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# SPEECH-COMP: ENGLISH COMPOSITION IN THE INTRODUCTORY SPEECH CLASS

by
Lennie Donald Stanciel

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Arts
(English Language & Literature)
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Doctoral Committee:

Associate Professor Walter Clark, Chairman
Assistant Professor Richard L. Enos
Professor Alan Howes
Professor Jay L. Robinson

DEDICATION

To: Deborah and Kenneth

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Freshman composition, which proposes to enable a student to express himself effectively and engage in rational discourse about his experiences, thoughts, feelings, the things he learns, has become the target of attacks from educators outside of this discipline, the American public and the business community. Those attacking contend language literacy is the responsibility of college and university English departments, and especially of those responsible for basic work in composition.[1] Those who teach this course are faced with attacks which suggest that college students are not realizing and developing a conscious command of the essential components of the "standard" written expression.

Attackers who are not directly involved in "education" rely on various kinds of proof to substantiate their contention of language illiteracy. Parents of college students either rely on "letters" received from their children while in school, reports from the news media which tell them "Johnny Can't Write" and strongly suggest why he can't, or specific "non-standard" linguisitc codes and habits that dominate their children's conversation. The business community look at misspellings of their employees or the infelicities in the prose of their business reports and conclude that <u>something</u> is drastically "wrong" with our colleges and universities.

Educators outside of this discipline complain that their students can not read textbooks, produce logical examination papers, write technical reports. Because their students are having these problems, these educators contend their students are not grasping the theories and tenets of these particular disciplines; something is wrong and they contend that something can be found in the focus and management of the freshman composition classroom.

If we view the development of numerous approaches to teach composition as responses to these attacks, we are, in a sense, sanctioning the legitimacy of these attacks. Teachers of English composition are saying, then, that there is an urgent need for more productive models which will offer to the students more effective tools which will make the mastery of the "standard" written expression not so difficult. Educators are providing thousands of pages of alternative models available in textbooks, dissertations, journals, articles, national associations of English teachers conventions' reports and position statements. We have those who maintain that short and specific "how to" guidelines will provide the students with what they need to know about language and what they need to do to pursue their specialty in one of the disciplines. A representative textbook which captures the essence of this view is Writing to the Point: Six Basic Steps. In the section addressed "To the Instructor," the author tells us that he's used this method for over twenty years and it has proved itself

successful with thousands of "regular" and "remedial" students in college. It is a method that starts from scratch and teaches the indispensable basic step by step approach to writing. ". . . I begin with the very first step and when they (the students) can all do that--as they all can-- I take them to the second step and then to the third, and on to the point where finally all of them--all--are writing competently."[2] His book raises the students methodically in this fashion (attached to each step there are explanations, examples and assignments):

STEP 1: Write a sentence.
Write a short, simple declarative sentence that makes one statement.

STEP 2: Write three sentences about the sentence in Step 1.

STEP 3: Write three sentences about the sentence in Step 1--about the whole of that sentence, not just something in it. Write three sentences about the sentence in Step 1--clearly and directly about the whole of that sentence, not just something in it.

STEP 4: Make the material in the four or five sentences in Step 3 as specific and concrete as possible. Make the material in the four or five sentences in Step 3 as concrete and specific as possible. Go into detail. Use examples. Don't ask, "What will I say next?" Say some more about what you have just said. Your goal is to say about a little, not a little about a lot. Make the material in the four or five sentences in Step 3 concrete and specific as possible. Go into detail. Give examples. Don't ask "What will I say next?" Say some more about what you have just said. Your goal is to say a lot about a little, not a little about a lot.
[Then he provides a section which guides

the students in "Correcting the Paper". Then he moves back to his steps.]

STEP 4 AGAIN: You are to ask yourself, "Have I explained what I have said to my reader? Or do questions immediately come to mind?" Decide what such questions would be if they come to the reader's mind and supply sufficient details to answer them.

STEP 5: . . . insert a clear reference to the idea of the preceding paragraph.

STEP 6: Make sure every sentence in your theme is connected with, and makes a clear reference to, the preceding sentence.[3]

We also find a more liberal view, in Professor Albert Kitzhaber's words, "that the primary purpose of the course is to focus the student's attention on the fundamental principles of clear thinking and the clear and the effective written expression of that thinking and to give him disciplined practice in applying the principles."[4] Clear Thinking for Composition summarizes the concerns of this particular view:

> This text is designed to communicate those reasoning skills essential to successful expository writing. Its order is tripartite and progressive. Analysis, the method of logical thinking (and an extremely useful prewriting heuristic), is first; next, those forces and reasoning habits that interfere with disinterested and logically valid analysis; and finally, an examination of the type of subject that requires students to inform themselves thoroughly before they can justifiably begin analysis of it, however complete their mastery of the content of the two preceding sections.[5]

Then we find a "skills" concept between the two ends of the spectrum, with "standard" grammatical rules and

conventions closely allied to the liberal. Harbrace College Workbook: From 8 A typifies this trend. "This book, like its predecessors, is frankly utilitarian. It begins with sentence analysis and stresses the basic principles of the clear English sentence, introducing . . . those grammatical terms most useful in writing. [It] . . . is a complete discussion, together with excercises, of the techniques involved in writing paragraphs and essays."[6]

Most programs I am acquainted with are between the service or practical concept and the "intellectual training" concept; they fuse the compositional component with models of "well-written" prose, attempting to obtain both intellectually and through performance the basic habits of thought and expression common to "clear" and "fluent" prose, based on a command of the "standard" grammatical system, basic logic, rhetorical principles, and careful selection of subject matter. Steps in Composition, the text which represents this view, is designed ". . . to stimulate students with visuals, essays, and vocabulary sections while simultaneously providing participatory, reinforced instruction in spelling, vocabulary, and basic grammar and rhetoric."[7]

Then there are those who suggest we need to do in writing what we do in every other area--to provide training for teachers of composition. Some institutions have responded to this suggestion by directing their English

students to the education school for a course or two. Education courses, however, really focus more on pedagogy than on the subjects of writing, and the lessons learned, while valuable, are also limited. Future teachers learn "X" number of effective ways to teach paragraphing using transparencies, films, and ads cut from magazines, but they do not learn why "good" paragraphing is essential.

Then there are some institutions which offer a specific program--Doctor of Arts in English--which is committed to preparing teachers to teach writing. Some of the institutions where this program is in operation are: The University of Michigan, Syracuse University, New York University and University of North Dakota. Although graduation requirements vary, the purpose of the Doctor of Arts in English in all these institutions is the same. The University of Michigan Doctor of Arts in English Program's bulletin states its basic purpose is to prepare English teachers for teaching at the undergraduate level. The bulletin states this purpose more explicitly:

> As in other D.A. programs now existing or proposed, Michigan's . . . focus [is] on teaching rather than research. Preparation for teaching includes an internship to be served in . . . [an undergraduate] . . . college, and a wide range of courses in learning theory, development of language and cognition, pedagogical theory and method, as well as social and psychological problems of the classroom and its inhabitants. Though research will not be central to the program, it will be an important component of a doctoral project in which candidates will be asked to discover and evaluate ideas, materials, and techniques that contribute to the learning and teaching of English. New research on

> teaching English in the . . . [undergraduate] college is badly needed; we will expect graduates from the D.A. program to contribute to that research.[8]

So, this particular program does not suggest to its students that it will provide the framework for answers and cures for the attacks that are facing them. It provides them with the equipment to begin their journey by raising questions. As they raise questions, they can point college students toward possibly less frightening paths in their search for answers, or at least help them to avoid known dead-ends. While studying in this program, graduate students are exposed to research in composition which suggests that negative reinforcement does not work, that revising writing is important, that lessons in prescriptive grammar are counterproductive.[9] Some of the work in transformational grammar has immediate practical value for composition. There is also Francis Christensen's generative approach to the sentence, paragraph and essay.[10] They can point to James Sledd's attack on biloquialism[11] and to Jay Robinson's suggestion that there is a crucial difference between marking errors and diagnosing problems.[12]

In their search for possibilities, not panaceas, these students develop and implement compositional models. Below I have summarized some of the research efforts which propose to make the freshman composition students' experiences in the classroom more rewarding, vital and personally relevant.

1. Kathleen L. Eisele attached sociolinguistic theory to Peter Elbow's theory in Writing Without Teachers and developed a Writing Security[13] compositional model. She contends the instructor must place emphasis on three principles: ". . . awareness of the nature of language, a theory of writing instruction and an awareness of students. It seemed to me that students do practice their writing in order to improve it. I also thought if students know about language, they could control it, and therefore, become more confident writers." By "writing security" or "confident writers" Eisele means ". . . belief in oneself as a writer and belief in one's ability to improve one's writing."

2. F. Sharon Drolet offers a suggestive course model which is rooted in the tenets of transactional analysis.[14] She believes if the course begins with an introduction to this theory, the classroom atmosphere becomes perhaps more conducive for clarification of the written expression. This theory provides for an ". . . open workshop method of teaching composition . . ." where the teacher is an active participant in the learning process, both students and teachers have equal adult postures in this classroom situation. Drolet contends this method provides more ". . . objective, descriptive rather than Parental and prescriptive notions of language and linguistic expression."

3. James Brazil's[15] discussion centered around two contrasting methods of teaching composition at the under-

graduate level. His purpose was to evaluate their effectiveness as tools to increase levels of learning by the students. These two methods of teaching were a "student-centered" approach and a "teacher-centered" approach. In his experiment, he attached the following traits to the method of conducting the "student-centered" approach: "dialect-acceptance philosophy; emphasis on invention and discourse stages of the compositional process; no grading papers, but long, supportive written comments and suggestions instead; no anthology text used, class activities centered around students' own writing; teacher-produced 'paralinguistic handbook' used during last two weeks of course; much emphasis on student discussion groups and student sharing activities; student choice of topics; student involvement in decision-making in such areas as grades, class activities, or suggestions for class direction; and explicit encouragement of personal growth and personal planning." The "teacher-centered" approach had these methods of instruction: "standard" English ". . . correctness doctrine; emphasis on discourse and editing stages of the compositional process; written assignments grades, with all surface "errors" marked; class discussion and written assignments centered around anthology of professionally written essays--to supply model, motivation, and assignments for student writing; commercially-produced "handbook" used throughout semester; no student reading and discussion of each other's papers,

no student discussion groups, no student sharing of strengths, weaknesses and experiences; no student choice in writing topics; no student decision-making in such areas as grades, class activities, or suggestions for class direction; and no explicit encouragement of personal growth or personal planning." His findings revealed that the "student-centered" classroom environment brought greater gains in all the affective areas, and that the "student-centered" approach brought about greater gains in writing "fluency."

