaths = breathes
   colours
   conjurs = conjures
   degree
   disacre
   forhead
   frightned
   heights
   houswive
   ined
   jewls
   knowledgeable
   lavitiv
   lonliness
   monestry
   precisely
   queus
   rarly
   righteous
   sooth
   temprament
   therefor = therefore
   therby
   unfortunatly
   wheras
   wherby

6. / .....
6. 'e' incorrectly inserted
argueing  hero
d匡ent (4 times)  inconceivable
briney  iedly = idly
changeing  lacey
enabeling  martyr
envelope = envelop  monstrous
feate  nonesense
foreward  pathes
gentley  pilgrames
geinuse  prefer
georgeous  proceeds
hieding  proleetiate
hazey  rangeing
healf  rythme
hero
scorne
shiney
stoney
tangeable
tenderley
therefore = therefor
truely
usage
valueable

7. 'e' misplaced
multitued
quite = quiet

9. 'etly' for 'ately'
adequetly

11. 'ee' for 'ea'
beek = beak
treesore
skreaming
streeks
weeknesses

13. 'ea' for 'e'
creapt
sheapard
swaapt

15. 'e' for 'u'
secumbs

17. 'ea' for 'ee'
gread
redeam
speach (4 times)
streats

18. / .......

8. 'ee' for 'e'
preceeding

10. 'e' for 'ea'
plesant
steling

12. 'el' for 'le'
gentelman
liabel
subtelty

14. 'ea' for 'a'
blearing = blaring

16. 'ea' for 'ere'
mearly

18. / .......
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Correction</th>
<th>Word 1</th>
<th>Word 2</th>
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<td>húmerous</td>
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<td>'er' for 're'</td>
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<td>'a' for 'o'</td>
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<td>introduction</td>
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<td>'ai' for 'a'</td>
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<td>31. 'au' for 'ua'</td>
<td>32. 'able' for 'ible'</td>
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<td>33. 'ible' for 'able'</td>
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<td>acceptable (twice)</td>
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<td>34. 'i' incorrectly inserted</td>
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<td>stabiliser</td>
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<td>36. 'icle' for 'ical'</td>
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<td>'Radicle Society'</td>
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<td>37. 'ied' for 'ide'</td>
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<td>38. 'ious' for 'uous'</td>
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<td>inconspicuous</td>
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<td>39. 'i' misplaced</td>
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<td>complimenting = complementing</td>
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<td>41. 'jous' for 'uous'</td>
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<td>42. 'o' for 'e'</td>
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<td>43. 'o' for 'a'</td>
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<td>ambivalent</td>
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<td>propaganda (twice)</td>
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<td>44. 'ou' for 'o'</td>
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<td>45. 'ou' for 'u'</td>
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<td>46. 'o' for 'u'</td>
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<td>pronounciation</td>
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<td>47. 'oe' for 'oo'</td>
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<td>woes = woos</td>
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<td>48. 'u' for 'o'</td>
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<td>opportunity</td>
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<td>49. / ...........</td>
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</table>
C. CONSONANTS AND VOWELS CONFUSED

1. 'y' for 'ie'
   - bully = bullys
   - cry = crys
   - tally = talllys
   - twenty = twentieth

2. 'ie' for 'y'
   - crannie
   - poultre
   - querie
   - trie

3. 'i' for 'y'
   - analized
   - idiosincratic
   - mith
   - portrayed
   - simbolize

4. 'y' for 'i'
   - embroydered
   - gayeity
   - Israely-Arab War
   - layed
   - likelyhood
   - lythe = lithe
   - payed = paid
   - satyre
   - satyrical
   - trustworthyness

D. PAIRS OF WORDS CONFUSED

- affects = effects (6 times)
- boarders = borders
- breaks (verb) = brakes (noun) (twice)
- chose = choose
- coarse = course (twice)
- complement = compliment
- conscience = conscious
- course = coarse
disproved = disapproved
duel = dual
forth = fourth
here = hear
ice flows = floes
illusion = allusion
isle = aisle
know = no
loose = lose
loss = lose
of = off
plain = plane
playwries = playwrights
pouring = poring (5 times)
practise = practice (3 times)
soul = sole
tail = tale
there = their (6 times)
through = threw
to = too
too = to
vacations = vocations
vane = vain
way = weigh
weather = whether
where = were
woman = women

E. ONE WORD WRITTEN INSTEAD OF TWO

alright
afterall
courtlife
everyday (twice)
eveready
everytime

inparticular
inorder
on the otherhand
overelaborately
smoothtalk
sometime (not an adjective)
statusseeker

F. MISCELLANEOUS

abolution
authorative
automatum = automaton
basicy
Britains = Britons
ceased = siezed
chilvalry
cloisture = cloister
conceivedness
consequences = consequences
conventional = conventional
disreptible = disreputable
failiur
favorat

flamboic / ........
flamboic
gaffau = guffaw
gapped-toothed
gigune = jejune
heigthens = heightens
heroes = hero's
importans = importance
isotype = isotope
knudge
lawayer = lawyer
learn't
lingua francae
ludicrously
noneties = nonentities
nouveau-riche
odeurs
orcheister
phenomen = phenomenon
praeps = perhaps
portraits = portrays
preforan = preference
qualilms = qualms
qualatively
restered = rested
rhetorique
sceptism
sectre = sector
similarary = similarly
skrieks = shrieks
sovereignity
subtlely = subtly
synonemes
usely = usually
vocabulary
your's = yours
This chapter on vocabulary is divided into twelve sub-sections:
1. Inappropriate words
2. Circumlocution
3. Redundancy
4. Malapropisms
5. Clumsy expression
6. Colloquialisms
7. Clichés
8. Ambiguity
9. Illogicality
10. Pretentious language
11. Jingles
12. Mixed metaphors

Although this list is lengthy, by far the largest numbers of errors occurred under sub-headings 1, 5, and 6. Errors under the other sub-sections were relatively minor, and not many examples have been recorded.

1. INAPPROPRIATE WORDS

The examples below show the large numbers of words or phrases considered to have been used inappropriately. It should be stressed that all the examples chosen were considered to have been incorrectly used in their contexts. The quotations that follow are, therefore, long enough to show how the words or phrases in question were used.

In order to present these examples in an organised way, it was decided to divide them according to the parts of speech incorrectly used. The sub-sections of 'Inappropriate words' are, therefore, 'Adjectives', 'Adverbs', 'Nouns', 'Participles and other non-finite verbal forms', and 'Verbs'.

The mistakes in the category 'Inappropriate words' fall into three main types (apart from their divisions into parts of speech). In the first type (called Type One), students either used neologisms, the meanings of which were obscure, or they used current words in unusual or new ways unsuited to formal writing. Examples of such words are: (1) 'His big mouth also hinted at his jabby nature ...' (69,C24) ('Jabby' is a neologism, the meaning of which is obscure in this context.) (2) 'It would be described in great, detail, either glamourised or horrified to a large extent.' (69,B18) (Note the use of 'horrified' as a past participle with a transitive force.)

In the second type, students used words that were wrong in their contexts, as in: (1) 'Euphemisms are a popular tool in spoken and
written English, owing to the fact that they are unrealistic."
(Here 'unrealistic' is wrongly used in this context, and, in fact, does not make sense.)
(2) 'Surely the hand is merely an expressionless lump of protoplasm - a useful commodity ...?' (70,A69)
(Here, although 'commodity' would be correct in another context, one's hand can certainly not be described as a 'commodity'.)

In the third type, students used words, the meanings of which they were clearly not sure. These words were not entirely wrong, but seemed out of place in their contexts. Examples of such words are:
(1) 'Thus, the monks slept in the dorter, which was not far from the church, so that devotions both early and late were quickly accessible.' (69,C18) (Here, the student clearly meant to say that the place for devotions was accessible, rather than the 'devotions' themselves.)
(2) 'They are all enveloped by their domestic activities and stare enviously and yet distastefully at this unreserved 'rushing' (sic) female.' (69,D19) (What was probably meant here was that they 'stared with distaste'. 'Distastefully' seems out of place here.)
(3) 'We laugh at the ridicule of the situation ...' (69,C48). (It is difficult to decide exactly what was meant here, but the student could have improved the sentence by saying: 'We laugh at the ridiculous situation'.)

The other examples in the categories mentioned above, appear below. Where necessary, brief comments have been added in brackets.

ADJECTIVES

Type One (Neologisms)

Man learns the art of articulative speaking at an early age. (69,B74);
If we had no books and no knowledge from the experience of others to be found in literative sources ... (69,D72).

Type Two (Words that are wrong in their contexts.)

In addition in his elusive manner Chaucer indicates the Monks (sic) position ... (69,C19) (Can a manner be described as 'elusive' in this context?);
Chaucer has the talent of exaggerating without becoming unbelievable. (69,C24);
... in that he is untrained in the field of aural self expression. (69,B17) ('Oral' is intended here.);
... between the speakers of the Romantic and the Germanic languages. (69,B35) (What is meant here is 'romance.');
Euphemisms are a popular tool in spoken and written English, owing to the fact that they are unrealistic. (69,B46);

The standard / ....
The standard of English in advertising ranges from blatant to adequate. (69,B75);

It makes you think of the good work the police force does and you may pick up something knowledgable (sic). (69,A12) (This is advice not to touch anything after a burglary.);

Travelling at the time I do, I am invariably in the midst of the pathological rush-hour. (69,A54) (What is a 'pathological' rush hour?);

The student of today has an unimaginable agenda (sic) each day. (69,D52). (The student is probably trying to say that 'the student of today' has a very full agenda.);

It is not always obvious to me which words are most nearly related and therefore which words should be placed in the sentence as near to each other as possible in order to achieve comprehensive syntax. (69,B30) (It is not clear what 'comprehensive syntax' is.);

Besides the strides being made in the economical field ... (70,A17) (The student should have said 'in the field of economics').;

... I glanced at her, puzzled that she should be so disinterested. (70, A47) ('Uninterested' is meant here.);

The explanation is definitely tangible ... (70,C69). (How can an explanation be 'tangible'?).

Type Three (Words that are out of place in their contexts.)

Chaucer is able to use unsubtle factual statements .. (69,C32);

... I could feel how scrawny he was, how very tough and untender. (69,D53) (In both the above examples, 'unsubtle' and 'untender' are out of place in a formal essay.);

Chantecleer believed that his dream was a somnium coeleste as a doctor would classify it... Therefore it was not to be cast off as dispensable (sic) once a dose of laxative had been administered. (69,C77). (How can a dream be described as 'dispensable'?);

It is advisable to reserve words such as 'fatal' and 'crisis' for strong occasions ... (69,B31). (What is a 'strong' occasion?);

A soft purring voice and very continental vowels reveals (sic) a Frenchman .. (69,B41). (What is a 'continental' vowel?);

This cycle / ....
This cycle becomes more and more ineradicable until generation after generation has been so honed down that they will accept anything and everything they hear. (70,B44) (Can a 'cycle' be 'eradicated'?);

With two such perfect characters one expects a tale of heroic victory and impeccable destiny. (70,C51) (What is an 'impeccable' destiny?);

A further and rather more contentious merit may be stated. (69,B69) (Can a 'merit' be described as 'contentious'?);

... of a mind obsessed by an idealistic, theoretical idea. (69,B68) (What is a 'theoretical' idea?);

While reading some of this far-fetched literature I have paused to think of (the) vital necessity of this non-descript and intangible matter in life. (i.e. air.) (69,A31) (Can air be described as 'non-descript'?);

Probably the widest field in which hats play a part in fashion in this modern day, where clothes are becoming less and less obvious ... (69,A38) (It is not clear whether the student meant that people are wearing more revealing clothes or that clothes are becoming duller.);

Their love has not slowly extinguished (sic), but has grown steadily stronger and everlasting. (69,A73) (How can love grow 'steadily everlasting'?);

It is the official standard this common, yet high model. (Referring to the English language). (69,A75) (What is a 'high' model?);

This vacant hollow atmosphere crawls eternally onward, unmolested yet waiting. (70,A31) (What is a 'vacant' 'hollow' 'atmosphere'? Can an atmosphere be 'unmolested'?);

The patient may then forget about whether the treatment is helping him by having to(sic) much faith that he is sure his doctor's advice is recommendable. (70,A4) (What is probably meant here is 'acceptable');

This shows clearly how the people of this time were not questioning the Bible as they begun to do during the Renaissance; they were still very ecclesiastical. (69,C76) (What is meant here is 'religious');

...: words are merely labels for artificial concepts. (69,D66) (What is an 'artificial' concept?);

Thus we see / ....
Thus we see that jars, prevalent in the days of the Bible and earlier, are still in existence today. (70,A57) (How can 'jars' be 'prevalent'?);

The vastness of infinity is tangible. (70,A24) (Can 'vastness' be 'tangible'?).

ADVERBS

Type Three (Words that are out of place in their contexts.)

(There were no examples of the other two types.)

Words are used indifferently as to their correct meaning. (69,B25) ('Irrespective of' should replace 'indifferently' here);

Chaucer's (sic) presentation of Chauntecleer is hyperbolically hilarious. (69,C48).

NOUNS

Type One (Neologisms)

... presenting his characters in the jumble and haphazardly of life. (69,C64):

Modern English literature has discarded pedant (sic) in favour of greater personalisation in writing and, more important, a higher degree of expressiveness. (69,B1);

Throughout the tale Chaucer mentions many learnings of the period. (70,C6);

This results in confusion dissension (sic) and even hilariosity ... (70,B17).

Type Two. (Words that are wrong in their contexts.)

... yet scorns the text of learned ecclesiastics. (69,C69) ('Ecclesiastics' is meant here.);

... and with the peculiar Robin-Hood-like apparition of the Yeoman .. (69,C80) ('Appearance' is meant here.);

I discovered that there are many diversions from the rules and regulations of the English written language. (69,B4) ('Digressions' is meant here.);

Speed does have undeniable attributes and yet it can also be a curse ... (69,B56) ('Advantages' is meant here.);

With the discovery and improvement of the wheel .. (70,A5) ('Invention' should have been used.);

Even in this day and age of science, we still cannot find words to aptly describe things such as beauty, love, misery ... (69,B15) ('Beauty, 'love' and 'misery' are not 'things'.)

And the / .....
And the amount of tourists and immigrants to South Africa has greatly increased ... (69,A22). ('Number' should have been used here.);

The men were caught in a magnetism of great silence ... (69,A52) (What is a 'magnetism' of 'silence'?);

(Describing a storm). Suddenly the wind drew back into a cone of vacuum ... (69,A52) (What is a 'cone of vacuum'?);

The imminence of a political regime can lay its foundations with the same form of brainwashing ... (69,A60) (This word does not make sense here. Perhaps 'power' is meant, but then the sentence would have to be rewritten);

Those bottle-green towers of water moving relentlessly, thoughtlessly shoreward to climax (sic) on the beach as a mere laced fringe, a fast disappearing asterisk of their former power. (70,A45) (The word 'asterisk' is meaningless here.);

It is prevalent that the three forces 'regional', 'social' and 'commercial' do have drastic effects on a language. (70,B35) (What is probably meant here is 'obvious' or 'clear');

Likewise today we can find such a person whom we admire for his character, and actions and not only for his dress or impressive outlook. (70,D4) (What is meant here is 'appearance');

Youth is therefore a natural bug bed for potential demonstrators. (70,B31) (What is a 'bug bed'?);

My answer is that protest is not a wasteful, unheeded institution ... (70,B31). (Can 'protest' be regarded as an 'institution'?).

Type Three. (Words that are out of place in their contexts)

New substances (rayon and nylon) organisms, (flagellae, femur) ... (70,B47). (Can the 'femur' be described as an 'organism'?);

These societies provide facilities for sporting, intellectual, cultural and religious expression. (69,A55) (What is 'sporting expression'?);

Mrs. Brown expressing her unappreciation at this ... (69,D9) ('Lack of appreciation' would have been better here.).

PARTICIPLES / ...
PARTICIPLES AND OTHER NON-FINITE VERBAL FORMS

Type One (Neologisms)

There is a general laxening of dogmatic grammar rules. (69,B46) ('Laxening' was probably formed on the basis of 'loosening').

... self-denied monk in search of spiritual enlightenment. (69,C19) (What was probably meant here was 'self-denying').

Chaucer typifies human nature in the monk, who not wanting to be taken for a narrow cloister-bounded bigot. (69,C64) (Possibly 'cloister-bound' was meant).

On the other hand a member of the more educated technicalised class. (69,B70) (It is not clear what was meant here).

Nail imprints appear on palms like a series of hallucinated half-moons. (69,A59) (It is not clear what a 'hallucinated half-moon' is).

Those bottle-green towers of water moving relentlessly, thoughtlessly shoreward to a climax on the beach. (70,A44) (The noun 'climax' is not used as a verbal form in formal writing).

In exacting the meaning of a sentence a knowledge of syntax can be used ... (70,B72) (it is not clear what is meant by 'exacting' here).

... another heart rending sign. (70,D47) (What was meant here was 'heart-rending').

Type Two (Words that are out of place in their contexts.)

In the Catholic religion it is taught that one is forgiven for a sin there is still a remaining punishment to be expiated in this world. (69,C11) (One does not 'expiate' a punishment).

His glorified crowing particularly emphasises his vanity. (69,C39) (It is not clear what was meant here, but the student possibly meant 'glorious' or 'proud').

... may have been prevented if the dreamer had recognised the idea of pre-destination and attempted to obscure or obstruct the hand of destiny. (69,C46) (How can one 'obscure' the hand of destiny).

Chaucer is, however, very exacting in his jokes. For example, he describes Chantecleer as having a beard ... (69,C74) ('Exact' was possibly meant here).

While I was reading "The Complete Plain Words" I realized how fond I am of breeding verbiage. (69, B29) (One does not 'breed' verbiage in this sense).

... he glides / ....
he glides unconsciously into the fastest, most dangerous most skilful game ever formed - rush-hour. (70,A25)
(Does one 'form' a 'game'?);
Another important point to make about the setting out of the Parson is that ... (69,C51) (What is meant here is 'description');
His being is perhaps too prosaic to levitate, as it were, to battle for things. (69,A65) (It is not clear what is meant here, but possibly 'to rouse itself' was meant.)

Type Three (Words that are out of place in their contexts.)
The tension suspended in the air of an operating theatre ... (69,A31) (One does not normally describe tension as 'suspended').
She scolds him for being cowardly and threatens to take back her love if he continues to be so foolish. (69,C41)
(Does one 'take back' one's love?);
Its higher slopes are bare of vegetation, thereby disallowing the face of the colossus (sic) to be hidden and thus end its faithful watch over the surroundings. (70,A83) (What was meant here was 'preventing').

VERBS

Type One (Neologisms)
His business acquaintances snobbed socially. (69,A35) (Note the use of 'snob' as a verb here);
He claws his attache case and stutters to the control panel. (69,A69) (Note the new use of 'stutters' here. Perhaps 'staggered' was meant);
He reams (sic) on and on just to illustrate one point .. (70,C38) Note the use of 'ream' as a verb here.

Type Two (Words that are wrong in their contexts.)
The words which cannot be found to describe a situation are often filled in by abusive language. (69,B57) ('Replaced' is meant);
What is inferred here is that Chaucer believes in predestination. (69,C70) ('Implied' should have been used here);
The fox is conducted with the smooth accomplished flattery of the false courtier. (70,C78) ('Conducted' does not make sense as it is used here, but perhaps 'conducts himself' was meant);
Chaucer skilfully unfolds the question of predestination ... (69,C27) ('Unfolds' was probably meant here);
... and by giving / ...
... and by giving us this 'glossy image' one expects if not relishes some misfortune to strike. (69,C57) (Perhaps 'hopes that' was meant.);

Although he (Chaucer) despises what is about to take place he feels that there is no escaping it. If Fate decrees it so, then it must be so. (69,C70) (How can one despise something that is about to take place?);

The party seemed to be running even more successfully than usual. It was only when there was found to be a shortage of food and drink that the spirit drooped. (69,D13) (The student seems to have been confused with the term 'our spirits drooped'.);

He sited (sic) many famous examples of how dreams had materialised. (69,D54) (What is meant here is that dreams came true.);

... but it is the psychological aspects of these emotions that effects (sic) his personality. (70,A40) ('Affects' is meant here.);

The simplest thing to do here is to use short accurate sentences in which hardly any commas are needed and so alleviate mistakes and at the same time write more concisely. (70,B68). (How can mistakes be alleviated?);

Again I will say that no matter how ghastly I consider a certain taste, I in no way infer that it is wrong. (70,A28) ('Imply' should have been used here.);

Blood covered his face and the people dissolved (sic) into a howling (sic) mob. (70,A27) (How can people dissolve into a mob?);

To add to all this come (sic) the biggest abortion to the English language. The American servicemen aborted the language with their form of English. (70,B4) (It is not clear how a language can be 'aborted').

Type Three (Words that are out of place in their contexts.)

The discussion between Chantecleer and Pertelote expresses a satire on matrimony and its shortcomings ... (69,C1) (Can a discussion 'express' a satire?);

In both the examples quoted by the fox the destinies of both the murdered and the drowned man occurred exactly as had been dreamt. (69,C23) (Can a destiny 'occur'?);

Pertelote conducts a long speech on the demerits of a coward. (69,C72) (Does one 'conduct' a speech?);

Our success is/...
Our success in concealing from those with whom we are close is less assured as the years elucidate our flaws. (70,A15) (How can 'years' 'elucidate' flaws?);

Just think what these factors might wield. (70,A19) (Can factors 'wield' anything?);

Anyone with a modicum of intelligence and culture can decipher right from wrong .. (70,B31) ('decipher' is inappropriate here.);

Man wants to be a hero but he is suppressed by the times.(69,A39) (Can 'times' 'suppress' someone?);

He obeys the order to kill ... He has deadened the vital beat of yet another one. (69,A58) ('deadened' is used here in the sense of 'to kill'.);

They are the ones who are a tempting to conquer the unknown, delve into unpredictable outer space. (69,A48) (Astronauts do not 'delve' into space.);

The drab uniform and laddered stockings ... enhanced every weak point concerning my looks. (69,A35) (One does not usually describe weak points as being 'enhanced').

2. CIRCUMLOCUTION

The errors under 'circumlocution' fall into five categories:

(1) phrases containing the word 'case', as in: 'Parsons, in the case of the Prologue, are very idealized figures.' (69,C10); (2) phrases containing abstract nouns, as in: 'Similarly the increased use of the word 'got' gives the language, in my opinion, a tone of cheapness.' (70,B57) (The verb 'cheapens' would have been more effective here.);

(3) combinations of verb and noun when a single word, usually a verb, would do, as in: '... who cannot however, give expression to his thoughts.' (70,B76) ('Give expression to' could be replaced by 'express'.);

(4) stock phrases such as, 'in this respect', 'with regard to' and 'in the event of', as in: 'The importance of grammar decreases and most people no longer notice mistakes in this respect...' (70,B58) ('In this respect' could be eliminated and the sentence rewritten.); and

(5) circumlocutory phrases and clauses that do not fit into the categories above, as in: 'I am of the opinion that ...' (69,B57) (I think' would have been better here.); and 'I am quite sure that it is safe to say this is not a generalisation.' (70,B49) ('It is safe to say' could be eliminated.).

The examples given below, although not among the really serious errors, are numerous enough to show that many students lacked a sound knowledge of how to write concisely and effectively. In general, they used / .....
they used too many words to say what could have been said more directly; in other words they lacked economy, there being no balance between the number of words used and the amount of significant information conveyed. (1) Had the words, phrases and clauses underlined been eliminated, or perhaps rewritten, the examples quoted would have been neater and more direct without any change in their meanings.

Throughout this selection it has been kept in mind that the briefest expression is not always the best' (2), for writing stripped to bare statements of facts, without supporting and elaborating detail will lack clarity and interest. (3) All the examples below, are, then, good examples of circumlocution.

Type One (Phrases containing the word 'case'.)

The greatest problem facing English today is that, with the exception of the case of some much-derided rebels, written English ... (69,B62); Furthermore, it is the application of this same logic which has led to most, if not all, of our grammatical controversies, in cases where logic has said ... (69,B62);

In many cases there is nothing a woman would like better ... (69,A44);

In many cases people adopt the style of someone else. (69,B13);

In the case of a women's magazine the ... (69,B26).

Type Two (Phrases containing abstract nouns.)

... that might in some way or other be of a derogatory (sic) nature ... (69,B49); ... mark it as being of an inferior nature. (69,B26); ... people are in a state of exhaustion. (69,A28);

... we notice that pleasure is experienced in a passive type of way ... (70,A40);

Thus it is of the utmost importance that every person should ... (69,B14);

This sceptism (sic) / ...
This sceptism (sic) was agnostic rather of an atheistic character. (69,C2);

... by stating that what God foresees must come to pass and there is in all probability no choice ... (69,C6);

However, this argument is contradicted when one considers mutes, and the many other people afflicted with the inability to speak. (70,B76);

It is surprising that the dictionaries have given recognition to such horrid intruders. (70,B57);

Chauttecleer is found to have learning of a classical nature ... (70,C42);

... the air becomes cooler and the atmosphere is one of tension. (70,A20).

Type Three (Combinations of verb and noun when a single word would do.)

I will make a start with the example of the mini-skirt. (69,A45) ('To start' would have been better.);

I tend to make use of inverted commas too frequently ... (69,B26) ('To use' would have been better.);

I would like to make use of a well known idiom in the English Language. (70,B49).

Type Four (Stock Phrases)

With regard to the reasons for padding ... (69,B37);

However in the event of a country realising its doom at the hands of another country ... (69,A57);

This of course being in view of the fact that South Africa is ... (69,B49);

One should definitely set a limit for one's speech in this regard. (69,B26).

Type Five (Circumlocutory phrases and clauses that do not fit into the categories above.)

This will not necessarily be English such as is spoken in South Africa today. (69,A22);

... and spend a much longer span of time doing it. (69,A73);

... the desire for entertainment has always been present. (69,A60);

If he were to be seen it would only be for the purpose of attending a psychedelic music-show. (69,D49);

The millinery / ....
The millinery department of a shop is irresistible to a member of the female sex. (69,A37);

Perhaps the awareness in some of their language stems from the fact that on the whole they have more to express than their less interesting contemporaries. (69,B65);

Fowler advises the reader to guard against being tempted by showy qualities and ... to be direct, simple, brief, vigorous and lucid. (69,B26);

Probably the widest field in which hats play a part is fashion in this modern day ... (69,A38);

Living in this modern highly scientifically developed, mid 20th century era, ... (69,A74);

... then there is nothing on which to build and if so, whatever follows will be a very shaky form of structure. (70,B25);

As far as the apostrophe is concerned in denoting possession I agree entirely with its retention. (70,B57);

One of the most widely accepted linguistic illusions is the belief that each language possesses a 'pure' or 'correct' form which is independent of usage which exists but is now in danger of losing its existence. (70,B40);

To my way of thinking Chaucer is not a woman hater. (70,C2);

The listener can be strangely influenced by the type of voice of the speaker and his looks. (70,B10);

The time factor will tell us whether (sic) it will become the best English. (70,D36).

3. REDUNDANCY

Redundancy and circumlocution should really go together, but it was decided to distinguish between the two, as the quotations under 'redundancy' contain words or phrases that can be eliminated without impairing their sense in any way, whereas the examples under 'circumlocution' required rewriting rather than excision. Again, the large number of examples of redundancy found indicates that many students had little idea of how to write concisely.

The mistakes under 'redundancy' fall into four categories, which are: (1) Tautology, or unnecessary repetition of the same idea ... producing a colloquial conversational tone. (69,C19)

(One does / ... 

(1) See Fowler, op.cit., p.615.
(One does not need both the words underlined here. One is enough.); or (b) 'When experiencing pleasure we should try to extend our happiness out towards others ...'(70,A40) ('out' is redundant here, as the idea is already expressed in 'towards'). (2) Unnecessary modifying or qualifying words, especially 'personal(ly)', 'rather', 'actual' and 'definite(ly)'. The following are some examples in this sub-section: 'Chaucer's individual characters are distinguished chiefly by dress, physical appearance and personal habits . . .'(69,C13); (b) 'This rather unorthodox style certainly paints a crude and violent picture; ...' (69,B1); (c) '... and anything connected with the actual construction of writing or speaking the language.' (70,B68); (d) 'The characters of Chanticleer and Pertelote are definitely amusing.' (70,C40); (e) '... they are fondly devoted to each other.' (70,C76); (3) unnecessary repetition of the same words, as in: 'In addition, to prove this point she will also bring forth evidence to prove her point.' (70,D55); (4) the unnecessary inclusion of 'as to', as in: 'As to whether the sides of the pulpit are panelled is a question ...' (69,A49).

The other examples in the above categories are now given. Comments have been added where it was thought necessary.

Type One (Tautology)

The incessant repetition of the enquiring question ... (70,A34);

More than that, however, a woman is sympathetic and sensitive too. (69,A43);

It still remains basically conservative ... (69,B8);

Man would have been thwarted in his attempts to better himself had he been limited in his outlook to basic concrete facts. (69,B68);

Literature of the abovementioned kind though peculiar (sic) to contemporary life alone ... (69,B26);

It is important to guard against stilted, long-winded circumlocutory writing. (69,B31);

The study of language is also important because it helps make a person more concise and brings about clear and unmuddled reasoning. (69,B14);

Many an interested student has read and reread the verses of Shakespeare as has tried to attempt to form an impression of such a person's character. (69,B57);

I personally feel very impressed when I discover ... (69,B39);

St. Bernard's / ....
St. Bernard's aim in founding monasticism in the Western World was to create a new whole complete life for those ... (69,C53);
He learns to work hard at school for his own personal satisfaction. (70,A40);
The individuality of these prints allow (sic) the crime detectives to make important ... (70,A70);
Cables on the floor-bed of the sea is the best thing that could have happened. (70,A74);
... but the basic form of English still remains. (70,B33);
They say that advertisements that do not contain many true facts... (70,B6);
It is a known fact that slang is mostly the reaction of the young ... (70,B33);
Without giving away any of their private secrets, ... (70,B41);
Although there are rules of grammar every individual develops a style peculiar to himself only. (70,B55);
... but in true fact they are part of the underlying message. (70,C66);
In my own opinion... (70,D12).

Type Two (Unnecessary modifying or qualifying words.)

... and how the writing personally affects the reader. (69,B17);
He also arranges marriages for the girls he has personally seduced. (69,C11);
... through personal vanity. (69,C20);
In the 'Nun's Priest's Tale' Fertelot severely reprimands Chantecleer for his personal emotions. (69,C46);
I personally think that the most cruel pain ... (70,A37);
With the use of pictures and personal interiors ... (70,B75);
I find it rather difficult to answer the above question. (69,A61);
... the lake begins to fill up rather rapidly. (69,A54);
... a rather socially disproved of and notorious lady. (69,D17);
Modern grammarians no longer lay down definite rules ... (69,B4);
All his assignments and homework would be done with infinite care and would definitely be handed in at least a week ahead of schedule. (69,B48);
Actual missiles and pieces of earth that landed on Mars after the historic hydro-atomic bombing and annihilation... (70,A66);
... loud and firm / ...
... loud and firm in an almost defiant male voice. (69,A61);
... but I think that the role of fashion is perhaps most applicable to our present day society. (69,B30);
... the images, the construction and the vocabulary are often so complicated that they are inclined to sound like nonsense. (69,D72);
... and again he gives the exact opposite. (69,C24);
There is no need to use subtle descriptions or to analyse his inner motives. (69,C32);
Although man has succeeded somewhat in penetrating the depths of the mighty sea by means of spearfishing and skin diving, the dangers still remain. (70,A20);
She is very nonchalant about dreams ... (70,C45).

**Type Three (Unnecessary repetition of the same words.)**

... the eye itself is of considerable importance in whatever sphere or environment he may be obliged to live in. (69,A30);
... as far back as Shakespeare, the evidence of girls marrying at the age of thirteen and fourteen is clearly evident. (69,A74);
But in a desert there is little living life. (70,A33);
... he should merely observe and try and grasp the essential essence of the sea ... (70,A75).

**Type Four (Unnecessary inclusion of 'as to'.)**

At present there is great controversy as to whether English ... (69,A40);
We are asked the question as to whether or not freedom is limited. (69,A45).

4. **MALAPROPISMS**

Malapropisms are generally defined as words that have been ludicrously misapplied, especially when they have been used mistakenly for words resembling them. The malapropisms found in the essays are similar, either in sound or spelling, to the words given in brackets, which are regarded as the correct ones in these contexts.

The future of this world-wide language, whether it will flourish or be snubbed out in South Africa is our problem, and ours alone. (snuffed) (69,A57);
... is noted for her masterful use of the same device. (masterly) (69,B26);
... an explanation mark / ....
... an explanation mark ... (exclamation) (69,B75);

... it was thought that religious accesses would develop. (excesses) (69,B2);

So I sank wearily onto the softest bit of grass-carpet; and proceeded to relate my woeful tale. (proceeded) (69,D15);

Chauntecleer rejects the advice of taking a purge and turns to other pleasures for divergence. (diversion) (69,C21);

He loved hunting and would not restrain from it at any cost. (refrain) (69,C24);

The enormity of the monastic estates ... (enormousness) (69,C50);

He has received many medals, the V.C. medal, the George's (sic) Cross and others for distinctive and brave service. (distinguished) (69,D4);

Most of his time is spent in the dustier stockrooms paging through tomes on obscure philosophers. (tomes) (69,D43);

At this instance Chauntecleer shows how quickly he learns and that he will not fall into the same trap twice. (instant) (69,D61);

The whole valley is affected by the stillness. (affected) (70,A1);

I feel that the second half of the definition is the relative one. (relevant) (70,A43);

... whereas Latin still (sic) retains the inflexive endings. (inflexional) (70,B16);

Poetry, the recluse of the sincerely verbally adept has too small a following ... (refuge) (70,B44);

In this light little illusions in the poem take on new connotations ... (allusions) (70,C19);

While Chantecleer proves his statement, Pertelote procribes a remedy ... (prescribes) (70,C25);

... also making fun of the hypocondriates to the time. ('hypocondriates' does not exist. 'Hypocondriac' was meant.) (70,D35).