4. Catherine E. F. Lamb's model[16], an attempt to teach the art of invention, proposes to provide a classroom atmosphere which encourages students to assume some of the functions traditionally performed by the teacher. The two functions the students assume are helping to decide on class objectives and evaluating one another's work (individually or group motivated). Lamb postulates this encourages the students"to take increased responsibility for achieving these objectives and therefore changes the students' attitudes in a positive manner toward writing as well as improves their rhetorical skills.

5. Gary N. Christensen[17] developed a "writing-everyday" approach to composition. He found after experimentation that there was an increase in the students' attitudes toward writing, an increase in their knowledge about their own writing and an improvement in their writing performance.

6. Camillus L. Odell[18] proposes in his study to show that

the use of the "tagmemic heuristic" model is a practical means of aiding the students to reach a level of self-awareness. He also feels this approach increases the students' sensitivities to experiences as they involve themselves in the process of inquiry and discovery. Odell uses the following definition of heuristic procedure: it is a ". . . set of questions or operations which speed up the process of inquiry and encourages the intuition of provisional solutions or hypothesis."

Although these compositional models are being developed and implemented and in most cases producing improvement in the quality of students' writing, the "literacy crisis" still overwhelms. This reality is so prevalent it has led one observer to recommend the abolition of freshman composition in the undergraduate curricula.[19] The argument maintains English departments have been given and have accepted responsibilities they cannot hope to fulfill and should not be asked to carry alone. The only realistic way to give those responsibilities to whomever should have them is to stop attempting the impossible. Responsibility of teaching the mechanics of surface structure belongs to the elementary and high schools. Additionally, writing cannot be taught in a vacuum; writing must be about something. If the unique function of freshman composition is to teach writing, this function can best be performed by various subject matter courses in the undergraduate

school, where subject matter is available and where assignments of writing can be realistic. Dropping freshman composition as a course would force all departments to share responsibility for students' use of the language.

I totally disagree with his drastic recommendation--dropping freshman composition as a universal requirement. This, I feel, would harm instead of help the students. In many cases, the composition classroom is the only time the students have "formal" learning experiences with language, literature and composition theory. The composition teacher is the expert trained to enhance these experiences; the previous analyses of various compositional models obviously reveal this. I would like to alter his suggestion that composition should be taught in every classroom to composition should be reinforced in all disciplines in the undergraduate curriculum.

The general notion of academic discipline reinforcement was the concern of a recent summer conference for educators sponsored by the Institute for Services to Education (ISE).[20] The theme of this conference was CREATE (Cooperative Reinforcement Emphasizing Accountability and Techniques in Education). The concerned educators, representing various historical Black colleges, worked with a team of experts from ISE's Division of Curriculum and Faculty Development on "creating" multidisciplinary teaching models to take back to represen-

tative home institutions (See Appendix A for summaries of some of these models).

These educators contend that since our system of education has tended to foster a learning process which encourages a division among the disciplines, this multi-disciplinary approach to education can provide an academic setting which will allow students to pull into focus the interrelatedness of various disciplines' learning experiences. There continuously appears to be a schism between what one learns from various college courses and how what one has learned is directly related to the creation of a more productive personal life. Often times courses are taught in isolation from one another and the content correlations are not made among the disciplines by the faculty members. Seldom are students taught a process whereby the interrelatedness of the learned materials can be internalized for their own growth and development once they have graduated.

The concerned educators feel it is important that faculty members at various home institutions work closely together to reinforce one another's teaching strategies, techniques and content. They further believe that it is the reponsibility of the entire faculty to insure that students receive their constitutional rights in education.

This notion of discipline reinforcement is the general concern of this research. There is no question about the need for this philosophical posture to be explored by

committed teachers. Educators, teaching at all educational levels, should explore ways to improve their current teaching styles. They should go one step further and begin to create a systematic procedure at their institutional levels for multi-disciplinary course structures. The specific concern, however, of this research is to analyze and document the concept of English composition being reinforced in every classroom, with specific emphasis being placed on the application of this concept to the introductory speech class.

A review of the literature indicates there are no well-defined works analyzing the concept of English composition being reinforced in every classroom. Daniel Fader generally entertains this pedagogical concept in his Hooked on Books.[21] Fader's contention is that no discipline within the school curriculum is independent of language arts skills. All teachers, then, in the school should become quasi-English teachers. Particularly, he suggests that English composition instructors should serve as consultants for other teachers outside of this discipline, consultants who would offer compositional models that other instructors could incorporate in their classrooms. This could be done by teachers of various disciplines who wish to see their students progress and who would not hestitate to use the models.

This approach attempts to provide the answer to the repeated complaint, "Why Johnny Can't Write," which

has been consistently referred to the English composition teacher. Instead of English composition being isolated as the panacea for students' urgent needs for increased language competences, all disciplines within the school curriculum should come together as a community and should participate in teaching what all depend upon for their existence.

This pedagogical experiment was implemented at two schools: W. J. Maxey Boys Training School at Whitmore Lake, Michigan and Garnet-Patterson Junior High School in Washington, D.C. Fader, who served as consultant at both schools, found that this schoolwide approach to the language problem yielded the following evaluative responses from its implementers:

> 'I've noticed a big improvement in their history spelling. I don't know if it's due to the program or not.'
>
> 'Their vocabulary seems about to have doubled. They really go for those dictionaries.'
>
> 'I find that the pupils show much greater freedom and expression than they did at the beginning. The papers most recently written are much more interesting to read than the earlier papers.'
>
> 'Every member of my team has said how much better our students are writing. It's important to the students that all of their teachers are working on their writing together. They like that.'
>
> 'It makes the child aware of the consolidated efforts of the teachers.'
>
> 'It gives the English teacher opportunities to evaluate her own effectiveness by the quality of work done by the child in other classrooms.'
>
> 'It's a wonderful method of teaching.'[22]

Fader's "English in every classroom" experiment and ISE's discipline reinforcement experiment have provided the philosophical foundation for my particular concern, shaping and testing a pedagogical model which applies the teaching of compositional skills to the introductory speech course. The primary focus of this study was the community college environment since this is the setting in which I have acquired my teaching experience. Thus the community college was the exploratory setting in which I devised an alternative approach to teaching writing skills.

This study was conducted in an introductor speech class at a community college. I conducted an e pirical study of the effects of an alternative approach to the teaching of writing skills designed for the introductory speech class at the community college level. I expect to show in my study that by using this "Speech-comp model", the students' literacy and oracy will be improved.

This "Speech-comp model" was applied at Kennedy-King Community College in Chicago, Illinois. Kennedy-King is one of seven city community colleges which has an urban student population. Secondly, we attempted to measure the effects of this model in improving the writing skills and speaking skills of the student and finally compare the effects of this approach with that of the traditional approach of the English composition class.

To document and describe this experiment our dis-

cussion is divided into four additional chapters. Chapter II is concerned with determining if community college students possess better writing skills or speaking skills. What are the specific problem areas of community college students in speaking and writing? Are they basically the same or are they widely different? Chapter III provides the theoretical framework, the rhetoric of speech and the rhetoric of writing ("Speech-comp model"), to teaching communication skills at the community college level. Chapter IV is an explication of the application and evaluation of the "Speech-comp" experiment. Chapter V is the concluding chapter.

FOOTNOTES

[1]"Too Many A's," Time (November 11, 1974), p. 106; see David B. Truman, "The Necessity of Higher Literacy," The Chronicle of Higher Education (December 2, 1974), p. 24; also Professor Mike Shugrue's description of the problem as that of introducing "growing numbers of young adults to literacy--to reading, writing, and even to speaking." as quoted in "Crisis in English Writing," The Chronicle of Higher Education (September 23, 1974), p. 1.

[2]William J. Kerrigan, Writing to the Point: Six Basic Steps (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1974), p. vi.

[3]Ibid., pp. 6-122.

[4]Albert Kitzhaber, Themes, Theories, and Therapy: The Teaching of Writing in College (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), p. 8.

[5]Ray Kytle, Clear Thinking for Composition: Instructor's Manual (New York: Random House, 1977), p. 2.

[6]Sheila Y. Graham, Harbrace College Workbook: From 8 A (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977), p. x.

[7]Lynn Quitman Troyka and Jerrold Nudelman, Steps in Composition (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976), p. xvii.

[8]The Doctor of Arts in English (mimeographed bulletin), The University of Michigan, p. 3.

[9]Richard Braddock, Richard Lloyd-Jones and Lowell Schoer, Research in Written Composition (Champaign, Ill.: NCTE, 1963).

[10]Francis Christensen, "A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence," and "A generative Rhetoric for the Paragraph," Teaching Freshman Composition (1975), pp. 190-217.

[11]James Sledd, "Doublespeak: Dialectology in the Service of Big Brother," Varieties of Present-day English, eds. Richard Bailey and Jay Robinson (New York: MacMillan, 1973), pp. 439-456.

[12]Jay Robinson, "The Wall of Babel: Or, Up Against the Language Barrier," Varieties of Present-day English, eds. Bailey and Robinson, pp. 413-448.

FOOTNOTES (con't.)

[13]Kathleen Lee Eisele, "Writing Security," Diss., The University of Michigan, 1977.

[14]F. Sharon Drolet, "Transactional Anlysis and Related Psychotherapeutic Techniques in the College Composition and Communication Classroom," Diss., The University of Michigan, 1975.

[15]James Michael Brazil, "On Teaching Composition at the Community College," Diss., The University of Michigan, 1975.

[16]Catherine E. F. Lamb, "On Suffering Change: A Theory of Instruction in the Art of Invention," Diss., The University of Michigan, 1974.

[17]Gary N. Christensen, "Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Daily Practice in a College Composition Course," Diss., The University of Michigan, 1975.

[18]Camillus L. Odell, "Discovery Procedures for Contemporary Rhetoric: A Study of the Usefulness of the Tagmemic Heuristic Model in Teaching Composition," Diss., The University of Michigan, 1970.

[19]Warner Rice, "A Proposal for Abolition of Freshman English as It Is Now Commonly Taught, from the College Curriculum," College English, 21 (1960), pp. 361-367.

[20]The Institute for Services to Education was incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1965 and received a basic grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The organization is founded on the principle that education today requires a fresh examination of what is worth teaching as well as a pedagogy of teaching. ISE undertakes a variety of educational tasks, working cooperatively with other educational institutions, under grants from government agencies and private foundations. ISE is a catalyst for change. It does not just produce educational materials or techniques that are innovative; it develops, in cooperation with teachers and administrators, procedures for effective installation of successful materials and techniques in the colleges.

From 1967 to the present, ISE has been working cooperatively with the Thirteen-College Consortium in developing the Thirteen-College Curriculum Program. The Thirteen-College Curriculum Program was an educational experiment that included developing new curricular materials for the entire freshman year of college in the areas of English, mathematics, social science, physical

FOOTNOTES (con't)

20 (con't) science, and biology, and two sophomore year courses, humanities and philosophy.

The program is designed to reduce the attrition rate of entering freshmen through well through out, creative curricular materials, new teaching styles, and different faculty arrangements for instruction. In addition, the program seeks to alter the educational pattern of the institutions involved by changing blocks of courses rather than by developing single courses. In this sense, the Thirteen-College Curriculum Program is viewed not only as a curriculum program with a consistent set of academic goals for the separate courses, but also as a vehicle to produce new and pertinent educational changes within the consortium institutions.

21 Daniel Fader, and Morton H. Shaevitz, Hooked on Books (New York: Berkley Medallion Books, 1966). Also see Fader's Final Report (Cooperative Research Project, Contract No. OE-6-10-313); English for Reluctant Learners, Grades 7-9: English in Every Classroom (under Contract with: Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education and Administered through: Office of Research Administration, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1967).

22 Fader, Hooked on Books, p. 25.

# CHAPTER II

## THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT

The nature of the student population in the community college can be illuminated by focussing first on the evolutionary framework of this educational institution in the United States. The unique development of the community college in the United States strongly predetermined to a large degree the type of student that would attend these institutions.

While the community colleges historically began in the mid-1800's as privately operated institutions, they encountered difficulty and resistance in being accepted as a legitimate part of higher education in the United States. "American public community colleges came into existence at the turn of the century."[1] These first public community colleges were the work of a group of educational innovators who recognized a need for such institutions in American higher education. One authority in discussing the early movement of public community colleges in the United States succinctly noted:

> While this concept of higher education did not gain wide acceptance at the time, by the early decades of the twentieth century it claimed an increasing number of adherents. A few local school systems begin to offer work at the freshman and sophomore levels. The movement made considerable progress in the Midwest under William Rainey Harper, president of the University of Chicago, who set up a system affiliated with colleges attached to an academy or public high school. In 1911 in Fresno, California, the high school established a junior college with three

> teachers and 15 students, thus giving birth to what would become one of the most extensive public junior college systems in the country.[2]

The other trend of development of community colleges in the United States was the state-supported systems set up to provide educational opportunities to rural youth who were distant from urban centers. This pattern dominated in states such as New York, Oklahoma and Mississippi.

But the modest beginning of community colleges in the United States was to take a turn immediately following WWII and again in the 1960's. There were several factors which led to these two explosive periods of development of the community college in the United States. Following WWII, an expanding job market which was primarily based in the area of industrial technology was to be accommodated by the ability of the community college as an appropriate institution to offer and provide the new and various training programs which our economy demanded. Another factor which gave rise to a rapid development of the community college after WWII, was the fact that these institutions were able to absorb the great demand for college enrollment after the war due to returning military personnel taking advantage of the G.I. Bill. In other words, the demand for college enrollment exceeded the capacity of the four-year institution in the United States. Consequent-community colleges absorbed the enrollment spill-over of the over-crowded four-year institutions. The community college enrollment in 1946 accounted for 10 percent of the

total national enrollment in institutions of higher education in the United States.[3]

In the 1960's the growth of the community colleges surged again in the United States. The growth during this period could be attributed primarily to the fact that by this decade the concept of the community college had gained acceptance as a legitimate component of American higher education. The growth of community colleges received impetus from the sanctioning of educational authorities. In 1964, "the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association maintained that any high school graduate must be allowed to take two years of post secondary education if the nation's goal of universal educational opportunity is to be realized."[4]

The other crucial factors which gave rise to a greater emphasis on the development of community colleges were the returning veterans of the Korean and Vietnam conflicts who sought to take advantage of the educational benefits provided by state and federal legislation and increasing demands by disadvantaged urban minority Americans for greater educational opportunities.[5] This rapid surge in growth of the community college in the 1960's was a result of its ability to respond to these pressures. As a consequence of these pressures on American higher education, the number of public community colleges doubled in the period of a decade from 656 in 1960 to over 1,100 in 1970. A corresponding increase in student enrollment in community

colleges has occured concurrently. While all fifty states have public community colleges, the general development of these institutions has been uneven in that the majority of them are to be found in the big industrial-urban states.[6] Thus, such states as Illinois, Michigan, New York, California and Pennsylvania lead the nation in the numbers of community colleges in enrollment.

The nature of the student population at community colleges, given their evolutionary framework, begins to give us some general profile or prototype. We begin to get a general profile of a student population which is adult or otherwise not fresh out of high school, a disproportionate number of disadvantaged urban minorities, and those who would take advantage of higher institutions that were philosophically predicated upon the idea that each individual should be allowed to develop to the limits of his capabilities.

By focussing next upon the research studies done on community college students we may be able to further characterize the nature of the student population that comprises the community college. Since our interest extends now to an assessment of the "communication skills" of community college students in establishing a need for an alternative introductory speech class at this academic level.

A perusal of the studies done on the community

college students reveals that they focus primarily on comparing their academic ability with that of four-year college students, characterizing socio-economic backgrounds and their occupational interests and motivation.

In measuring the academic ability of the community college students, researchers typically compared the scores on standardized tests of community college students with those of students attending four-year colleges. "Carefully designed research studies find that junior college students in national, regional, or statewide samples achieve lower mean scores on academic ability tests than comparably selected students at four-year colleges and universities."[7]

Cumulative research studies confirm the fact that ". . . , public two-year college students, as a group, are from a considerably lower socio-economic background than are university students."[8] This is not surprising since the nominal costs of attending public community colleges has always been one of its attractive features for those who could not afford to attend other traditional types of higher educational institutions.

The studies on community college students confirm the general fact that the nature of the student body does not coincide with the characteristics of the students attending "traditional" or four-year institutions of higher learning. By contrast, the student body differs in its socio-economic background, academic ability and ethnic composition. In other words the student population at the

community college is non-traditional.

One scholar has appropriately defined what she calls the "new student" in American higher education which traditional institutions are not prepared to educate: ethnic minorities, adults and women.[9] This concept of "new student" certainly is consistent with the general characterizations of the community college student population. Although the community college student population certainly is not exclusively comprised of "new students" it is not comprised of "traditional students", those who attend four-year institutions. Instead, the community college student population is comprised of varying proportions of these types. The student population of the community college was succinctly summarized by one scholar when he observed:

> "Community college students have different needs from those of their four-year counterparts. 'Poor' students are in the majority. They cut across racial, ethnic, and class lines. The open-door policy produces a heterogeneous student body, representatives of the total population. Community colleges must expect and provide for students from the lower two-thirds of the academic spectrum--an important yet frequently ignored fact."[10]

Because the community college is dedicated to providing post-secondary education for any student who wants it, it has inevitably drawn students who are non-traditional, who have a different set of expectations and needs than their four-year counterparts.

## The Community College Student and Communication Skills

Since the studies on community college students made assessments of their general academic ability based on performance on standardized tests, there exist no data that focus upon measuring specifically the verbal or communication skills of community college students. In order to devise alternative approaches to teaching communication skills, verbal or oral, to the non-traditional student population of the community college we had to generate data that sought to measure or give us some framework for devising non-traditional methods of teaching communication skills at the community college level.

## Methodology

In order to measure the communication skills of community college students, it was decided to rely upon the experience of communication teachers, English and Speech, at community colleges. We in turn developed a questionnaire to be completed by English and Speech teachers at community colleges within the Chicago City College System and doctoral students enrolled in the Doctor of Arts in English Program at The University of Michigan. These doctoral students are basically community college instructors or instructors at four-year institutions with open-admission policies. Our population sample of English and Speech teachers consisted of 300 of which only 125 responded by

completing and returning the questionnaire.

The questionnaire consisted of both open- and closed-ended questions. The questions were designed to identify in which area of communication, written or oral, community college students were strongest, what specific problems in teaching oral and written communication community colleges have, and what type of communication curriculum exists in community colleges.

The 125 respondents in our sample consisted of three categories--English teachers, Speech teachers and English-Speech teachers. English teachers comprised 55 percent of our sample, while Speech teachers constituted 34 percent and teachers of both comprised 11 percent of our sample. Our respondents were teachers of considerable experience. The average years of experience in teaching for our sample was 10 years. Thus, our sample opinions as a source for gathering reliable data cannot be in doubt.

In constructing our questionnaire we operated out of some hypotheses about the "communication skills of community college students, based on our own experience. Thus the questionnaire tested our hypotheses about the writing and oral skills of the community college student which would form the basis for creating alternative approaches to teaching these skills at the community college level.

The four hypotheses which we sought to confirm from our sample were:

Hypothesis 1: Community College students possess better oral communication skills than

writing skills.

Hypothesis 2: Comunity College students write differently from the way they speak.

Hypothesis 3: Community College students' problems with oral expression parallel their problems with written expression.

Hypothesis 4: The discrepancy in oral and written communication skills is a product of an emphasis in community colleges' curricula on developing written skills.

Data Findings

We analyzed our data based on four perspectives. We first measured the responses of all communication teachers--English, Speech, English-Speech. These allowed for the comparisons between different communication teachers and revealed whether there were differences in their assessment of the "communication skills" of the community college student.

To show our findings we present the data collected in tabular form to show the basis of analysis.

The data seem to be highly supportive of hypothesis 1: Community college students possess better oral communication skills than writing skills. In all four categories, the overall responses of all communication teachers, English, Speech, English-Speech, the data confirm that the community college student possesses better oral communication skills than writing skills.