However Chantecleer with husbandry smugness ignores her offer to take him ... (husbandly) (70,D77).
5. CLUMSY EXPRESSION

The examples in the sub-category 'clumsy expression' are very difficult to describe in general terms, as each example stands on its own. They are all examples of poor handling of words, either singly or in groups, that should be presented to show the weakness of many students' writing in the general category of 'vocabulary'.

The errors have been grouped into four sub-categories for convenience, and comments have been added to examples where it was thought necessary. The sub-categories are: (1) the same words used in a sentence, but with different meanings, as in: 'This point of view misses the point...' (70,D73) (Here, the first 'point' does not mean the same as the second 'point'. Each one belongs to a different idiomatic expression.); (2) the word 'image', which could be termed a 'vogue word', used in a clumsy way, as in: 'This character reminds me so much of a typical poor artist image.' (70,D38) (Here the word 'image' is unnecessary, and, in addition, is very clumsily used in the group 'poor artist image'.); (3) combinations of words that did not make sense, even though they fitted into the linguistic patterns of English, as in: '... seeks an impartial answer which sets up an overwhelming reality when attempting a reply.' (70,A34) (What is an 'overwhelming reality'?). or 'Chauntecleer counters this method of undermining his self-importance by airing his intellectual gifts and sets about a demonstration of the high assertive grasp of male mentality, pointing out that if .... ' (69,C67) (What is a 'high assertive grasp'? The phrase does not make sense.); and (4) those examples that did not fit into the categories above. In these examples students have expressed themselves clumsily, either through a poor choice of words or through a clumsy combination of words, as in: (a) 'Matrimonial struggles have been with the burlesque writers as long as writing has existed.' (70,C35) (What the student has tried to say is that writers of burlesque have written about clashes between husband and wife for as long as writing has existed.), and (b) 'One of the most beautiful sights is when the mountain is illuminated by flood lights. It has a ghostly, eerie feeling with huge shadows falling haphazardly.' (69,A23) (The clause, 'it has a ghostly, eerie feeling' does not make sense as it stands, for it is clear that the feeling should apply to a viewer, rather than to the mountain.).

The other examples in the four categories now follow. Where necessary, comments have been added.

Type One (The same words used in a sentence, but with different meanings)

Now and now only can the old beggar pick up his hat and slowly pick his way home. (69,A53) (Note the clumsy repetition of 'pick' and the change of meaning.);
The barriers he (the animal) faced were imposed by nature alone; his personal incompetence or the prohibitive nature of the land. (69,A71) (The word 'nature' has two meanings here.);

It was a slow process of education in a slow time. (69,D52) (The word 'slow' has two meanings here).

Type Two (Use of the word 'image'.)

In this mock-heroic poem, Chaucer makes us laugh by using the images of simple fowls against a beautiful and cultured background of speech and images.... (69,C27) (The difference between the two 'images' is obscure here);

... which suggests that some of Chaucer's (sic) characters may be an image filtered through established literary modes. (69,C30) (Perhaps the student was trying to suggest that some of Chaucer's characters in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales are stereotypes);

I was, however, quick-witted enough and by flattering the image of his father I won him over ... (69,D64) (Perhaps 'prowess' was meant here);

... is a vane (sic) attempt to restore his superior male-intellect image. (70,C43) (Perhaps the student was trying to say that this person was trying to maintain, or to restore himself to, his position of intellectual superiority).

Type Three (Combinations of words that did not make sense.)

He appeals to the public sense of heroics. (69,A39) (What is a 'public sense of heroics'?);

It (reading) should be instilled into everyone so as to discourage illiteracy, and so produce a well-read and well-spoken nation of all countries. (69,B18) (What is a 'well-spoken nation of all countries'?);

One does not usually associate a cock with gentile (sic) or high-born. (69,C55) (The phrase 'gentile or high-born' does not make sense);

... smoking wastes money and does not suit his high values of virtue. (69,D56) (What is a 'high value of virtue'?);

I often wonder whether these extremists are trying to follow the fashion or whether they have a facial complex. (70,A4) (Perhaps the student was trying to say that 'these extremists' have complexes about their faces. The meaning of the clause underlined is obscure.)

With the return / ....
With the return of the military and colonists from British dominions came the wealthy pseudo-English, who developed a pedantic dialect of their own. The underlying cause for this trend was impressionistic. (70,B35) (The word 'impressionistic' is meaningless here.)

This shows us immediately that Chanticleer is of high stock in his particular little world. (70,C12) (The meaning of the underlined clause is obscure here. The student could possibly have meant that Chanticleer is of noble stock or that he is widely admired.)

**Type Four (Examples that did not fit into the above categories.)**

I think the menace of advertising is completely up to the individual. (69,A20) (What the student is trying to say is that, whether advertising is a menace or not, depends on the individual person.);

To the right or left of the chancel on the south side is the pulpit which holds the description of a somewhat elevated or enclosed desk. (69,A49) ('holds the description of' should be replaced by 'is described as', or simply 'is').

I have even heard the abominably unbelievable fact ... (69,A59) (It is difficult to discover what is meant by this combination of words.)

These famous words from the New Testament: "As a man thinketh so is he" concisely clinch the essentiality of clear expression and concise thought. (69,B11) (What the student was probably trying to say here was that the quotation shows the effectiveness of clear expression.);

Chanticleer and his wives are set in the midst of luxury, not only by way of visual and comic contrast, but *morally* as to give the poem more depth than is allowed by saying that the tale has a moral. (69,C57) (The meaning of the underlined words is obscure.);

He was not only the best shot, but also the best grenadier, best officer, and so many others. (69,D4) (What the student wanted to say was that this person had many other notable qualifications.);

All these quotations have snob value for Chanticleer .. (69,D40) (It is not clear exactly what the underlined words mean. Perhaps the student tried to say that the 'quotations' prove that Chanticleer is a snob.);

The humour of the poem comes in strongly with Pertelote and Chanticleer being *animals*. (70,C33) (What the student probably meant to say was that the humour of the poem lies in the fact that Pertelote/...
that Perule and Chanticleer are animals.

For example, she picks on his sensitive point, his bravery...

Etiquette was a passion to her as was she passionately tender-hearted.

...provides a lengthy...answer to his dreams that is highly practical (for this is one side of her housewife-type character) (70,053) (Note the clumsy combination of words.).

6. COLLOQUIALISMS

Colloquial, or conversational, forms are extremely difficult to define, or even to confine within practical limits, because at no period have the colloquial vocabulary and idiom of the English language been completely preserved in English Literature, or even in dictionaries.

In general, the term 'colloquial language' can be defined as language 'characteristic of or appropriate to ordinary or familiar conversation rather than formal speech or writing.'(2) Colloquial language, although part of Standard English, is not appropriate to all kinds of writing. (3) As a living language changes so will its standards change according to circumstances. (4) In the words of Greenough and Kittredge 'Every educated person has at least two ways of speaking his mother tongue. The first is that which he employs in his family, among his familiar friends, and on ordinary occasions. The second is that which he uses in discoursing on more complicated subjects, and in addressing persons with whom he is less intimately acquainted. It is, in short, the language which he employs when he is "on his dignity", as he puts on evening dress when he is going to dine.' (5)

Colloquial language is characterised, in particular, by popular words that would be out of place in formal speech, as well as by learned words with popular meanings, such as the word 'aggravate' used in the sense of 'irritate', or 'alibi' used in the sense of 'excuse'. In addition, the contractions 'I'll, don't, we'd' etc. generally reflect the pronunciation and enunciation of colloquial, rather than formal language. Colloquial language is further characterised...

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(2) Quoted in J.M.Cricrmon, op.cit., p.173.
characterised by abbreviated words such as 'advert' for 'advertisement', a very flexible syntax, a fondness for sentences with only one verb, the omission of 'I' at the beginning of a sentence or clause, and sudden leaps from one subject to another. (1)

All the characteristics mentioned above would be regarded as out of place in formal written English, with its broader and more formal vocabulary, its longer and more complex sentences, as well as its conservative approach to grammar and syntax.

Although the examples of colloquial English found in the essays do not reflect all the characteristics mentioned above, there are enough of them in certain of these characteristics to suggest that, to start with, a large number of the students examined had little idea of the difference between colloquial and formal English.

The examples fall into four major categories, which are:

(1) abbreviated forms such as 'doesn't', 'don't' and 'you've', as in (a) '... a career doesn't always stay the same either.' (69,A7); (b) 'If they don't greet one ...' (69,A61); (c) '... or since you've lost so much ...' (69,A61); (2) abbreviated words such as 'matric' for 'matriculation', 'exams' for 'examinations' and 'quote' for 'quotation', as in: (a) '... essential to obtain at least matric standard ...' (69,A74); (b) '... if only just before exams.' (70,D74); (c) '... he has misinterpreted quotes.' (69,B50); (3) Words and phrases typical of conversation, as in: (a) '... don't let this fool you.' (69,A4); (b) '... because people are pressurised into doing what everyone else does in any case;' (70,B73); (4) Sentences as a whole that reflect conversational, rather than formal English, as in (a) 'She states that it is no good if one just looks fine ...' (70,C8); (b) 'One could only discover the person's actual worth by probing beyond this dummy set-up.' (69,B44).

The other examples in these four categories now follow.

Type One (Abbreviated forms such as 'doesn't'.)

... as if he didn't have a care in the world... (69,A25);
... but the girls can't do anything ... (69,A44);
... if it wasn't for the language of advertising. (69,B75);
I thought I'd found the answer ... (69,C10);
There definitely couldn't be another Robin ... (69,C52);
... but it isn't really ... (69,C52);
... as he doesn't want to give in to her altogether. (69,C44);
... that looked like a dog, but wasn't. (69,C60);
He laughed / ....

(1) E. Partridge, op.cit., p.191.
He laughed jovially and said he'd never felt better. (69,D13);
Next morning many eager hands grab the newspaper too (sic) see if they've made the news. (69,D32);
Her figure ... subtly bulging out where it should and pressed in where it shouldn't. (69,D32);
I'm quite sure he wouldn't flinch from smoking ... (69,D49);
Their faces are blank, it's just their eyes that are moving ... (70,A16);
For one second he hadn't recognised Rhodes ... (70,A39);
... who don't really believe what they're chanting .. (70,A43);
... although we needn't think that it has become simpler... (70,B16);
So who's to say present day people who don't take as great delight in food and drink ... (70,D26).

Type Two (Abbreviated words such as 'matric'.)
If we were suddenly deprived of all adverts .. (69,A15);
Even President Johnson. on their return, phoned them. (69,A42);
... although he cannot think straight about a certain type of lit. he reads. (69,B17);
... helps him to answer exam papers. (69,B79);
The quote actually means ... (69,C41);
The writers of adverts believe ... (69,D22);
Before the sun has finished sweeping Jammie steps ... (69,D43)
(These are the steps of the Jameson Hall at the University of Cape Town.);
People are not fully acquainted with varsity. (70,A36);
I was more accustomed to the desolation of the Free State. (70,A37)
(The student meant the Orange Free State.);
... in subjects such as Maths, History, English and Biology...
(70,B30).

Type Three (Words and phrases typical of conversation.)
There are very many examples in this category, and it has, therefore, been thought necessary to present as many of them as possible to show the casual attitude with which many students approached the writing of their essays.
... a ballet student with his long hair, lilac pants and effeminate manner ... (69,A25) (This word could have been taken as a shortened / ....
as a shortened form of 'pantaloons' and put into the second group, but it was considered that 'pants' has now become a word in its own right. The same could be argued for the 'chap' and 'frock').

... just to satisfy our *sensation crazy* public. (69,A26);

It was *non-u* to behave immorally. (69,A23);

The *dreadful smell* and the *delightful aroma* are the two main characteristics of a fish and chip shop. (69,A16);

... and leaves me in a definite state of expectancy of something to happen which is also *thrilling* to my mind ... (69,A31);

He will soon be *put wise* ... (69,A27);

... we all need to revise our ideas. (69,A44);

... the medical students who are housed at *medical school*. (69,A45);

... and it is an *odds-on bet* that ... (69,A51);

On stage too, actors can *put across* any emotions .. (69,A32);

He has recently been released from jail for being involved in a *drugs deal*. (69,A56);

This all seems *marvelous* (sic). (69,A60);

... to look back on days when everything was *sweet and rosy* ... (69,A58);

... kindly, yet *awful* to be near to. (69,A63);

... and arguing *like blazes* ... (69,A62);

... having sorted out the *prang* ... (69,A66);

She is also a *maniac* for cleanliness. (69,A72);

... have enriched the language to a *wonderful* degree. (69,A75);

This results in a *terrible mixture*. (69,A79);

What we need is a "watchdog" body to *kick up a fuss* every time any disrespect .. (69,B5);

... and he proves that he is not *scared* of speed. (69,B6);

struggling to *get across* what you say .. (69,B9);

Whether or not a man can *think straight* about what he reads ... (69,B17);

If the standard of the writing is low, then the person who is studying it gets the wrong idea. (69,B18);

Advertisements in bright colours with *funny slogans* ... (69,B28);

If this is done/ .....
If this is done, the reader may not know what it refers to until he arrives at the principal which leaves him guessing. (69,B31);

Vocabulary reflects a character's general attitude to life. (69,B40) ('character's' meaning 'a person's');

... to buy his aged mother a new frock. (69,B44);

... and how you can best put over your ideas to them. (69,B47);

This, then, is the style used by one author to get his ideas over. (69,B47);

... and wishes to let others in on the fact that he is "quite some thing". (70,B80);

... his phoney verbs. (69,C3) (This is an Americanism.);

It certainly has got many touches of satire, parody and such like... (69,C16);

He was fat but in tip-top condition, and his horse was in the same condition too. (69,C28);

... and says that the death of Hasdrubal's wife had nothing on the grief of Pertelote. (69,C34);

... in the 'Nun's Priest's Tale' Chaucer intermingles four of his pet subjects ... (69,C36);

Ultimately, the laying on of flattery and praise ... (62,C40);

... that he (the chap in the stable) ... (69,C60);

... plunges the reader slap-bang into the farce... (69,C61);

They are generally brief cautionary anecdotes ... that use the obvious resemblances ... to push a proverb home. (69,C67);

People from all walks of life feature in it. (69,C80) (This is an Americanism.);

It is a fabulous casual pants-suit with floral designs. (69,D4);

He was a bit of a flirt with the girls. (69,D9);

He couldn't give a damn for the text that says that ... (69,D9);

Pertelote was so worried and in a flap that she jumped ... (69,D16);

The Wife of Bath was a complete and utter social disgrace. (69,D7);

The Wife of Bath laughed off his misfortune. (69,D58);

However Chauntecleer was not all that brilliant either. (69,D51);

The failure-rate at most universities is something quite phenomenal. (70,B14);

... still, their (sic) must be substitute gossip-shops. (70,A19);

Men make use / ....
Men make use of me to get places... (70,A21);

Found in conversation..., is the horrible habit of telling fabricated jokes or funny stories... (70,A26);

... she obviously does not seem to mind this set up. (70,A37);

Not, however, until some civilized rational human being had tried to nick in behind me. (70,A49);

Those magnates whose interests are in the liquor trade make an awful lot of money out of people like these... (70,A56);

So infinite in its stories and legends and history, yet the sea will never stop dishing up surprises. (70,A74);

... the writer who is unsure of his syntax will tie himself and the reader in inextricable knots. (70,B2);

We can see why some unfortunate people fall for bad advertisements. (70,B6);

Language is therefore the cloaking of one's thoughts, dressing them in the manner which is most suitable to their character, be it stylish, frivolous or way, way out. (70,B29);

Anyway, usually protesting students don't have to miss out on any real studying. (70,B30);

These messages are all trying to get over certain messages. (70,B60);

Chanticleer fell for this flattery... (70,C9);

The chase at the end of the Nun's Priest's Tale is an absolute riot... (70,C19);

... but at others (times) she seems to be a low-down tart. (70,C31);

... and he really goes to town on him. (70,C41);

... and his handling of his wife is classic. (70,C43);

Probably the largest English speaking country, populationwise, is the United States. (70,D10);

... we must have been smiling all the time for the whole story is really beautifully absurd... (70,D13);

... for he has read them all (even though his knowledge is slightly vague, it is not a bad speech considering that it is impromptu). (70,D22);

... he who shuts his eyes when he should see or talks when he should shut up is abandoned by God forever. (70,D30);

Pertelote / ......
Pertelote, not being a bad looker herself, has every right to be proud of him - and herself. (70,D54);

Chaucer gets in a rather snide smile at overbearing husbands ... (70,D60).

Type Four (Sentences as a whole that reflect conversational, rather than formal English.)

I think it is about time people took a new look at the word "freedom". (69,A23). (Note the omission of 'that' after 'think', an omission characteristic of colloquial speech. This example, and the one following, will serve to illustrate the considerable number of similar examples.);

The position of the Tale just after the solemn Monk's tragedies indicates it is intended to parody these solemn tragedies. (69,C16);

The general idea is that everybody has the right to think, say and do as he likes. (69,A24);

All experiments are planned and controlled and everything is neatly organised - nothing abstract about it at all. (69,B16);

... a fairly obscure sort of essay. (69,B54);

Getting back to the business of spoken language ... (69,B62);

It was the thing of the time to pray for the dead... (69,C10);

Yet maybe Chaucer parodies the fashion of the taking of a fair mistress by a noble young lad through using a cock and a hen, thus hoping to bring this trend down to size. (69,C35);

The clerk would be a student working for his Honours or his Master of Arts. (69,D24);

... and then, with a glint in her eye, walked swankily over to a gentleman ... (69,D74);

... why we use language at all. Well, that seems obvious .. (69,D70);

The urge is to get home - now and fast. (70,A14);

Now I also gesticulate wildly when I get enthusiastic about what I'm saying. (70,A26);

Swamped by the crowd, an ice-cream vendor decides that it's too early for a meaningful (sic) thirst to have been developed. (70,A63);

... strange how words learnt in childhood take on a different nuance of meaning as one grows up ... (70,A71);

Now she sat / ......
Now she sat perched on the gate, like when she was a child. (70,A80);

Then you have the "American" English whom only the Americans understand. You have the English spoken by the Scots .. (70,B37);

Then we get the English Afrikaans speaking people. (70,B78).

7. Clichés

In the words of E. Partridge: 'a cliche is an outworn commonplace; a phrase (or virtual phrase) that has become so hackneyed, that scrupulous speakers and writers shrink from it ... '.(1) Clichés are, then, stereotyped, unoriginal and stale. They are ready-made, and therefore save the speaker or writer the trouble of creative effort. (2)

There were very few examples of clichés in the essays, indicating that students had little trouble in this field, but the few that were found are worth presenting. They fall into three categories, which are: (1) stock epithets, as in '... by its indescribable beauty ...' (70,A20); (2) alliterating pairs, as in '... and look, and believe without any idea of whether it is fact or fantasy.' (69,A58); and (3) other well-worn phrases such as: 'Words used over and above this Standard English are termed "slang"!' (69,B74).

The other examples in these categories appear below.

Type One (Stock epithets)

... with the very real danger that .. (69,A43);

... by saying that dreams must be treated with all due respect. (69,C6);

Chaucer is in actual fact revealing ... (69,C19);

... which is a basic and integral part of every persons (sic) life and thus of inestimable value. (69,D14);

... he greets the "Wife" in a deafening roar. (69,D34);

I know a lot of these piggish people; you see them ... acting out their pantomime lives with smug assurance ... (70,A2).

Type Two (Alliterating pairs)

... while joy and laughter fill each and every day... (69,A58).

Type Three / ..... 

(1) E. Partridge, Usage and Abusage, Penguin, 1967, p.73.
Type Three (Well-worn phrases)

The highways and by-ways become active death traps, but the rush-hour people are shrewd and elude them by some trick of fate. (70, A14);

One has such a wide range to pick and choose in (sic). (69, A24);

For more and more are we becoming subject to the iron will of science. (69, A26);

Even in this day and age of science... (69, B15);

Chaucer leaves no stone unturned. (69, C32).

8. AMBIGUITY

There were relatively very few examples of ambiguity in the essays, but it is worth presenting the few that did occur because they form part of the generally careless approach to planning and careful presentation that has been noted in many essays.

In general, the ambiguities have arisen either because a word or phrase can be interpreted in more than one way, or because an adjective or a pronoun can refer to more than one noun.

The examples in this sub-category appear below with comments where necessary.

(a) Words or phrases that can be interpreted in more than one way:

He was a gay flatterer who was not beyond the seduction of many young girls. (70, C33). (The phrase 'beyond the seduction' is confusing because it is not clear whether 'he' seduced the girls or whether the girls seduced him. Perhaps the distinction is academic.);

However, I am neither a parent nor regretfully, a teenager any longer. (69, A51) (It is not clear whether the phrase 'any longer' refers both to 'parent' and to 'teenager' or to only one of them.);

There is a chance to take part in many social, cultural and perhaps slightly more dangerous, political activities. (69, A27) (In this sentence the implication is that 'social' and 'cultural' activities are dangerous and that political activities are 'slightly more dangerous'.);

Anglers sit with their rods and lines thrown overboard. (70, A48) (Here it seems that both the rods and the lines have been thrown overboard.);

In advertising grammar often suffers as a lot must be crammed into a few words. (70, B17) (It is not clear whether 'a lot' refers to 'advertising' or 'grammar'.).
The Student Representative Council is a body elected by students, and as such the student has a say in the matters of general interest and importance on the campus. (69,A55). (It is not clear whether 'as such' refers to the 'Student Representative Council' or to the 'student'.)

(b) A pronoun or adjective that can be interpreted in more than one way:

... as the only writings were those done by the religious scribes. (69,B22). (Here it seems that only 'religious' scribes wrote.);

... filmstars captivated audiences and satisfied their every whim. (69,A2) (It is not clear whether 'their' refers to 'filmstars' or 'audiences'.).

9. ILLOGICALITY

The examples presented below are generally badly planned and lack common sense. It should be noted that, in all of them, either one part of a sentence cancels out another, or a nonsensical statement has been made.

The opposition in the Monk is between the studious, disciplined man (which this Monk is not) and the sensual, worldly man (which the Monk is) who wastes his energies in sensual pleasures and continual sport. (69,C31) (How can there be an opposition in the Monk if he is not studious? He is sensuous and worldly, having no qualms about this.);

The future of the English language in South Africa is certainly a debatable point. (69,A14) (How can the 'future' of English in South Africa be a 'debatable point'? There is no doubt about the fact that there will be a future.);

... I think that it is beginning to die out more and more ... (69,A61). (How can something die out more and more?);

... Chaucer is producing an example of the corrupt, progressive Monk... (69,C19) (The connotations of 'corrupt' and 'progressive' cancel each other out.);

Man is nothing, and then only for a very short time. (70,A27) (The word 'nothing' should be replaced by a 'nonentity', for, as the sentence stands, existence for a short time cancels out 'nothing'.);

But just as the human intellect is capable of producing negative shadows ... (70,A65) (What is a 'negative shadow?);
Student protests may not be completely effectual in that they immediately achieve their success and result in sweeping changes. (70,B7) (As the sentence stands, there is a contradiction between 'may not be completely effectual' and 'they immediately achieve their success'.)

To speak and say: isn't, can't, won't, couldn't, doesn't and mustn't to name a few is perfectly acceptable (sic) but is completely incorrect and is a misuse of words. (70,B49) (As the sentence stands 'incorrect' contradicts 'acceptable' (sic).)

Another factor lacking in my style is that there is an abundance of superfluous words. (70,B68) (The words 'lacking' and 'there is' contradict each other.)

The widow, as suits her character, is not made into an individual. We are given an impression of a plain woman who is an entirely realistic character. (70,C62) (The clauses 'is not made into an individual' and 'who is an entirely realistic character' contradict each other.)

10. PRETENTIOUS LANGUAGE

Many of the students examined seemed to have had problems in maintaining the correct tone in their essays, especially at the beginning of each year examined. It was thus felt that it would be useful to give some examples of pretentious language in this sub-category to show how students went astray.

In all the examples given below students used language that was too pretentious for the contexts. The errors fall into three categories, namely (1), the use of pretentious words that give the wrong tone to a passage, as in: 'They will be occluded from possibility...' (69,B69) (This is a pretentious way of saying that something will not happen.); and (2) the use of pretentious phrases and pretentious language in general, as in: (a) 'We are forming part of a link in a very long chain stretching back ... and struggling forward to a time of vagueness and unknowing.' (70,D11) (The phrase 'a time of vagueness and unknowing' is a pretentious way of referring to the future.); and (b) 'Munificent shedder of light on dim working hands and cement floors whence fall thy rays?' (69,A69) (This is a pretentious reference to the sun.); and (3) far-fetched similes and metaphors, as in: 'The scrolls of time unwound before the eyes of Heaven, revealing the destiny of mankind in his search for freedom.' (69,A33) (The scrolls of time' is a far-fetched metaphor.)

The other examples, with comments where necessary, appear below.
Type One (Use of pretentious words that give the wrong tone to a passage.)

Then it entered my mind: the variety of extra-domiciliary occupations in which women engage ... (69, A56) (A pretentious way of saying 'work outside the home'.); Unless one is telepathetically communicative with someone ... (69, B17) (This could have been expressed more simply as 'communicate by telepathy'.); It is all there to be gazed upon if one takes the time to behold the mediocrity, the ambulation of an immense group who have no ambition to fulfill. (70 A34) ('Movement' could have replaced 'ambulation'.).

Type Two (Pretentious phrases and pretentious language.)

Emancipation allowed women to enter the fury of the business world so that now almost all avenues of employment are accustomed to the tramp of female feet. (69, A43) (This is a pretentious way of saying that women are employed in many kinds of business.); Complacency - a word suggesting the harmonious tone flowing rhythmically through the mind of the self-satisfied. (69, A58) (This is a pretentious way of saying nothing.); The motor-trade and kindred industries prospers (sic) on the economic ensnarement of any man desirous of living beyond the sight and sound of the hideous claws of commerce and industry. (70, A19) (This could have been more simply put as 'any man who wants to live far from public transport').

Type Three (Far-fetched similes and metaphors.)

For centuries, Table Mountain flew as a flag from the tip of Africa. (69, A71) (The comparison of Table Mountain with a flag is far-fetched.); Tomorrow the day will stretch its banal threadbare fabric over his stooping frame and will cloak his spiritless actions in acceptable duties. (69, A69) (The comparison of time with a 'threadbare fabric' is far-fetched. In addition, it is not clear what a 'banal fabric' is.); In this hour we all change from insignificant "massies" of our work for the beautiful individualistic golden eagle of our home. (70, A8) (The comparison between 'massies' and 'golden eagle' is far-fetched.).

11. JINGLES / ....
11. JINGLES

Jingles, as described by Fowler(1), are unintended repetitions of similar words or sounds. Such repetitions frequently produce clashes that offend the eye and the ear, and should be avoided in formal essays.

There were very few jingles in the essays, and the ones that were found are mostly examples of the ugly repetition of '-ly' spellings, as in: 'Hats were probably originally worn to protect the head from the sun or rain ... ' (70,A77). There was one rhyme: 'so who's (sic) to say present day people who ... (70,B26), and one example of the repetition of homophones, as in: 'His conceit can be seen in the scene with the wily fox ... ' (70,D21).

The following examples are all like the first example above:

A teenager would almost certainly deny emphatically that teenagers are in fact over publicised. (69,A50);

People must realise that there is an ugliness in shortness ... (69,B20);

The necessity for brevity forces Chaucer ... (69,C14).

12. MIXED METAPHORS

Mixed metaphors arise when metaphors from different sources are combined in one subject. (2) There were very few examples in the essays, and only three are worth noting:

Avariciousness and rivalry are fuel to the vortex.(69,B2) ('Fuel' and 'fire' might be associated, but not 'fire' and 'vortex').;

The church in the Middle Ages was very complicated but the monastery was an important cog in the network. (69,C2) (One might associate 'cog' and 'machinery', but a 'cog' seems out of place in a network.);

I doubt whether they even cause a ripple in the march of Time. (70,B8) (One might cause a 'ripple' in a 'pool', but hardly in 'the march of Time').

SUMMARY / ......

(1) Fowler, op.cit., p.317.
(2) See E. Partridge, Usage and Abusage, p.185.
SUMMARY

The large number of examples in this chapter shows the general weakness in what can be loosely called vocabulary. Words are a medium of communication, and neither thinking nor writing can be efficient unless words represent precisely what the writer wants to say. Every symbol put on paper by a good writer should, therefore, be a 'deliberate choice calculated to fulfil some desired function'. (1)

The errors presented in this chapter were selected with what has been said above in mind. It was assumed that, as the essays examined were formal and were written by students in their own time, the errors found were due as much to ignorance as to carelessness.

Although the errors noted in this chapter cover a large number of sub-sections in the general field of vocabulary, they show certain major weaknesses. The greatest weakness, referred to in the sub-categories 'Inappropriate words' and 'Malapropisms', seems to lie in an inability to choose words appropriate to certain contexts. There were many examples suggesting that quite a few of the students examined had little idea of the denotations and connotations of words, especially at the beginning of each year under consideration.

The large number of examples in the sub-categories 'Circumlocution' and 'Redundancy' show that many of the students, especially at the beginning, did not know how to write concisely so that their ideas were effectively presented without wasting words. In a formal essay it can be reasonably expected that a student should be able to express himself clearly and concisely.

The very large number of colloquialisms of many kinds in the essays suggests that there has been a gap in the teaching of some students at school level. The idea of register, or levels of language, does not seem to have been adequately conveyed to them, neither do they seem to have had any experience in distinguishing the various levels of language, especially written forms, in practical exercises. Writing has, admittedly, become more informal, but this does not excuse these students from their very casual approach.

Evidence of this informal approach to writing has been reinforced by the very large number of clumsy expressions found. Again, many of the students should have taken more trouble in preparing their essays.

The remaining sub-categories, although relatively insignificant in themselves, provide further evidence that some students need a good deal more practice in writing formal essays at school level.

(1) J. W. Corder and L. H. Kendall, Jr., op.cit., p.18.
CHAPTER 7
IDIOM

It has been extremely difficult, both to define the term 'idiom' for the purposes of this chapter, and to draw a line between accepted idioms and those coined for a certain use and then discarded. Since 'idiom' covers natural, racy or unaffected English\(^1\) it can be expected to change as English, itself, changes.

The word 'idiom' is used as a general term to describe the 'form of speech peculiar to a people or nation'.\(^2\) In particular, idioms are 'those forms of expression, or grammatical construction, or of phrasing, which are peculiar to a language, and approved by its usage, although the meanings they convey are often different from their grammatical or logical signification'.\(^2\)

Because these idioms are traditional, rather than logical, they can be learnt only by experience, not by rule.\(^3\) There is, for example, no rule that will tell us in advance what verbs will, for example, govern what prepositions. In the same way, the meaning of a verb may not give an idea of its meaning in an idiomatic combination of verb and adverb.

In the words of L. Pearsall Smith, the idiosyncrasy of English,... is perhaps most strikingly exemplified in the use of prepositions. Prepositional usage in all languages contains ... much that is peculiar and arbitrary; the relations to be expressed by prepositions are often so vague and indefinite, that many times one might seem logically just as right as another.\(^4\) Here it appears that only capricious idiomatic usage decrees that one preposition is to be favoured against another. F. T. Wood goes into more detail: 'One of the most difficult aspects of the English language to master is the idiomatic use of prepositions... There are several reasons for this. In the first place, many prepositions ... are used in so many different ways that they often have no very clearly defined meaning apart from the phrase or construction in which they occur ... Secondly, prepositional idiom is not always logical... Thirdly, where two or more prepositions are idiomatic, it may sometimes make very little difference which we use; but in other cases the choice of one or another may express a rather nice distinction of meaning: ...'.\(^5\)

The examples / ....

\(^1\) H. W. Fowler, op.cit., p.261.  
\(^2\) L. Pearsall Smith, English Idioms, Society for Pure English, Tract No. XII, quoted in E. Partridge, op.cit., p.148.  
\(^3\) See J. M. McCrimmon, op.cit., p.172.  
\(^4\) L. Pearsall Smith, loc.cit.  
The examples collected under the general heading 'Idiom' cover so many different usages in varying contexts that it was decided, for convenience, to discuss them according to the parts of speech considered to have been incorrectly used. Prepositions are the most numerous, but there are a good many examples in the categories of 'Article', 'Verb', 'Noun', 'Gerunds and Participles', 'Adjectives' and 'Adverbs' that merit discussion as well.

Each sub-category will now be discussed, with examples, after which the other examples in these sub-categories will be given.

A. THE ARTICLE

It was noted that, in many instances, students were not certain about using the definite article in certain contexts. The definite article was frequently included unnecessarily when abstract nouns were used as in:

1. There is therefore no aspiration towards the proficiency in this language. (69,657) (Normally, in this context the abstract noun 'proficiency' is not preceded by the definite article.);

2. What part the university plays in the society at large ... (69,48) (The word 'society', here used in a general way, should not be preceded by the definite article.)

The definite article was also incorrectly used with common nouns, as in:

The increases in vocabulary ... are known as the borrowings ... (69,680) (The words 'increases' and 'borrowings' are here used in a general, rather than a specific sense, and so the definite articles are unnecessary.)

An incorrect use of the definite article with what could be called a Proper Noun (2) was also noted:

We need only to turn to the "Hansard" for many ... (69,339).

The definite article was also incorrectly used with the name of a language, (3) here English:

Here the style is also different from the contemporary English. (69,660). (The article 'the' should have been omitted here.)

There was, in addition, the omission of the definite article before the abstract noun 'abstract' when it should have been included:

He is not dealing with abstract but with a piece of life. (69,20) (Here, idiomatic usage demands that 'the' be inserted before 'abstract'.)

The other / ....

The other examples of the incorrect inclusion of the definite article where idiomatic usage demands its omission, are as follows:

Hence the rise of the so-called Woodstock English and the 'Gammatjie Talk'. (69,B8) (There is no need to specify 'talk' here, and so the definite article is unnecessary.);

As a result of the abstract thought a car (sic) was invented ... (69,B16) (The phrase 'abstract thought' is used in a general way, and so 'the' is unnecessary.);

It (style) is not a separate part of the writing, but is ingrained in it. (69,B27) (There is no need to specify 'writing' here.);

Standard English and its pronunciation is the correct English, but it does not exist in the English Society. (69,B24) (The article 'the' should have been omitted here as 'society' is used in a general way.).

Students had no difficulty with the indefinite article, but there is one example of its misuse that is worth recording:

Nearly every public meeting or discussion ends or tends to end in a chaos. (69,A24) (The word 'chaos' is never preceded by the indefinite article(1)).

B. FINITE AND NON-FINITE VERBS.

The examples of the incorrect idiomatic use of verbal forms have been divided into (1) finite verbs, (2) participles and gerunds, and (3) infinitives. As the errors do not fall into clearly recognisable groups other than those given above, it was decided to present the errors alphabetically in each sub-category and to comment separately on each.

The incorrect idiomatic usages involved either a verb unsuitable for a noun, as in: 'Language is indeed one of the most wonderful discoveries of all time, for without it other discoveries would not have been aptly enough expressed in order to pass them from generation to generation.' (69,B15), or an incorrect verbal form standing on its own, as in 'These people, should better get such feelings out of their systems ...' (70,A38), or incomplete verbal forms as in: 'The statesman has much to consider and he also has to propagate (sic) with excellency.' (70,B6), where the clause 'has to propagate' should be completed with a noun or pronoun.

The other / ....

(1) O. Jespersen, op.cit., p.437.
The other examples now follow, with comments on each.

(1) Finite verbs.

Much more spice is added to the language by the addition of words such as 'blurb' and 'spiv' which, by their sounds are so appropriate to the meaning they are trying to acquire. (69,B31) (Idiomatically, words do not 'try to acquire' meanings.);

These people **should better get** such feelings out of their systems... (70,A38) (Idiomatic expression demands 'had better get such feelings' rather than 'should better ...').

If people did not pause to think before acting, the world would deteriorate and people would have no standard along which to guide their lives - the world would cease. (69,B28). (The world cannot 'cease' in this sense. What is meant here is that 'the world would cease to exist').

Language is indeed one of the most wonderful discoveries (sic) of all time, for without it other discoveries would not have been aptly enough **expressed** in order to pass them from generation to generation. (69,B15) (A 'discovery' is not 'expressed', it is 'described').

Words have been used to describe different phenomena and as new **words have gained**, so people have been enabled to make new discoveries. (69,B15) (The word 'gained' is incomplete in this context. The student probably wished to say 'as new words have gained in importance').

Even though it may rain or the sun may shine at these functions, these hats do not **have much protection** as they are not normally waterproof. (70,A77) (The word 'hats' can not 'have protection' in this sense. They 'offer' or 'provide' protection);

In short her mind has become one-track and the **value she holds** is for material things. (69,B41) (What was probably meant here was that her values are material. One does not 'hold' a 'value').

English therefore as an international language cannot be **over-emphasised**. (69,A11) (One does not 'overemphasise' a language in this sense.).

The statesman has much to consider and he also has to **propagate (sic) with excellency**. (70,B6) (It is not certain what this means, but the student probably has attempted to use the expression 'to propagate a faith'. The word 'propagate' is normally used with an object.

Unless we look deeper into these advertisements we can be spoken into buying almost anything. (69,B18) (One does not 'speak' someone into doing something, one 'talks' someone into doing something.).

That was / ....
That was a second aspect of U.C.T. and I was utterly downcast, but as usual empty vessels make the most noise and tend to swallow the better parts of society. (69,A24) ('Empty vessels' do not 'swallow' anyone or anything.);

If you have never been into a fish shop you cannot begin to imagine the wonderful chaos that takes place. (69,A18) (The word 'wonderful' is an unsuitable word to describe 'chaos', and 'chaos' does not 'take place'.).

2. Gerunds and Participles.
It appeared, from the animated monologue being carried out by Miss Wench ... (69,D31) (One does not 'carry out' a monologue.);

At first he was rather a superficial character, causing young girls to fall in love with him at first sight, committing brave deeds ... (69,A41) (Idiomatic expression in English does not allow one to 'commit' brave deeds.);

... and the pros and cons weighed before we rush straight into buying the article or doing and following the idea. (69,B28) (In English one does not 'do' an idea. One would, perhaps, put it into practice.);

The poor were being kept poor by the church who employed men to bleed them of anything they had by hanging such threats as excommunication. (69,C51) (One does not 'hang' a threat. One might, however, hang a threat of excommunication 'over' someone.);

I believe that such a man is fighting for his right of living ... (69,A41) (The phrase 'right to live' should replace 'right of living'.);

We find a strive for freedom of thought stronger than ever before. (69,A24) ('A striving for freedom' is what is needed here.);

... while moving from one counter to the next and from one shop to another. They are busy scrounging for presents and doing the last-minute food-buying ... (69,A28) (One does not 'scrounge' for presents in a shop unless one is a beggar. 'Searching for presents at reasonable prices' would be better.).

(3) Infinitives.

... that his dream about the fox could well be a premonition of what was to become. (69,D54) (The words 'to come' should replace 'to become'. Perhaps the student was trying to say 'what was to become of him'.);

Mr. and Mrs. Snodgrass, being very keen on having all types of people at their numerous parties, decided to do a rather unheard of event. (69,D17) (One does not 'do' an event.);

All this involves the background of a thorough education in the language and a flair to express thoughts logically and clearly. (70,B6) (The phrase 'a flair for expressing' should have been used here.).

Indeed / ....
Indeed, everything seems to indicate to the fact that language is the whole basis of our civilisation. (69,B15) (The word 'indicate' should have been replaced by 'point'.);
The influence of Afrikaans seems to lie mainly on the spoken English ... especially in the lower classes. (69,B8) (The infinite 'to lie' should be replaced by 'to be' here.);
I saw my opportunity and proceeded to pacify his fears with my clever flattery. (69,D15) (One 'allays' fears and 'pacifies' someone);
A brief caption helps to persuade the truthfulness (sic) of the images invented. (70,B32) (One does not 'persuade the truthfulness' of anything. One tries to persuade someone of the truthfulness of something.
The mother of young children has a very important duty to regard, as young children need ... (69,A56) (One does not 'regard' a duty; one 'performs' a duty.);
The three examples I have chosen to represent that humanity does wear masks and what the (sic) consists of... (70,A43) ('Show' should replace 'represent'.).

C. NOUNS

There are two noticeable groups of nouns that have been incorrectly used in this sub-category, and they are: (1) the incorrect use of plural nouns when idiomatic usage demands singular nouns, as in:

Then the government has to support orphanages and repair damages ... (69,B12) (The word 'damage', in this context, does not have a plural. The student seems to have been confused between 'damage', a general term not used in the plural, and 'damages' used in a legal sense.);
and (2) the incorrect use of 'amount' applying to plural nouns that should have been preceded by the word 'number'. ('Amount' should be used to describe mass or bulk, rather than a countable number.(1).)

An example of this usage is:

... an enormous amount of words. (69,B78) (The word 'amount' should be replaced by 'number'.).

The other examples cannot be grouped, and so will be discussed one by one after the remaining examples in the two groups described above have been presented.

Type One /...

(1) See E. Partridge, op.cit. p.36.
Type One (Incorrect use of plural nouns.)

But its most important part with regards to history is ...
(69,B51) (The singular 'regard' should have been used here.);
I am of the opinion that George Orwell is treading on very
dangerous grounds. (69,D57) ('Ground' should replace 'grounds'.
The student seems to have confused the legal use of 'ground' in
the plural with the use in this context.);
The position of jargons with respect to our language is that
terms used in technical discussion hardly belong ... (70,B20)
The word 'jargon' is not used in the plural);
... the reader is tempted to merely scan the informations
between the commas ... (70,B25) (The word 'information' is not
used in the plural.).

Type Two (Incorrect use of 'amount'.)

The reason being that an enormous amount of facts of interest
are encompased in it. (69,B14) (The word 'amount' should be
replaced by 'number').;
But this would occur very seldom, for the clothes he wore
would last for an astonishing amount of months or years. (69,D48)
('Number' should replace 'amount' here.).

The Remaining Examples.

I am one of the culprits of this error. (69,B29) (What was
probably meant here was 'I am among those guilty of this error.'
The term 'culprit of an error' is unidiomatic in English.);
In the most likelyhood (sic) the above speaker's English ...
(69,B8) (The terms 'most likely' and 'in the likelihood of'
have been confused here.);
Perhaps it would be close enough to say that it occurs when two
immature people enter into a mature bond of relationship. (69,A74)
(It is not clear what a 'mature bond of relationship is', but
the wording is certainly unidiomatic.);
The English of the masses is the best form of communication for
it expresses what has to be said, now, and in terms which all are
able to comprehend to the bottom of their meaning. (70,D11)
(What the 'bottom' of a meaning is is not clear.);
This point of opinion can be discussed from two leads ...
(69,D72) (The student has confused the word 'opinion' on its own
with the phrase 'point of view'.);
Have you ever noticed the preference that a certain beach might
have for sea-weed, whilst another has a preference for wood?
(70,A42) (In English it is unidiomatic to say that something
inanimate has a preference for something.).
D. ADJECTIVES

There are only four adjectival forms that merit discussion, but two of them represent fairly common idiomatic usage. In the first example:

... which were not in the exact same place. (70,A5),

the adjective exact should be changed to the adverb 'exactly' and 'same' should be 'the same'. This incorrect usage is fairly common in colloquial usage. In the second example:

... a glass of brandy or something in her one hand. (69,D29),

the numeral adjective 'one' is used in such a way as to suggest that this person has only one hand. This incorrect usage is fairly widespread, both in colloquial and in formal usage. The acceptable usage is 'in one of her hands'. The third example:

... small streets ... (69,A2),

might possibly arise because of the influence of the Afrikaans 'smal', meaning 'narrow'. 'Narrow streets' is the correct usage here.

The fourth example:

Here the menace lies, where people believe in, and act from a stimulus without no serious thought or reasoning to guide them. (69,A60),

shows the incorrect use of 'no' with 'without'. Correct idiomatic usage demands 'any' here.

E. ADVERBS

The two examples to be discussed: (1)

An important branch is dramatisation, extremely prevalent in Journalism ... (69,B46),

and (2)

He would probably find the curriculum very vast ... (69,D76),

show the unnecessary use of adverbs as modifying words. In (1) 'extremely' is not acceptable with 'prevalent', and in (2) 'very' is unnecessary because there are no degrees of 'vastness'.

PREPOSITIONAL IDIOMS

The large number of incorrect prepositions found in the essays suggests that many of the students are confused about the correct idiomatic usage of prepositions. Students seemed to have inserted any prepositions that they thought suitable for a particular occasion, whether these prepositions conformed with idiomatic usage or not. In many instances they did not.

This confusion suggests that the use of prepositions in general is in a fluid state. Prepositions have always offered problems, even to those who have a sound grasp of English, and so it is, perhaps, not surprising that relatively inexperienced students should have trouble. (See the beginning of this chapter.)
This section has been divided into the following sub-sections for convenience:

1. Prepositions associated with verbal forms.
2. Prepositions associated with nouns or pronouns.
3. Prepositions associated with other parts of speech.
4. Prepositions that are superfluous.
5. Prepositions that were incorrectly omitted.

1. Prepositions associated with verbal forms.

In idiomatic English usage certain prepositions have become associated with certain verbs or verbal forms. These have been described by Barbara Strang\(^1\) as follows: 'so we are compelled by lexical and other evidence to recognise the existence of units, functioning and conjugated as verbs, consisting of two or three words... The lexical consideration is that such combinations may have lexical meaning quite different from that of the components strung together as distinct lexical units.' An example of this usage is:

Advertising is the only way one can keep track with all the new discoveries. \((69,A15)\) (The 'prepositional verb'\(^2\) here should be 'keep track of'.)

In addition to this usage, there are many examples of combinations of preposition and verb that can be taken literally, as in:

... an immediate interest is aroused in trying to experience whatever is said with the person. \((70,B80)\) (The preposition 'to'\(^3\) should replace 'with'.)

Such examples have also been included in this sub-section. Where possible, references have been given to the relevant entries in F. T. Wood, *Prepositional Idioms*.

The other examples in this sub-category follow in alphabetical order.

All the scientists were centred around the faith-healer... \((69,D4)\) (Centred 'on'\(^4\) is preferable here);

We can clearly see this (a fall from grace) by Chaucer's monk. \((69,C2)\) (The preposition 'in' should replace 'by' here.)

In this section we are presented by a rather 'hen-pecked' Chauntecleer which is extremely funny. \((70,C11)\) (The preposition 'with' should replace 'by'.)

Unfortunately/....

---


\(^2\) Barbara Strang, *loc.cit*.


\(^4\) F. T. Wood, p.150.
Unfortunately we often dismiss the fact that we are clearing our own minds and are rather more motivated in gaining a victory. (69,B39) (What was meant here was 'towards', (1)); Chaucer infuses fine shades of meaning in the character of the monk. (69,C19) (The preposition 'into' (2) should have been used here.);

Chantecler, a beautiful majestic cock resided in the farm of a poor widow. (69,D46) (The preposition 'on' (3) should replace 'in'.);

One has such a wide range to pick and choose in. (69,A24) (The preposition 'from' should replace 'in'.);

... the language conditions our thinking into a positive and constructive way. (69,B21) (The preposition 'in' (4) should replace 'into').

She carefully manipulates the discussion into another direction... (69,D4) (The preposition 'in' (5) would be better here.);

... he is deliberately making a cryptic oracular statement, that cannot be interpreted into a definite and observable command.' (70,B54) (The preposition 'as' (6) should replace 'into').

One could label each one into a certain type of person one knows or knows of today. (70,D52) (The preposition 'as' (7) should replace 'into').

The frequent use of 'in' and 'into' as prepositions should be noted in the examples above. The same trend is noticeable with the prepositions 'of' and 'to' in the following examples:

Campus society comprises of ... (69,A5) (The words 'consists of' (8) should replace 'comprises of'.) (This example could also have been included in sub-category four below, had it been thought necessary to retain 'comprises'.);

... and one can give facts immediately if one writes and no unnecessary fumbling of words will occur. (69,B61) (The preposition 'of' should be replaced by 'for' (9)).
Glorification of his crowing draws attention to that gift of which he is especially vain. (69, C16) (The preposition 'about' should have been used here.);
Chauntecleer allows himself to be dissuaded of these forebodings. (69, C44) (The preposition 'from' should replace 'of'.);
It is imperative to comply to the basic concepts. (69, A46) (The phrase 'to comply with' should replace 'to comply to'.);
They may have professors to keep them occupied and therefore do not draw to a man ... (69, B11) (The preposition 'towards' should have been used here.);
... it must be compared to some other form. (69, B43) (Compared 'with' is preferable here.);
Similarly if one is critical to world opinion ... (69, B30) (The preposition 'of' should replace 'to'.);
Ordinary manual labour was for the first time given to the hands of paid labourers. (69, C11) (The preposition 'into' is preferable here.);
... and as everyone turned to the direction of the door ... (69, B31) (One says 'in the direction of' or 'towards the door'.);
A doctor who is not fully acquainted with his profession is liable to hide his face by talking to great length to his patient. (70, A4) (The preposition 'at' should replace 'to'.);
... looked to their watches ... (70, A12) (The preposition 'at' should replace 'to'.);
The description of Chauntecleer and Pertelote contrasts vividly to that of the widow. (70, C65) ('with' should replace 'to'.);
... where the husband's whims are catered to by a ... wife. (70, B76) (The preposition 'for' should replace 'to'.);
He had long since mastered this style of writing and could afford to make fun with it. (69, C44) (The preposition 'of' is intended here.).

2. / .....
2. **Prepositions associated with nouns or pronouns.**

Following the trend noticeable with the verbs above, the prepositions used with nouns or pronouns were frequently incorrect. It should be noted that the prepositions 'in', 'of' and 'to' were, in particular, incorrectly used. The following examples illustrate the point made above:

Colours *in* that time represented certain things. (70,C62) (The preposition 'at' (1) should replace 'in'.);

As a result she *worn* (sic) (i.e. won) him over to her disbelief of the dream and to her particular attitude. (70,D20) (The preposition 'in' (2) should replace 'of'.);

His insight to characterisation is quite remarkable ... (70,C43) (The preposition 'into' (3) should replace 'to').

The other examples in this sub-category follow below with comments:

.... for the reason that it causes political tension and is the cause for many political disputes. (69,A40) (The preposition 'of' should replace 'for');

I found it comforting to learn that the authorities in spelling differ ... (69,B30) (The preposition 'on' (4) should replace 'in').;

This word should be brought in as soon as possible in an aid to being understood. (69,B31) (The preposition 'as' (5) should replace 'in').;

This relish in the ordinary things of life ... (69,C64) (The preposition 'for' (6) should replace 'in').;

... yet he generally keeps the results of his findings in others to himself. (70,B29) (The preposition 'about' (7) should replace 'in').;

These different ethnic groups do develop their own way in speaking English. (70,B37) (The preposition 'of' (8) should replace 'in').;

For those of us who are not as energetic as the enthusiasts of other fields ... (69,A47) (The preposition 'in' (9) should replace 'of').;

Distinctions of certain objects can also now be made. (69,B21) (The preposition 'of' should be replaced by 'between' (10).);

Chaucer / ......

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Chaucer has a peculiar fondness of simple exaggeration ... (69,C64) (The preposition 'for' (1) should replace 'of').

... and complete deviant of the university behavioural norms ... (69,B48) (The preposition 'from' (2) should replace 'of').

... the following is and (sic) advertisement of a suntan lotion: (70,B13) (The preposition 'for' (3) should replace 'of').

Reporters, radiomen ... all conceive it part of their professional responsibility to present fairly the views of controversial issues. (70,B47) (The prepositional 'on' (4) should replace 'of').

What role does the individual's act have on the happenings of tomorrow? (69,C36) (The preposition 'in' might have been appropriate here, but 'effect' could replace 'role', 'on' remaining.)

She is the practical wife who has all the answers on the tip of her fingers. (70,C52) (The preposition 'at' should replace 'on').

When one restriction becomes predominant to an individual, so that it overshadows all others ... (69,A34) (The preposition 'in' should replace 'to').

Notice how the Nun's Priest's Tale comes after the sombre tragedy of the Monk so that it forms a parody to it. (69,C39) (The preposition 'of' (5) should replace 'to').

... therefore makes his point without causing ill-feeling to his audience. (69,C48) (The preposition 'among' (6) is probably intended here).

... disappearing men, and phantom vessels which sail my waters until eternity. (70,A21) (The preposition 'to' or 'for' should replace 'until').

When headline language, (sic) corrupts literary style it is within the interests of the public to protest. (69,B3) (The preposition 'in' should have been used here).

3. Prepositions associated with other parts of speech.

There are two examples, both of prepositions associated with adjectives, that are worth commenting on:

... different to ... (69,A5) (The preposition 'from' (7) is better here).

A double-decker bus went by, completely full with people. (70,A70) (The preposition 'of' (8) should replace 'with').

4. / ....

(3) F. T. Wood, p.33, No.2.
(5) F. T. Wood, p.57, (9a).
(6) F. T. Wood, p.10, No.3.
4. **Prepositions that are superfluous.**

In this sub-category there are three examples of prepositions incorrectly associated with words that do not normally have a preposition attached to them. They are as follows:

The little child now at home awaits anxiously for his meals ... (69,A58) (One normally 'awaits one's meals'. There is no need for 'for' here.);

Chaucer also manages to ridicule at the English courts ... (70,C36). (One 'ridicules' someone or something. The 'at' is unnecessary here.);

As regards to English, the number of people speaking it ... (70,D27) (The phrase 'as regards' stands on its own. There is no need for 'to').

5. **Prepositions that were incorrectly omitted.**

In this sub-category there are only two examples of the omission of prepositions that merit discussion. They are:

The other 'freshers' and 'freshettes', seeing the huge pile of books next to him, thought he was a senior student who came to spy out (sic) the new 'freshettes' and interrupt and bicker the student representative council members ... (69,D8) ('bicker' cannot stand on its own in this context: 'with' should be inserted after it.);

He thinks what he should preach on in tomorrow's church service. (69,D26) (In this context 'thinks' cannot stand on its own. 'Thinks about' might be an improvement.).

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The errors in idiomatic usage were the fewest in the six major categories of error recorded. These errors were confined largely to the essays written early in the years under examination, as there was a significant reduction in their numbers at the end of 1969, and a smaller reduction in 1970.

Correct idiomatic usage is difficult to teach, as it requires a deep understanding of the linguistic subtleties demanded by each context. A knowledge of usage must, therefore, be gained through experience and reading, as well as through teaching. The uncertainty about some aspects of idiomatic usage shown in the essays examined reveals an insensitivity towards English usage that is unexpected at the level of first-year university studies, and suggests that there may be some major influence at work affecting idiomatic usage. This major influence may be Afrikaans, for there is evidence in certain examples - the unnecessary use of the definite article, and the use of the adjective 'small' instead of 'narrow' - that Afrikaans had directly affected the idiomatic usage of some students. The existence / ...
existence of another language in such close proximity is bound to influence the students' usage, whether directly or indirectly, if only to make them less certain than they might normally be when problems arise.

The errors in this chapter were divided according to the parts of speech incorrectly used, which were: prepositions, finite and infinite verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs and articles. The most numerous errors were in prepositions, especially 'in', 'into', 'to' and 'of', which were used, seemingly at random, to replace other prepositions; in verbs, especially those that were inappropriate with particular nouns in the same sentences; in nouns that were incorrectly used in the plural; in adverbs incorrectly used as modifying words; and in the definite article, which was used unnecessarily.

The incorrect use of prepositions in the essays is significant in that it seems to be part of a general uncertainty in the use of prepositions, which has been commented on by Potter in Changing English (1). The students who had difficulty here seem to have used the prepositions quoted above at random. They clearly knew that prepositions were needed in the particular contexts, but had little idea of the currently acceptable ones. The use of correct prepositions has always presented difficulty, even to people who have a sound grasp of English, and students will, in future, have to be made aware of the difficulties involved, both in the use of prepositions and of other idiomatic expressions, if they are to avoid errors.

The aim of punctuation is, basically, to indicate the logical structure of sentences. (1) Punctuation should follow the meaning of sentences, and should help in the flow of ideas, being governed more by the construction of sentences than by their length. (2)

It could be argued, too, that another aim of punctuation is to indicate the pauses or breathing spaces appropriate for reading aloud, but this would seem to be of secondary importance because of all that is written and printed only a small fraction is read aloud, and it must be remembered that the needs of the eye are not exactly the same as those of the voice. (3)

Punctuation is, then, a matter for writing rather than for speech. The punctuation marks merely outline the pattern and nature of the sentence for the reader, who arrives at the meaning and significance through the eye, and not through the ear. (4)

Punctuation should indicate the relationship of the various parts of a sentence one to another, and it plays only a minor part as an aid to the rhetorical delivery of a sentence by the spoken voice.

Because punctuation is a convention practised by the writer for the convenience of the silent reader, it is very difficult to lay down a large number of rigid rules to suit every taste. It is essential, of course, that the meaning of what is written should be accurately conveyed to the reader's mind, through his eyes, 'with the least possible delay and without any ambiguity', (5) but, once this has been achieved, any other punctuation marks can be left to the writer, or even the reader, to supply as he sees fit.

The problem of setting out rules is also complicated because modern usage is tending towards increasing economy in punctuation. This tendency was noticeable in the 640 essays examined, there being relatively few punctuation marks. It was considered, however, that this economy was due largely to incompetence or ignorance, rather than to the sound construction of sentences that then did not need a great deal of punctuation. The omission of commas was particularly evident, but a large number of instances were also found where either colons or semi-colons could have been inserted to improve...
improve sentences. In addition, hyphens, the apostrophe 's', and question marks were omitted. Finally, there were quite a few commas that were incorrectly inserted.

This chapter has been divided into the following sub-sections for convenience:

1. Commas omitted.
2. Question and exclamation marks omitted. Full stop in the wrong place.
3. Hyphens omitted.
4. Apostrophe 's' omitted.
5. Colon or semi-colon omitted.
6. Colon or semi-colon incorrectly inserted.
7. Commas incorrectly inserted.
8. Quotation marks omitted.

1. **COMMAS OMITTED**

The comma is, in many ways, the most important of the marks used in internal punctuation. In its simplest use the comma marks the natural pause at the end of a phrase or clause. If the phrase or clause is transferred from the beginning to the middle of the sentence, it is placed between commas. (1)

The main uses of the comma can be summarised as follows:

(a) The comma is used to separate two independent clauses joined by 'and', 'but', 'for', 'or' or 'nor'. It should be noted here that some handbooks on writing have stated this rule without qualification. (2) In fact, the comma between independent clauses is often omitted, particularly if the meaning of the sentence is clear without a comma. (3)

(b) The comma is generally used after an adverbial clause or a long phrase preceding the main part of the sentence.

(c) Commas are used to set off non-defining clauses.

(d) Commas are used to set off words, phrases, or clauses that interrupt the main flow of a sentence, especially when the grammatical structure is complete without them.

(e) Commas are used to separate elements in a series.

(f) Commas are used to set off non-defining appositives.

(g) A comma is used to separate two co-ordinate adjectives not joined by a conjunction.

(h) Commas are used to set off a short direct quotation from the rest of the sentence. (4)

The commas / ....

The commas omitted by the students fall into six categories:

1. Commas omitted before co-ordinating conjunctions.
2. Commas omitted either before or after, or both before and after, phrases and clauses that interrupt the normal flow of a sentence.
3. Commas omitted either before or after, or both before and after, adverbs.
4. Commas omitted between sections of sentences where a break is needed.
5. Commas omitted before non-defining clauses.
6. Commas omitted in lists of words, phrases or clauses.

The first four categories contain by far the largest number of errors. Errors in Group Five have only been touched on here as they will be treated in more detail in the Chapter on grammar. There are very few examples of the errors in Group Six. It should be noted that all punctuation marks have been underlined are considered incorrect, and that all punctuation marks in brackets have been inserted in order to improve the examples given.

1. Commas omitted before co-ordinating conjunctions.

The very large number of commas omitted before the co-ordinating conjunctions 'and', 'but', 'for' and 'so', but especially before 'and' and 'but', suggests that students are becoming increasingly sparing with their use of commas. The modern trend is, of course, towards increasing economy in punctuation, but this does not excuse students from a knowledge of the effective use of commas. All the examples given below are considered to be more effective with the commas, but the writer is aware that it is not always considered essential to have commas in the places indicated, especially as most of the sentences given are short.

Four examples, one for each of the above co-ordinating conjunctions, will now be given to illustrate what has been said above.

Their comical gestures and manner of speaking never fail (sic) to intrigue me (,) and I slowed my stride so that I could listen a little longer. (69,A25);
This is not solely the cause of the subtle change of meaning (,) but there is also no room for the hero in our modern society. (69,A41);
This statement is undoubtedly true (,) for today it is universally accepted that illiteracy is dangerous for social, political and cultural reasons. (69,B54);
It is quite impossible to stop the progress of language (,) so we must keep up with the words and expressions of our time. (69,B25)

Although all the sentences above are short, the commas before the co-ordinating conjunctions make the sentences more effective because

the commas / ...
the commas provide a necessary pause, as well as indicating the end of one clause and the beginning of another.

The other examples in this category are:

(a) The co-ordinating conjunction 'and'.
The 1820 Settlers constituted a real threat to the language (,), and for the first time there was a definite move for anglicisation which resulted in certain disputes. (69,A40);
Although I was disillusioned during my first week, everything is now beginning to fall into place (,) and I am beginning to realise the full meaning of a university training. (69,A35);
In his position the blind man is unable to rely upon the accuracy of his own observations (,) and the audible verbal reports of his assistant officials, however trustworthy, would never ...
(69,A30);
The ways of man are such that he would rather be entertained than entertain (,) and science has exploited this tendency to the full. (69,A26);
Gowers refers to our national vocabulary as a democratic institution (,) and what is generally accepted will ultimately be correct. (69,B19);
Today the love of the abstract word is very strong (,) and this is a threat to the problem of making one's meaning plain. (69,B30);
The author uses a balance of tone in his character (,) and his speech is almost typically poetic when he communicates with the Voices. (69,B67);
In the Canterbury Tales Chaucer depicts a diversity of character (,) and this can be seen in the contrast between the character of the Miller and the Monk. (69,C19);
The reversal of these parts of flatterer and dupe is the core of the story (,) and the dramatic irony is heightened by the fox's character. (69,C40);
These ideas about dreams were not based on fact (,) and this shows that the people of the middle ages were completely unscientific in their attitude to such concepts as dreams. (69,C76);
They address each other in the polite form (,) and Chanticleer (,) with his 'noble' sentiments (,) draws Pertelote's attention to the lovely flowers and the singing of the birds. (69,D40);
He showed respect for every member of the company (,) and I felt that he was a genuinely kind hearted man. (69,D67);
The bathyscope (,) a round metal ball with two people inside (,) has been let down to great depths (,) and huge monstrous creatures have been seen in that pitch black world into which no light is able to penetrate. (70,A3);
A little way farther on stood an old wind-mill, its sails contorted in broken agony (,) and around (sic) the corrugated iron dam stood a few withered oxen. (70,A66);
The symbolic / ...
The symbolic value of words is understood in this (,) and through language not only thoughts and feelings of the present can be expressed (,) but also those of the past. (70,B67);
These comments are very true to everyday life (,) and Chaucer very cleverly uses a cock and a hen in the place of a human couple. (70,D18);
The language is of the people for the people (,) and therefore the language can only be judged from the way it is used by the majority of people or masses. (70,D27);
We see that Chantecleer does not apply his own advice to himself (,) and Pertelote's advice almost proves to be fatal. (70,D65).

(b) The co-ordinating conjunction 'but'.
Inevitably there will be difficulties (,) but these can be resolved within the framework of human love uniting the family. (69,A43);
I usually find a vacant seat when I board the train at Wimbledon (,) but once the train has filled up and there is only standing room left, I am invariably confronted with (sic) an old lady glaring down at me. (69,A54);
All the time, new words are being incorporated into our language, as new discoveries are being made (,) but some words are also being excluded gradually and are becoming archaic. (69,B15);
Throughout my school days I was warned to avoid using prepositions at the end of a sentence (,) but this often presented numerous problems. (69,B30);
Some expressions take advantage of the credulousness of the reader (,) but the competition among advertisers is so keen that, without actually lying, they make exaggerated claims. (69,B75);
She lets him make the intellectual point, she submits to his amorous attentions (,) but in the end Chauntecleer forgets all about his dream and walks round the yard, as Pertelote has told him to do. (69,C5);
He chivalrously thanks her for her pains (,) but one cannot miss the element of sarcasm in his reply ... (69,C34);
One forms an idea of his character from the conversation (,) but this idea usually undergoes a metamorphosis when one meets the person face to face. (70,B59).

(c) The co-ordinating conjunction 'for'.
But then there are people of modes of living and ideas different from his own, and therefore dissenion arises (,) for each one sees the other as knocking his head against what they (sic) consider to be a wall of irrefutable and granite fact. (69,A65);

Perhaps / ....
Perhaps Chaucer intends us to laugh at manhood itself (,) for men are shown to be filled with pride and vanity. (69,C35);
A Miller in the Middle Ages possessed an important monopoly (,) for all of the peasants under the rule of the lord of the manor were obliged to take their corn and grain to the Miller of the estate on which they lived. (69,C52);
The distortion is more noticeable in good characters (,) for the characters he satirizes are livelier than those he respects. (69,C80);
I cannot agree with George Steiner (,) for a language is a living thing and new forms, no matter ... (69,D14);
These protests are completely pointless (,) for they show that these people are doubting the word of our leaders, who obviously ... (70,B12);
Here again, however, we must use the right preposition (,) for our meaning can be greatly altered if we make a mistake. (70,B45);
Without the standard literary language, English would be chaotic (,) for it is constantly changing. (70,D10);
Chaucer is also somewhat naive (,) for he expresses complete faith in the books he had read on the subject of dreams. (70,D31).