Based on the overall responses (Table I), 94 percent of all communication teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that most of their students possessed better oral

TABLE I

Overall Responses of English, Speech and English-Speech Teachers

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Based on my experience, most of my students write differently from the way they speak. | 31% | 45% | 13% | 11% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students possess better oral communication skills than writing skills. | 38% | 56% | 3% | 3% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students possess better writing skills than oral communication skills. | 0% | 7% | 41% | 52% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students speak as well as they write. | 7% | 18% | 51% | 24% |

| | Need Great Improvement | Need Little Improvement | Need No Improvement[11] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Based on my experience, the speaking or oral communication skills of most of my students. | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Based on my experience, the writing skills of most of my students. | 31% | 69% | 0% |

communication skills than writing skills. When English teachers are analyzed alone the hypothesis is even more highly supported. One hundred percent (Table II) of the English teachers agreed or strongly agreed that most of their students possessed better oral communication skills than writing skills. Eighty-two percent of Speech teachers (Table III) agreed or strongly agreed that most of their students possessed better oral communication skills than writing skills. All English-Speech teachers (Table IV) either agreed or strongly agreed that based on their experiences most community college students possess better oral communication skills than writing skills.

This position is further confirmed by looking at the responses of the four categories to three other questions raised which attempted to see if community college students speak as well as they write, write better than they speak, need greatest improvement in writing skills or oral communication skills.

On the question relating to the writing skills of community college students all four categories disagreed or strongly disagreed that most of their students possess better writing skills than oral communication skills. In the overall category, 93 percent of the teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed that the community college students possess better writing skills than oral communication skills. Measuring the responses of the English teachers alone, 90 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that community

TABLE II

Responses of English Teachers

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Based on my experience, most of my students write differently from the way they speak. | 18% | 63% | 13% | 6% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students possess better oral communication skills than writing skills. | 20% | 80% | 0% | 0% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students possess better writing skills than communication skills. | 0% | 10% | 63% | 27% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students speak as well as they write. | 10% | 10% | 60% | 20% |

| | Need Great Improvement | Need Little Improvement | Need No Improvement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Based on my experience, the speaking or oral communication skills of most of my students | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Based on my experience, the writing skills of most of my students | 53% | 47% | 0% |

TABLE III

Responses of Speech Teachers

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Based on my experience, most of my students write differently from the way they speak. | 37% | 27% | 18% | 18% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students possess better oral communication skills than writing skills. | 64% | 18% | 9% | 9% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students possess better writing skills than oral communication skills. | 0% | 9% | 9% | 82% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students speak as well as they write. | 7% | 28% | 19% | 46% |

| | Need Great Improvement | Need Little Improvement | Need No Improvement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Based on my experience, the speaking or oral communication skills of my students | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Based on my experience, the writing skills of most of my students | 0% | 100% | 0% |

TABLE IV

Responses of English-Speech Teachers

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Based on my experience, most of my students write differently from the way they speak. | 66% | 34% | 0% | 0% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students possess better oral communication skills than writing skills. | 34% | 66% | 0% | 0% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students possess better writing skills than oral communication skills. | 0% | 0% | 34% | 66% |
| Based on my experience, most of my students speak as well as they write. | 10% | 13% | 54% | 23% |

| | Need Great Improvement | Need Little Improvement | Need No Improvement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Based on my experience, the speaking or oral communication skills of most of my students | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Based on my experience, the writing skills of most of my students | 0% | 100% | 0% |

college students possess better writing skills than oral communication skills. Ninety-one percent of Speech teachers at the community college level disagreed or strongly disagreed that community college students possess better writing skills than oral communication skills. English-Speech teachers confirmed the contention unanimously, 100 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that community college students possess better writing skills than oral communication skills.

Hypothesis 1 was more firmly confirmed by the fact that all four categories affirmed that community college students do not write as well as they speak. Measuring the overall responses of all the teachers, we find that 75 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that the community college students speak as well as they write. Eighty percent of all the English teachers in our sample disagreed or strongly disagreed that their students speak as well as they write. The proportion of disagreement that the community college students speak as well as they write among Speech teachers was 65 percent, while it was 75 percent for the English-Speech teachers in our sample.

We found that in terms of determining which skills, oral or written, of the community college students need the most improvement, there existed a varied opinion between our three categories of communication teachers. In the category of the overall responses, 100 percent of our sample believes that the oral communication skills of community

college students need little improvement, while only 31 percent believe that the writing skills need little improvement. We get a stronger difference of opinion among just the English teachers. While 100 percent of the English teachers believe that the speaking or oral communication skills of the community college students need little improvement, a majority believe the writing skills need great improvement, 53 percent Speech teachers indicated something even different from the above two categories: they expressed (100 percent) the belief that both the oral communication and writing skills of the community college students need little improvement. The English-Speech teachers took the same position; 100 percent of them believe that both the oral and writing skills of the communication skills need little improvement.

Although there existed a wide degree of variance in opinion among our sample on which skills needed the greatest improvement, the data supported that variance; the writing skills of the community college student needed the greatest improvement when compared with his oral communication skills.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 will be the topic of concern under another section.

Out of our sample 76 percent of our respondents report that their community college does not require any speech classes for their students. Although this does not establish a causal relationship between the communication

skills of community college students and their training, it does indicate that there is a correlation between the curriculum and the discrepancies between the oral and written communication skills of students. Thus hypothesis 4 seems to be supported by our data.

## FOOTNOTES

[1]Leonard V. Koos, The Junior College Movement (Boston, 1925), pp. 2-4

[2]Leland L. Medsker, Breaking the Access Barrier (New York, 1971), p. 13.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Medsker, p. 13.

[5]Dorothy M. Knoell, "Who Goes To College In The Cities?", Junior College Journal, Vol. 40, September, 1969, p. 23.

[6]William Morsch, State Community College Systems (New York, 1971), pp. 1-3.

[7]K. Patricia Cross, The Junior College Student: A Research Description (San Francisco, 1971), p. 160.

[8]Medsker, p. 44.

[9]K. Patricia Cross, Beyond the Open Door (San Francisco, 1971), p. 159.

[10]John E. Rousche and John C. Pitman, A Modest Proposal: Students Can Learn (San Francisco, 1972), pp. 2-5.

[11]The Speech-Comp survey form was used in this project to validate the premise of this discourse, however, the distinction between "Need Great Improvement" and "Need Little Improvement," here and in Tables II, III, and IV is deliberately unscientific in terms of its ability to make fine discriminations. If used as a measuring instrument in similar experiments or research projects, investigators would do well to broaden the spectrum of possible responses so as to educe degrees of improvement, and to allow for minimal responses.

# CHAPTER III

## AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING COMPOSITION: SPEECH-COMP

Rhetoric is the art of effective expression in speech or writing. Thus courses which are focussed around the development of either verbal or oral skills have the same ultimate goal, teaching students how to express themselves effectively.

At the community college level, most curricula require that students take two semesters of English composition. This requirement exists at all colleges, four-year and two-year in the United States. All freshmen are usually required to take English composition. Therefore despite the academic discipline or professional interests of students in colleges in the United States they can expect to take a course in English composition.

This requirement is justified on the basis of two distinct arguments. The first centers around the "service" function of the composition course. One author has explained this concept succinctly in this manner;

> The course exists to provide immediate therapy for students whose academic future is clouded by their inability to manage the written form of English with reasonable ease, precision, and correctness.[1]

Thus the essential purpose of freshman English from the "service" concept is a practical one: to develop each student's writing skill to the level of competence required by college work. The second argument for requiring English

composition involves a non-practical function for the course. It is predicated upon the broad notion of intellectual training, a chief component of the idea of liberal education. Therefore, English composition is justified as a requirement in the curriculum of colleges and universities to foster in students the ability to think clearly and effectively express their thinking in written form.

As a result of these two justifications or varying points of view on the essential purpose of the composition course we find that throughout American colleges and universities the freshmen composition course takes a variety of forms. This is due to the fact that these courses emphasize different dimensions of language as a mechanism for improving the writing skills of students. Courses may emphasize grammar, logic, literature. In describing the diverse nature of English composition in American colleges and universities, one authority has explained the state of freshman composition courses in the following manner:

> . . . the personal theories--or simply the preferences--of the people who have charge of organizing courses in freshman English determine the nature of the course; and what goes by the name of freshman composition on one campus may bear little resemblance to a course of the same name on another. The course may be based on any of the following or on innumerable combinations of them:
>
> 1. Traditional grammar, usage, and mechanics (punctuation, spelling) often with the familiar exercises of sentence diagramming.

2. The "new grammar"--structural linguistics.

3. Literature, organized by major types, by major figures, by restriction to someone's list of Great Books of the Western World.

4. Rhetoric of various kinds, from the classical theory of Aristotle and Quintilian to the familiar nineteenth-century systems of paragraph development and "forms of discourse."

5. Logic, in amounts ranging from only a day or two spent discussing fallacies to book-length treatments that dominate an entire semester's work.

6. Semantics of various kinds and according to various prophets.

7. The communication process and the mass media.

8. Public speaking.

9. Propaganda speaking.

10. A kind of watered-down social survey based on collections of essays drawn for the most part from current magazines.[2]

Thus the great diversity of the state of freshman composition leads us to the same general conclusion that more and more scholars are beginning to draw: freshman composition in American universities and colleges suffers greatly from a confusion of purpose, content and organization. Is freshman composition achieving its general purpose? Scholars today frequently remark that the verbal skills of American students are progressively declining. In other words the belief that American students are writing worse

than their preceeding generation is rapidly gaining popularity among scholars.

On the other side of the coin, the fate of the courses in the college curriculum that seek to develop the oral communications skills of students has not been that much different from that of English composition. In the community college, specifically, the status of speech has always been one of lower priority in terms of curriculum emphasis. There is typically no speech requirement in the community college.[3] Therefore, although for different reasons, the destiny of speech is strikingly similar to that of freshman composition.

Thus, the acquisition of effective "communication skills" by community college and all other college students is cast in serious doubt even among those who are responsible for insuring their acquisition. This predicament necessitates that we begin to devise alternative approaches in the English and Speech disciplines that would relieve us of the doubt that presently prevails. If we fail to do this the future of a generation of American college students will bear the brunt, though the implications for the functioning of the broader society are considerable.

In an attempt to contribute to this process it shall be our purpose to offer some alternative approach to the dilemma of English composition and speech courses at the community college level. We shall call our approach a rhetoric of writing and speaking approach to the acquisi-

tion of communication skills.

The theoretical basis of this approach is that the principles of communication, both written and oral, are basically the same. We rely heavily on the concept of rhetoric in devising an alternative approach to the teaching of verbal and oral skills at the community college level. This is obviously a departure from the present approach to teaching those skills in that most emphasis has been placed on developing writing skills. By combining and equally emphasizing both writing skills and oral skills, the student is predicted to be able to learn to write with greater ease while at the same time perfecting and improving his oral communication skills. The underlying assumption is that community college students have substantially better oral communication skills than writing skills and thus by teaching in a way in which you get them to learn to write by transferring and capitalizing upon their oral communication skills, they will learn to write more effectively with greater ease and more quickly.

The underlying assumption we make here has been verified by data we collected from our sample of English, Speech and English-Speech teachers at the community college level. We attempted to identify the problems of speech and the problems in writing of students based on the experience of community college level teachers. In attempting to identify the problems of speech we solicited the responses of speech teachers and English-Speech teachers,

thus, we had the different perspectives of two categories of teachers in each case in attempting to identify the problems community college students have in written expression and oral expression. This method works to lend more validity to our conclusions about the problems in writing or speaking community college students have.

The English-teachers in our sample generally agree that community college students have problems expressing ideas, using correct grammar and syntax and deploying an adequate vocabulary. (Table I) The teachers who have had experience in teaching both speech and English (Table II) overall were in agreement with the English teachers about the problems in writing that the community college students encounter. They identified the same problem areas as the English teachers.

In the area of speech, Speech teachers, the data reveals, identified the following areas as those which present community college students' problems in effective oral communication: expressing ideas, syntax, grammar, vocabulary and diction. (Table III) The teachers of English and Speech confirmed these areas as problem areas for community college students in communicating effectively in speech. (Table IV)

Thus, we can conclude and make another central assumption for our alternative approach to the teaching of English and speech based on the findings of our data: the problems

TABLE I

Problems in Writing
(English Teachers)

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is expressing ideas. | 47% | 53% | 0% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is syntax. | 13% | 60% | 20% | 7% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is incorrect grammar. | 20% | 47% | 26% | 7% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is the lack of an adequate vocabulary. | 26% | 54% | 20% | 0% |

TABLE II

Problems in Writing
(English-Speech Teachers)

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is in expressing ideas. | 34% | 66% | 0% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is syntax. | 0% | 66% | 34% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is incorrect grammar. | 34% | 66% | 0% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is the lack of an adequate vocabulary. | 34% | 66% | 0% | 0% |

TABLE III

Problems In Speech
(Speech Teachers)

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is in expressing ideas. | 23% | 62% | 15% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is syntax. | 23% | 54% | 23% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is grammar. | 38% | 54% | 8% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is the lack of an adequate vocabulary. | 39% | 38% | 23% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is diction. | 8% | 54% | 38% | 0% |

TABLE IV

Problems In Speech
(English-Speech Teachers)

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is in expressing ideas. | 66% | 0% | 34% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is syntax. | 66% | 0% | 34% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is incorrect grammar. | 66% | 34% | 0% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is the lack of an adequate vocabulary. | 66% | 0% | 34% | 0% |
| One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is diction. | 66% | 0% | 34% | 0% |

of community college students in effective writing and oral communications skills are the same. Our model is thus predicated on the following assumptions: (1) the principles of communication, both oral and written, are the same; (2) the problems in writing and speaking of community college students are basically the same although these problems are more severe in the students' attempts to express themselves in written form. Our data reveals that community college students write differently from the way they speak. (Table V)

## The "Communication Approach" to the Teaching of Writing and Oral Communication Skills

The rhetoric of writing and the rhetoric of speech for definition purposes will be called communication. Thus our alternative course to the teaching of writing skills and oral communication skills will not be called English composition or Speech but Speech-Comp.

Speech-Comp seeks to develop the writing skills and oral communication skills of students concurrently. The "communications" course is based on the concept of rhetoric. Since rhetoric is broadly defined as the art of effective expression, the concept does not contradict the aims of the traditional English composition course or the speech course at the college level. Rhetoric further connotes the principles of clear thinking and effective expression. The notion of rhetoric historically involves four traditions:

TABLE V

Responses of Speech Teachers

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Based on my experience, most of my students write differently from the way they speak. | 37% | 27% | 18% | 18% |

Responses of English-Speech Teachers

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Based on my experience, most of my students write differently from the way they speak. | 66% | 34% | 0% | 0% |

propaganda, literary criticism, persuasion (Aristotle) and the quality of the writer in his adherence to truth and virtue (Plato).[4] These are the basic concerns in teaching effective writing.

The proposed course, "Speech-Comp." thus departs from the traditional course in composition in that it seeks to transcend the mere emphasis of literary skills, writing and reading, but incorporates in this effort the skills of speaking and listening. The Speech-Comp course would be involved in the overall process of what has been called "language production and reception."[5] In showing the relationship between speech and English Composition as the same process one author has succinctly and aptly observed:

> . . . First of all then I would like to talk about the fundamental process going on in English teaching . . . I would produce three words which would seem to me to describe the essential process that we are concerned with in the teaching of English. These words would be the verbalization of experience. In other words, it's encouraging people to put what they have experienced into words--when I'm writing I'm putting something that happened to me into words, when I'm speaking I'm putting something that happened to me into words. . . The other part of the process encouraging English teaching is the experience of verbalization. "Verbalization" is what other people write and what other people say. And we as readers read what they write and we as listeners listen to what they are speaking. . .[6]

The author defines experience in very broad terms. Not only does experience mean what has happened to the student but it involves all encounters of the student, e.g., reading a novel, visiting places, reading poetry, and under-

going what comes to his mind when he hears a bell ring, etc. . . .

The next step in our proposed "Speech-Comp" course is to avoid the conventional trend in teaching English composition of setting out the traditional goals and objectives of certain skills. The conventional English composition course establishes usually as its objective to perfect certain skills such as grammar, spelling, paragraphing etc. The conventional English composition course is designed as a result of our perception of the main components of English: language, literature, and composition. We propose abandoning this approach because it confines us to enhancing only the skills of reading and writing.

This perspective in planning the English composition or "Speech-Comp" course should be replaced by emphasizing the notion of "experience" or more specifically the "verbalization of experience." In starting with the objective of the "verbalization of experience" as the focus of the "Speech-Comp" course, one naturally begins with producing language and this is called procution. Language is produced two ways: by speaking it and writing it.[7] If language is produced it also is received by listening and reading. This is called the recognition of language.

Out of recognition of the fact that there was no term describing the skills of speaking and listening of language like there was a concept that referred to the skills of reading and writing, i.e. literacy, one scholar

has adopted the concept of "oracy" to fill this void.[8] Thus, reading and writing are the skills of literacy and speaking and listening are the skills of "oracy".

Our proposed "Speech-Comp" course or alternative approach seeks to incorporate the skills of literacy and oracy in imparting effective communication skills to the community college student. Now since this is an unconventional approach combining speech and English, we should clarify more broadly how this is to be done.

We should like to do this by clarifying further the "speech" aspect of this proposed new approach since it is the area which has been greatly neglected in teaching communication skills at the college level. This approach is all the more novel because speech traditionally has been treated and looked upon as a frill subject.

But in our proposed merger of speech and composition we are contending that speech lessons should not be separate from English lessons. First of all we must make it clear that when we speak of speech we are not referring to certain types of speaking, e.g. <u>public speaking</u>, interpretative language, recitation of a poem. For our proposed "Speech-Comp" course is ingrained in the realist's dimension of speech by which everyone is affected. Very few of us ever have to make a public speech. What we refer to in the notion of speech is a certain quality of language which involves our own putting of words together

and expressing our ideas and thoughts. Secondly, the equal emphasis on "speech" or "oracy" in teaching effective communication grows out of the recognition that "our communication is most of the time through speaking and listening, and very little of the time through reading and writing. . ."[9]

There is a growing recognition upon the part of English faculty at the community college level which specifically points to the importance of emphasizing speech skills in traditional composition courses. In a national survey of community college English teachers in traditional composition courses, 47 percent expressed the idea that speech should be taught informally by all teachers of English while 27 percent went further to say that ". . . speech concepts and skills should be systematically but informally developed in the basic freshman composition course . . ."[10]

The effects of English Composition courses on students' writing are so hard to determine, and appear to be so negligable when measured, that some have begun to advocate that the course be dropped from the college curriculum. One author when commenting on the results of composition research notes:

> Most studies of improvement in student writing have been undertaken in composition to determine the superiority of one method over another. However, since students under all experimental conditions have generally failed to show significant improvement in their writing, the studies have seemed to indicate the equal in-

> efficiency of all methods being compared. Such lackluster results have finally forced researchers to question whether instruction in composition really has any positive effect on student writing at all. Thus far there has been very little evidence from research to support the contention that instruction in composition does have a significant favorable effect on student writing. Most studies, in fact, tend to disprove this contention.[11]

This observation points to the dilemma the English Composition course finds itself in. Perhaps this predicament accounts for the willingness, and call by English professors themselves, for novel and experimental approaches for conducting composition courses.

However, in order to adopt and incorporate English composition in the introductory speech class as an alternative approach, we must first establish what problems exist in the teaching of composition skills. In other words, why is it hard to teach "Johnnie" how to write? Once we gain some insight into this much researched question we will have established a framework for attacking and remedying the whole problem in a proposed "Speech-Comp" class. Another question we should answer before examining the problem of methods is why we teach composition in the first place? One linguist succinctly answers this question in terms of the "service concept"

> . . . the student must know how to express himself cogently and articulately in order to perform effectively in the rest of his school subjects to write papers and reports, to take examinations, and so on. I would prefer, however, to take a somewhat broader approach here and to say that a higher literacy, or perhaps more accurately, an ingredient of a general or liberal education. If our social order is to continue over the next three or four decades in a form which we can approve, presumably one

> in which wise and sound policies concerning all aspects of life will emerge from public debate that is at once vigorous and incisive, the need for skill in the use of language will be greater than it has ever been before. We shall need more individuals who can express themselves cogently and think clearly, and at the same time, the quality of the thinking and the expression must improve.[12]

The foregoing points to the need for English professors to establish realistic, clear goals in the composition course. Unfortunately this is not the case frequently and may be a contributory factor to the dilemma that "little Johnnie can't write" even after taking courses in English Composition.