(c) The co-ordinating conjunction 'so'.
I knew that I would stand no chance against the humans as they greatly outnumbered me (,) so I decided to try and frighten them away. (69,D1).

(d) Commas omitted either before or after, or both before and after, phrases and clauses that interrupt the normal flow of a sentence.
There are a considerable number of examples in this category, the main fault being that students used only one comma with a phrase or clause that interrupted the main flow of a sentence, rather than two commas, or possibly none at all, as in:
(1) Restraint towards dress, especially in the upper classes (,) vanished. (70,A17).
Here the important words in the sentence are 'Restraint towards dress vanished'. The phrase 'especially in the upper classes' breaks into the main flow of the sentence, and so should be separated, by two commas, from what comes before and after.
(2) The London businessman, his social equal (,) will speak more pointedly ... (69,B43).
Here there is an appositive phrase that should be set off by two commas, rather than one, the main flow of the sentence being 'The London businessman ... will speak more pointedly ...'.
(3) The shrubs (,) bent by the slight breeze(,) seemed almost alive. (70,A32). (In this sentence two commas have been inserted to mark off the intervening phrase.)
The other examples in this category are:
The music students, some carrying violins and cellos, strolled along, each thinking of the latest work they were studying. (69,A25);
To the soldiers, he was, and still is, a symbol of a brave and ... (69,A42);
Students, drawn chiefly from other parts of the world, come here to study in one of the many Faculties, eg (sic) arts, science, medicine and commerce. (69,A45);
The Baptism of Our Lord is usually a favourite carving and this, along with other architectural characteristics, is supposed to be a striving towards the promotion of the Glory of God. (69,A49);
People such as these as well as salesmen and political speakers, use special devices which will cleverly deceive ... (69,B9);
This, I feel, is something which depends on the individual. (69,B31);
The voice, or the sound of the voice, assumes even greater importance when the speaker can be heard, but not seen. (69,B73);
A German form of the tale, Reinhart Fuchs, also appeared in the twelfth century. (69,C4);
... those that have prophetic meaning ... and those, a majority, that have not. (69,C6);
Chauntecleer, like any husband, knows he knows better than his wife ... (69,C16);
Macrobius, a fourth century doctor, went so far as to write ... (69,C65);
It is hard to believe that he is, in fact, the Rev. Newton. (69,D2);
The language, like the tree, would just wither and die. (69,D5);
Just then the Rev. Goodchild, a devout holy parson, came up. (69,D37);
We tried to explain to her, by various very learned allusions to classical mythology, that dreams were often premonitions of things to come. (69,D54);
The subjects he would take would probably be Latin and English and, as rhetoric is the study of gestures to be made while speaking (we are told that he spoke with decorum and respect), he might possibly do drama. (69,D76);
A gentle nun, Madame Sweetbriar, was delicately sipping... (69,D80);
Silence, broken only by the incessant rolling to-and-fro of the beautifully formed waves, gradually settles on the sea shore. (70,A20);
Driftwood, by virtue of this change (,) is rather a popular method of ornamentation. (70,A42); Its discovery meant a strengthening of that chain, a beautiful exhibit to another museum and (,) to one man in particular (,) untold joy. (70,A57); As Eric Partridge (,) in Usage and Abusage (,) writes "Spelling was idiosyncratic, syntax experimental ... (70,B3); America (,) because of its economical (sic) and political power and prestige (,) make (sic) her a creditor nation in linguistic matters. (70,B34); In the end he rejects the laxatives, not (,) after all (,) on very rational grounds, but simply because they are disagreeable ... (70,C1); Generally, Chaucer assigns character to his animals very skilfully and, by taking natural human failings and assigning them to a cock and a hen (,) he forms a very clever assessment of both man and woman, ... (70,C68); The Fox again tries flattery but (,) as Chanticleer himself says (,) "once bitten, twice shy". (70,D9); Above all it must be reputable, that is (,) spoken by educated, cultured people, and it is here that the language of the masses is seen to be lacking. (70,D24); Take (,) for example (,) a rock pool as described by a teacher, a biologist and a drama student. (70,D40); Efficacy (,) when considered in the scientific sense (,) demands accuracy and conciseness. (70,D63).

3. Commas omitted either before or after, or both before and after adverbs.

In the following examples it is felt that the adverbs, because they interrupt the flow of the sentences, should be separated by two commas from what comes before and after them.

Our vastly diverse population many of whom do not have English as their mother tongue are bound to have their affects (sic)(,) and African and Afrikaans influences (,) especially, will become more and more prominent. (69,A22); The cockney (,) further (,) has a wide slang vocabulary. (69,B43); However (,) I always try to use them only in the correct context, and I agree with Gowers when he says that they become a 'matter of occasion'. (69,B30).

It should be noted that either one or two commas were needed to improve the sentences.

The large number of examples like the above suggests that many students have little idea of the conventions applicable to the use of the comma.
The other examples in this sub-category are given below. It should be noted that the following adverbs gave trouble: 'especially', 'further', 'furthermore', 'however', 'lastly', 'perhaps', 'then', 'therefore' and 'too'.

Lastly (,) man wants and always wanted (sic) freedom of action. (69,A24);
On stage (,) too, actors can ... (69,A32);
His being is (,) perhaps (,) too prosaic .. (69,A65);
This (,) then (,) seems to be a valid argument for predestination. (69,C38);
Chanticleer pointed out (,) therefore, that dreams ... (69,C60);
Furthermore(,) in most Western societies higher status is accorded to the individual who is well versed in the usage of those ... (70,B73);
Pertelote (,) especially (,) has all the qualities of a typical suburban housewife. (70,D54).

4. Commas omitted between sections of sentences where a break is needed.

In the following examples, commas should have been placed between clauses or parts of sentences that formed units. These commas indicate both pauses and natural breaks in the sense.
(a) Pertelote believed that Chantecleer's dream was caused merely by indigestion (,) whereas Chantecleer himself felt it to be a prophetic vision. (69, C47).
In this sentence there is a natural break between 'indigestion' and the clause beginning 'whereas ...'. This break should be indicated by a comma.
(b) In every street and shop there are huge advertisements waiting to greet you (,) written in such persuasive language that it is difficult to resist buying. (69,A5).
In this example there is a break between the parts of the sentence ending in '...you' and the part beginning 'written ...'. This break should have been indicated by a comma.

The other examples in this sub-category are:

Conversation was impossible (,) for the music was unbearably loud and the partner too uninterested. (69,A24);
Moreover, the older folk have experience on their side (,) while the teenager has inexperience on his. (69,A51);
Some poets such as Yeats and Dylan Thomas use structurally and artistically excellent English (,) whereas others such as Lawrence and Eliot experiment with the language in their poems. (69,B24);
The purpose of language is certainly not simply confined to the expression of thought (,) although most people tend to think of this as being its main function. (69,B34);
The schoolboy falls through incompetence and inexperience since his character has not yet been completely formed, while the preacher thinks it his duty to God to be pompous. (69,B35); With the few whom I love and trust I am uninhibited; with others, a chameleon, changing colour according to the society I am in. (70,A15); The waves on the horizon became as big as towers, rolling towards the shore at a tremendous rate. (70,A48); A book such as this will interest the reader, whereas a badly written book will bore him to tears. (70,B18); In his examples of the authenticity of dreams Chauntecleer proves that one is forewarned of danger, yet he ignores the warning of his own dream and takes the advice of his Lady Pertelote. (70,048).

5. **Commases omitted before non-defining clauses.**

Non-defining adjectival clauses should be separated from their antecedents by commas, but a large number of students did not use commas at all, thus making no distinction between defining and non-defining clauses. As these clauses will be discussed in the chapter on grammar, only three examples are given here:

The farmer, who had stood silently by, lifted his rifle and took aim. (70,A55); Pertelote, who is also very proud of her appearance and dotes on Chantecleer, shows typical wifely characteristics. (70,D3); Standard English, which is the name given to English taught in schools and used in books, does change, but much slower (sic). (70,D33).

In these examples, the clauses beginning with 'who' and 'which' are non-defining, and so should be marked off from their antecedents by commas.

6. **Commases omitted in lists of words, phrases, or clauses.**

There are only three examples worthy of note in this sub-section. In all of them commas have been left out between items that should have been separated.

The examples are as follows:
Wherever you look there are posters guaranteeing freedom from pain (if you take a certain pill), freedom from financial worries (if you insure your life with a certain insurance company), and freedom from the bustle of everyday life (if you take this holiday to the Bahamas). (69,A23);

Because / ..
Because of his quick and observant eye, he is able to produce rounded (,) convincing characters ... (69,C32);
He wears a dark (,) well-cut suit. (69,D29).

2. QUESTION AND EXCLAMATION MARKS OMITTED. FULL STOPS IN THE WRONG PLACE

(a) The basic use of the question mark is to indicate a direct question. It might seem that its use is simple enough, yet quite a few examples of direct questions without question marks were found. If we keep in mind the fact that these essays, with the exception of the final ones, were written at the students' leisure, it would seem that many students were either very careless or lacked a satisfactory knowledge of punctuation.

A few examples of direct questions without question marks are given below to show this type of error.

Is this basically what man wants and has his reality become "The Cinema Sheet; man's utter nothingness". (Wells) (?) (69,A39); And if she knows nothing about affairs, how will she be able to advise properly (?) (69,A44);
... for surely this is the purpose for which men enter a monastic life (?) (69,C66);
Do you like it (?) (69,D33);
If the modern student cannot ... how could Chaucers (sic) clerk adapt himself (?) (69,D52);
Perhaps they have never loved and surely they will not die (?) (70,A8);
Surely all traffic must stop to allow pedestrians like myself to cross the road (?) (70,A9);
What is the cause of this (?) (70,A25);
I by no means wish students to adopt an apathetic attitude to the goings-on in the world around us; but surely there is a time and place for everything (?) (70,B14);
This brings us to a larger topic - namely, how do we define English and what is the domain of its use (?) (70,D12);
So who's to say present (-) day people don't take as great delight in food and drink as the Franklin did (?) (70,D26);
On the other hand (,) if everybody decided to accent "mass English" as good English surely the language would begin to degenerate (?) (70,D66).

(b) There was only one example of a missing exclamation mark that was worth noting:

Off-course (sic) he was the best shot in their battalion (:) what an impossible question to ask (!) (69,D3).

An exclamation mark should have been placed at the end of this sentence because the sentence shows strong feeling.

(c) / ..
A few examples, four of them given below, of full-stops that were placed inside quotation marks instead of outside them were found in the essays. This is a trivial error, but it is, nevertheless, worth noting.

Therefore we are able to see that there are still many heroes left in this 'real world (,) and that the cinema has not "become almost the last refuge of the hero" (,) (69,A42);
... and I agree with Gowers when he says that they become 'a matter of occasion'(. (69,B30);
... clichés such as 'inclined to think' and 'as at present advised'(. (69,B37);
Predestination is used very effectively in "The Nun's Priest's Tale" (,) (69,C29).

In all these examples the students have probably been confused because the quotation marks ended the sentences, but did not begin them.

3. HYPHENS OMITTED

The hyphen is used primarily to show close relationships between words or parts of words. It should be noted here that, although hyphens are used in the writing of certain compound expressions, usage is not fixed, and authorities differ on the use of hyphens in particular instances.

1. Hyphens are used in compound numbers, such as 'twenty-one'.
2. Hyphens are used in most compounds made up of nouns and prepositional phrases such as 'mother-in-law'.
3. Hyphens are used between words that function as a single adjective before a noun or pronoun.
4. Hyphens are used in most compounds with self- or ex- as a prefix.
5. Hyphens are used in most compounds made up of prefixes joined to proper nouns.

Apart from a few compound-nouns lacking hyphens, all the errors connected with hyphens in the essays examined were acting as compound adjectives, such as:
(1) ... his long (-) awaited crowing ... (69,D59);
(2) ... the all (-) important carriage ... (70,C31).
In both these examples the words joined by hyphens are acting together as adjectives. There was a considerable number of errors in this category, and it can be fairly said that most of the students knew very little about the use of hyphens. The selection of examples below illustrates common errors.
(a) Single hyphens.
... frost (-) bitten world ... (69,A50);
... chromium (-) plated metal ... (69,A53);

(1) See G. V. Carey, on.cit., p. 81; and Birk and Birk, on.cit., p. 477.
... open (-) heart operation ... (69,A67);
... ever (-) changing world ... (69,B22);
... deep (-) thinking people ... (69,B40);
... as one of the shallow so (-) called elite ... (69,B41);
... large (-) scale interaction. (69,B57);
... in fourteenth (-) century England ... (69,C11);
... the age (-) old dispute ... (69,C22);
... berry (-) brown horse ... (69,C43);
... two (-) pound tin ... (69,D5);
... non (-) return basis ... (69,D43);
... ever (-) eager enthusiasm to study ... (69,D48);
... a never (-) ending challenge ... (70,A3);
... the blue (-) clad females ... (70,A16);
... open (-) air cinema ... (70,A56);
... the last (-) minute supplies ... (70,A78);
... a final (-) year student ... (70,B48);
... a life (-) long relationship ... (70,B74);
The last (-) moment reversal of fortune ... (70,C1);
... a jet (-) black beak (70,C8);
... green (-) beaded rosary ... (70,C53);
... first (-) degree eyestrain ... (70,D47);
... a fur (-) trimmed cloak (70,D59).

(b) **Compound-nouns.**

There are very few examples of compound-nouns without hyphens, but those that there are should be presented because they also point to the students' general ignorance about the use of hyphens.

... held his wailing first (-) born ... (69,A50);
... in a misty state of semi (-) sleep ... (69,A64);
... material well (-) being ... (69,C50);
... the life (-) blood of the city ... (70,A12);
... his self (-) importance ... (70,C20).

It should be noted that students could have been confused about current usage concerning compound-nouns, but it is significant that hyphens were omitted from all these examples.

4. **APOSTROPHE 'S' OMITTED**

The apostrophe 's' to indicate possession needs no explanation, but it seems that many students either know nothing about it or cannot see any purpose in using it. In many of the essays there were several examples of possessives without an apostrophe. As this is a basic punctuation mark it cannot be argued that students are ignorant of it. It seems, therefore, that students see no need for it, on the grounds that contexts are sufficient to indicate possession.

A selection / ...
A selection of examples is now given to indicate the range of the problem.

... one(')s ideas ... (69,A24);
... of man(')s innermost desire ... (69,A39);
... the attendants(') children ... (69,A56);
... the foetus(')s cry ... (69,A58);
Today(')s cricket match has proved ... (69,B4);
... the readers(') imagination ... (69,B18);
... the writer(')s meaning ..... (69,B25);
... a person(')s character ... (69,B41);
In Ingraham(')s categorisation ... (69,B45);
... the author(')s own idiosyncracy ... (69,B46);
... their parents(') manner of speech. (69,B48);
... his friends (') minds ... (69,B58);
... a child(')s character ... (69,B72);
... the readers(') feelings ... (69,B75);
... the friar(')s main task (69,C3);
... in a parson(')s pocket ... (69,C7);
... a preacher(')s illustrated anecdote. (69,C20);
... the miller(')s face ... (69,C24);
... the individual(')s act ... (69,C36);
... the knight(')s military fame ... (65,C45);
... the birds(') singing. (69,C61);
... the latter(')s description ... (69,C69);
... the reader(')s whole(-)hearted support. (69,D47);
... hen(')s eggs ... (69,D50);
George Orwell(')s statement... (69,D57);
... the archbishop(')s wife ... (69,D69);
John Masefield(')s poem ... (70,A3);
... pirates(') treasure ... (70,A21);
... assistants(') rush hour ... (70,A31);
... the sun(')s creative work ... (70,A46);
... under nature(')s lambent-cloak ... (70,A53);
... a delicate spider(')s web ... (70,A76);
... in every student(')s blood ... (70,B9);
... a person(')s ambition ... (70,B13);
... last year(')s slang ... (70,B21);
The teacher(')s way of speaking ... (70,B32);
... a boy(')s interest ... (70,B43);
... today(')s journalist ... (70,B75);
... the Nun(')s Priest(')s Tale ... (70,C3);
... the birds(') song ... (70,C13);
... his wife(')s advice ... (70,C22);
... the widow(')s board ... (70,C36);

... a millionaire(')s / ...
... a millionaire(')s daughter ... (70,556);
... the Queen(')s English ... (70,610);
... the widowed farmer(')s wife. (70,47).

5. COLON OR SEMI-COLON OMITTED

The functions of the colon and semi-colon largely overlap to-day, and the colon has, as a result, become a specialised mark indicating introduction, anticipation or amplification. In the words of G. V. Carey: "Nowadays the job of acting as 'half-way house' between the comma and the full-stop has come to devolve more and more on the semi-colon, leaving the colon only one rather specialised use."(1) This specialised use is described in Modern English Usage as: 'that of delivering the goods that have been invoiced in the preceding words'.(2)

The possible uses of the colon and semi-colon are summarised as follows:

(a) The colon is used:
   (1) to introduce members of a set;
   (2) to introduce examples, quotations and explanatory material;
   (3) to divide antithetical halves of sentences. (In this use the colon is regarded as a half-stop between two independent clauses, but the semi-colon has virtually replaced the colon here.)

(b) The semi-colon is used:
   (1) to separate the main independent clauses of compound sentences that are not connected by a conjunction or by a conjunctive adverb;
   (2) to separate main clauses when the second clause begins with a conjunctive adverb such as 'therefore', 'so', 'accordingly', 'hence';
   (3) to separate any main clauses that contain commas;
   (4) to separate elements in a list when any of the elements contain commas.

Because the uses of the colon and semi-colon overlap to a certain extent it has been extremely difficult to decide between a colon and a semi-colon in many of the examples given below. It was decided, therefore, to divide this section as follows: (a) examples where colons should have been inserted before quotations, as in:

  Gowers gives us a remedy for this (:) "the only rule for avoiding it is to be self-critical". (70,868);

(b) / ....

(1) G. V. Carey, op.cit., p.35.
(2) H. W. Fowler, op.cit., p.589.
(b) examples where colons should have been inserted to introduce explanatory material, as in:

In this case the valour was instinctive (:) rather than see the man drown the child saved him (, ) whereas in previous years valour was something to be shown to all. (69,A41).

(In this example the second part of the sentence amplifies the first part. It was therefore thought necessary to insert a colon after 'instinctive'.) ; (c) examples where either a colon or a semi-colon should have been inserted to indicate a break stronger than a comma, but not meriting a full-stop, as in:

So the English of the masses serves its purpose (: ) it replaces the English of another generation's masses and in its turn will be replaced. (70,D11).

(There is a strong pause after 'purpose' that merits either a colon or a semi-colon.) ; (d) Examples where a semi-colon should have been inserted before certain conjunctions, as in:

The city is alive with people (;) yet a cold and frosty anonymity hangs over everything and everybody. (70,A8).

(A comma could, possibly, have been used here, but it was felt that the break was strong enough to warrant a semi-colon. The other examples in this sub-category are very much like this one.).

In the other examples all punctuation marks in brackets have been inserted to indicate a lapse in punctuation. Punctuation marks that are underlined are considered to be incorrect.

(a) Colons introducing quotations.

For those whose rejoinder is (:) "Science is providing us...". (69,A26);
Warner says the following (: ) "Style is a way of writing ...". (69,A55);
Politicians (,) like advertisers (,) have one rule (: ) "the end justifies the means". (69,D22);

(b) Colons introducing explanatory material.

One sees all types (: ) from the lowest realms of society to the upper crust. (69,A54);
There is, however, a method in his madness, a singleness of purpose which drives them on to either frustration or destruction (:) the homing instinct is very strong. (69,A68);
By far the largest number of English speaking peoples living outside Britain live in the United States of America (: ) some 155 million people. (69,A75);

There is / ...
There is never satisfaction (:) only a continual grasping and clutching for more. (69,B2);

English is the chief language of science, commerce and industry, it is, in short, the most important language in the world. (69,B5);

The pilgrims are divided into three categories (:) the Knight-hood, Clergy and Ploughman, each with his own function. (69,C14);

Parody at this high level of performance is not the blatant derision that sometimes passes for parody, it is the light, affectionate raillery of a style he had long since mastered, and which he could afford to make fun with (sic). (69,C67);

Language is like a living organism; it needs nourishment and plenty of space within which to grow. (69,D5);

In some ways he was rather arrogant and conceited (sic); one can see this by his haughty stance. (69,D54);

He explained to me in the course of our conversation that he had fallen on hard times (:) his ancestral castle had had to be sold to make ends meet. (69,D68);

Really, it is the bullies (sic) in life that I dislike (:) those misguided people who feel that they were ordained to rule, and take advantage of other people's misfortune. (70,A2);

Language is our basic instrument of communication; its essential purpose is to convey our thoughts to other people. (70,B23);

He brings to bear his more ponderous erudition (:) 'ensamples' out of 'olde bokes' of dreams that come true. (70,C1);

Singers were divided into two categories (:) those who were technically proficient and at the same time were skilled musicians ... and those who were merely possessors of agile voices. (70,C21);

She feels (sic) very basic qualities of life (:) poverty, weariness and drudgery. (70,C33);

Chaucer uses the Prioress to gain a gentle laugh at all her kind (:) the nuns who are ladies first. (70,C60);

This is basically what the English of the masses does (:) it aims at quick understanding and clarity. (70,D33).

It should be noted that a large number of examples have been given in this sub-category to indicate the students' general lack of knowledge about the uses of the colon.

(c) Examples where either a colon or a semi-colon should have been inserted to indicate a break demanding more than a comma, but not meriting a full-stop.

There was a very large number of examples in this sub-category, but only a selection has been given here.
There was no need for deep thought; only enjoyment and looking forward to the next show. (69,A2);

There is no doubt that advertisements beautify town (sic) at night; why some people come into town at night. (69,A16);

The train en route to Cape Town arrives, usually on time; people rush for the door, usually the same door everyday (sic) and everyone squeezes in that (sic) by the time they reach Rondebosch each carriage is packed like a shoal of sardines. (69,A28);

During the time of ancient Greece some men were attributed (sic) with having god-like qualities; in fact these traits were applied to the great leaders of war, as well as the power of communicating with Zeus, Minerva and other inhabitants of Mount Olympus. (69,A41);

My elders, I know for a fact, are not stupid; nor is the teenager for that matter. (69,A51);

The southernmost institution of its kind, the inmates of which although not enjoying complete liberty and success in all they undertake are modestly contented and well cared for; it plays a very real part in the education of our youngsters. (69,A70);

Indeed the field is virtually boundless and when one begins it may prove difficult to stop; the enthusiasm may become overwhelming. (69,B14);

Off-course he was the best shot in their battalion; what an impossible question to ask! (69,D3);

His dream was a warning; it was a predestined event; anyone who knew anything about metaphysics could tell you so, but of course ... (69,D16);

Pertelote suggests some medicine made out of worms; this seems in keeping with their needs, but the joke lies in the fact that a mediaeval medicine was made out of worms to cure the particular ailment her husband has. (69,C61).

Examples where a semi-colon should have been inserted before certain conjunctions.

It is little wonder too that religion has taken such a terrific (sic) blow to the solar-plexus (sic); for why should they believe in God when he has never been to school. (69,A51);

It is believed that early marriages are more likely to fail than later marriages; hundreds of years ago, people married in their early teens and divorce was never heard of. (69,A73);

The English of laws and regulations is an easy butt; yet even this style of writing has its justification undiminished by the fact that some specimens of writing in this style may be clumsy or bad./...
or bad. (69,B67);

Pardeners were mainly priests(;) however they could be laymen. (69,C11).

6. **COLUMN OR SEMI-COLON INCORRECTLY INSERTED**

There are relatively few examples in this sub-category, but they are worth noting because they again underline many of the students' incompetence in the field of punctuation.

The examples fall into four groups:

(a) colons incorrectly inserted under the mistaken impression that a long pause was needed, as in:

I think you get to know far more of the mountain's personality and character by walking up[ ] just where, by leaving the path that has been trodden by so many before you, you can find a tiny ice-cold stream. (69,A23). (In this example the colon after 'up' is unnecessary as the sense of the sentence demands an uninterrupted flow at that point. It should be noted that this is the only example in this sub-category.);

(b) semi-colons introducing explanatory material that would have been more effectively introduced by colons, as in:

I feel that grammar is concerned with the basic requirements of a language: the vocabulary, the syntax, the comparison of adjectives and adverbs, ... (70,B2) (Here the explanatory material after the semi-colon would have been more effectively introduced by a colon.);

(c) colons incorrectly used to introduce explanatory material:

The University community makes each student aware of his social and moral responsibilities, and also encourages good will to others: Shawco is one such organisation run by the University community. (69,A55) (In this example the student has mistakenly inserted a colon before 'Shawco' presumably under the impression that what follows the colon is explanatory material, but there has been no mention of any organisations in the first part of the sentence. A full-stop after 'others' would be better, but then the words after 'Shawco' would have to be rewritten.);

(d) semi-colons that should have been replaced by commas, as in:

The barriers he faced were imposed by nature alone[ ], his personal incompetence or the prohibitive nature of the land. (69,A71) (In this example a comma after 'alone' would be adequate as there is no other internal punctuation.)

The other examples in the sub-categories (b), (c) and (d) are:

(b) **Semi-colons introducing explanatory material that would have been more effectively introduced by colons.**

The English language may be considered on three marginal levels: the standard, the colloquial and the literary. (70,B63).

(c) / ...
(c) **Colons incorrectly used to introduce explanatory material.**

Through the ages eyes have made the observations of countless happenings such as tragedies, festivals, ... (60,A30); A writer must use inadequate (sic) literary conventions, for example: punctuation marks, to convey different types of frivolous talk. (69,B71) (The colon is incorrect here because the words 'for example' have already been used. Had 'for example' and the comma been omitted, the colon would have been correct. (1)); Whether it be for a picnic or to play in the surf or to swim; everybody loves to go to the beach. (70,A74) (The colon indicates too strong a break here.).

(d) **Semi-colons that should have been replaced by commas.**

It is entirely relative, its basis being the established views of the group. (70,A28).

It has been said that, in "The Nun’s Priest's Tale", Chaucer shows us his shrewd understanding of human nature and at the same time his genial tolerance of human frailty, his keen sense of the ridiculous. (70,D9).

In both these examples a comma in the place of the semi-colon would be adequate.

7. **COMMAS INCORRECTLY INSERTED**

The general impression that the essays examined show a lack of knowledge of punctuation, and even a lack of feeling for the rhythm of English sentences, is reinforced by a good number of examples in which commas have been incorrectly used.

The number of examples found suggests that these commas were deliberately inserted.

This failure to maintain the flow of information in a sentence is shown in the following examples: (a)

This great being, is definitely (in my opinion) the dominant landmark, not only in size, but in character as well. (69,A23); and (b)

Who knows, this great courtier and poet, may have had a very similar experience himself(?) (70,D54).

(In both these examples the incorrect commas have been underlined. It will be seen that these commas interrupt the flow of each sentence and hinder, rather than aid, the reader.)

The other / ....

(1) See K. Smith and L. G. Steele, op.cit., p.85.
The other examples in this category are given below. All incorrect commas are underlined. In all these examples it should be noted that the flow of information has been hindered, rather than aided.

The hawk must kill in order to survive and therefore, his eyes must co-operate with his deadly talons so that they may obtain nourishment ... (69,A30);

John Braine, William Golding and Ernest Hemingway state their cases very clearly ... (69,B4);

The reason why deaf-mutes suffer a severe set-back in our civilisation, is that they cannot hear and thus do not have a vocabulary with which to express themselves. (69,B15);

On the whole modern writing is narrowing the gap between spoken and written English with increasing frankness and attempts to produce more realistic works portraying life as it really is. (69,B70);

It is obvious that the back drop of the monastery and its corrupt inmates formed an excellent opportunity for Chaucer to subtly poke fun at. (69,C2);

His characterisation of the cock and hen shows up the best of Chaucer's humour. (69,C41);

Mrs. Snodgrass was, however, not as pleased ... (69,D17);

'No - you really think so?' With a loud gaffau (sic) the worthy Wife of Bath slapped our host Mr. X on the shoulder, and shrieked with laughter. (69,D33);

In fact, writing books would be no use at all because they would be of value only to the few people who spoke the same way as the author. (69,D72);

... that they fail to see what happy magic the rising heat haze plays with buildings and trees, ... (70,A7);

It (an advertisement) must therefore be concise and logical. (70,B10);

A schoolgirl of the same age would have settled down to reading and study and therefore starts to familiarise herself with words she will use in her vocabulary (sic). (70,B43);

The word is the basis of the English Language, and therefore it can be taken as a general rule that the concise, plain word is the most desirable. (70,D2);

All during his lengthy refutation (which is no real refutation at all, because he is arguing on a completely different plane of thought) ... (70,D22).

8. QUOTATION / **...**
Quotation marks should be used (a) to enclose direct quotations, (b) to enclose titles of poems, stories, magazine articles and chapters of books; (c) to enclose technical terms that might confuse the reader if they were not identified as technical, and (c) to enclose expressions that the writer wishes to call attention to, as in "... "strategic withdrawal" sounds better than "retreat"." (1)

The examples of the omission of quotation marks found in the essays fall into three groups:

(a) unmarked titles, as in:

... and it is taken out of the story 'Miss Brill'. (69, B61);

(b) unmarked quotations, as in:

If there are limitations to freedom, then freedom does not exist, because freedom means 'liberty, free from constraint, no limits'. (69, A47);

(c) unmarked words that were quoted, as in:

Catchwords like 'fantabulous' are being used ... (70, D16).

The other examples in these categories are given below. They add further to the general impression of inefficiency in punctuation. All quotation marks that have been inserted have been put in brackets.

(a) Unmarked titles.

Mediaeval dream psychologists set great store by dreams, and Chaucer incorporates these beliefs into the 'Nun's Priest's Tale'. (69, C37).

(b) Unmarked quotations.

As I have previously mentioned, he practised what he preached, for he said that 'if gold rusts, what shall iron do?' (69, D67).

(c) Unmarked words that were quoted.

... for after reading a few American books and magazines it does not take the reader long to adjust to the differences, such as that 'cookies' are 'biscuits', and an 'elevator' is a 'lift'. (69, A75);

For instance the words 'decision' and 'suspicion' are enlargements of the verbs 'decide' and 'suspect'. (69, B19).

... but he uses phrases and expressions like 'quixotic', 'gleaned subliminally', 'climatological statistics' ... (69, B61);

... they always address each other in a courtly way, using 'ye' and 'your'. (70, D13);

A man's / ......

(1) Birk and Birk, op.cit., p.483.
A man's occupation, hobbies and sports will often be reflected by the words and phrases he uses e.g. ('to ante up'), ('dead certainty'), ('break ground'), ('peter out'). (70,B22).

For instance ('He was quite ready'). ('Quite') can mean 'absolutely' or 'nearly, almost'. (70,B38).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The essays examined showed that many of the students were bad at punctuation, especially at the beginning of each year, as a small reduction in the number of errors had occurred by the end of each year. In addition, there was a reduction in the number of serious errors. It is clear that many of the students did not know the functions of certain punctuation marks or how to use them effectively. Even though allowance has been made for carelessness, the general impression of the punctuation - or lack of it - in the essays examined was one of inefficiency, and even ignorance.

The use of punctuation has become much less formal in general, and the tendency to use short, simple sentences, as well as shorter compound and complex sentences, has meant that internal punctuation marks need not be used as much as they used to be. It is clear, for example, that many of the students knew very little about the use of colons or semi-colons. Commas were frequently used where a longer pause should have been indicated, whereas, in other positions, colons or semi-colons were used when the logic of the sentences did not demand so long a pause. The many short compound and complex sentences, as well as short simple sentences in the essays, may well have accounted for this infrequent and inefficient use of the colon and semi-colon.

The incompetence of many of the students was further revealed in their omission of the apostrophe to indicate possession, and in their failure to use hyphens to link compound nouns and adjectives. The virtual disappearance of these two punctuation marks from the essays could, however, be accounted for by the general state of confusion in the use of these two marks. The apostrophe to indicate possession seems to be disappearing from public notices and informal writing, and so the students' omissions may well be a reflection of a much wider movement. In addition, the use of the hyphen is extremely confused to-day, the general trend being to allow every writer to decide for himself. The absence of general guidelines has certainly shown itself in the essays examined, for, rather than risk mistakes, the students seem to have left out hyphens altogether.

The major categories of error made by the students are as follows: the omission of commas, especially between co-ordinate clauses, but also before and after words or phrases interrupting the
main argument of a sentence; omission of apostrophe 's'; omission of hyphens; and omission of colons or semi-colons. In addition to these major categories, errors were made in the following minor categories: omission of question marks and quotation marks, and in the incorrect insertion of commas.

From the mistakes listed above, it is clear that many of the students lacked an appreciation of the rhythms and flow of thought in sentences. They did not appreciate the value of a short internal pause as opposed to a longer pause, nor did they realise, fairly often, that they were interrupting the flow of sentences unnecessarily. It is clear, then, that if punctuation is to be improved the attention of pupils and students will have to be drawn, both to the importance, and to the details of effective punctuation.
CHAPTER 9
SENTENCE STRUCTURE

As the sentence is one of the most important means of conveying logical thought, of advancing an argument, and of providing information in a formal essay, considerable attention was paid to the structure of the sentences in the essays examined.

It was found that many of the students had a great deal of difficulty (especially at the beginning of each year examined) in arranging their sentences logically, clearly and effectively. Because of their inadequate knowledge of punctuation (see Chapter 8) their sentences were often badly constructed, with poor subordination of ideas, an inadequate flow of information, and interrupted argument.

If a sentence is to be clear it must be unambiguous, its parts must be logically related, and its important elements must be properly emphasised so that the reader can grasp its essence without being confused by unimportant material.

Clear sentences must, first of all, be grammatically accurate. Ungrammatical sentences are really unformed thought, and therefore do not adequately convey what the writer intends. Proper communication demands that grammatical relationships are clearly, logically and unambiguously shown.

The second prerequisite for clear sentences is that they must be accurately punctuated. Punctuation, if it is to be effective, must satisfy certain conventions when it is used to separate the elements of a sentence, indicating breaks in the sense, relationships of one part with another, or pauses.

The third prerequisite for clarity is adequate subordination; for a very important part of writing is discriminating between ideas that do not merit equal emphasis. A sentence in which the elements are correctly related, minor sections being subordinated to major sections, is the best indication of a student's mastery of the problems of writing.

'If a sentence is the expression of a complete thought, surely the best sentence shows that its author has weighed that thought, determined what about it is most important, and constructed his sentence to emphasise whatever he found to be most important.'(1) Through effective subordination a writer is not only able to point out to his reader what he wishes him to remember, but is also able, by varying the rhythm, movement and emphasis of a sentence, to keep constantly before his reader the central idea of his essay.

In order to achieve adequate subordination, a writer must exercise his judgement upon a mass of information, must sort out minor from major elements, and must arrange these elements, adequately joined by subordinating / ...

(1) J. W. Corder and L. H. Kendall, Jr. op.cit., p.52.
subordinating conjunctions, in a complex sentence. A skilful writer can, by subordinating carefully, make his sentences more effective and interesting, because he achieves the right emphasis, economy and clarity.

Poor sentences in general arise mainly through lack of unity. When a sentence is unified, everything in it has a logical relation to the purpose of the sentence as a whole, and nothing has been omitted that is necessary to that purpose. The three most serious and conspicuous errors that cause lack of unity in sentence construction are: (a) fragmentary sentences, in which incomplete statements, consisting of a phrase or subordinate clause, are carelessly punctuated as a complete sentence; (b) comma faults, in which two separate sentences are joined together by a comma, and (c) fused sentences, in which two sentences have been run together with no dividing punctuation at all.

The mistake in sentence structure in the essays considered have been divided into the following categories:
1. Clumsy construction.
2. Sentences containing incorrect conjunctions.
3. Words that have been punctuated as though they were a sentence.
4. Two or more sentences that should have been joined as one.
5. Sentences lacking unity.

From these sub-categories, it will be seen that most of the errors found are ones that have been described in the introductory remarks above. The most numerous errors found are: (a) long sentences that show a serious lack of punctuation, or sentences that should have been divided into two or more shorter sentences; (b) sentences spoilt by lack of subordination; and (c) groups of words that are not sentences, although punctuated as if they were sentences.

Each sub-category will now be discussed with examples.

1. Clumsy construction.

The large number of errors in this sub-category all involve the clumsy construction of sentences, and show both a lack of sensivity in sentence construction and a lack of knowledge about sentence structure. At first many students, for example, omitted main clauses from their so-called sentences, used co-ordinating conjunctions without discrimination, failed to subordinate adequately, ran together sentences that should have been separated, and generally did not plan their sentences correctly, especially at the beginning of each year considered.

(1) See J. M. McCrimmon, op. cit., p.150.
This sub-category has, therefore, been divided as follows:

(1) Large sentences showing a serious lack of punctuation, or sentences that should have been divided into two or more shorter sentences, as in:
   (a) It is up to the person concerned if he accepts life as it is and never questions anything he will have a narrow outlook on life. (69,A6) (This example should be divided into two sentences by means of a full-stop after 'concerned'.)
   
(b) There is a chance to take part in many social, cultural and perhaps slightly more dangerous, political activities. (69,A27) (The illogicality of this sentence has been caused by a serious lack of punctuation and an unhappy choice of words. Commas before and after 'perhaps' would have improved the sentence.)
   
(c) The pardoner, summoner and friar seem to spend most of their time getting money out of the people, this was probably due to the feudal relationship which laid England particularly open to the rapacity of papal tax collectors during the 14 century (sic). (70,C21) (This sentence should have been divided into two shorter sentences by means of a full-stop after 'people'.)
   
(d) In his description he has solemnly followed the rules of a teacher of rhetoric if the reader is aware of this fact the tale is given further life. (70,C58) (A colon or semi-colon after 'rhetoric' would have improved this sentence, but it would also have been possible to divide it into two sentences by means of a full-stop after 'rhetoric'.)

(2) Badly planned sentences, as in:
   (a) there is so much to learn: all the different races and nations that are represented here (at the University), their views, the many discussions, lectures and entertainments that are offered between lectures. (69,A24) (The item 'all the different races and nations' does not follow from 'There is so much to learn'.)
   
(b) I think Chaucer has succeeded in this by means of the manner in which he describes a character which may be with a particular idealization or characterized by a distortion of proportions or by a description of habits. (69,C52) (The various items in this sentence have been badly put together, resulting in confusion. The grammatical construction 'which may be with a particular idealisation' should be followed by a phrase or clause containing an abstract noun: instead, the next item is the past participle 'characterised', which does not follow grammatically from any preceding construction.)

(c) / ....
Free divers with aqualungs have not been able to get below three hundred feet, and they have only reached that depth at great risk as the great pressure and the oxygen breathed in has (sic) the effect of producing a kind of drunkenness which may induce the diver to give his mouth-piece to the fishes or some other unwise action. (70,A3) (The final phrase 'or some other unwise action' does not follow grammatically from what has already been written.);

badly planned sentences containing 'and' and 'but' as conjunctions, as in:

(a) A few of the uses of language have been (sic) enumerated so far but not only does it have many uses and serve to assist each individual in a number of ways but it can also be very rewarding to the individual in that a study of language is so very fascinating. (69,B14) (The first 'but' is unsuitable as a conjunction here: it should be replaced by a colon or a full-stop. The student has made a clumsy effort at using the correlative 'not only ... but also'.);

(b) B is an unemotional report on the death of a 12-year-old boy, but it was completely unnecessary to include the ages of all the other people involved in the accident but in written English it can be done by using much less words and letters than one could do when one is speaking. (69,B61) (There should have been a full-stop after 'accident', followed by: 'It can, however, be done ...'. The second 'but' should have been omitted.);

(c) And then Chanticleer tells his wife that he's been disturbed by a dream and she scornfully rejects this and practically prescribes a laxative and bemoans (sic) that she's married to a cowardly and niggardly husband who is so unmanly that he fears dreams. (70,C38) (This sentence has been badly planned, with too many co-ordinate clauses. It should have been divided into two sentences, the first one ending at 'dream').

sentences beginning with 'also', as in:

(a) If they do not use the slang that their friends are using, they are rejected, outcast. Also, a show of bravado must be displayed before teachers and parents that it might be recognised that they are no longer nonentities. (69,B10);

(b) This shows an inability to express oneself with clarity in description. Also I oppose the use of "mutual" and "common" as illustrated by Gowers. (70,B57);

(c) Thus when the fox tries to tempt him by flattery a second time, Chanticleer has learnt his lesson and he sits firmly in the upper boughs of the tree. Also his wisdom and quick thinking allow him to escape from the fox's grips. (70,C8).
It was difficult to decide whether the above examples, and the other examples to follow are acceptable in formal essays or not. They certainly represent the 'informal stringing on of afterthoughts'\(^{(1)}\) typical of colloquial, rather than formal written English, and a conservative view would find them unacceptable in a formal essay. It was because of this conservative point of view that these examples were chosen, 'also' being regarded as an adverb, rather than a conjunction \(^{(2)}\), and so unsuitable as the beginning of a sentence. It should be noted, however, that sentences beginning with 'also' are often seen in formal writing and that they may be regarded as acceptable by some writers (see Fowler's comments in Modern English Usage, p.19).

The other examples in these categories are given below. Comments have been added where they have been thought necessary.

**Type One. (Long sentences showing a serious lack of punctuation, or sentences that should have been divided into two or more shorter sentences.)**

We cannot hope to know much about a man's character by examining his footwear - true, his shoes may be down at heel indicating shabbiness - but this may be accounted for in a number of ways his wife may have neglected to have them mended because she was away or ill on the other hand he may be a bachelor or a widower and, having no female to take care of him, he may be indifferent to his appearance. \(69, A37\) (There should be either a colon or a full-stop between 'ways' and 'his'. In addition, there should be a full-stop after 'ill'.);

The two imposing Residences strike one in their solidarity and strength the buildings have an almost awesome appearance enhancing their appeal, though not so idyllic seen through the unappraising eyes of we (sic) the residents. \(69, A46\) (There should be a full-stop between 'strength' and 'the buildings'.);

I am of (the) opinion that as a result of the vast distance physically between South Africa and other English-speaking lands such as America, where incidentally a lower class of English is being spoken and the Americans blandly insist that they speak American and not English. \(69, A57\) (This sentence is badly planned as the clause introduced by 'that' does not appear.);

Democracy believes in the right of each individual person to have his own opinion, one must respect these opinions and one cannot disregard these opinions. \(69, A61\) (The comma between 'opinion' and 'one' is insufficient. Either a colon or a full-stop should replace the comma.);

The hurry / ...

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\(^{(1)}\) H. W. Fowler, \textit{op.cit.}, p.19.

The hurry of modern life has put both the florid and the polished styles out of fashion, except for special audiences, it is not to be deplored if this leads to a more general appreciation of the capacity of the simple and neat style. (69,B20) (The comma between 'audiences' and 'it' is insufficient. It should be replaced by a full-stop.);

I seem to make a habit of complicating the reader's task by separating the relative from its antecedent and the verb from its auxiliary and the reader has consequently to glance back at the main verb to get the gist of the sentence - I also use the words 'former' and 'latter' and the reader has constantly to reread the sentence in order to grasp my meaning. (69,B37) (This sentence is badly planned with three co-ordinate clauses as well as a dash.);

Her make-up is very carefully applied, lipstick, eyebrow pencil, shadow, rouge and mascara go very well in creating an attractive face, but her mode of language shows her as one of the shallow so called elite which infest all towns. (69,B41) (The comma after 'lipstick' should be replaced by a full-stop.);

Reliable writers safeguard the accuracy of their conclusions: they do not make snap judgments above important matters - they carefully search for evidence to support their conclusions they wish to reach - they also search for evidence contrary to their conclusions and consider it fully. (69,B52) (There are four main clauses in this sentence, three of them beginning with 'they'.);

English spoken in South Africa has very many words adopted from the Afrikaans, words are used that one will never write in an essay for example; and one doesn't notice how many Afrikaans words really are used when doesn't listen for it (sic). (69,B61) (The comma between 'Afrikaans' and 'words' should be replaced by a full-stop.);

It is a world of comedy, there is no doubt about that the animals have conversations and adventures which seems (sic) to make it even more ridiculous. (69,C16) (There should be either a full-stop or a colon after 'that'.);

Chanticleer is depicted as noble and his appearance is aristocratic as well as his bearing while Pertelote is more stable and simple-minded her wisdom is for the most part the wisdom of the home dispenser. (69,C40) (There should be a full-stop after 'simple-minded'.);

The miller has indeed become richer through stealing - 'thumb of gold' - and so at a level of double irony Chaucer ironically equates a surface appearance of honesty, 'thumb of gold' with money / ...
money, again 'thumb of gold', for not only was the miller rich enough to have a 'thumb of gold' acquired through dishonest means, and he was also 'honest' from the actual idiom i.e. by equating honesty with dishonesty Chaucer assumes that there are no honest millers. (69,059) (Not only should be followed by 'but', rather than 'and'. In addition, 'i.e.' seems to have been used as a conjunction here. The whole sentence has been badly planned.)

The early saints were also relied on and many superstitions and exaggerations probably surrounded these stories, this shows that people were probably very superstitious during the Middle Ages. (69,C76) (There should be a full-stop after 'stories'.)

She is magnificently decked out, a large and handsome, woman, she is quite an imposing figure. (69,D45) (There should be a full-stop after 'out'.)

There can be no doubt that education has progressed enormously over the last ninety years - the span of a generation - that this progress is accelerating and that our present system has a long way to go before being perfect, must be remembered, however. (70,B7) (This sentence is badly planned. The words 'must be remembered, however.' should have been omitted.)

Most people have an inward conviction that they are superior, this conviction can be easily played upon by advertisements. (70,B10) (The comma between 'superior' and 'this' is insufficient. It should be replaced either by the conjunction 'and' or by a full-stop.)

There is no point in haphazardly grouping words together like mat the sit cat the on - it is a senseless and an abstract formation. (70,B16) (The first dash should be omitted, and the second should be replaced either by 'for' or by a colon.)

Scientific and foreign words enter the common language through literature mainly, slang through colloquial usage, technical terms and dialect words enter the language in literature and speech. (70,B20) (The comma after 'usage' should be replaced either by a colon or by a full-stop.)

But what educated people regard as natural and clear, the lesser educated may find difficult to understand. An example of this is the phrase 'cross the Rubicon' any one who is not familiar with Roman history could not guess at its meaning. (70,B58) (There should be either a colon or a full-stop after 'Rubicon' if the words are not to be altered. Proper subordination of the element beginning 'any one who ...' would have improved the sentence.)
The colloquial is the popular turn of expression, for example "O.K.", it is not bound by any strict frame, for example "I shut my mouth awfully quickly" and is largely relative, for example the term "Blighty" was commonly used as a synonym for "Britain" twenty years ago but it is to-day obsolete. (70,B63)

(This sentence is very badly constructed. There should be a full-stop after 'O.K.', and a colon, instead of the comma, after 'relative'.)

In order that these articles sell well they are sensationalised, a sensational article is one that implies something shocking. (70,B75) (A full-stop should replace the comma after 'sensationalised'.)

Chaucer uses his keen wit to show up the fallacies of certain people namely those taken in by flattery his satire (sic) about married couples is not harsh and biting and it is done playfully and knowingly. (70,C17) (There should be a full-stop after 'flattery'.)

However, he does redeem (sic) himself by his quick-wittedness and we do not laugh scornfully at him for Chaucer does not hit out at human foibles, sneers or is sceptic (sic) about them but he uses rather the tone of an understanding grandfather. (70,D17)

The last part of the sentence is badly planned as the verbs 'sneers' and 'is' do not follow from 'does not'. The word 'sneers' should be replaced by 'or sneer', and 'or is sceptic' should be replaced by 'neither is he sceptical ...'.)

Chanticleer, the cock, is true to type. full of noise and conceit, 'his voice was merrier than the merry organ' and his voice is often described in terms of nightingales. (70,D21) (This sentence is badly planned because the quotation, and the second part of the sentence, do not support the word 'noise'. The quotation should appear between dashes, and the final co-ordinate clause should be rewritten to avoid repetition of the word 'voice'.).

Type Two. (Badly planned sentences.)

Everybody is allowed to voice his ideas, and how is this used! (69,A24) (The clause 'and how is this used' is not properly co-ordinated with the first clause. Neither 'this' nor 'used' in the second clause follows logically from any word in the first clause.)

Many writers tend to divulge (sic) in the gritty style - not clean and smooth. (69,B4) (The words 'not clean and smooth' should have been a clause and subordinated to the main clause.)

That is / ....
That is why I use words like 'present situation' or 'if the position arose', or that something has a certain type of 'character', without really making myself clear. (69,B32) (The part of the sentence beginning 'or that...' does not follow grammatically from what has already been written.);

It is easy to detect the lower uneducated classes by their raw English style, although admittedly more expressive. (69,B46) (The group of words 'although admittedly more expressive' does not follow from what has already been written, because it is not clear who or what is expressive.);

It is through Chaunticleer's conceit that the fox manages to flatter him into singing with his eyes closed, then grabbing him by the neck and taking him into the copse. (69,C21) (The words 'singing', 'grabbing' and 'taking' are not logically connected because Chaunticleer is 'singing', whereas the fox is 'grabbing' and 'taking'. As the sentence stands, it seems as though the fox has flattered Chaunticleer into 'grabbing' something.);

Joseph explained the dreams of Pharaoh's butler and baker as well as Pharaoh's own dream - these dreams came true. (69,C29) (This sentence has been badly planned as the final part of the sentence after the dash should have been subordinated to 'dreams' and 'dream'.);

The view from above brings one into a state of consciousness - conscious to observe the pitiful decline of civilisation. (70,A34) (The part of the sentence after the dash does not follow grammatically from the first part. This part should have been co-ordinated with the first part by means of the conjunction 'for', followed by '... one becomes conscious of ...');

Along comes the bus and stops, thinking you are waiting for the bus. (70,A36) (It seems as though the bus was thinking. The second part of the sentence could be improved if it read: '... the driver thinking that you are waiting for it.');

America because of its economical and political power and prestige make her a creditor nation in linguistic matters. (70,B34) (The sentence has been badly planned because the clause 'make her a creditor nation' follows from the phrase 'because ... prestige', instead of from 'America'. The clause 'make her' should be replaced by 'is'.);

Man's cultural heritages (sic), knowledge of his environment and himself, which if one find them interesting, are generally regarded as valuable. (70,B73) (There is no main clause in this sentence.);
These suggested movements provide a source (sic) for the imagination of his reader or hearer which itself supplies the remainder of the desired action and helping to capture the communal feeling of the age. (70,C19) (The co-ordinate clause does not follow grammatically from what comes before it. The word 'helping' should be changed to 'helps'.);

It is felt by some people that as Chaucer came from a good home and from the time he was a young boy he was always protected from the ugliness of common life. (70,C49) (This sentence is confused because the clauses 'as Chaucer... home' and 'and from ... life' are co-ordinate, although it seems as if the student did not intend them to be. In addition, there is no clause to follow 'that'.);

Type Three. (Badly planned sentences containing 'and' and 'but' as conjunctions.)

On the horizon the victor-ship unfurled its sails in satisfaction and the Jolly Roger flapped in the evening breeze while below the pirates growled in drunken discord and a lonely bent figure strummed a guitar absentmindedly. (69,A52) (One 'and' should be eliminated by a change from 'flapped' to 'flapping'. The sentence would then read: 'On the horizon ... satisfaction, the Jolly Roger flapping ... breeze, while below ...'.); In South Africa we have the Paul Sauer Bridge spanning the Storms River and is constructed of reinforced concrete, carrying a road, and is 405 feet above the gorge. (69,A55) (This sentence is clumsy because the co-ordinate clauses should have been subordinated to the clause beginning the sentence.);
The same applies to the cinema, another medium of good quality entertainment and education and plain rubbish. (69,A60) (The first 'and' should be replaced by a comma.);
The barbaric people therefore must be that part (sic) of (a) community which seemingly have not had a good education and talk in simple language and those who are clear-thinking and prefer not to use periphrasis. (69,B3) (The three 'ands' are clumsy here, and the sentence should be re-written as follows: 'The barbaric people, therefore, must be those who are poorly educated and who use simple language, together with those who think clearly and write concisely.');
If one has been emotionally aroused, for example by fear, one becomes "tongue-tied" and words fail to formulate (sic) and thus so do thoughts. (69,B21) (The first 'and' should be replaced by a comma.);
Words used over and above this Standard English are termed "slang" and are usually used by the younger generation of the era and help to make up an entirely new language. (69,B74) (The second 'and' should be removed, and 'help' should be changed to 'helping.');

Without an adequate means of communication - and many people are inclined to underestimate the definition of 'adequate' - misunderstandings between people would prevail causing a great deal of unhappiness or bitterness, and this happens everyday (sic) somewhere. (69,B78) (This sentence would be improved if the second 'and' were eliminated and the words 'this happens everyday somewhere' changed into a separate sentence.);

However in the 'Nun's Priest's Tale' he does not pursue the problem but shrugs it off, but he was particularly interested in dreams and predestination. (69,C6) (The second 'but' should be removed and the words 'he was ... predestination' changed into a separate sentence.);

The last type is Phantasma and these dreams occur when one is on the verge of sleep and vague forms of horrifying size and appearance seem to rush upon one. (69,B6) (The first five words of this sentence should be a separate sentence, the next sentence starting with 'these'.);

The necessity for brevity forces Chaucer to be careful in his choice of words and none of which are superfluous. (69,C14) (The conjunction 'and' should be eliminated here.);

Chaucer's Monk lacks discipline and religion becomes tepid and it was always a good excuse for living outside the cloister and Chaucer's monk is typically the head of one of these cells. (69,C28) (This sentence is badly planned, with a change of tense to confuse matters even further. There are four main clauses, none of which seems to be related to the others.);

There is satire in one of Chaucer's interludes just before Chanticleers (sic) pride causes him to fall, and just after his argument with his wife over (a) dream which he considers is a prophetic vision and she considers it just a matter of overeating and should be overlooked - "women's advice is generally fatal - women's advice first brought us to grief and caused Adam to leave Paradise where he was too happy and comfortable". (69,C78) (The confusion in this sentence has arisen because the student has co-ordinated all the elements of this sentence, instead of attempting to subordinate some of them.).

Many / ...
Many hours had been spent deciding whom to invite and invitations were finally sent out and the day arrived. (69,B11) (This sentence should be divided into two with the full-stop after 'invite'. The first 'and' should then be eliminated.); And when he felt no more movement he unlocked his seat belt, lit a cigarette and reached for his traveling (sic) bag and made his way down the aisle and smiled back at the stewardess and walked down the steps and then looked up and for a moment he was utterly lost. (70,A39) (The student has co-ordinated too many elements in this sentence.);

After I had found the highest and most convenient spot from which to look down, and look down I did, at my fellow beings. (70,A49) (Lack of subordination has caused the confusion in this sentence. The clause 'and look down I did' should be rewritten as a main clause without the 'and'. As this clause stands in the sentence it seems to be co-ordinated with another main clause.);

Suddenly the mood changes and the peace and tranquillity of the farmyard has been broken and we are thrust into the pandemonium of the chase. (70,C16) (The clause 'Suddenly the mood changes' should be a separate sentence, the first 'and' being eliminated.).

Type Four. (Sentences beginning with 'also')

Artificial flowers and imitation fireplaces are on my ghastly-good-taste-list (sic) where homes are concerned. Also the antique furniture and Persian rug which cannot be eat(en) from, sat in or walked on. (70,A28) (This 'sentence' beginning with 'Also', should be attached to the previous sentence by means of 'as well as'. The colloquial flavour of this addition, as well as of the other examples in this section, should be noted.);

he is extremely stubborn and will not alter his opinion of anything, even after long discussions during which his arguments are logically defeated. Also he has a tendency, like many of us, to regard his opinions as facts ... (70,A23) (The 'sentence' beginning 'Also' could be effectively sub-ordinated, by means of 'as' to the two co-ordinate main clauses in the previous sentence.);

Authors and poets who wanted their works to sell, wrote to England, since many of the people who were attacked (sic) by Protestantism were of humble origin and lacked classical education. Also, social and occupational groups who had little or no Latin had arisen in England. (70,B41) ('Also' could be replaced by 'In addition').;

These and other similar mistakes are easily recognisable to the careful / ..
careful reader. Also the choice of words, the avoidance of unnecessary padding, are all indications of the quality of a piece of writing. (70,B70) ('Also' should replace 'all', and the sentence should read: 'The choice of words and the avoidance of unnecessary padding are also indications ...').

He should not indulge in wars which have these results. Also there should not still be backward countries. (70,B74) (The 'sentence' beginning with 'also' should be co-ordinated with the previous main clause: 'He should not indulge in wars ...').

Until (the) late nineteenth century English people born in this country spoke very similarly to their parents and there was little development of geographical or social dialects. Also there had been no further large-scale immigration to influence their speech. (70,B78) (The 'sentence' beginning 'Also' should be subordinated to the co-ordinate main clauses in the previous sentence.)

The descriptions and references to authority combine to give us character delineation and hence do not seem to be irrelevant to plot action. Also much of the Nun's Priest's Tale is parody so that descriptions and authorities are fittingly included. (70,C32) ('Also' should be replaced by 'in addition').

Chaucers (sic) relating of the poor widows (sic) table arrangement is effective and so is the fact that 'she never fell ill through overeating'. Also Chaucers (sic) elaboration on the subject of her not drinking any wine is effective. (The essence of the sentence beginning 'Also ...' should be included in the previous sentence.) (69,C72).

2. INCORRECT CONJUNCTIONS

Although there were relatively few examples of incorrectly used conjunctions in the essays examined, errors in the use of the co-ordinating conjunctions 'and' and 'but' suggest that some students were not always sure of their functions. The following examples will make the students' lack of knowledge clear:

(a) Honesty is brought out by open frankness and in revealing yourself to others you can understand yourself the better, language is therefore a means of self-expression. (69,B40) (The co-ordinating conjunction 'for' should replace 'and' here. The conjunction 'for' would be preferable here as it has the force of 'because', whereas 'and' is neutral);

(b) In radio commercials and interviews it (his character) sounds dull and monotonous and his character and personality could not be described as such. (69,B73) (The conjunction 'but' should replace 'and', as 'but' has an adversative force which 'and' does not have.).
The other examples in which 'for' should replace 'and' are given below. These examples will be followed (a) by those in which 'but' should replace 'and', and (b) by those in which 'for' should replace 'but'. It should be noted that, in all these examples, there is an incorrect relationship between two co-ordinate clauses.

1. **Examples in which 'for' should replace 'and':**

   The total abandon of the sea finds its counterpoint in my unfulfilled hopes and wild dreams, and distant lands and travel (usually in a sailing ship) are immensely attractive. (70, A44) ('For' or 'when' should replace 'and').

   A language cannot be forced to remain static, and by its very nature it is subject to changes. (70, B1) ('For' should replace 'and').

   I myself like the term "weather conditions" and it does imply a larger meaning than "weather" alone. (70, B57) ('For' should replace 'and').

   Because of this, one warms to them, and Chaucer has very realistically portrayed a husband and wife combination in the cock and hen. (70, C7) ('For' should replace 'and').

   Pertelote advises her mate on the use of laxatives and she is practical and typical female, the supervisor on her own ground. (70, D67) ('For' should replace 'and').

2. **Examples in which 'but' should replace 'and':**

   The population laughed at these new expressions and eventually absorbed them. (70, B4) (The conjunction 'but' should replace 'and').

   At the very outset of the tale, Chaucer contrasts the living conditions of the widow with that (sic) of the cock, and the idea of a cock preening in his kingdom, while the widow, his owner, has barely enough to exist on, is absurd. (69, C33) (The conjunction 'but' should replace 'and').

   In the Prologue Chaucer introduces us to a large, muscular, repulsive man and although he tells a vulgar tale we are not shocked. (69, C45) (The conjunction 'but' should replace 'and').

   This mock-heroic tale is set against a sombre background and contains a great deal of merriment. (70, C48) (The words 'but also' should replace 'and').

3. **Examples in which 'for' should replace 'but':**

   It is likely however that people would not say as much if they first considered what they were going to say, but in this way nothing would be spontaneous but instead it would be calculated. (69, B40) (The conjunction 'for' should replace the second 'but').

   The humour / ....
The humour in the Nun's Priest's Tale is not by any means found in the comic scenes alone but if one reads the tale with the utmost consideration, one can find a more subtle humour emerging from the poetry as well as the rhyme scheme of this delightful tale.

(69,C57) (The conjunction 'for' should replace 'but'.)

3. WORDS THAT HAVE BEEN PUNCTUATED AS THOUGH THEY WERE A SENTENCE

The verbless sentence, since it is used freely by many good writers, must be regarded as acceptable modern usage, even though some modern grammarians might regard such sentences as contradictions in terms. (1)

Used with discretion, the verbless sentence may effectively suggest the rapid movement of thoughts, the speed and patterns of mental activity. In addition, the verbless sentence may be used to introduce an air of informality into a more formal passage and to describe a scene in an impressionistic way.

Effectively used, the verbless sentence, even though it may be regarded as grammatically incomplete, is able to convey clearly and appropriately a writer's meaning. Such sentences are stylistically complete and independent without verbs, but writers should be careful to plan these sentences, for they could easily occur because of a failure to recognise all the essential elements of a sentence. Good judgment, rather than rigid rules, is what the writer has to rely on.

The examples of verbless sentences given below are regarded as inappropriate because the writers did not seem to realise that their sentences were, indeed, verbless. These sentences, then, seem to have arisen through carelessness and lack of knowledge of sentence construction, rather than through careful planning.

The examples in this sub-section fall into two groups: (a) those sentences without any finite verbs, and (b) those sentences without a main clause, but with a subordinate clause or clauses. It was felt that it was important to give examples of both types of sentence because they are very similar and indicate the same weaknesses.

In all the examples below the sentences preceding the verbless sentences have been provided in order to show the contexts of the unacceptable sentences.

Type One (Sentences without any finite verbs.)

8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
- 8 a.m. and 12 noon Saturdays. The sounds of vehicles large and small, the hum-drum (sic) of the people speedily making their way to and from work and the general din which prevails over the greatly occupied area make way for frustration and irritation.

(69,A28) (The part underlined is the abrupt beginning of an essay.);

There / ...

(1) H. W. Fowler, op. cit., p.674.
There also exists the freedom of the individual. Freedom of choice, freedom to make small decisions (sic). However, the freedom of choice is greatly affected by the general opinion of the society in which we are living. (69,A46) (The verbless sentence should have been co-ordinated with the previous sentence.);

A bulwark, a gateway, thrower of long dark shadows, protector and landmark, all these things describe Table Mountain. The upper slopes a haven of peace, and a paradise for lovers of nature. The cableway making money out of people's curiosity, love of heights and panoramic views. A game reserve, preserving the (sic) wild life from becoming extinct. A playground for the (sic) mountain climbers and members of the spelaeological societies, whilst the lower slopes enfold the long established Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens. (69,A47) (One verbless sentence, but not three, would have been effective here.);

They are not places of warmth and comfort, but rather, places of formal prayer. Places to be entered on (sic) Christmas, on (sic) Easter and maybe on Sundays. (69,A63) (A colon after 'prayer' would have been more effective here.);

Articles with basically the same intention are often written in entirely different emotions. In newspapers for example. (69,B18) (The sentence 'In newspapers for example' is meaningless on its own. It would have been more effective had it been incorporated in the previous sentence.);

On the other hand, according to R.T. Davies, there is a similarity in method and detail between Chaucer and some earlier writers, which suggests that some of Chaucer's characters may be an image filtered through established literary modes. For example, his description of the Reeve and Franklin as 'choleric' and 'sanguine'. (69,C30) (This sentence should have been incorporated in the previous sentence.);

His glorified (sic) crowing particularly emphasizes his vanity and is to be his eventual fall. Hence an important theme of the tale - 'pride' - "pride before the fall". (69,C39) (These two sentences should have been amalgamated, the second sentence coming first.);

Pertelote was gracious and pretty. Very feminine and a typical woman. (69,D16) (The second sentence should have been amalgamated with the first by means of a comma after 'pretty' and the removal of the first 'and'.);

Large velvet /...
Large velvet hats, an abundance of gold jewellery and silk stockings were worn. All rich, gay material. (70,A17) (The verbless sentence does not follow logically from what has gone before, as 'gay material' cannot apply to 'gold jewellery'. It should have been incorporated into the first sentence.);
People talk of the 'shadow of life' indicating a sad, tragic, event. Meaning the dark sad aspect of living, where the hurtful events occur. (70,A33) (The two sentences should have been joined by the clause 'by which they mean' after 'event'.);
The first example that springs to mind is that of euphemism. This reflecting the "expression assumed to conceal feelings (sic)." (70,A43) (The verbless sentence should have been subordinated to the first sentence.);
The black fingers of skeletal trees point accusingly at the blue sky - blue, such a heavenly sapphire blue, sweet and innocent, all-unknowning. And the sun, symbol of warmth, light, drawing the nourishment from the land, drawing its life-blood, and leaving it barren, dry, desolate. (70,A61) (The first 'drawing', as well as 'leaving' should have been finite verbs);
Without these rules, everything concerning the (sic) grammar would be vague rather chaotic, rather like the spelling during the Age of Enlightenment in England. Rules like using "maybe" with a subject "It may be so" and not just "maybe so", and not using the word "following" as a preposition. (70,B16) (The two sentences should have been amalgamated, the verbless sentence being inserted after 'these' in the first sentence.);
The misuse of words which are clearly comprehensible when speaking, but as closer examination is (sic) often easier when reading, this becomes an immediate offence. For example the word 'realistic'. (70,B49) (The verbless sentence should have been incorporated into the first sentence.);
Awareness of his many and varied attractions caused many other characteristics to glitter in Chanticleer. Perhaps, the most important being that of arrogance and supreme pride. (70,C31) (There should have been a comma after 'Chanticleer', followed by the verbless sentence.);
The English used by advertisers (sic) in advertisements is the English of the masses. They use colloquial expressions designed to evoke the interest of the public and do not strive after good standard English. Their main aim being to communicate quickly with the public. (70,D33) (The verbless sentence should have been joined to the previous sentence.)

Type Two / ....
Type Two. (Sentences without a main clause, but with a subordinate clause or clauses.)