In order to demonstrate the degree to which English Composition courses lack clear and concise objectives we randomly selected several Community College Catalogs and scrutinized their course descriptions for the basic writing course and speech course. Our secondary objective was to compare the description and focus of the English courses with that of the speech course in these institutions.

Our sample represents a cross section of Community Colleges across the country. Practically all geographical areas are represented, in addition to large and small public and private community colleges. In order to indicate the full intensity of this problem we have elected to share our data in its raw form before presenting an analysis.

Alexander City State Jr. College — Alexander City, Alabama

1976-77 Catalog

Eng 101 - Composition Skills - A first course in composition skills emphasizing description, narration, exposition, and argument. Instruction in subject development by various techniques within one of the traditional rhetorical frameworks.. Stress fundamentals of communication, as paragraph development, sentence structure, and diction, within the context of extended essays.

Speech Communication 101 - Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication - Primary attention is given to the elements, principles and techniques of effective interpersonal comunication in the sender receiver emphasis. This emphasis is put on the student becoming accustomed to and aware of social as well as employment communication situations. Students may be expected to learn to prepare communication situations. Students may be expected to learn to prepare and extemporaneously deliver an acceptable speech to an audience for a worthwhile purpose.

Allen County Community Jr. College — Iola, Kansas

1976-77 Catalog

103-English I - A study of the essentials of composition and critical reading. Much practice in writing.

101-Speech - A basic course in public speaking. Training is provided in delivery, evaluation and listening. Techniques of effective speaking and types of speeches useful in community life are studied.

Brewer State Jr. College — Fayette, Alabama

1976 Catalog

EH - English Composition - This course embraces the essentials of composition, emphasizing sentence and paragraph structure, clear thinking, and procedures of organization. Basic instruction in the fundamentals of writing is given. An introduction in literature is included, with emphasis on the short story.

SH-101 - Fundamentals of Speech - This performance course studies the techniques governing speeches to inform, convince, and actuate. The students' studies emphasize speech composition, delivery, and audience analysis.

Brunswick Junior College — Brunswick, Georgia

1974-75 Catalog

Eng 101 - Composition - Designed to help students learn the mechanics of English through writing of themes.

Spe 108 - Fundamentals of Speech - The principles of effective communication. Special attention is given to the development of a good speaking voice, and to the organization and presentation of different types of speeches.

Coffeyville Community Jr. College — Coffeyville, Kansas

1975-1977 Catalog

Eng 101 - Provides review of language mechanics through realistic reading, research, and writing assignments with emphasis on expository and argumentative forms.

Spe 101 - Fundamentals of Speech - A course designed to acquaint the student with human communication. Based upon a consideration of language and general communication theory, the student will be exposed to the processes of intrapersonal, interpersonal, mass-media and person-to-group communication. The course will also include practical application of designated principles in all three areas of study.

Daniel Payne College — Birmingham, Alabama

1973-75 Catalog

Eng 101-102 - The course gives fundamentals of grammar, reading and writing. Students read, write and discuss with an aim to effective communication.

Spe 202 - A basic course emphasizing the improvement of speech habits of speaking voice, articulation, pronunciation and dialect. The course further assists the teacher or perspective teacher to develop personal skills in speech along with an understanding of certain common speech problems characteristic of oral discourse in the classroom. Brief study of types of speeches.

Denver Community College — Denver, Colorado

1976-77 Catalog

Eng 111 - English Composition - Designed to introduce the student to the broad field of communication and to

develop ability in the writing of short papers and reports through the application of the techniques of clear thinking: definition, classification, structure and process analysis, and comparison/contrast.

S 110 - A beginning course in communication and public speaking. Completion of course requirements in language, speaking poise, speech composition, mastery of listening techniques and ability to express ideas in order to enable students to become effective speakers.

El Paso Community College — Colorado Springs, Colorado

1974-1975 Catalog

Eng 101 - Freshman English I - A course designed to develop writing and critical reading skills through intensive practice in the writing of brief essays and the critical evaluation and discussion of literary materials. Clarity of thought and organization are emphasized in student writing.

Spe 102 - Public Speaking - This course is devoted to the theory and practice of public speaking and includes audience analysis, preparation of speech materials, and delivery of the speech. Types of speeches (informative, persuasive, entertaining, etc.) are studied and practiced, and a selected number of classical speeches are studied.

Emanuel County Junior College — Emanuel, Georgia

1975-76 Catalog

Eng 101 - Composition - A first course in college writing stressing grammar, vocabulary, sentence and paragraph structure, theme, organization, dictionary usage. Parallel reading.

Spe 108 - Fundamentals of Speech - A course in the fundamental principles of effective oral communications.

Garland Jr. College — Boston, Massachusetts

1973-1974 Catalog

Eng 300 - Basic Composition - Using programmed material the student eliminates persistent errors in her written English, develops adequate paragraphs and longer papers, learns the rudiments of research, and studies logic for writers. Dependent upon her skill level and her career and personal goals she chooses one of the following programs: minimum essentials, standard college composition, or

advanced composition. The classroom is conducted as a writing laboratory.

Speech 300 - Communication Arts - An exploration into the world of non-written communication, emphasis is placed on freeing physical and vocal inhibitions in appearing before an audience, the expressive use of voice and body, articulation, the logical organization of material to be used in a speech, and the manner in which that material can be most effectively presented. Approaches used include theater games, oral interpretation of literature, impromptu and prepared speeches, interviews and discussions.

Grand Rapids Jr. College — Grand Rapids, Michigan

1974-75 Catalog

Eng 101 - English Composition - Expository and argumentative writing based upon a variety of readings and upon personal experiences. Organization, clarity and simplicity of expression, development, and correctness are stressed. One formal research paper is required.

Sc 131 - Fundamentals of Public Speaking - Effective oral communication; practice in presenting short speeches; emphasis on speaker adjustment, organization, selection, development of ideas, improvement in vocal quality, evaluation of speech content, and performance.

Highland Park Community College — Highland Park, Michigan

1975-77 Catalog

Eng 101 - Reading & Composition - In this course the students will practice expressing themselves in writing. They will read and discuss essays and stories by both black and white writers and then write papers expressing their own ideas. The course also concentrates on improving the students' understanding and enjoyment of reading. The students will be coached in the mechanics of writing and encouraged to develop new writing skills.

Speech Communication 201 - Fundamentals of Speech - This course is designed to introduce the students to the basic concepts of face-to-face oral communication, as well as to provide opportunities to perfect the basic skills of speaking and listening. Reading assignments, class lectures, and student projects should help the students to organize ideas logically and to express them clearly in various speaking situations; instruction and practice help them also to listen more effectively and to evaluate what they hear.

Kellog Community College — Battle Creek, Michigan

1976-78 Catalog

Eng 101 - Basic Communications In Writing - Study and application of the nature, means, and purpose of communication, including inquiry into conditions which affect it and practice in written and other forms of communication. Emphasis is on individual thought and competence in educated usage.

Sp 101 - Foundations of Interpersonal Communication - The course focuses on providing the student with an experience in human communication, emphasizing the oral tradition. Emphasis is placed on becoming an effective communicator in a variety of face-to-face communication situations.

Malcolm X Community College — Chicago, Illinois

1973-73 Catalog

Eng 101 - Composition - Development of critical and analytical skills in writing and reading of expository prose.

Sp 101 - Fundamentals of Speech - Theory and practice of oral communication; development of poise and confidence, delivery, and speech organization; speaking practice and development of standards of criticism.

Muskegon Community College — Muskegon, Michigan

1973-74 Catalog

Eng 101 - English Composition - A course in which the student is expected to strengthen his ability to read and listen with understanding; to relate his reading and thinking to class discussion, and, primarily, to write clearly and forcefully. He will study principles of written composition and apply them to his themes.

Sp 101 - Fundamentals of Oral Communication - An introductory course in communication which will help the student increase his understanding of the communication process and his effectiveness in interpersonal relationships through understanding of himself and others. Practical application--individual participation and group discussion.

Oakland Community College — Bloomfield, Michigan

1976-77 Catalog

Eng 151 - English 1 - The student will analyze composition of various kind of content, purpose, concept, audience and point of view. He will accomplish this analysis via an application of the rules of straight thinking and the basic principles of rhetoric and language structure. Reports and oral assignments will be based upon the individual student's needs and interests.

Orange Community College — Middletown, New York

1976-77 Catalog

11101 - Freshman English 1 - This basic course emphasizes student practice in expository writing. Reading and class discussion center on the formal and informal essay.

13110 - Fundamentals of Speech Communication - Topics include interpersonal, small group and large group communication. Emphasis is on development of concepts in oral communication processes and their application.

Palm Beach Junior College — Lake Worth, Florida

1976-77 Catalog

En 101 - Freshman Communications - This is primarily a skills course which aims to develop proficiency in all aspects of communications, but strongly emphasizes writing and reading. An understanding of how language is actually used is necessary as a basis for any real understanding of the problems encountered in effective communications.

Sp 101 - Fundamentals of Speech - This course aims to train the student in the basic principles and techniques involved in effective speaking communications. The student develops poise and confidence in presenting various materials via many speech communication experiences. The emphasis lies on individual development and improvement.

Rochester Community College — Rochester, Minessota

1974-1976 Catalog

Engl 117 - Writing For Personal Awareness - The writing

process and students' involvement in the process are stressed. Student writing will include narrative and descriptive papers. The emphasis, however, will be on the nature of language (conveying impressions concretely and developing sentences) and on developing ideas completely (developing paragraphs).

Spe 114 - Fundamentals of Speech - A study of the theories of public speaking with frequent utilization of these theories through classroom speaking. Emphasis is placed on persuasive and informative speaking.

Sanford D. Bishop State Junior College Mobile, Alabama

1976-77 Catalog

EH 101 - Communications Skill - A course designed to develop the student's skill of oral and written communication. Major emphases are on expository writing; selected essays and advance critical will be covered.

Sp 101 - Introduction to Public Speaking - Emphasizing the fundamentals of public speaking, this course treats such basic concepts as social functions of public speaking, types of speeches, mechanics of speaking and delivery, group speech, activities, and parliamentary procedures.

Santa Rosa Junior College Santa Rosa, California

1975-77 Catalog

Engl 1A - Reading and Composition - Critical reading and discussion of works in various literary forms. Composition predominantly of reasoned and reflective prose. Content and emphasis of particular sections specified in English Department course description bulletin issued each semester.

Speech 1A - Introduction to Speech - Intended to improve the student's ability to prepare, organize, and deliver a speech and to evaluate critically various forms of communication.

Wayne County Community College Detroit, Michigan

1975-77 Catalog

Engl 110 - Freshmen English - Writing of expository essays based upon the analysis of a variety of readings.

Emphasis on the logical organization of ideas clearly expressed in unified, coherent papers which illustrate an understanding of correct usage.

No Speech Courses offered in curriculum.

An analysis of the course descriptions of the English courses readily verifies that in the overwhelming majority of the cases these courses are written with no conciseness and precision as to what skills the student is to obtain in the course. There were very few exceptions to this general trend. The course descriptions were in essence highly abstract and intangible. If these descriptions are to be an outline of the focus of the course we can see why students come out of composition with no improvement in writing skills.

The other observation is that there exist no continuity or similarity in these various descriptions of the English writing course. The descriptions were very diverse in title and in abstract philosophical objectives. Another way of describing this situation is that the descriptions were too ambiguous and broad. Many course descriptions simply settle for saying that their goal was to make the student a better or "effective" communicator, but they fail to describe how they will do this. In addition we can also see that a vast majority of the descriptions focused upon "grammar." So one is led conclude frequently that often these courses end up merely improving the students grammar, as opposed to

to teaching them how to express and organize ideas effectively.

The speech courses tend to suffer from the problems that the English courses do. While the course takes on a variety of names it appears that the vast majority appear to be preparing students for public speaking. In other words they tend to focus on the mechanics of delivering a speech.

The various problems that reveal themselves to us just from the course descriptions have led many teachers of communication to call for some standard and uniform goals in speech and English composition courses. There, goals should be realistic and devoid of high sounding metaphysical terms. One advocate of "realism" in teaching of communication skills observes:

> . . . what I hope we might develop, and this would be no small accomplishment if we succeded in it, is a public taste which will demand of those who address any group of persons, large or small in speech or writing, the qualities of directness, economy and clarity. I should like to have us develop a public taste that will be impatient with, possibly even intolerant of, blurred expression, tautology, and faulty logic.
>
> . . . In the face of a demand for logic, clarity, and economy of expression, think of the change in newspaper editorials, in public utterances, from the pulpit and lecture platform.[13]

Now to the original question raised since we seek to overcome the ineffectiveness of the English Composition course; what problems prevail in the teaching of writing? Second, what is the basic pedagogical strategy in the

teaching of English Composition?

English teachers have been successful in identifying the problems that exist in trying to teach someone to write. In other words they have been able to reach agreement on what the barriers tend to be.

One of the primary problems they describe is that of "motivation." Motivation involves getting the student voluntarily interested in the writing course. Most students tend not to be interested in "composition" courses because they feel that it is extremely difficult to learn how to write. Thus this attitude has spill over effects on the enthusiasm and spirit which the student has for the class. This definitely will effect his ability to gain the maximum benefits from the course. If students go into "writing courses" detached and indifferent the effectiveness of the course already has significant drawbacks because the student is not totally open, receptive, and willing to expend considerable energy in the course.

All this means is that the methodology employed in teaching writing skills must somehow ignite a desire on the student's part to communicate his ideas.

The next salient problem in the teaching of composition is that of "attitude" on the part of students. Educators have historically been concerned with this problem because they have recognized that the student's attitude toward a subject matter has definite influence on his performance in a particular class. The teacher

of composition is constantly confronted with the problem of negative attitude of his students becuase they feel terribly frightened by the composition course. In other words they feel highly insecure.

The reason that they feel insecure is that most students in composition do not feel that they have control or mastery of the English language. In order to overcome this insecurity students must be made to feel that the English language is something that they can control and master.

The methodology used in teaching "writing" skills has to take into consideration this fact and seek to overcome this insecurity. Students must be made to feel that the English language is something that they can control and master.

A third problem in the teaching of composition is that of developing the skills necessary for effective writing. This is an equally crucial problem, and gets us into the basic pedagogy for composition courses, which has been described in the following manner:

> We shall continue to depend in the main upon guided practice in writing. We shall continue to assume that the more a student writes, the greater fluency and facility he will develop, and that continued insistence upon logical organization and precision of expression will result in improvement with respect to those qualities. Such recent developments as the use of lay readers and team teaching do not alter the basic pedagogical strategy; they merely provide mechanisms for implementing it more effectively.[14]

Our alternative approach to teaching composition takes into consideration these problems as enumerated and vocalized over and over again by English teachers. We have advocated that these problems can be overcome if we approach the teaching of composition from the framework of understanding the relationship between speech and writing.

Our Speech-Comp model recognizes and advocates the "primacy of the spoken language." This means that we should attempt to get students to understand and see the relationship between speech and writing.

The argument of the "primacy of the spoken language" also makes some basic assumptions which influence the pedagogical method of teaching writing skills. One is that everyone learns to speak before they learn to write. Therefore they have contracted their first understanding of language through this form, as opposed to writing. We can verify this position by recognizing ". . . that whereas language is very old writing is relatively new, that every person learns to speak before he learns to read and write, that there are hundreds of languages that are spoken but for which no writing system has been developed whereas by contrast there are no written languages which are not now spoken or have not been spoken."[15]

The other assumptions that have been verified in this chapter that are relevant to this framework is that

students possess better oral skills than writing skills, and that some of the problems in writing manifest themselves in their oral communication. In other words the essence of language structure manifests itself in the spoken language.

With this framework for the Speech-Comp model we shall proceed to present and measure it by applying it in an actual classroom environment.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Albert R. Kitzhaber, Themes, Theories, and Therapy: The Teaching of Writing in College (New York, 1963), p. 4.

[2]Ibid., p. 13.

[3]Win Kelly, "Speech: Status, Trends, Innovations in California," Junior College Journal, vol. 40, April, 1970, p. 28.

[4]Richard E. Young and Alton L. Becker, "Toward a Modern Theory of Rhetoric: A Tagmemic Contribution," in New Rhetorics, Martin Steinmann, Jr., ed. (New York, 1967), p. 79.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Andrew Wilkinson, "The Concept of Oracy," English Journal, Vol. 59, (January, 1970), p. 71.

[7]Ibid., p. 72.

[8]Ibid., p. 73.

[9]Ibid., p. 73.

[10]Michael F. Shugrue, "The National Study of English in the Junior College," Junior College Journal, Vol. 40, No. 9, June-July, 1970, p. 11.

[11]John H. Littlefield & Sara E. Sanders, "Perhaps Test Essays Can Reflect Significant Improvement in Freshman Composition: Report On A Successful Attempt," Research in The Teaching of English. 40:9 (June-July, 1970), 8-15

[12]Albert H. Marckwardt, Linguistics And The Teaching of English, (Bloomington, 1966), p. 67.

[13]Ibid., p. 72.

[14]Ibid., p. 67.

[15]Ibid., p. 75.

# CHAPTER IV

## SPEAKING-WRITING-SPEAKING MODEL: AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING WRITING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

The purpose of this chapter is threefold: (1) to present an explication of the Speaking-Writing-Speaking approach to teaching the introductory speech course; (2) to present the general outlines for constructing an alternative approach to teaching communication skills, written and oral; and (3) to measure the effectiveness of this approach based on an actual application of the model in an urban community college setting.

### Speaking-Writing-Speaking Experiment

The course was divided into four distinct units.

Unit I--In this unit the goal was to make the student aware of his level of competence with language vis-a-vis his speaking skills or oral communication.

The idea here is to make the student realize that he has some mastery and control of language through his oral or speaking skills. If he understands this, the frequent tendency to fear expressing himself by writing will be diminished significantly because this dislike is developed when a person feels he has adequate control or understanding of language.

We sought to achieve this goal by having the students choose topics from a list of controversial topics. This was done because students would feel that they could talk

about topics such as the pros and cons of abortion, capital punishment, disarmament race, etc.

Students were divided into groups of five so as to overcome fear of speaking to a large unfamiliar class. Also, this created an informal atmosphere so that students would feel relaxed in expressing their ideas on a controversial topic.

We had the student groups record the oral presentation of each student on their chosen topic.

After all five groups had recorded an oral presentation of each member the whole class listened to an oral presentation of each student.

Students were instructed to evaluate and analyze each recorded presentation with respect to certain linguistic areas: (a) expression of ideas clearly; (b) thesis; (c) coherence; (d) grammar; (e) structure of oral presentation. Each student had to rate the strength of his classmates with respect to each of these areas.

The next step was to assign each student to write a theme on his or her chosen topic. The themes were graded with close scrutiny in order that the student would become aware of his language problems.

Our final activity in this unit was to have the student compare his language problems as identified in his oral presentation and his written theme. The same and different problem areas were highlighted in the comparison so that the student would become aware of the continuity

of errors with language in oral communication or speech and written expression.

We spent the first five weeks of class on this unit.

Unit II--After getting the student to familiarize himself with language through oral presentation our next goal was to impart to him the relationship between speech and writing.

The idea here was to make the student aware that the same language process in terms of structure and the organization and expression of ideas operates in oral and written expression; the understanding of language is enhanced and can facilitate and improve his writing skills through transference.

Our first activity under this unit was to lecture, comparing the structure and organization of a speech with that of a theme to demonstrate how people manipulate language to express an idea.

The activity under this unit was to listen to orations by famous orators. We selected and listened to the recorded speeches of a variety of people that had notoriety and familiarity to the public. We selected Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream"; Malcolm X's "Ballots or Bullets"; Whitney Young's "A Strategy for the Seventies"; and Robert F. Kennedy, "On Martin Luther King, Jr.".