The political connotation which English holds for some people is yet another reason for its decline. Since the Boer War anything and everything English has been classified as taboo by some elements of the population which still exists today. In country districts where the English-speaking population is fairly sparse and schools have no option but to employ Afrikaans to teach English. (69,A14) (This sentence is incomplete without a main clause.);

Different levels of style are implemented according to the aims of the speaker or writer. If someone speaking to the masses in an effort to gain their support would use the emotional, sentimental passionate style. (69,B46) (This is one paragraph in an essay.) (There is only a conditional clause in the underlined sentence.);

Each point about the Parson is carefully laid out one after the other for probably two good reasons at least. The first being that Chaucer wanted the reader to understand clearly and grasp every point he (Chaucer) made about the 'Poure Person'. (69,C51) (There should be a comma after 'least', followed by the verbless sentence.);

In fables, animals are used as embodiments or caricatures of human virtues, vices and follies - the simplicity, greed (sic), sloth and other typical qualities of mankind. They are generally brief cautionary anecdotes that use the obvious resemblances between men and animals to point a moral or push a proverb home entertainingly. Chaucer's sunny zest and his extraordinary comic insight into human relationships, particularly the relationship between husband and wife, which, in the Nun's Priest's Tale, we are shown in a rooster and a pullet. (69,C67) (There is only an adjectival clause in the sentence underlined.);

Myriads of shoppers and shop assistants are emerging from the tall departmental stores. The shoppers carrying towers of parcels in O.K. Bazaars or Garlick's wrapping, and clutching on to their handbags having been warned by the notice in the station of the pickpockets who are everywhere, (usually where one least expects them to be!) (70,A16) (These two sentences should be joined as one.);

The value of student protest is to awaken within the society a sense of discrimication (sic) between good and evil, right and wrong. The presentation of true fact, not that which is so often warped by newspapers and politicians. (70,B31) (This sentence should form part of the previous sentence.)

Chaucer / ...
Chaucer shows up Chaunticleer as the cock-sure pseudo intellectual, male, always in the right. Who dismisses his wife's arguments as woman's stuff not to be taken seriously. (70,Cl7) (This sentence is only a clause, and should be attached to the previous sentence.);

He is a man who should have been a "gelding or a mare". We often find the effeminate man who should rather have been a woman. One who wears outrageous clothes and flutters his eyelids and hands. (70,D52) (This sentence should form part of the previous sentence.).

4. TWO OR MORE SENTENCES THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN JOINED AS ONE OR RE-ARRANGED

The few examples of pairs or groups of sentences that should either have been amalgamated or re-arranged again draw attention to the inability of some of the students to plan their sentences with the proper subordination of relatively unimportant parts.

The examples below fall into two groups: (a) two sentences that should have been joined as one, as in:

The five main types are. Under prophetic dreams the first is known as Somnium and is a dream which is in parable form ...

(69,C77) (The first sentence is incomplete, as one would expect the five main types to be listed. As it is, only one type is listed in the following sentence.);

and (b) groups of short sentences that should have been re-arranged, as in:

In spite of all this smartness her lips are still too broad. She has a red face but can hide it under some cosmetics. She is wearing a false tooth so that she will not be gap-toothed. She is deaf because one of her husbands had in his fury hit her. She tells the other guests how she had become deaf. (69,D25)

(Note this series of short sentences, some of which could be turned into co-ordinate or subordinate clauses. The two sentences underlined, could, for example, have been amalgamated. In addition, the second and third sentences could have been written as one sentence with co-ordinated elements.)

The other examples in these two categories are given below.

Type One. (Two sentences that should have been joined as one.)

Most people say a cultured person is one who knows something about the arts and sciences. That brings us to poetry - a very large contribution. (69,B16) (These two sentences should be rewritten as one sentence as follows: "Most people say a cultured person is one who knows something about the sciences and the arts, poetry in particular, as this plays a very important / ....")
important part in the reading and experience of a cultured person.';

I raced to the kettle which was almost melted, switched it off. Grabbed a jacket and motored into town at a speed not advisable to any sane person. (70, A49) (There should be a comma after 'off' and the second sentence should follow as part of the first);

Chaucer does not describe country scenes or blazing sunsets. The reason being that his moral intention only permits the setting of a tone or the animation of a personality; he cannot use the story to effect an aesthetic tour-de-force. (70, C63) (The second sentence should be made part of the first sentence, following immediately after the word 'sunsets'.)

Type Two (Groups of short sentences that should have been rearranged.)

The naive approach to sentence structure should be noted in all these examples.

Chanticleer (sic) is famous for his crowing because he is always on time. His vanity is paramount when he is tempted by the fox. The fox after having startled him succeed (sic) in flattering him into forgetting his fear. (69, 240) (The second and third sentences should have been amalgamated, the third sentence being changed to a subordinate clause);

However Chanticleer was not all that brilliant either. He believed in dreams and backed his argument up cleverly. But that still did not stop him from being caught by the fox. And he was not far behind her (Pertelote) in vanity either. But he did possess a certain amount of brains. This he showed when 'outfoxing the fox'. (69, D51) (The second and third sentences should have been joined as a compound sentence, and the fourth, fifth and sixth sentences should have been combined as a compound-complex sentence);

Sometimes, over the weekends, hops are held in Jameson Hall. During the intervals people sit on "Jammie" steps to admire the beautiful view. From the top of Jammie steps, the view stretches for miles. This is especially beautiful at night, when all the lights of the city can be seen. (70, A41) (The second and third sentences should be combined as one sentence);

Spoken English consists of, inter alia, colloquialisms and slang. Writing has moved nearer to casual speech. Few writers today aim at dignity or elegance. (70, B48) (These three sentences should be joined as one sentence, the first sentence being the main clause);

Consequently /...
Consequently, being isolated from England, their language was largely influenced by foreign languages. Not only is there variation in pronunciation, but also in grammar and syntax. An example would be the comparison of American English and British English. (70,B35) (The second and third sentences should be joined.)

5. SENTENCES LACKING UNITY

A sentence may be said to have unity 'when it has a dominant idea to which all details within the unit are clearly relevant'. (1) The fault of disunity arises when the writer includes material that is irrelevant, or that appears to be irrelevant because of lack of subordination or conjunctions. In addition, disunity can arise if apparently unrelated ideas, or too many ideas, are included in one sentence.

All the examples of disunity given below have arisen because of bad planning. It will be seen that students have included in one sentence, material that is unrelated, and so should be included in two separate sentences. Each example is now discussed separately.

Most people do not need tonics at all, but as a result of reading adverts (sic) many have now many a tonic an essential part of their lives - this, I think, is quite awful and very unnecessary many of the adverts around do appeal to the sense of beauty. (69,A15) (The part of this sentence underlined is irrelevant to the preceding part, and so should be the kernel of a separate sentence.);

English has so many valuable assets in that most technical books and reference (sic) works are written in English and Afrikaans is as yet not so far advanced in this field. (69,A40) (The part of the sentence underlined should be a separate sentence which develops the new theme suggested.);

English has also vast intrinsic merits. The vocabulary of English is rich and subtle and the language belongs to the Tutonic (sic) group of languages. (69,A76) (The richness and subtlety of the English language do not seem to have any connection with the fact that English belongs to the Teutonic group of languages.);

The abstract word description is what most poets use in their works and nature is another subject they are continually writing about. (69,B16) (The part of the sentence underlined seems to have nothing to do with what has gone before, and should be used to start another theme in a separate sentence.);

Up until / ......

(1) Birk and Birk, op.cit., p.465. See also the introduction to this chapter.
Up until 1500 there were four main dialects of English after 1500 and it can be seen that Middle English triumphed. (69,B22) (The fact that Middle English triumphed seems to have little to do with an account of the four main dialects of English up to 1500.);

However, Daun Piers is a unique human being with his large, prominent eyes and a glistening ruddy countenance, he is bald and stout, and his pomosity and implied resentment against the world are presented subtly. (69,C52) (This sentence starts off with a physical description of 'Daun Piers' and suddenly moves on to a statement about his pomosity and implied resentment. These two sections should have been included in separate sentences);

When they are young they are supple they do not seem to have any ambitions but simply to be. (70,A75) (The fact that 'they' do not seem to have any ambitions has nothing to do with the fact that 'they' are supple);

The solemnity of love, science, marriage, tragedy and eloquence are amusing in a sense, and the question of human responsibility and will is also portrayed. (70,C76) (The phrase 'human responsibility and will' seems to have little to do with the 'solemnity' of 'love, science, marriage, tragedy and eloquence').

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The modern preference for simple and direct sentences, rather than the longer, more elaborate sentences of earlier writers was reflected in the essays examined, for the students, in general, preferred simple or short complex or compound sentences of loose construction. Although loose constructions are easier to produce than the more formal periodic constructions, they require just as much care if they are not to become rambling and formless.

There was evidence in the essays examined that many students tended to be influenced by the rhythms and groupings typical of spoken, rather than written English. As a result, a fair number of sentences were badly planned, especially at the beginning of each year, lacking effective co-ordination and subordination. In addition, some sentences were left incomplete, whereas others were run together as though they were one sentence. These errors suggest that some students lacked an initial sensitivity to the sentence rhythms of written English, and, in addition, did not know enough about the types of sentence to be found in formal written English.

The major errors in sentence structure found in the essays were: (a) a serious lack of punctuation that made some sentences ineffective and difficult to read; (b) badly planned sentences, especially /
especially those in which the relative importance of their elements had not been shown because of lack of subordination; and (c) sentences that lacked unity of content. Other errors, which were not as numerous, were incorrect co-ordinating conjunctions, verbless sentences, and sentences without main clauses.

If the ability of some students to write effective sentences is to be improved, then more time than is at present allocated will have to be devoted to teaching them about the different demands made by colloquial and formal written language, as well as the elements of sentence structure and the importance of planning and unity.
Although there were relatively few errors in grammar in the essays examined, these errors represented a wide range of significant mistakes. A conservative approach has been adopted throughout the essays in the marking of grammatical errors, but an attempt has been made at the same time, to allow for recent changes in attitudes towards certain grammatical rules.

All the errors presented in this chapter have been described in terms of traditional grammar, on the grounds that current research in linguistics has not, as yet, produced a widely acceptable group of terms by which grammar can be described.

This chapter has been sub-divided into the following categories:

1. Incorrect sequence of tenses.
2. Errors in number.
3. Pronouns with obscure antecedents.
4. Errors in case.
5. Incorrect correlatives.
6. Non-defining clauses without a comma or commas.
7. Defining clauses introduced by 'which'.
8. The indefinite 'one' incorrectly used.
10. Incorrect sequence of verbs.
11. Incorrect word order.
12. Split infinitives.
13. 'It's' used as a possessive form.
15. Miscellaneous errors.

Although there are so many sub-categories in this chapter, most of the errors occurred in the sub-categories: 'Number', 'Pronouns with obscure antecedents', 'Unrelated and misrelated participles', 'Incorrect sequence of tenses' and 'Incorrect word order'.

1. **Incorrect Sequence of Tenses**

In the words of C.T. Onions the sequence of tenses is 'the principle in accordance with which the Tense in a subordinate clause "follows" or is adjusted to that of the principal clause; thus, in general, when the governing clause has a Present, Perfect, or Future, the subordinate clause has a Present (Primary Sequence); when the governing clause has a Past or Pluperfect, the subordinate clause has a Past (Secondary Sequence).'.

This usage, though old, remains, for the most part, firm, but it is not observed if there is need (a) to represent something as habitual, customary, characteristic, or as universally true, as in:

---

(1) 'He asked the guard what time the train usually starts.'

(2) 'He didn't seem to know that nettles sting.'; (b) to emphasise the relation of the act or state in question to the present or the future, as in: 'He brought vividly to their minds that honesty has always been the best policy.; (c) to represent a state or activity as still continuing, as in 'He told me this morning that the men are still at work on the bridge.'; and (d) to indicate when the reference is to a point of time still vividly felt as future at the time of speaking, as in: 'He told me this morning that he is going, or will go, with us to-morrow.'

The most numerous errors in sequence of tenses found in the essays examined show a confusion, either between present and past tenses, as in:

Pertelote tells him not to be afraid but to fly down from the beams. At first he would not but after getting the better of her he forgets his dream and flies down. (70,D18),

in which the sentences start with a present tense, change to a past tense and then back to a present tense; or between past and present tenses, as in:

Pertelote was gracious and pretty ... She enjoys her role of being ... and plays ... She had everything at ... she had some growing in the garden ... but she has another side to her ...

(69,C16)

in which the sentences start with a past tense, change to the present tense, then to the past and back to the present tense.

It should be noted that, in the examples above, the sequence of tense is broken, not in subordinate clauses, but in adjacent simple and compound sentences. The explanation of the convention of sequence of tenses does, therefore, apply to them, but the confusion of tenses was so noticeable and created such a poor impression that it was decided to include these, and other examples, in this sub-category.

The other examples in this sub-category that follow indicate both the type of confusion shown above, and a change in tense between main and subordinate clauses, which can be criticised in terms of the statement or sequence of tenses at the beginning of this sub-section.

In addition to the errors described above, there were five miscellaneous examples of confused tenses that will be described individually.

A. Confusion between present and past tense.

In a house down the road, a little girl is practising her singing .... The sound of her clear yet somewhat tremulous voice carried across the street and followed me as I moved on. (69,A36) (Note the change in the tense of the verbs from present to past.)

The discussion/ ...
The discussion on dreams between Chanticleer and Pertelote bring (sic) out ... Pertelote places a physiological meaning to dreams and advises ... This was in order to cure his indigestion. (69,C21) (Note the change in tense from present to past for no apparent reason.);
Chanticleer listens to her scolding, thanks her rather haughtily for her advice but contradicted her by saying that there were many others beside Cato who believed in the value of dreams. (69,C41) (Note the change in tense from present to past for no apparent reason.);
He explains to her the hideous dream he has just had. He described to her how in his dream ... (69,C54) (Note the change in tense. The word 'described' should be 'describes'.);
It is now her turn to get ready, for she brought her clothes with her in a suitcase. (69,D34) (The word 'brought' should be 'has brought'.);
He even quotes from Latin, and then translates, (incorrectly) for Pertelote, implying that he had forgotten she is not as intelligent as he is ... (69,D38) (The word 'had' should be 'has').;
The Pardoner is a man who does his job well. He is religious ... He was an able preacher ... (70,C37) (The word 'was' should be 'is').;
However, in spite of his arguening (sic) he takes his wife's advice ... he seems to have forgotten his dream. It was fortunate for the cock that he was clever enough ... (70,C71) (The word 'was' should be 'is' in both instances.);
After he has told Pertelote about the dreams, he looked into her eyes and all is right for the moment. (70,D78) (The word 'looked' should be 'looks').

B. Confusion between past and present tenses.

He was not a member of one community from which he is never to leave, and in which he is to live a communal life. (69,C28) (The word 'is' should be changed to 'was' in both clauses.);
She had a rather affected manner or so I thought. She always speaks in an over bright manner ... (70,A26) (The past tense of the first verb suggests that 'speaks' should be 'spoke').;
Chanticleer was also knowledgeable --- in that he did not act ---. He allowed Pertelote --- to tempt him ---. He is extremely cowardly underneath all the display. (70,C46) (The word 'is' should be 'was').

C. / ....
C. Miscellaneous examples.

I have made the same mistake with 'infer' and 'refute'. Until I read the 'Complete Plain Words' I have always been under the impression ... (69,829) ('I have always' should be 'I had always'.) (The past tense 'I read' demands that the perfect tense 'have ... been' should be changed to the past perfect tense 'had ... been' to indicate knowledge further in the past.);

She will only lose (sic) her temper if anyone criticized her. (69,820) (The future and past tenses are not compatible here. The word 'criticized' should be 'criticizes'.);

A monk is one who should have given up all the material pleasures and possessions in life and devote his entire self to ... (69,619) (The past participle form 'given' calls for 'devoted', rather than 'devote', here.);

What he would do, is, (sic) to give extra lessons. Then he will be the most patient and loving tutor ... The money which he would thus receive ... will be spent on books again. (69,824) (If 'he would do' is accepted, then 'he will be' should be changed to 'he would be'.);

In viewing his surroundings man has always turned to the sky and considered the magnificent bodies he saw there. (70,65) (The perfect tense 'has turned' demands 'has seen', rather than 'saw').

2. NUMBER

There were quite a few errors in number in the essays examined, by far the larger proportion of them offending against the basic rule that 'the finite Verb agrees with the Subject in Number and Person.' (1)

The remaining errors were those in which pronouns did not agree either with the nouns to which they referred or with other pronouns with which they were associated.

This sub-category has been divided into ten sub-categories for convenience:

(a) Incorrect number of verb, either with a pronoun or a noun as subject.
(b) Incorrect number of verb with nouns joined by 'and' as subject.
(c) Incorrect number of verb caused by attraction of an intervening noun or nouns differing in number from the subject.
(d) Incorrect number of the verb 'to be' because of the attraction of the number of the complement. (Only one example.)

(1) C. T. Onions, op.cit., p.29.
(e) Incorrect number of the verb 'to be' after the expletive 'there'.

(f) Nouns in a sentence that vary in number without good reason. (Only one example.)

(g) Linked pronouns or possessive adjectives in a sentence or sentences that vary in number without good reason.

(h) The pronouns 'either', 'each' and 'nobody' followed by pronouns or possessive adjectives incorrect in number.

(i) Pronouns incorrect in number that refer to a noun in the same sentence.

(j) 'Media' instead of 'medium'. (Only one example.)

Type (a) (Incorrect number of verb, either with a pronoun or a noun as subject.)

This sub-category contains the straightforward errors in number, as in:

The whole structure of that particular society in which you find yourself, contribute (sic) and influence your use of English. (70, B36),
in which there is a lack of concord between verb and subject. (In this sentence 'contribute' should be 'contributes' and 'influence' should be 'influences'.)

The other examples are given below:

American text books are used in many studies, ... and proves the point that ... (69, A75) (The verb 'proves' should be 'prove'.);

This type of writing ... are necessary. (69, B18) (The verb 'are' should be 'is').

... and the reference to the fox ... are ripples comic surface variations... (69, C16) (The verb 'are' should be 'is');

At the station, the long queues for buying tickets to their destinations seems to stay ... (70, A16) (The verb 'seems' should be 'seem');

... whilst that of banks or insurance companies are more flowery ... (69, B70) (The verb 'are' should be 'is').

Type (b). (Incorrect number of verb with nouns joined by 'and' as subject.)

The error in concord in the examples in this category is, of course, the same as in the first category, but these examples have been separated because there is a greater likelihood of an error when two singular nouns are joined by 'and', as in:

Furthering my interest in that field in which my talent and interest lies. (69, A10),
in which the number of 'interest' could have resulted in the singular verb / ...
verb 'lies'. The confusion brought about by nouns differing in number can be seen in the following examples:

The same expression, worn-out clichés, repetitive (sic) style and structure, makes them stereotyped. (69,D55), in which 'clichés' is plural and 'structure' is singular; and

Their comical gestures and manner of speaking never fails to intrigue me. (69,A25), in which the number of 'manner' probably influenced the number of the verb 'fails'.

The other examples in this sub-category are given below:

Poetry and the flowery language of description is always found. (69,A77) (The verb 'is' should be 'are'.);

Science and the space-age has been responsible for ... (69,B1) (The auxiliary verb 'has' should be 'have'.);

... when sloppy sentence construction and bad grammar is used. (69,B72) (The auxiliary verb 'is' should be 'are'.);

Chaucer's gift of description and his human handling of his subjects is nowhere clearer than ... (69,C1) (The verb 'is' should be 'are'.);

This diversity and the uses to which he puts his characters ... is ... (69,C39) (The verb 'occurs' should be 'occur'.);

... his stolidness and lack of sense of humour comes under criticism. (69,C55) (The verb 'comes' should be 'come'.);

... as the great depth and the oxygen breathed in has the effect of ... (70,A3) (The verb 'has' should be 'have').

Their twittering, sporadic fluttering and general uneasiness tends ... (70,A31) (The verb 'tends' should be 'tend'.);

... deprive the language of that vigour and reality which comes ... from its intimate association ... (70,B1) (The verb 'comes' should be 'come').

Their language and terminology is clearly indicative of the thinking ... (70,B55) (The verb 'is' should be 'are').;

Both the eye and the mind is at fault. (70,B71) (The verb 'is' should be 'are').;

His loyalty and kindness was still ... (70,C47) (The verb 'was' should be 'were').;

The basic richness and reality ... is often found in very subtle ... (70,C57) (The verb 'is' should be 'are').

**Type (c) (Incorrect number of verb caused by intervening nouns or pronouns differing in number from the subject.)**

In these examples the number of the verb has been attracted to the number of a noun or pronoun that is closer to it than is the subject.
subject. Three examples show this attraction:

1. The size of people's eyes differ. *(69,A29)*, in which the plural noun 'eyes' has attracted the verb and made it plural instead of singular, in spite of the singular subject 'size';

2. Everyone, from the greatest authorities down to the lowest nonentities *(sic)* make grammatical mistakes. *(70,B68)*, in which the plural form 'nonentities' has attracted the verb 'make';

and (3)

Thus Chanteleer's discussion of dreams are relevant ... *(69,C6)*, in which the number of the noun 'dreams' has affected the verb 'are'.

The other examples in this sub-category are given below:

... as the length of the queues increase ... *(69,A19)*

(The verb 'increase' should be 'increases'.)

... and the clouds that roll over its summit, by resembling a table cloth, improves this impression. *(69,A47)* (The verb 'improves' should be changed to 'improve'.)

... high powered programmes *(sic)* of advertising that all but pays for the advertised article. *(69,A60)* (The verb 'pays' should be 'pay'.)

Outstanding achievements in any sphere leads to hero-worship. *(69,A80)* (The verb 'leads' should be 'lead'.)

A kaleidoscope of historical events flash through one's mind ... *(69,B14)* (The verb 'flash' should be 'flashes'.)

Rather, the use of grammatically correct forms are often considered ... *(69,B26)* (The auxiliary verb 'are' should be 'is'.)

The economy of some countries rely on safe and speedy trade routes. *(69,B60)* (The verb 'rely' should be 'relies'.)

Slang from such people as sailors ... have become popularized ... *(69,B80)* (The auxiliary verb 'have' should be 'has'.)

The dangers of the service of Venus in marriage is shown ... *(69,C4)* (The auxiliary verb 'have' should be 'has'.)

The witty, vivid story of the fox and the cock make an immediate impact ... *(69,C20)* (The verb 'make' should be 'makes'.)

References to his character ... constitutes the latter part ... *(69,C52)* (The verb 'constitutes' should be 'constitute'.)

Numerous examples of the new middle class ... contributes to the ... *(69,C80)* (The verb 'contributes' should be 'contribute'.)

I realized *(sic)* that the expression on people's faces were to me by far the most entertaining. *(70,A47)* (The verb 'were' should be 'was'.)

The individuality of these prints allow the crime detectives to make important use of them ... *(70,A70)* (The verb 'allow' should be 'allows').
The language of written and spoken advertisements differ in some respects. (70,B10) (The verb 'differ' should be 'differs'.)

... this divergent tendency that has been apparent over the past few centuries now seem to have been slowed down ... (70,B34) (The verb 'seem' should be 'seems'.)

... the trivialities of that society was shown up ... (70,C17) (The auxiliary verb 'was' should be 'were'.)

Type (d). (Incorrect number of the verb 'to be' because of the attraction of the number of the complement.)

In this, the only example, the number of the plural complement has attracted the verb, making it plural. The legitimate subject, 'illustration', is singular.

A good illustration of this are the two Westerns ... (69,A41) (The verb 'are' should be changed to 'is'.)

Type (e) (Incorrect number of the verb 'to be' after the expletive 'there'.)

In these two examples the verb 'is' should be 'are' because the expletive 'there' acts as the subject, replacing groups of nouns that, in fact, are a plural subject. (1)

... there is obvious traces of slang ... (69,B4) (The verb 'is' should be 'are'.)

There is learned discussions of free-will and God's foreknowledge ... (70,C36) (The verb 'is' should be 'are'.)

Type (f) (Nouns in a sentence that vary in number without good reason.)

In this, the only example, the nouns 'viewers' and 'person' refer to the same people and should thus be in the same number, preferably singular here:

Artists want the viewers to interpret the painting exactly how the person wants to. (69,B16) (This adjustment would still result in a clumsy sentence, however, and it would thus be better to change 'person' to 'they' and 'wants' to 'want'.)

Type (g) (Linked pronouns or possessive adjectives in a sentence or sentences that vary in number without good reason.)

In these two examples the correct number of the associated pronouns and possessive adjective has not been maintained. In the first example:

Who wishes their speech to be continuously formal? (69,B10), the number of the verb 'wishes' indicates that the subject 'who' is singular. The number of the possessive adjective 'their' should, therefore, be singular, rather than plural. In the second example:

Bright / ....

(1) See C. T. Onions, op.cit., p.7.
Bright, bold colours and prints are also a device for attracting attention and persuasion. This is particularly used on advertisement boards and in newspapers. The man who is unable to see through these ..... (69,B9),
the number of the pronouns 'this' and 'these' is inconsistent. The sentence contains plural nouns, and one would expect this plurality to be maintained: instead, there is a variation between the singular 'this' and the plural 'these'. 'This is' should be changed to 'they are'.

Type (h) (The pronouns 'either', 'each', 'someone' and 'nobody', followed by pronouns or possessive adjectives incorrect in number.)

The indefinite pronouns 'either', 'each', 'someone' and 'nobody' are generally regarded as singular, and should be followed by singular verbs and singular pronouns associated with them. In the following examples it will be seen that, although the pronouns quoted above are clearly singular, other pronouns associated with them are plural:

It gives great pleasure to yourself when you know that you have made someone happy by giving them advice. (69,A3),
(The pronoun 'them' should be 'him'. The difficulty has probably arisen because of the lack of a singular pronoun to refer to both sexes.);
Each one went their own way to find a place to live. (69,C21)
(The possessive adjective 'their' should be 'his'.);
.... until I knock something over, or someone asks me not to hit them. (70,A26) (The pronoun 'them' should be 'him'.);
You usually find someone you know and you can walk up to them and start talking to them. (70,A41) (The pronouns 'them' should be 'him'.);
It seems that nobody wants to feel that they are unique. (70,B75)
(The pronoun 'they' should be 'he'.).

Type (i) (Pronouns or possessive adjectives incorrect in number that refer to a noun in the same sentence.)

This sub-category is much the same as the previous one except that nouns, rather than indefinite pronouns, are involved. The following examples illustrate the errors that were found:
Animals are able to love their offspring and care for it only when young. (70,B74) (Here the pronoun 'it' clearly refers to 'offspring', which is plural in this context, and so 'it' should be changed to 'them'. This use of 'it' to refer to a plural noun was one of several found in the essays examined. It is possible that this error results from the use of the Afrikaans form 'dit' to refer to plural nouns.);

(1) M. Alderton Pink, op.cit., pp.114 and 115.
Yet these words are all a shade different from *its* synonym. (70,D16) (This use of 'it' is much the same as the previous example, except that 'its' is used as a possessive adjective. The words 'its synonym' should be changed to 'their synonyms'.)

The person who didn't greet you may just have had an emotional upset or may just have forgotten to put on *their* glasses. (69,A61) (The possessive adjective 'his' should replace 'their'.)

The other examples in this sub-category appear below:

Large *eyes* are usually an asset as it makes a person more attractive. (69,A29) (The clause 'it makes...' should be 'they make...'.)

... the *man* of routine in *their* aims to attain ... (69,A39) (The possessive adjective 'his' should replace 'their'.)

*Men* must first of all be made to realise a woman's importance as lover, wife and mother of *his* children. (69,A44) (The possessive adjective 'his' should be changed to 'their'.)

Similarly *words* in past centuries ... might today be regarded as clumsy or archaic or be defined differently to (sic) *its* different meaning ... (69,B18) (The phrase 'its different meaning' should be 'their different meanings'.)

... be able to understand how the mind of the other *person* functions and be able to feel with *them*. (69,B40) (The pronoun 'them' should be 'him').

Character may be defined as the particular brand of action peculiar to any one *person* or their personal form of reaction ... (69,B65) (The possessive adjective 'their' should be 'his'.)

In Chaucer's time these fables were extremely popular. *It* appealed to the people ... (69,C7) (The pronoun 'it' should be 'they'.)

..... delicate pink *blossoms* of peach trees bedeck the branches and twigs - blossoms so delicate that *it* seems transparent when the morning sun shines upon *it*. (70,A46) (The words 'it seems' should be 'they seem' and 'it' should be 'them'.)

To be able to trade with a *country*, a rudimentary knowledge of *their* written and spoken language ... (70,B42) (The possessive adjective 'their' should be 'its'.)

*It* would not be at all effective to use pedantic scientific *words* here as *it* would not be understood. (70,D40) (The pronoun 'it' should be 'they'.)

**Type (j)** ('Media' instead of 'medium'.)

In this example the singular verb 'is', together with the singular noun 'language', indicates that the plural form 'media' should / ....
The only useful contact medium between human beings is language. ...

(69,B9) (The word 'media' should be 'medium'.)

3. PRONOUNS WITH OBSCURE ANTECEDENTS

In this sub-category the pronouns 'it', 'they', 'this' and 'he' have been so carelessly used that it is not clear to which nouns in the examples they refer. Examples of the careless use of 'it', as illustrated below, predominate in this sub-category:

The ambition of the poor is to make money, the ambition of the rich is to make more money. It eats into the minds of people — they become hypnotized by it. (70,A10) (Here 'it' could refer to two nouns, 'ambition' and 'money'. ((See also 'type (i)' in the sub-category 'Number'.)))

The other examples of the careless use of 'it' are given below:

Thus the future of the English Language in South Africa depends on the ruling power, which has the ability to make the laws for or against English being recognised as an official language. It may have to give certain concessions and to be dominated by Afrikaans ... (69,A41) (It is not clear whether 'it' refers to the 'English language' or to some noun not mentioned in these sentences.);

... although trends are the same, each individual expression of them is different, thereby making it something worth while. (69,A62) (It is not clear whether 'it' refers to 'trends', in which case there is an error in number, or whether 'it' refers to 'each individual expression'.);

Who is capable of maintaining formality in everyday talk? It could only lead to a nervous breakdown ... (69,B10) (The pronoun 'it' could refer either to 'formality' or 'everyday talk').;

Our language would thus be abused, although if we consider it in the correct perspective it becomes illuminating and fascinating. (69,B39) (Each 'it' seems to refer to a different noun, not given in the sentence, but they could also refer to 'language'. Their reference is thus obscure.);

Chaucer does not use subtlety or discrimination as it is not necessary. (69,C2) (The pronoun 'it' could refer either to 'subtlety' or to 'discrimination'.);

With all its power and captivating beauty the sea typifies all the joys of nature in its essential form. (70,A20) (It is not clear whether 'it' refers to 'the sea' or to 'nature'.).

The remaining examples in this sub-category illustrate the careless use of 'they', as in:

In South Africa /..
In South Africa, most protests and demonstrations have their origins in racial matters or government moves (sic). If they do not like the way of life here, why do they bother to remain? (70,Bl4),
in which the antecedent of 'they' is obscure; and
Apart from the colloquial phrasing and familiarity of address, they have very short sentences, some of which are not sentences at all but phrases and clauses in sentence form: "In any gear", "plus comfort and performance". This comes partly from an attempt ... (70,B60).
in which the antecedent of 'this' is obscure. In both these examples the singular form 'this' seems to be associated with a preceding plural noun.
The other examples are given below:
Early marriages do not necessarily mean starting a family early. They may wait until they are financially stable. (69,A73)
(It is not clear to whom 'they' refers.);
In reports of a specialised nature, they tend to be very technical or scientific ... (69,B4) (The pronoun 'they' could refer to either reports or to some plural noun not mentioned in this quotation.);
Personal relationships have become less formal and social restrictions have lessened to a large extent. This is also reflected in the language. (69,B59) (The pronoun 'this' could refer either to the 'personal relationships' or to 'social restrictions'. It should be replaced by 'these changes'.).

4. ERRORS IN CASE

The errors in case found in the essays have been divided into four categories:
(a) The incorrect case of a pronoun that is the object of a verb or verbal form, as in:
... by the likes of him, who they scorned. (70,C11),
in which 'who' should be changed to 'whom' because it is the object of 'scorned';
(b) Incorrect cases of pronouns governed by prepositions, as in:
... and the person with who he or she is talking to (sic) (70,B46),
in which the preposition governs the pronoun, which should be in the objective case.(1)
(c) Incorrect cases of pronouns in elliptical sentences(2), as in:

(1) For statements on the governing by prepositions of the objective case, see G. O. Curme, op.cit., p.42, and C.T. Onions, op.cit., p.91.
The aged have a chance of meeting others who are in a similar plight as them. (69,A3), in which 'them' should take the case demanded by the expanded construction, which is '... as they are'.

(d) Incorrect cases of nouns and pronouns associated with gerunds, as in:

The reference to it being Friday ... (69,C20), in which 'it' should be changed to the possessive form 'its' because it is regarded as the subject of the gerund 'being'. In the words of G. O. Curme: 'the gerund was originally a noun, its subject was a genitive ... The old rule is now best observed with the possessive adjectives, which were originally the genitives of the personal pronouns.' (1) It should be noted, however, that this rule is not invariable, as both Onions and Pink note, and should be applied with discretion. According to Onions, for example, (see footnote one), an alternative participial construction without the genitive case, as in: 'What is the use of his coming? - of him coming?' is equally acceptable. It was decided, however, for the purposes of this thesis, that gerunds without associated possessive forms would be regarded as errors.

The other examples in the sub-categories just described are given below:

Type (a) (The incorrect case of a pronoun that is the object of a verb or verbal form.)

... that cannot fail to stir he who sees it. (69,A70) (The pronoun 'him' should replace 'he' as it is the object of 'to stir'.)

One does not remember who one has met formally and who one has just seen about. (69,A61) (Both 'whos' should be 'whom', as they are objects of 'has met' and 'has seen'.)

My appeal to them is to remember that the imperfect world has you and I in its clutches ... (70,B8) ('I' should be 'me' as it is the object of 'has').

His favourite hen is Pertelote also very pretty who he loves a great deal ... (70,C3) (The relative 'who' should be 'whom' as it is the object of 'loves').

The final example in this sub-category illustrates the incorrect case of a pronoun that is the subject of a verb.

... and the gods and goddesses whom man believed ruled them. (70,A5) (The relative 'whom' should be 'who', as it is the subject of 'ruled').

Type (b) / ...
Type (b) (Incorrect cases of pronouns governed by prepositions.)

... of we, the residents. (69,A46) (The pronoun 'we' should be changed to 'us', as it is governed by the preposition 'of'.); ... come with my tape-recorder and I to Cape Town Station. (70,B29) ('I' should be 'me' as it is governed by the preposition 'with').

Type (c) (Incorrect cases of pronouns in elliptical sentences.)

... thus it is essential to man that no-one drives faster than him. (69,B6) (The pronoun 'him' should be 'he', because the expanded construction 'than ... drives' demands the subjective case.);
... nobody except his father crew better than him. (69,B30) (The pronoun 'him' should be 'he', because the expanded construction 'than ... crew' demands the subjective case.);
... who have obviously not civilized themselves to such an extent as us. (70,B12) (The pronoun 'us' should be 'we', because the expanded construction 'as ... have civilized ourselves' demands the subjective case.);
... can write the language more correctly than us ... (70,B45) (The pronoun 'us' should be 'we', because the expanded construction 'than ... can write it' demands the subjective case.).

Type (d) (Incorrect cases of nouns and pronouns associated with gerunds.)

The reason for the government wanting ... (69,A11) (As 'wanting' is a gerund, 'government' should be in the possessive case.);
... there is no tangible record of them having been there. (69,A47) (The pronoun 'them' should be replaced by 'their', as 'having been' is a gerund.);
... in the event of a country realizing its doom ... (69,A67) (The noun 'country' should be 'country's', as realizing' is a gerund.);
They are also an example of the male wanting to gain dominance. (69,D40) (As 'wanting' is a gerund, 'male' should be 'male's').

5. INCORRECT CORRELATIVES

Pairs of conjunctions, such as 'not only ... but also' joining parts of sentences equal in value, are called correlatives. Although the word 'also' is not regarded as essential to the group in every instance, it is considered, for the purposes of this thesis, as desirable / ...

as desirable, both for syntactical and for rhythmical reasons.

The following examples illustrate what was regarded as the use of incomplete correlatives because equal elements of the sentences were joined by 'not only' ... followed by 'but', 'also' being omitted:

Chaucer's humour lies not only in the words themselves but in their relation to one another. (70,C39) (The word 'also' should be inserted after 'but'.);

This is evidenced not only by his nature, but by the story he relates ... (70,C55) (The word 'also' should be inserted after 'but').

Not only were his morals that he put across correct by Christian standards but they were written in such a way ... (70,C75) (The word 'also' should come after 'were').

Not only is he famous, but he is modest ... (70,D32) (The word 'also' should be inserted after 'modest').

6. NON-DEFINING CLAUSES WITHOUT A COMMA OR COMMAS

In the essays under examination it was clear that many of the students, especially at the beginning of each year, had difficulty in distinguishing between defining and non-defining relative clauses, and, in addition, did not seem to know how to indicate the difference between them, even if they recognised that there was a difference.

H. W. Fowler, in Modern English Usage, explains the differences between the two types of relative clause as follows: 'The two kinds of relative clause, to one of which that and to the other of which which is appropriate, are the defining and the non-defining; and if writers would agree to regard that as the defining relative pronoun, and which as the non-defining, there would be much to gain both in lucidity and ease...'. (1)

A non-defining relative clause is one that does not identify or limit its antecedent in any way, but merely gives additional information. Such clauses, because they form an essential part of any sentence, should be separated from the rest of the sentence by commas. The defining clause, on the other hand, because it very clearly limits its antecedent, should not be separated in any way from the rest of the sentence.

It is clear, however, that the conventions described above are being adhered to less and less: indeed lapses in these conventions are not always regarded as errors to-day. In the words of H.W. Fowler: '... it would be idle to pretend that it is the practice either of

most / ....

most or of the best writers. (1)

The examples below have, then, been chosen to illustrate a modern trend, rather than errors in the use of the non-defining relative clause. Through their omission of commas in such examples as:

The Afrikaner also speaks his own South African English (,) which is better known ... (69,A40); and Pertelote had common sense enough to realise that Chanticleer's dream (,) which he thought was prophetic (,) was merely due to his digestion. (70,I20), the students have disregarded the means of indicating a subtle distinction in English that should, in the view of the writer, be maintained.

The other examples in this sub-category are given below. It should be noted that, in each example, the non-defining clause is not essential to the major thought in the sentence.

English is a powerful, universal language (,) which has a wealth of history and culture behind it. (69,A22);
... of expectancy of something to happen (,) which is also thrilling ... (69,A31);
... to be afraid of the semi-colon (,) which can be useful in marking ... (69,B31);
This can be truthfully said of the delightful and charming Nun's Priest's Tale (,) which is told to the company with the idea of lifting the atmosphere of gloominess produced by the Monk's Tale. (69,C35);
Of this a more pure form was that of literary standard English (,) which is more conventional and dignified, ... (70,B3);
Clouds avoid this endless piece of sky and seek companionship with the distant mountain peaks (,) which stand rounded in a blue velvet mass ... (70,A1);
... by describing his dream (,) which is conservative in detail. (70,B32).

7. DEFINING CLAUSES INTRODUCED BY 'WHICH'

In the following examples, selected to indicate the trend described in the previous sub-category, it is considered that the relative clauses are defining, and so, according to the conventions described in the previous sub-category, should be introduced by 'that' in order to provide a subtle distinction between them and the non-defining clauses already considered.

It should / ...

(1) H. W. Fowler, loc.cit.
It should be noted that, in all these examples, the relative clauses are essential to the main idea of the sentences, and so are not divided from their antecedents by commas.

Thus I feel that although there are difficulties which have to be faced ... (69,A22) (The relative 'that' should replace 'which'.);

... and perfumes must move in air from the objects which release them. (69,A31) (The relative 'that' should replace 'which'.);

... a singleness of purpose which drives them on ... (69,A68) (The relative 'that' should replace 'which'.);

Casual speech is (I believe!) (sic) the strongest criterion which has influenced the change of the English language. (69,B4) (The relative 'which' should be 'that'.);

Because language enables us to communicate we are able to live in a society which is characterised by interacting human beings. (69,B34) (The comma after 'society' should be removed, and 'which' should be replaced by 'that'.);

... and without regard to the church belief that all which is written, is written ... (69,C2) (The relative 'which' should be 'that'.);

... the type of argument which Pertelote and Chantecleer have ... (70,D1) (The relative 'which' should be 'that'.);

It is this ability to mould two lifelike figures from the seemingly dull material of a cock and a hen which gives Chaucer his reputation for being a brilliant caricaturist. (69,D26) (The relative 'which' should be 'that'.);

... it is this falseness which causes me to dislike this character (,) who was not content with his unobtrusive goodwill ... (70,A2) (The relative 'which' should be 'that'.);

... yet wouldn't we be horrified if others could be aware of all the thoughts which pass through our minds. (70,A15) (The relative 'which' should be 'that').

8. THE INDEFINITE 'ONE' INCORRECTLY USED

The following examples, relatively few in number, but nevertheless worth discussing, illustrate the incorrect use of the indefinite 'one'. In the words of O. Jespersen:[1]

'When the indefinite one has to be repeated the usual English practice nowadays is to use forms of the pronoun itself ... But /

---

But the old practice, which is still frequent in Scottish and U.S. is to use forms of he: ...

The variety of changes from the indefinite pronoun to other pronouns and possessive adjectives shown below illustrates the confusion in the minds of some of the students examined, possibly caused by the usages contrary to the English practice described by Jespersen above. In addition, the rather formal continuation with the indefinite 'one' is typical of written, rather than spoken English. (1)

Style is important in that it is through one's style we communicate ... (69,B46) (Either 'one's' should be 'our' or 'we communicate' should be 'one communicates');

... and this only results in one having to speak his language as pure as one possibly can. (69,B57) (The possessive 'his' should be 'one's');

One becomes used to one's own doctor and lawyer and does not often think about whether the next doctor or lawyer will be of more help to them. (70,A44) (The word 'them' should be 'one');

One can stand at the bus stop, anticipating the arrival of your friend. (70,A36) (The word 'your' should be 'one's');

If one says that this is necessary, he may as well be saying that scholars ... (70,B25) (The word 'he' should be 'one');

Conversely, the use of slang in one's speech is indicative of his thinking. (70,B55) (The word 'his' should be 'one's').

9. UNRELATED AND MISRELATED PARTICIPLES.

Being a verb-adjective (2), the participle should qualify a noun or pronoun in a sentence, both logically and grammatically. In the words of C.T. Onions: "The Participle must always have a proper 'subject of reference'." (3) This 'subject of reference' should be placed as close as possible to the participle or participial phrase in order to ensure both a logical and a grammatical link.

In this sub-category a distinction has been made between unrelated participles, as in:

Standing on the sandy shore on a moonlit evening the beach looks like the Highwayman's road ... (70,A72),

in which / ...
in which the noun 'beach', because of its proximity to the participle 'standing', is grammatically, but not logically related to it, and in which there is no noun or pronoun to which the participle can logically refer; and misrelated participles, as in:

Fashionably and expensively dressed, socially a success and apparently prosperous, we hear one day that this particular young man has 'gone wrong'. (70,D19),
in which the noun that the participle 'dressed' should qualify has not been placed as close as possible to the participle, and in which a pronoun, because of its position in the sentence, has been grammatically, but not logically, associated with the participle.

The other examples in these two sub-categories, relatively few in number, are given below.

(a) Unrelated participles.

Being a Fuller Freshette myself, U.C.T. is not merely the university ..... (69,A46) (The word 'being' is an unrelated participle.);

On entering the church on either the right side or left side near the door a font will be eminent. (69,A49) (The word 'entering' is an unrelated participle.);

Appearing to rise vertically ... thousand feet in height, its most striking feature is ... (69,A70) (The word 'appearing' is an unrelated participle.);

... but looking back in history, as far back as Shakespeare, the evidence of girls ... (69,A74) (The word 'looking' is an unrelated participle.);

When using abstract words the meaning of a sentence may not be clear to the ...... (69,B3) (The word 'using' is an unrelated participle.);

For, having allowed us to "see" the pilgrims we are now about to be allowed to hear them as well. (69,C14) (The group 'having allowed' is an unrelated participle.)

When comparing him with the Parson he falls very short of a true religious man. (69,C51) (The word 'comparing' is an unrelated participle.);

While entering the second great city, his eye fell upon a poor man's goat ... (70,A53) (The word 'entering' is an unrelated participle.);

While approaching the glittering waters one is oblivious of these creatures but on entering, the pinch of a scuttling crab immediately ... (70,D20) (The word 'entering' is an unrelated participle.).

(b) / .....
(b) Misrelated participles.

Situated on the slopes of Devil's Peak, the elevated position of the buildings seems ... (69,A26) (The word 'situated' is a misrelated participle, because it should qualify 'buildings', rather than 'position').

Extending from the principle entrance to the chancel we have the middle ... (69,A49) (The word 'extending' is a misrelated participle, because it should qualify 'middle' rather than 'we').

Surrounded by a wide circle of masculine prey, the brash tones of her gin-sodden voice blasted in my ears as she held forth. (69,D65) (The word 'surrounded' is a misrelated participle, because it should qualify 'she', rather than 'tones').

She says that her husband's dream is due to indigestion, then having allowed him to win the argument, he does exactly what she told him to do. (70,C70) (The group 'having allowed' is a misrelated participle, because it should qualify 'she' rather than 'he').

10. **INCORRECT SEQUENCE OF VERBS**

The term 'Incorrect Sequence of Verbs', as distinct from 'Incorrect Sequence of Tenses', is used here to describe examples in which, because certain verbs or auxiliary verbs have been omitted, verbal groups are either incomplete or incorrect.

The following examples illustrate what has been said:

(a) The same ideas, thoughts and values can and always are expressed in as many different styles. (69,B24) (In this sentence, because the auxiliary 'be' has been omitted, the verbal group 'can ...' is 'can expressed', rather than 'can be expressed').

(b) ... because these have and will arise in speech and writing. (70,B73) (In this example, because the past participial form 'arisen' has been omitted after 'have', the verbal group 'have ...' is incomplete. The extract should read '... because these have arisen and will arise ...').

The other examples in this sub-category are given below:

Time has always, is and will always be the governor of all men. (69,B60) (The verbal forms have been very clumsily arranged, as the auxiliary 'has' does not go with 'be', and 'is' is out of place between the two auxiliaries);

... had dreamt of things that had or never would happen. (69,C60) (Because the past participial form 'happened' has been omitted, it seems as though 'had' and 'happen' go together);

... the mysterious sea has always and will always hold man's interest in it. (70,A48) (The verb 'held' should be inserted after 'has').

This must / ....
This must, and is I am sure realised by ... (70,B31)  
(The auxiliary 'be' should be inserted after 'must' in order to complete the verbal group 'must ... realised').

11. INCORRECT WORD ORDER

The errors in word order illustrated in this sub-category have been divided as follows:

(a) Errors in the position of adverbs, (by far in the majority here), especially 'only', as in: (1) To Chantecleer high drama only is suitable for recounting his experience ... (70,D76) (The adverb 'only' should follow 'is').; and (2) ... future reference often we will discover that ... (69,B39) (The adverb 'often' should be placed after 'will').;

(b) Errors in the position of adjectives, as in: ... a cockerel owned by an old poor widow ... (69,D51), in which the collocation 'poor old' has been ignored;

(c) Errors in the position of phrases, as in: Chaucer could also be refering (sic) to the vanity and pride of some men through Chantecleer. (69,C21), in which 'through Chantecleer' would be more effective if placed after 'refering';

(d) Errors in the position of other parts of speech, as in: Just think what might these factors wield ... (70,A19), in which the auxiliary 'might' should be placed next to 'wield'.

The remaining examples in these sub-categories are given below:

(a) Errors in the position of adverbs.

In general, adverbs 'should be so placed as to make it impossible to doubt which word or words they are intended to affect.' (1) In the following examples, however, the adverbs have been so placed as either to offend against usage or to make it difficult to decide what words or phrases in the examples they modify.

(1) Incorrect position of 'only'.

In the following examples it was considered that 'only' could have been placed in a more effective position so as to emphasise the important elements more vigorously.

This is only limited to a small number of people. (69,A29) (The adverb 'only' should come after 'limited').; One only has to be involved in some way ... (69,B6) (The adverb 'only' should follow 'has').; ... flash / ...

(1) C. T. Onions, op.cit., p.151.
...flash through one's mind when the subject is only reflected on for a flitting moment. (69,B14) (The adverb 'only' should come after 'for'.); I have only assessed my main faults ... (69,B29) (The adverb 'only' should come after 'assessed'.); I can only draw opinions from my own experience. (69, B48) (The adverb 'only' should come after 'opinions').; These people are only concerned with their own business ... (70,A13) (The adverb 'only' should be placed after 'concerned').

(2) Incorrect position of other adverbs.

When an adverb modifies a compound tense, its usual position is between the auxiliary and the completing verbal form. (1) In the following examples students have offended against this usage.
The radio (i.e. broadcasting) has largely been influenced ... (69,B4) (The adverb 'largely' should be placed after 'been').; These are used on the radio mostly ... (69,B76) (The adverb 'mostly' should be inserted after 'used').; The rich strive for money for fear that they may lose what they already have got. (70,A10) (The adverb 'already' should follow 'have').; They thus are regulated to their characters ... (70,C76) (The adverb 'thus' should follow 'are').; New words were formed from modern foreign languages and also words were formed from a combination of Greek and Latin elements. (70,B41) (The adverb 'also' should follow 'were').

In addition to the errors above, there were other errors in the placing of adverbs. In the two sentences below, for example, the adverbs have not been placed next to the words that they should modify:

His intense visual images and descriptions as well as the figures of speech add to the amusement greatly. (69,C34) (The adverb 'greatly' should modify 'add', and so should be placed after it, instead of at the end of the sentence.); No one can speak exactly as everybody else and speak exactly the same way under all circumstances ... (70,B40) (The adverb 'exactly' should modify 'the same way' and so should be placed after 'in').

There were errors, too, in the correct placing of 'both', 'either' and 'not', as in: (a)

... incomparable in both outward appearance and ... (69,C52), in which 'both' should come before 'in'; (b)

Parents / ...

Parents, because of either neglecting or on the other hand spoiling their children ... (69,B11),
in which 'either' should be placed before 'because'; and (c) But having not studied the philosophy behind the Tale ... (70,C40),
in which 'not' should be placed before 'having studied'.

(b) Errors in the position of adjectives.

In this example the word 'empty' has been incorrectly placed after 'two(-)pound', instead of before it. The collocation 'two-pound syrup tin' should not be divided by an intervening adjective. ... trying to cultivate an oak tree in a two pound empty syrup tin. (69,D5)

c) Errors in the position of phrases.

In the three examples below the adjectival phrases underlined have been placed incorrectly and so have rendered the sentences less effective. In each example the phrase should have been placed as close as possible to the noun that it qualified.

Many new legal words appeared in English like bylaw, as the Danes had a very highly developed system of government. (69,B22) (The phrase 'like bylaw' qualifies 'words' and so should be placed after it.);

Some writers experiment with the structure of the English language such as James Joyce. (69,B24) (The phrase 'such as James Joyce' should follow 'writers', which it qualifies.);

In South Africa the word "held" is used fairly often and leaders of our nation are apt to become heroes after their deaths like Dr. Verwoerd. (69,A80). (The phrase 'like Dr. Verwoerd' should come after 'nation', as it qualifies 'leaders of our nation').

d) Errors in the position of other parts of speech.

In the example below the preposition 'for' should govern 'them' and so should be placed after 'both'.

... pandering to the youth is bad for both them and the rest of society ... (69,A51) (The preposition 'for' should come before 'them').

12. SPLIT INFINITIVES.

The construction known as the 'Split Infinitive' 'consists in the separation of to from the Infinitive by means of an adverb' (1), as in:

Often salesmen and shop assistants may assume a hypercorrect or exaggerated speech to either impress or imitate (sic) their / ...

(1) C. T. Onions, op.cit., p.129.)
Although the split infinitive has been condemned as 'inelegant' and 'un-English'\(^1\), the most recent attitude is that it may be used in formal writing provided that it is not clumsy and does not disturb the rhythm of the sentence containing it.\(^2\)

The three examples below have been selected because it was considered that they were ugly, and interfered with the rhythm in the sentences containing them.

I wish to first define the word Freedom \(^{69,A45}\); Speed always seems to invariably be a ... \(^{69,B60}\); ... in an attempt to finally awake and face the day. \(^{70,A7}\).

13. 'IT'S' USED AS A POSSESSIVE FORM

The convention pertaining to 'its' and 'it's' is that 'its' is the possessive of 'it';\(^3\), and 'it's' stands for 'it is'.

There were nineteen examples in the essays examined, in which 'it's' was used as a possessive form, and a selection of them is given below. They were evenly spread in both years.

Air in it's purest form ... \(^{69,A31}\);
... a world on it's own .... \(^{69,A46}\);
... of communication with it's maker ... \(^{69,B13}\);
... if it is carried to it's extremes ... \(^{69,B54}\);
... showing it's nonsensity through ... \(^{69,C35}\);
... the pride of a mother seeing her child take it's first steps. \(^{70,A40}\);
... constantly changing it's form ... \(^{70,A76}\);
... the world and it's problems ... \(^{70,B12}\);
... to master it's grammar .... \(^{70,B63}\);
... it's breezy style ... \(^{70,C63}\);
... amongst it's members ... \(^{70,D63}\).

14. INCORRECT TENSES

On the whole, the students whose essays were examined did not have a great deal of trouble with tenses, but the examples in this sub-section show where their difficulties lay when they did make mistakes.

In general, the students' major problem was to use the exact past / ....

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\(^1\) C. T. Onions, \textit{loc.cit.}
\(^2\) See H. W. Fowler, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 579 - 582; and E. Partridge, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 296.
\(^3\) See E. Partridge, \textit{op.cit.} p. 160; and G. O. Curme, \textit{op.cit.} p. 218-219
past tense to suit the context chosen. In the examples below it will be seen that the ordinary past tense has been used instead of the exact past tense necessary to convey the subtlety demanded in a formal essay at university level. This inability to use the exact past tense is significant because it could well be influenced by the lack of a present and a past perfect tense in Afrikaans.

For example, in the following sentence:

Of course if I really wanted to I could have caught him ...

(69,D1),

the past tense 'wanted' should have been replaced by the past perfect 'had ... wanted', both to match 'could have caught' and to indicate that the 'wanting' was further in the past than was indicated. In the following sentence:

Lastly man wants and always wanted freedom of action. (69,A24),

the past tense 'wanted' is inadequate to show that the desire for freedom has existed in the past and continues to exist. The present perfect 'has ... wanted' would, therefore, be a far more subtle and effective tense to use here.

This sub-section, because of the type of error illustrated above, and because of the other errors in verbs, has been divided as follows:

(a) Past tenses that should have been past perfect tenses, (already illustrated);

(b) past tenses that should have been present perfect tenses, (already illustrated);

(c) errors in the use of 'will', as in:

Perhaps in the future we will live under the waves ...

(70,A3), in which 'will', because it indicates the 'Plain Future', should be 'shall';

(d) miscellaneous errors that did not fit into the categories above. (Each one of these will be discussed separately.).

The remaining examples in these sub-categories are given below:

(a) Past tenses that should have been past perfect tenses.

The other 'freshers' and 'freshettes', seeing the huge pile of books next to him, thought he was a senior student who came to spy out (sic) the new freshettes ... (69,D8) (The verb 'came' should be the past perfect 'who had come').

Within seconds the crying will stop and the child will continue to play as if nothing happened. (70,A40) (The past tense 'happened' could be replaced either by the present perfect 'has happened' or by the past perfect 'had happened').

(he loved her since she was a week old ...). (70,D29) (The past tense 'loved' should be replaced by the past perfect 'had loved' in order to indicate that the 'loving' was further in the past.).
(b) Past tenses that should have been present perfect tenses.

I think that the most important lesson I learnt from Gowers, was how to write plainly ... (69,B32) ('I learnt' should be the more subtle present perfect 'I have learnt' in order to indicate that the 'learning' is recent. In addition, 'was' should be 'is'.);

English, on being transplanted to another continent, has left its imprint on those who have adopted it, for they developed similar traits of character. (69,B33) (The verb 'developed' should be 'have developed' in order to match 'has left'.);

It is a very common practise (sic) in recent times to do away with formal grammar (sic) as such. (69,D22) (The verb 'is' should be the more subtle 'has been' in order to show that the practice has occurred both in the past and recently.);

She's always talking about where she's been and how she travelled. (69,D62) (The verb 'travelled' should be 'has travelled' in order to indicate that 'she' has travelled in the distant past and recently as well.);

Perhaps the booming businessman's latest deal fell through. (70,A14) (The verb 'fell' should be 'has fallen' in order to indicate that the 'fall' has been in the very recent past.);

Throughout past centuries, the syntax of the English language was confused, ... (70,B24) (The verb 'was' should be 'has been', in order to indicate a continuing process.).

(c) Errors in the use of 'will'.

Only three examples of what was considered to be the incorrect use of 'will' have been selected here because of recent usage that shows a general disregard for the subtle distinctions between 'shall' and 'will', 'would' and 'should'.

In the words of M. Alderton Pink: 'The usage here explained (i.e. the proper use of 'shall' and 'will') has, until the recent past, been generally accepted by speakers and writers of Standard English. But it cannot be said that it is so accepted today. Some of the distinctions illustrated above are being rapidly obliterated in the speech and writing of even educated persons.'(1)

It was felt, therefore, that it was not necessary to select a large number of examples for this section, as they may no longer be regarded as errors in some circles. These examples, then, illustrate what is generally considered to be a widespread tendency to ignore the subtle differences between 'shall' and 'will'. All these examples /

(1) M. Alderton Pink, op.cit., p.90. See also H. W. Fowler, op.cit., p.549.
examples illustrate the incorrect use of 'will' in the 'Plain Future'.

I will try to mention some of the major changes. (69,B4)  
(The verb 'will' should be 'shall' as determination is not implied.);

We will thus be able to communicate with our peers ... (69,B57)  
(The verb 'will' should be 'shall' as this is intended simply to be a statement of what is to happen without any emotional overtones.);

I will attempt to convey clearly the main points he makes ...  
(69,C6) (The verb 'will' should be 'shall' as the writer did not intend to convey determination here.).

(d) Miscellaneous errors in verbal forms.

Each one of these examples will be discussed separately.

I have received the portrait which I had ordered. (69,A59)  
(In this example the past perfect 'had ordered' indicates an action too far in the past, and should be replaced by the past tense 'ordered'.)

He worked physically and should have a good constitution. (69,C24)  
(In this example the past tense 'worked' clashes with the present 'should have'. The present perfect tense 'should have had' should replace the present tense in order to balance the two tenses.;)

The faith-healer, however, had convinced the scientist that man was sinful. (69,D4)  
(In this example the past tense 'was' should be changed to the eternal present 'is'.);  
His face is contorted. He wants to be free of his cell, of his madness. He wants the fever in his brain to subside so that he might once again live not merely exist. (70,All)  
(In this example the past subjunctive 'might live' should be replaced by the present subjunctive 'may live' in order to match the present tense of 'is', and 'wants'. (1)).

15. MISCELLANEOUS ERRORS

The miscellaneous errors collected in this sub-category are divided into the following groups:

(a) Confusion between 'less' and 'fewer', as in:
... there are less possibilities for men ... (69,A30),  
in which 'less' should be replaced by 'fewer';

(b) confusion between 'like' and 'as', as in:
Pertelote listens to him like an obedient wife should.  
(70,C48), in which the conjunction 'as' should replace the preposition / ...
the preposition 'like';

(c) The incorrect use of nouns as adjectives, as in:

... to add to the mock-drama tone. (70,D1), in which the noun 'mock-drama' should be changed to the adjective 'mock-dramatic' in order to qualify 'tone';

(d) clumsy inversion of word order, as in:

With relish does Chaucer develop Chanticleer's counter-argument (sic) ... (70,C74), in which 'with relish' should be placed after 'argument' because the inversion is ineffective;

(e) use of an incorrect relative pronoun, (only one example), as in:

... in a country which is content with its political situation. However, in a country who has struggled ... (69,B21), in which the relative pronoun 'who' should be changed either to 'that' or to 'which' according to the intention of the writer, as 'who' refers to people, whereas 'which' and 'that' refer both to people and to inanimate objects. (1)

(f) use of an apostrophe to indicate a plural form (only one example), as in:

... communications between different peoples ' ... (69,D5) in which the influence of Afrikaans is clear (2);

(g) incorrect comparative degree, (only one example), as in:

... the more easier it is ... (69,B21), in which the comparative degree 'easier' is sufficient on its own.

The remaining examples in sub-categories (a) to (d) are given below, and are discussed where this has been thought necessary.

(a) Confusion between 'less' and 'fewer'.

In the words of H. W. Fowler: 'The modern tendency is so to restrict less that it means not smaller, but a smaller amount of; it is the comparative rather of a little than of little, and is consequently applied only to things that are measured by amount and not by size or quality or number ...' (3) The word 'less', then, refers to 'amount', whereas 'fewer' refers to a 'number'.

In all the examples below 'less' has been incorrectly used to qualify / ...

(1) See C. T. Onions, op. cit., p.147.

(2) Certain Afrikaans plural forms, 'plato's' for example, are written with an apostrophe 's'.

qualify a number, and should be replaced by 'fewer'.
... using very much less words ... (69,B61);
There were less than twenty people on the plane, ... (70,A39);
... we have far less rules than the speakers of English did ...
(70,B37).

(b) Confusion between 'like' and 'as'.

In the words of M. Alderton Pink "'like' is not a conjunction."(1)
In all the examples below 'like' has been incorrectly used as a
conjunction, and should be replaced by the conjunction 'as'. It
should, however, be pointed out that 'like' is being increasingly
used as a conjunction at the colloquial level, perhaps under
American influence. This trend has probably influenced the following
examples:

... and walks round the yard like his wife told him to. (69,C71);
... no wonder he was proud and strutted round like he did.
(69,B16);
... and then falls again to the sea like a flower blooms and
then dies. (70,A16);
If we wrote like we speak ... how much simpler life would be.
(70,B68);
... to close his eyes and sing like his father used to ...
(70,C18).

(c) Incorrect use of nouns as adjectives.

In the two remaining examples in this sub-category, the proper
noun 'Congo', and the common noun 'grammar' have been incorrectly
used as adjectives. This usage clearly reflects the growing
tendency, at the colloquial level, to use nouns as adjectives, even
though there may be a perfectly serviceable adjective, 'Congolese' and
'grammatical' in these examples, at hand. (2)

In both the French and Congo revolutions ... (69,A34)
(It should be noted that, in this example the correct adjective
'French' has been used just before 'Congo'.)
The English of the masses may be full of grammar mistakes ...
(70,D7).

(a) / ....

(1) M. Alderton Pink, op.cit., p.126. See also H. W. Fowler,
(d) **Clumsy inversion of word order.**

The remaining example in this sub-category shows an attempt by a student to invert the normal word order of a sentence in order to achieve an effect. This inversion seems unnecessary and pretentious here, especially as the normal English word order has been kept in the co-ordinate clause:

*Their trades they taught him and fashioned him into their moulds ...* (70, A53) *(Clumsy inversion.)*

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Although there were relatively few grammatical errors in the essays examined, these errors were of a wide variety, and could be divided into fifteen sub-categories with, generally speaking, a few errors in each. The students seemed to have a fair idea of the correct grammatical forms to use, and grammar seems to be an aspect of their work about which they are reasonably well informed, compared with the other aspects examined.

The most numerous errors were in the sub-categories: 'Incorrect Sequence of Tenses', 'Number', 'Pronouns with obscure antecedents', 'Unrelated and misrelated participles', and 'Incorrect word order'. Although there were ten other sub-categories of error, each one contained only a few errors. The most striking impression of the errors made was that correct grammatical relationships had either not been planned or had not been clearly indicated. The most conspicuous errors were those of number, in which a noun, intervening between the subject and the verb, affected the number of the verb. This error is being increasingly found in popular writing, especially in newspapers, and the trend seems to be reflected in the work of the students examined. This lack of grammatical planning, typical of colloquial language, was also noticed in the variation in number of related nouns and pronouns, in the use of pronouns without any reference, in the changing of the tenses of verbs without good reason, and in the careless placing of words in sentences, which resulted both in incorrect emphasis and in clumsiness. In addition, the examples of unrelated and misrelated participles showed that some students had failed to plan correct logical and grammatical relationships in certain sentences.

The most significant errors in the minor sub-categories were in verbs, which were either incorrect in tense or in sequences requiring the correct auxiliaries to be associated with the correct participial forms. In addition, there was confusion between the possessive form 'its' and 'it's' meaning 'it is', between 'like' and 'as' and between 'less' and 'fewer'. These errors, together with the use of nouns as adjectives, all suggest a less formal approach to writing.
and an increasing influence of spoken on written English.

The only direct influence of Afrikaans seems to have been in the use of an apostrophe to indicate a plural form, but there seems, however, to have been an indirect influence in some essays, on the choice of suitable past tenses. In these essays students used the ordinary past tense instead of the more subtle present perfect or past perfect tenses required by the contexts.

If a high standard of formal grammar is to be maintained, pupils and students will have to be made aware of the differences between colloquial and formal English. In particular, they will have to concentrate on maintaining correct grammatical and logical relationships in sentences, particularly when they are dealing with nouns, pronouns and verbs.
CHAPTER 11.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter the information gained from the study of 640 essays written by students in their first year at the University of Cape Town will be summed up. The various results will be discussed in the following order: (1) The statistical examination in general; (2) the investigation into the accuracy of the school-leaving symbols in English, in terms of the number and gravity of the errors made; (3) the major weaknesses found in the essays; (4) the specific weaknesses found in the six major categories of error, with an attempt to establish whether there was any improvement in these weaknesses during each year investigated; (5) the possible influence of Afrikaans, both direct and indirect, on the students' writing; (6) the possible influence, on the students' writing, of modern trends in, and attitudes towards, vocabulary, idiom, sentence structure, punctuation and grammar.

For this investigation the essays from students in two separate years were examined in order to ensure that all statistical results could be checked and verified, one year against the other. In addition, it was important to establish whether the trends in both years were the same or not. Once these comparisons had been made, and it had been established that the most significant trends in both years were the same, it was felt that no further purpose would be served by separating the errors found in the essays written in each year. The errors were, therefore, amalgamated in the discussions in Chapters five to ten, no distinctions being drawn between errors made in 1969 and 1970.

In terms of the reduction of average error densities (see Chapter Three) in the essays written in 1969 and 1970 the English Language Tutorial Scheme was an undoubted success (see the first aim of the thesis in Chapter Two), if the results of the first three essays are compared, but this success has to be qualified, in that the average error densities achieved in the fourth essays written in each year showed a deterioration to the level of the second essay in 1969, and almost to the level of the first essay in 1970.

As the fourth essay was written as part of the final examination, this deterioration can be attributed to the pressure under which the students wrote and the limited time at their disposal. However, when they were able to plan and write essays at their leisure they clearly benefited from the individual attention received during each year in small tutorial groups. It should be noted, here, that the trends in both years were the same, suggesting that the marking of the essays was accurate and consistent, and that the statistical results obtained /
obtained were accurate. Inferences can thus be drawn from these figures with greater confidence.

It was not possible to determine, with any precision, how well or badly the students wrote in terms of the essay titles set, (see the fourth aim of the thesis in Chapter Two), but it is clear that the changes in essay titles did not affect the steady improvement in terms of the numbers and gravity of the errors made during the year. The deterioration noted in the fourth essays in each year was due to the pressure under which the students had to write, rather than to the essay topics, because all the students had, during the year, written essays on similar topics.

Because a comparison of the total number of errors made in each group of essays, and in each year as a whole, would not have yielded really accurate results, in terms of improvement or lack of improvement, it was decided to test, by means of a rigorous statistical procedure, whether there had been any improvement, in terms of the 'Gravity' of errors, in each of the four sets of essays written in each year. In certain instances, for reasons explained in Chapter Four, the errors in each year were considered separately, whereas in other instances the errors in each year were considered together.

The rigorous tests applied to the first three 'Gravities' of error suggested that, although there were minor improvements between one group of essays and another, there was little or no general improvement, from the beginning of each year to the end, in these 'Gravities'. These conclusions suggest that there was only a small improvement in terms of the reduction of errors such as the omission of commas, clichés, jingles, the omission of hyphens and the apostrophe 's', spelling, redundancy, 'it's' used as a possessive form and confusion between 'like' and 'as'. It should, however, be noted that these errors are trivial in comparison with the errors of 'Gravity Four and Five', which were reduced, in some instances considerably, by the third essay in each year, and also in the fourth essay.

The statistical test relating to the errors of 'Gravity Four' showed that, by the third essay in each year, errors such as malaprops, colloquialisms, sentences lacking unity, the incorrect sequence of tenses and unrelated or misrelated participles were becoming fewer, but that they increased in the fourth essay, more in 1969 than in 1970.

The most significant results, in terms of improvement, were those obtained from the tests of the errors of 'Gravity Five'. The tendency towards improvement by the third essay in each year, already showing itself in the results for 'Gravity Four', was most marked in the results for 'Gravity Five', which were the most serious. There was a considerable reduction in these errors from the first to the third
essay of each year.

These results are significant because they show that the improvement achieved in the third essay in each year was maintained in the fourth essay, even though the students were writing under different conditions. The deterioration noted in the comparison of 'Gravity Four' errors had, then, been prevented, and the improvement achieved during each year had been maintained. These results suggest that the methods of teaching in the English Language Tutorial Scheme were successful in reducing considerably errors such as clumsily constructed sentences, the omission of colons or semicolons, illogicality, verbless sentences and pronouns with obscure antecedents.

The histograms showing the numbers of errors in each 'Gravity' in each year suggest, once more, that the methods and approach of the Tutorial Scheme were successful in reducing the worst errors, especially those of 'Gravity Five'.

The histograms showing the numbers of errors in each major category of error in 1969 and 1970 show that errors in vocabulary and punctuation were the commonest in both years examined, and that errors in spelling and sentence structure were approximately equal, followed by errors in grammar. The fewest errors were those in idiomatic expression.

In terms of improvement achieved by the students in the major categories of error, a study of the statistical results suggests the following: (a) that there was no improvement in spelling from the beginning to the end of each year examined, (b) that under 'Vocabulary' there was some improvement from the beginning of each year to the end, (c) that under 'Idiomatic Expression' there was a considerable improvement in 1969 and some improvement in 1970, (d) that under 'Punctuation' there was some improvement during each year, (e) that under 'Sentence Construction' there was some improvement in both years if the first and the fourth essays were compared, and (f) that under 'Grammar' there was, again, some improvement if the first and the fourth essays were compared. In general, then, there was, except in spelling, some improvement in the major categories of error from the beginning of each year to the end.

An examination of the numbers of errors in each sub-category of each major category of error shows (a) that under 'Vocabulary' the commonest error was 'clumsy expression', followed by 'inappropriate words' and 'colloquialisms'; (b) that under 'Idiom' the commonest errors were the misuse of prepositions, verbs that were inappropriately used with particular nouns, and nouns that were incorrectly used in the plural; (c) that under 'Punctuation' the commonest errors were 'omission of commas', 'omission of hyphens' and 'omission of the apostrophe' / ...
apostrophe "s""; (d) that under 'Sentence Construction' the commonest errors were 'clumsy construction', 'verbless sentences, or sentences without a main clause' and 'sentences lacking unity'; (e) that under 'Grammar' the commonest errors were incorrect 'number', followed by incorrect 'sequence of tenses' and 'pronouns with obscure antecedents'.

In addition, the histograms comparing the numbers of errors in each sub-category show that there was a significant reduction in the numbers of errors in the following sub-categories listed above: 'inappropriate words', 'clumsy expression', 'colloquialisms', 'clumsy constructions', 'verbless sentences or sentences without a main clause', 'pronouns with obscure antecedents' and 'sequence of tense'.

To complete the general statistical comparison, the histograms to show how the numbers of errors in the essays changed during each year indicate that there was a steady reduction, during both years, of essays containing large numbers of errors; and a corresponding increase in the number of essays containing fewer errors, especially if the numbers of errors in the fourth essay are compared with those in the first essay.

Although it was not possible to arrange for a searching statistical test of the numbers and types of error made by the five school-leaving groups, it was possible, nevertheless, to arrive at some conclusions about whether the school-leaving symbols accurately reflected the students' ability to write English. The following statistics relating to the five school-leaving groups were, therefore, compared: the average error densities; the average error scores; the number of errors in each major category of error; and the average number of errors in each major category of error.

The results of these examinations show (a) that not all the symbols accurately reflected the students' ability to write English, (b) that the A and B symbols seemed accurate, and (c) that the C, D and E symbols seemed, in some instances, to be inaccurate. It was, however, impossible to establish the degree of accuracy or inaccuracy.

An examination of the number of errors in each sub-category of the major categories of error made by the five school-leaving groups showed (a) that, under 'Vocabulary' and 'Punctuation', there was very little difference between the numbers of errors made by the As and the Es, and by the Cs and the Ds; (b) that, under 'Sentence Construction', the best results were those achieved by the As, results that were almost rivalled by those of the Bs; and that the As and the Es, as well as the Cs and the Ds, made approximately the same number of errors in the sub-category 'Clumsy Construction'; (c) that, under 'Grammar', errors had virtually disappeared from the fourth essays written /...
written by the As and Bs.

A comparison of the average number of errors made in each of the five 'Gravities' of error made by each school-leaving group in each essay in 1969 and 1970 shows that the greatest improvement during both years was in the reduction of 'Gravity Five' errors. The comparison shows, further, that there was really no clear pattern of change in the first three 'Gravities', but that the pattern of improvement began to show itself in 'Gravity Four'. The erratic changes in the averages of those awarded 'D' and 'E' symbols in all the 'Gravities' again suggest that these symbols might not have been accurate. The averages suggest, however, that the 'A' and 'B' symbols were accurate.

It was not possible, in terms of the third aim of the thesis (see Chapter Two), to establish whether any one of the school-leaving groups had made more rapid progress in the years examined than any other group, but some figures suggest that the As were better than the Bs. It was not possible to differentiate accurately between the Cs, Ds and Es, but it can be suggested that the symbols might not have been quite accurate.

A general examination of the errors made gives the impression that there were two major faults in the students' essays: (a) lack of sensitivity to some of the demands of adequate expression in formal contexts, and (b) a failure to recognise the differences between colloquial English and formal written English.

The evidence of the first ran through the essays in both years, but was especially evident at the beginning of each year. It could be seen in some of the students' choice of vocabulary unsuited to particular contexts, in their failure to articulate their sentences by means of effective punctuation, in their failure to subordinate and co-ordinate clauses, and in their failure to achieve unity in many sentences. Lack of sensitivity was noted, too, in the grammatical errors brought about by a failure to maintain agreement in number between subject and verb, or between associated nouns or pronouns, and a failure to maintain the correct tense in a sentence or a series of sentences. In addition, the unrelated and misrelated participles found in the essays showed that some students could not achieve both a logical and a grammatical relationship between these participles and the nouns that they qualified.

The second major fault, failure to recognise the differences between colloquial and formal written English, could be seen directly in the many colloquial expressions found in the essays, and discussed in the chapter on 'Vocabulary'. Not only were there shortened forms of words, but there were also a good many words that were unacceptable in a formal essay because of their limited currency. The influence of colloquial/...
of colloquial language could, in addition, be seen indirectly in the many examples of badly constructed sentences, in which students seemed to have written down their thoughts as they occurred to them, without any organisation, thus failing to subordinate effectively and to achieve unity.

In terms of the fifth aim of the thesis (see Chapter Two), the findings in each of the major categories of error will now be discussed in order:

(a) Spelling.
The most conspicuous errors in spelling were those in which a single consonant was used instead of double consonants or in which double consonants were used for a single consonant. In addition, the consonants 'c' and 's' were confused, as were the vowels 'a' and 'e', 'y' and 'i', and 'o' and 'i'. In addition, consonants were both omitted and incorrectly inserted.

(b) Vocabulary.
The major weakness in the students' vocabulary was in the subcategories 'Inappropriate Words' and 'Malaprops'. In these sub-categories errors in the choice of words suggested that a fair number of students were unable to choose words appropriate to certain contexts. In addition to these errors in vocabulary, there were many examples of circumlocution, redundancy, colloquialisms and clumsy expression.

(c) Idiomatic Expression.
This category contained the fewest errors of the six major categories of error, but the errors found suggested that major changes are taking place in idiomatic expression in general, and, in particular, in the use of prepositions. The most conspicuous errors were in the unnecessary use of the definite article, in the use of incorrect verbal forms and in the use of incorrect prepositions with verbs, nouns and pronouns.

(d) Punctuation.
The students' use of punctuation suggested that they were following the modern tendency towards increasing economy in punctuation. The most conspicuous errors were the omission of commas, the omission of hyphens, the omission of the apostrophe 's' and the omission of colons or semi-colons. In general, it seemed that many students were uncertain of the use and value of certain punctuation marks in formal written English.

(e) Sentence Construction.
In general, the errors in sentence structure showed the same lack of sensitivity to the rhythms of English sentences noted in the section devoted to errors in punctuation. A fair number of sentences either lacked unity or were spoilt by lack of subordination / ...
of subordination or by excess use of the co-ordinating conjunctions 'and' and 'but'. In addition, the general fault of poor expression was noted in the sentences that needed either re-punctuation or division into two or more shorter sentences. Some students, in addition, wrote verbless sentences, or sentences containing only subordinate clauses that were stylistically unacceptable. The influence of colloquial language was noted in the sentences beginning with 'Also', and in the groups of short, staccato sentences that should have been rewritten as one or more longer sentences.

(f) Grammar.
The majority of the students had a good knowledge of grammar, there being relatively few errors in this category. The most numerous errors were those in number (which, at the students' level of education, was surprising); failure to maintain the correct sequence of tenses; failure either to provide antecedents for pronouns, or to make their antecedents clear; and failure to show both a grammatical and a logical relationship between participles and the nouns or pronouns that they qualified. In addition, there were errors in word order. The most significant errors in the minor categories of grammatical error were in the incorrect tenses of verbs, in the use of 'it's' instead of 'its' to indicate possession, in the use of nouns as adjectives, and in the confusion of 'like' and 'as' and 'less' and 'fewer'.

In general, the strengths of the students examined lay in a reasonable command of idiomatic expression, but with some specific weaknesses, and in grammar, of which they had a good knowledge. Their major weaknesses lay in spelling, as well as in certain aspects of vocabulary, sentence structure and punctuation.

Although there was very little direct influence of Afrikaans, there was evidence, especially in the students' difficulties with idiomatic expression, that Afrikaans had indirectly influenced their work. The specific influence of Afrikaans could be seen (a) in the unnecessary use of the definite article, (b) in the use of the pronoun 'it' to refer to plural antecedents, (c) in the failure of some students to use the present perfect and past perfect tenses when they were clearly necessary, (d) in the use of the word 'small' instead of 'narrow' to describe streets (one example), and (e) in the use of an apostrophe to indicate a plural form (one example).

The students' difficulties with idiomatic expression, surprising at their level of education, seemed to indicate a major influence at work. It is possible that this indirect influence was Afrikaans, because of its proximity and its variety of idiomatic expressions that could, possibly, have made the students less certain in moments of doubt.
of doubt.

The errors in some of the major categories clearly reflect recent tendencies in vocabulary, punctuation, sentence structure and style. In the students' vocabulary, changes in the meanings of words were reflected in the use of words in contexts that would, normally, be considered incorrect. Some students, either dissatisfied with the conventional meanings of some words, or not knowing them, were prepared to use words with meanings that were considered errors, but that perhaps indicated new uses that might lead to changes in meaning. In addition, the less formal modern approach to written English was reflected in the students' use of a large number of colloquial forms in their essays. Many students were clearly unaware that they were using words unacceptable in formal writing.

The confusion in prepositional idioms noted in the essays also reflects a modern tendency, for usage here is changing rapidly. Prepositions have always given difficulty, even to those who are proficient in English, and this difficulty was reflected in the essays examined.

The modern tendency to write shorter, less involved sentences was also noted in the students' writing. In general, the students whose essays were examined tended to use either simple sentences or short complex or compound sentences. In addition, they preferred the loose to the periodic construction.

Linked with the types of sentences found in the essays was the tendency towards less formality in punctuation noted in formal writing to-day. In general, the students tended to avoid constructions needing elaborate internal punctuation, preferring to use commas where they used any punctuation at all. The modern confusion in the use of the hyphen, and the tendency to omit the apostrophe 's' to indicate possession were also noted in the essays.

Lastly, the two most conspicuous aspects of the students' grammar reflecting modern tendencies were confusion about the conventions controlling the use of defining and non-defining adjectival clauses, and the blurring of the distinctions between the auxiliary verbs 'shall' and 'will'.

If the major faults in the students' writing, noted at the beginning of each year examined, are to be eliminated, then more time, particularly at the level of the senior school, should be devoted to the detailed study of the conventions of formal written English, as opposed to those of colloquial English. In particular, schools should concentrate on the detailed preparation of short and long passages, stressing the importance of sentence structure and punctuation.

At the level / ...
At the level of first-year university studies in English more time, in addition to the limited time available to the English Language Tutorial Scheme, should be devoted in lectures and tutorials to the study of acceptable and undesirable trends in vocabulary, idiom, sentence structure, punctuation and grammar.

In conclusion, this examination of essays written by first-year students suggests that there is a continuing, though regrettable, need for tutorial work in English composition, such as that undertaken in the English Language Tutorial Scheme at the University of Cape Town.
APPENDIX I

The schools that the selected students attended are listed below by provinces. The city or town in, or near which, each is situated is indicated after each school.

CAPE PROVINCE

Alexander Road High School, Port Elizabeth. (Co-educational).
Alexander Sinton High School, Cape Town. (Non-European, co-educational).
Assumption Chinese College, Port Elizabeth. (Co-educational).
Athlone High School, Cape Town. (Non-European, co-educational).
Bergvliet High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Camps Bay High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Cape Town High School. (Co-educational)
Cape College for Advanced Technical Education, Cape Town.
Cape Tutorial College, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Christian Brothers' College, Kimberley. (Boys).
Collegiate High School, Port Elizabeth. (Girls).
Dale College, King William's Town. (Boys).
Diocesan College, Cape Town. (Boys).
Diocesan School for Girls, Grahamstown.
Durbanville High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Ellerslie Girls' High School, Cape Town.
Fish Hoek High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Good Hope Seminary, Cape Town. (Girls).
Groote Schuur Hoërskool, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Harold Cressy High School, Cape Town. (Non-European, co-educational).
Herschel Girls' High School, Cape Town.
Herzlia High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Hottentots Holland High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Huguenot High School, Wellington, Cape Town. (Girls).
Jan van Riebeeck Hoërskool, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
J. G. Meiring Hoërskool, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
J. J. du Preez Hoërskool, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Kimberley Boys' High School.
Kimberley Girls' High School.
Livingstone High School, Cape Town. (Non-European, co-educational).
Loreto Convent, Sea Point, Cape Town. (Girls).
Milnerton High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Muizenberg High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Muir College, Uitenhage. (Boys).
Observatory Boys' High School, Cape Town.
Outeniqua High School, George. (Co-educational).
Paul Roos Gymnasium, Stellenbosch. (Boys).
Pinelands High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Plumstead High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Point High School, Mossel Bay. (Co-educational).
Progress College, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Rhenish Girls' High School, Stellenbosch.
Rondebosch Boys' High School, Cape Town.
Rustenburg Girls' High School, Cape Town.
St. Andrew's Boys' High School, Grahamstown.
St. Cyprian's Girls' High School, Cape Town.
St. George's Boys' High School, Cape Town.
St. Mary's Convent, Cape Town. (Girls).
Sans Souci Girls' High School, Cape Town.
Sea Point Boys' High School, Cape Town.
Selborne Boys' High School, East London.
South African College High School, Cape Town. (Boys).
Springfield Convent, Wynberg, Cape Town. (Girls).
Union High School, Graaff Reinet. (Co-educational).
Vredendal Hoërskool. (Co-educational).
Vryburg Hoërskool. (Co-educational).
Westerford High School, Cape Town. (Co-educational).
Worcester Hoërskool. (Co-educational).

NATAL
Carmel College, Durban.
Durban Girls' High School.
Epworth High School, Pietermaritzburg. (Girls).
Michaelhouse Boys' High School.
Northlands Boys' High School, Durban.
Pietermaritzburg Girls' High School.
Port Shepstone School. (Co-educational).
Westville Boys' High School, Durban.
Westville Girls' High School, Durban.

ORANGE FREE STATE
Greenhill Convent, Bloemfontein. (Girls).
Notre Dame Convent, Kroonstad. (Girls).
St. Agnes' Convent, Welkom. (Girls).
St. Andrew's School, Bloemfontein. (Boys).
St. Mary's Convent, Bloemfontein. (Girls).
St. Michael's School, Bloemfontein. (Boys).

TRANSVAAL / .......
TRANSVAAL

Benoni High School. (Co-educational).
Damelin College, Johannesburg. (Co-educational).
Kingsmead College, Johannesburg.
Oxford College, Johannesburg.
Parktown High School, Johannesburg.
Pretoria Boys' High School.
Pretoria Girls' High School.
Roedean Girls' High School, Johannesburg.
St. Alban's College, Pretoria. (Boys).
St. Martin's School, Waverley, Johannesburg.
St. Mary's Diocesan School for Girls, Pretoria.
St. Ursula's Convent, Klerksdorp. (Girls).

SOUTH - WEST AFRICA

Convent of the Holy Cross, Windhoek. (Girls).
Swakopmund High School. (Co-educational).
APPENDIX II

The titles of the essays examined in 1969 and 1970 are listed here in alphabetical order.


A Battle at Sea.
Advertising is a Public Menace.
A Disappointed Crowd at a Football Match.
A Familiar Scene Viewed Afresh.
A Fish and Chip Shop.
Air.
A Letter of Complaint about a Portrait that, in the opinion of the Writer, was badly executed.
An Old Village Church.
Any Man can Make Money if he has Nothing Else in his Head.
A 'Shop' in a Factory.
A Suburban Street.
A Woman's Place is in the Home.
Bars.
By What Signs Would you Judge a Previous Civilisation?
Clouds.
Complacency.
Correct English.
Drought.
Drugged.
Early Marriages.
English as an International Language.
Eyes.
Faces.
Fashion.
'Father Time' - A Description.
Forms and Colours in a Wild Area.
Freedom.
Ghastly Good Taste.
Hands.
Happiness is Determined by What You do not Want, Not by What You Have.
Hats.
Intelligence Among Animals.
Is There Adequate Place for Private Study at the University of Cape Town?
Jars.
Language as a Reflection of Character.
Mars.
Meeting Places.

Abstract Thought is the Mark of Civilised Man, and so Periphrasis and Civilisation are Held by Many to be Inseparable?

A Discussion of The Complete Plain Words, by Sir Ernest Gowers.

A Man Who Cannot Think Straight About What he Reads, or Express Clearly and Correctly What he Thinks, May Fairly be called Illiterate.

An Analysis of the Students' Own Faults in Style.

Changes in English in the Twentieth Century.

Correct Grammar and Syntax are of no Importance as long as One Makes One's Meaning Clear.

Defend or Reject the Following Argument: 'Students are sent to the University to Study; They should not Waste their Parents' Money by Staging Ineffectual Protests. Their task is Academic, not Political.

Do we Know, Say and Convey What we Mean?

English in South Africa.

English is Constantly Changing, and Even Within the General Level of Usage there are Many Variations.

English is not Merely the Medium of our Thought, it is the Very Stuff and Process of it.
English Today Shows Various Levels of Style, Especially Noticeable in the Difference Between Spoken and Written English.

Few Writers Today Aim at Dignity and Elegance. Discuss the Merits and De-merits of this Statement.

'Grammar Perfectly Understood Enables us not only to Express our Meaning Fully and Clearly, but so to Express it as to Defy the Ingenuity of Man to Give our Words any Other Meaning than that which we Intended to Express.' — William Cobbett.

Has the English Language any Rules?
Is the Standard of English Declining?
Is there Such a Thing as 'Correct' English?

It is Language, More Obviously than Anything Else, that Distinguishes Men from the Rest of the Animal World.

'It is the Duty of the Official in his Use of English Neither to Perpetuate What is Obsolescent nor to Give Currency to What is Novel ...'

It is Worth Studying a Language not only Because it is a Useful Tool in so Many Way, but Also Because Language is so Fascinating in Itself.

Language as a Reflection of Character.
Language is not Merely the Means of Expressing Thought, it is the Whole Basis of our Civilisation.

Language is the Dress of Thought.
Language is the Pedigree of Nations.

Language Plays a Vital Role in One's Ability to Think.
Like Religion, Language is Clearly a Powerful Unifying and Dividing Force.

Speed — the Curse of the Modern World.
Student Protests.

Style in English.
Syllables Govern the Word.

The Effect of Spoken on Written English.
The English of Teachers, Reporters, Students and Advertisers Varies Considerably, both when Spoken or Written.
The History of Nations is Mirrored in the Language they Speak.
The Language of Advertising.
The Levels of Usage Vary not Only in Spoken English, but also in Regional, Social and Commercial Contexts.
The Mastery of a Language Helps Man to Take His Place as a Thinking Individual and a Wise Citizen.
The Value of a Knowledge of Grammar, Structure, and Correct Usage in Writing English Well and Efficiently.
The Use and Abuse of English as a Language Used by People of Varying Education and Cultures.
The Use and Abuse of Language.
The Use of English Today.

Why is it Necessary for us to Question the Aims and Standards of Everything we Read Today?

THIRD ESSAY / ....
THIRD ESSAY, 1969 and 1970

A Discussion of the Didactic Element, Satire, Description and Characterisation in the Nun's Priest's Tale.

An Essay on Chauntecleer's Dream in the Nun's Priest's Tale.

An Essay on the Characters in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.

An Essay on the Monk in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.

A Review of the Nun's Priest's Tale.

Chaucer's Capacity for Characterisation in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.

Chaucer's Characterisation is both Varied and Subtle.

Chaucer's Embellishment of the Animal Fable in the Nun's Priest's Tale.

Chaucer's Humour is Transparent in the Description of the Miller, and More Subtle in that of the Monk.

Chaucer's Use of Colour in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.

Compare the Descriptions of the Parish Priest, the Miller, the Prioress and the Manciple.

Discuss Chaucer's Monk in Relation to the Code of Conduct Established by St. Benedict.

Discuss Chaucer's Skill as a Poet Writing for an Audience of Varied Listeners.

Discuss How, and with What Effect, Chaucer Used Pre-Destination in the Nun's Priest's Tale.

Do you find Chauntecleer and Pertelote Amusing?

How Does Chaucer Achieve Characterisation in the Nun's Priest's Tale.

Illustrate how the Ecclesiastical Characters of the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales typify Medieval Life.

In the Nun's Priest's Tale Chaucer Presents a Story that Points to a Serious Moral with Matchless Zest and Humour.

Medieval Dream Psychology.

Saint Benedict was the Founder of the Monastic Order. Explain this in Terms of the Monk in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.

Satire in the Nun's Priest's Tale.

Show the Relevance of Chauntecleer's Discussion of Dreams to those of Predestination.

'Taketh the Fruyt and let the Chaf be Stille.' How does this line Apply to the Nun's Priest's Tale as a Whole?

The Comic Effect of the Nun's Priest's Tale.

The Fox's Explanation to his Wife After he Fails to bring Chauntecleer Home.

The Medieval Attitude Towards Dreams.

The Moral Tale of the Cock and the Hen is a Parody of Human Life in the Middle Ages.

The Nun's Priest's Tale is a Little Sermon Preached by the Pleasantest of Priests, who, after all the Laughter he has Raised, Rounds and closes it with a Moral and a Prayer.

The Nun's Priest's Tale / ...
The Nun's Priest's Tale is much more than a Mere Animal Fable. Discuss the Ways in Which Chaucer Embroiders and Augments the Tale.

The Nun's Priest's Tale is no more than a Farce about a Cock and a Hen. Discuss.

The Personalities of Chauntecleer and Pertelote.

The State of the Church in Fourteenth Century England, shown from the Prologue.

FOURTH ESSAY

These essays were written as part of the final examination in English Language. They are set out here in separate years, and in the order in which they appeared on the examination papers.

Topics, 1969.

Write an essay on ONE of the topics below. Do NOT use more than one and a half pages of your answer-book.

(a) 'George Orwell went so far as to say that "correct grammar and syntax are of no importance as long as one makes one's meaning clear."' ... Sir Ernest Gowers in The Complete Plain Words. Discuss.

(b) 'Our words seem tired and shopworn ... Sociologists, Mass-media experts, the writers of soap operas and politicians' speeches, and teachers of "creative writing" are the grave-diggers of the world ... The political inhumanity of our time, moreover, has demeaned and brutalized language beyond any precedent.' ... George Steiner in The Death of Tragedy. Discuss.

(c) Mr. and Mrs. X. are holding a cocktail-party. Among their guests are the modern equivalents of Chaucer's Monk, Wife of Bath, Knight, Franklin, Summoner and Parson. Choose either TWO or THREE of these characters and briefly discuss their appearance and behaviour at the party.

(d) How would Chaucer's Clerk behave at the University of Cape Town today?

(e) You are the Fox. Explain to your wife why you have failed to bring Chauntecleer home for dinner.

(f) Describe and illustrate the personalities of Chauntecleer and Pertelote.

Topics, 1970.

Providing illustrations where necessary, write an essay on ONE of the topics below. Do NOT use more than one and a half pages of your answer-book.

(a) 'The short plain word is not, under all circumstances, the most effective word.' Discuss.

(b) 'The best English is the English of the masses.' Consider.

(c) Show how Chaucer uses detail to achieve his effects in The Prologue.
(d) 'In his Prologue Chaucer gives us people not merely of his
times, but of our times.' Referring to two or three
characters, examine this remark.

(e) It has been said that, in The Nun's Priest's Tale, Chaucer
shows us 'his shrewd understanding of human nature and at
the same time his genial tolerance of human frailty; his
keen sense of the ridiculous ...' What is your opinion?

(f) In what ways can the relationship between Chauntecleer and
Pertelote be regarded as an amusing comment on marriage?
### APPENDIX III

The calculations done by the computer are given below. There are five groups of calculations, one for each of the 'gravities' explained in Chapter Three. The calculations for 1970 appear first in each group.

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\[ F = 3.156 \]

This is the F statistic for parallel profiles and if less than \( F \), we accept the hypothesis and continue. Otherwise, analyze each year separately.

The critical value of \( F_{3,156} \) is given.

\[ \text{Critical Value} = 2.66 \]

\[ \text{F statistic for equal responses} = 0.30295 \]

\[ \text{F statistic for testing equal responses} = 3.156 \]
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VARIANCE-COVARIANCE MATRIX FOR 1970

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MEAN NUMBER OF ERRORS PER ESSAY DIFFER: 2

T- STATISTIC FOR EQUAL RESPONSES: 17.948

F- STATISTIC FOR TESTING EQUAL RESPONSES: 5.83120
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Mean number of matches per essay differs

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F statistic for testing equal responses = 7.62588

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\[ F = \frac{17.3537}{5.7130} = 3.056 \]

We can accept the hypothesis and continue.

Profiles not parallel. Therefore analyze each year separately.

\[ F \text{ statistic for equal responses} = 73.925 \]
\[ F \text{ statistic for testing equal responses} = 22.32372 \]

SFIN

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TIME: 00:00:10.783 IN: 332 OUT: 0 PAGES: 29
INITIATION TIME: 14:53:52-AUG 9, 1971
TERMINATION TIME: 14:54:14-AUG 9, 1971
VARIANCE-COVARIANCE MATRIX FOR 1970

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-1
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\[ T \text{ STATISTIC FOR EQUAL RESPONSES } = 46.613 \]
\[ F \text{ STATISTIC FOR TESTING EQUAL RESPONSES } = 15.14420 \]

3. 77
**VARIANCE-COVARIANCE MATRIX FOR 1969**

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\[F \quad \text{STATISTIC FOR EQUAL RESPONSES} = 51.209\]

\[F \quad \text{STATISTIC FOR TESTING EQUAL RESPONSES} = 16.63764\]

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\[ T = 4.1030 \]

\[ F = 1.3504 \]

**Critical value of \( F_{0.01} \):**

This is the F statistic for parallel profiles and if less than \( \frac{1.3504}{3.156} \) we accept the hypothesis and continue.

F statistic for parallel profiles = \(-0.0296\) with 158 df for testing equal group levels. Accept equal group levels.

T statistic for equal responses = 13.696...

F statistic for testing equal responses = \( \frac{4.50739}{3.156} \)

Reject equal response means, scores on each differ.
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**Means 1969**
T = 4.0071

F = 1.3188

3,156

This is the F statistic for parallel profiles and if less than .

Accept the hypothesis and continue. Accept parallel profiles.

T statistic for equal responses = -1.1499 with 158 dof for testing equal group levels.

Accept levels same.

T statistic for equal responses = 17.276

F statistic for testing equal responses = 5.68576

3,156

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**Matrix of Transformation - C**

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**GRAVITY S**

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**MEANS 1969**
\[ T = 39.1526 \]
\[ F = 12.8857 \]

The critical value of \( F \) is \( 3.156 \).

This is the \( F \) statistic for parallel profiles, and if less than we can accept the hypothesis and continue.

If profiles are not parallel, reject hypothesis, examine each year separately.

\[ \text{STATISTIC} \, 2 = 126.17 \text{ WITH } 150 \text{ DOF FOR TESTING EQUAL GROUP LEVELS} \]

\[ \text{STATISTIC} \, 2 = 179.093 \text{ FOR EQUAL RESPONSES} \]

\[ \text{STATISTIC} \, 3 = 58.94204 \text{ FOR TESTING EQUAL RESPONSES} \]

Data ignored - in control mode.

\( \text{FIN} \)

RUNID: POMAN ACCOUNT: A0227-0000 PROJECT: Q50303
TIME: 00:01:06.508 IN: 759 OUT: 0 PAGES: 101
INITIATION TIME: 10:35:16-AUG-31971
TERMINATION TIME: 10:35:07-AUG-31971
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| \(\begin{bmatrix}
2.7872 & -1.1319 & -1.1420 \\
-1.1319 & 6.6225 & -3.2832 \\
-1.1420 & -4.2832 & 13.0477
\end{bmatrix}\) |           |
## VECTORS OF DIFFERENCES

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### MATRIX OF TRANSFORMATION - $C$

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0.0000 & -1.0000 & 0.0000 & 1.0000 \\
0.0000 & 0.0000 & -1.0000 & 1.0000
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$$
VARIANCE-COVARIANCE MATRIX FOR 1970

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\[
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0.1015 & 0.1771 & 0.0749 \\
0.0911 & 0.0749 & 0.0950 \\
\end{bmatrix}
\]

\[
\begin{bmatrix}
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-1.6324 & 8.8881 & -5.4472 \\
-4.9395 & -5.4472 & 19.5609 \\
\end{bmatrix}
\]

\[ T \text{ STATISTIC FOR EQUAL RESPONSES} = 65.094 \]

\[ F \text{ STATISTIC FOR TESTING EQUAL RESPONSES} = 21.14876 \]

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REJECT HYPOTHESIS OF EQUAL RESPONSES AT BOTH 5\% AND 1\% LEVEL
### Sums of Squares Matrix for 1970

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CS C

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-1

(CS C)

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T Statistic for Equal Responses = 121.275

F Statistic for Testing Equal Responses = 39.40162

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Reject hypotheses of equal responses at both .05 and .01 level.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


W. R. G. BRANFORD, A study of the Errors in the Written Work of First-Year Students of the University of Cape Town who had Matriculated in English on the Higher Grade. Unpublished thesis presented to the University of Cape Town in part fulfilment of the degree of Bachelor of Education, 1950.