The class was then assigned several themes to read and analyze with respect to the ways the writer organized, structured and developed his ideas. The class then compared

the techniques of organization used in the themes with those used in the orations the student listened to and eventually read by the same authors. We selected an anthology, Patterns of Exposition, edited by Randall Decker. We selected these expositions: "The Ghetto Cop," by Dick Gregory; "The Language of Soul," by Claude Brown; "A Brief, Yet Helpful Guide to Civil Disobedience," by Woody Allen; "The Declaration of Independence," by Thomas Jefferson; "Confessions of Female Chauvinist Sow," by Annie Raiphe; "Anglo vs. Chicano: Why?," by Arthur L. Campa; "The Gay Bar," by Martin Hoffman; and "Pornography," by D. H. Lawrence.

The next activity was to explain the types of discourse--persuasion, argumentation, exposition (comparison-contrast, cause and effect, process) and description--and their application to speaking and writing. The idea here was to show and discuss the theory of writing these types of themes and speeches.

We spent the second five weeks on this unit in our class.

Unit III--The goal of this unit was to make the student aware of the functional purpose of language expression. The idea here was that if a real appreciation of language can be instilled in the student by making him aware of the fact that to be able to express himself in written and oral form is important and serves a real purpose, his attitude toward learning language usage will be greatly enhanced.

To achieve this goal all assignments, both oral and written, were given in the context of real life situations where people find it necessary to express themselves effectively. For example, the oral presentations in Unit I were given as if the student was on a talk show like Johnny Carson, Mike Douglas, etc. or some panel. In other cases we used simulation theory in making assignments for themes and oral presentations. This is done so that students will learn that they master effective oral and written communication for real life situations.

Unit IV--The next goal was to devote a considerable time in improving the problem areas of students in their speaking and writing.

The idea here was since we had established an awareness of the process of language in oral and written expression, each student aware of his specific linguistic problems in each mode of expression, we set out to eradicate the specific problems each student had in writing and speaking.

The way we attempted to achieve this goal was to have the student present a speech, then write a theme and then give another speech in succession; in other words, speak-write-speak on controversial topics. The student was assigned to first make an impromptu speech of a variety of types and then write a theme after having observed movements, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, language, empathy, or any other usual or unusual

aspect of the speech, then prepare a formal speech on the original topic for presentation. This phase of the speaking-writing-speaking method was used in an attempt to indicate to the student how the purpose of the pre-writing process of composing is similar to that of the impromptu speech. At this point the student was also introduced to the mechanics and techniques used in effective speech delivery. The themes written after each speech were graded and returned to students, pointing out in detail all errors. Unit IV was incorporated simultaneously and operated concurrently during the period when actual written and speech assignments were given to students.

## General Outline for Constructing an Alternative Approach to Teaching Communication Skills

In the Speaking-Writing-Speaking model we have presented the general guidelines for designing a course around this concept to achieve our intended goals. The presentation should be interpreted as merely a guideline because the individual instructor is left to incorporate his creativity and ingenuity in developing specific activities to achieve the broader goals that are outlined. Therefore, the proposed activities which are accompanied by the goals are not to be taken as fixated in that they are the only means to achieve the goals. The activities are flexible and determined by the creativity of the instructor who adopts this approach to teaching writing skills.

Goal I: To make the student aware of his competence level of language vis-a-vis his speaking skills.

Activities

1. Assign students topics which students of their background like to talk about, (e.g. pros and cons of abortion, drugs, capital punishment). In other words assign topics which every one is most inclined to have an opinion on because they are controversial.

2. Have individual students make a presentation to class in group fashion so as to create an informal atmosphere,

3. Unknown to the class record the informal presentation of each student.

4. Analyze each students' presentation by playing back recordings to class. Analyze presentation with respect to certain linguistic areas (a) expressions of ideas clearly; (b) coherence; (c) structure of presentation; (d) grammar.

5. Evaluate each students' informal oral presentation with respect to language use.

6. Have students write a theme on their chosen topic.

7. Compare the language problems evidenced in their writing with those evidenced in their oral presentation.

8. Make students aware of the difference between their language problems in their oral and written presentation.

Goal II: To demonstrate the relationship between speech and writing.

Activities

1. Have the class listen to the works of famous orators. (e.g. Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and Daniel Webster).

2. Examine the above same works in written form. Analyze them for organization, structure, and the way they expressed ideas.

3. Compare and discuss the organization and structure of a speech and a theme.

Goal III: To make students aware of the functional purpose of language expression.

Activities

1. Establish all assignments, both oral and written in the context of real life situations in which people find it necessary to express themselves effectively. (Role theory, etc.)

Goal IV: To improve the speaking and writing skills of students.

Activities

1. Assign various speeches for class members to present. (e.g. one-point, informative, etc.)
2. After each speech have each member write a theme on some aspect of the speech.
3. Critique of speeches should include the dimension of language usage and organization.
4. Grade each student theme noting each specific language problem.
5. Explain the techniques for delivering speeches (e.g., eye contact, posture, etc.).
6. Have students choose appropriate topics to present various speeches on.
7. Critique all speeches on the technical aspects of delivery as well as language usage.

## Measurement of Writing Skills

Obviously when one adopts a method for achieving some end, the next concern after one employs the method is measuring its effectiveness in achieving that goal. "Composition" courses prove to be no exception to this rule. While it is easy for intellectuals to bombard professors with new

pedagogical models for making "composition" courses more beneficial for students, it becomes more difficult to measure the effectiveness of "models" in improving the writing skills of students after the model has been applied.

The validity of a method is established only to the extent that it yields the results it promises. The whole issue of measurement of the effects of composition is a very volatile issue. The problem of adopting a reliable instrument for measuring the progress of students in composition courses is widely recognized and the source of continous debate.

The specific problem in measuring the success of composition courses centers around the fact that most instruments used do not reveal the degree of improvement a student achieves or in other words that he has learned. All aspects of this problem were illuminated when one observer succinctly noted:

> How would a concerned researcher or a group of instructors find out if anyone is learning to write? Student learning in English composition classes is typically assessed in various ways. Grade marks issued by the instructor are examined or scores on alternate forms of various normative tests are compared. However, these types of measures lack several key elements. The grade marks fail to satisfy the researcher because they tell little about student learning. Were they issued in response to students' participation in class? Did they depend on written assignments, on performance on quick-score tests, on the preparation of research papers? Did they combine various types of measures into a single score? When one instructor grades his students according to how they learned to write, is he applying the same standards as his colleague?[1]

Thus we were confronted with the problem of measuring the effect of our model on teaching writing skills to students. After understanding the many pitfalls with using traditional methods of measurement, e.g. giving a pre-essay test before applying the model and a post-essay test after the model has been applied, we decided that a subjective instrument of measurement would be the best way to point to the things that we were interested in finding out with respect to the Speech-Comp model.[2]

We sought to measure the perceived effects of the Speech-Comp model on the attitudes of the students by having them respond and identify: (1) how they felt the method affected their writing, (2) how it compared with the method used in their English class, (3) how it affected their speaking skills. By registering their affective responses we got some clear understanding and indication of what effects students felt this method had on their writing and speaking skills.

After we used the Speech-Comp Model for one semester students were asked to answer these specific questions:

> Has the method used in this course improved your writing? If so, how?
>
> Is this method of teaching writing skills a better method than the one used in your English class? If so, why?
>
> Has the method used in this course helped improve your speaking skills? If so, how?

## Affective and Cognitive Effects of "Speech-Comp" on Students

The Speech-Comp method was tested on two introductory Speech classes at Kennedy-King College in Chicago during the summer of 1977. Both classes combined consisted of 41 students.

In order not to be misleading it is necessary that we give some attention to describing the population of students on which this method was tested. This is an attempt to qualify our conclusion by acknowledging that these responses about the Speech-Comp method are restricted to a definite population of students.

Kennedy-King is one of the community colleges of Chicago, located on the south side of the city. The demographic features of the student population at Kennedy-King are: (1) inner city students, (2) predominantly Black, (3) the median age is 27. As we can see the student population of this community college tends to be highly consistent with the characteristics of community college students in the United States in an urban setting as already discussed in Chapter 2. As far as the academic level of competence, Kennedy-King students follow the national trend among all community college students in this setting.

In analyzing the data on the first question: Has the method used in this course helped improve your writing skills? If so, how? We find that the overwhelming majority of the students felt that it had improved their "writing skills".

YES 36 NO 5

When asked specifically how the Speech-Comp method helped improve their "writing" students noted several ways. Generally students revealed that they had achieved a greater "security about writing." Students explained this point in the following ways:

STUDENT A. I feel more at ease in writing because now I imagine that I am writing for some audience.

STUDENT B. The continuous cycle of speaking, writing, speaking has given me more confidence in and more approaches to writing. By approaches I mean ways to begin a theme, how to develop my ideas and to conclude.
. . . Speaking, writing, speaking, seems to me, to go together. The more you speak and write, the less problems you have in writing.

STUDENT C. As a result of the manner in which this class has been conducted I feel more secure about writing. When I first came into class I feared it because I've always been secure in speaking and now I understand that the same language processes are at work in both endeavors. I seem to be less afraid to write my thoughts. So now I find that I like to write becuase I'm not afraid of it.

STUDENT D: In this class involving speaking, writing, speaking I have improved my writing skills by so much that if I hadn't taken the class I'd feel as though I were missing out on something. I say this because I have taken English but I did not leave those classes having overcome the fear of writing itself.

STUDENT E: Since I have been in this class I have lost my fear of writing. I use to hate the idea of trying to sit down and write or express myself on paper. There seemed to exist an automatic fear and mental block whenever I attempted to write. I now don't fear attempting to express my ideas any more even though I know I don't write perfectly. But now since I find myself writing outside of class assignments on my own I think that I will overcome my remaining problems.

STUDENT F. The method, speaking, writing, speaking, has helped me improve my writing. By painstakingly writing about what I am going to speak about, I find that I make fewer mistakes in writing. I have to think carefully before I start to write.. . . Because of this I feel more confident about my writing. I know that what I am saying has clarity to it because I consciously think more about how I say it.

STUDENT G. I must admit that writing is not an enjoyable task, but the speaking, writing, speaking method has made my attitude toward the act less negative. Since I've been in this class I've come to realize that writing is another way of manipulating language to communicate just as speaking. Therefore since I've always enjoyed speaking and never had too many problems with it my attitude toward writing has changed since I now understand that it is another mode of expressing myself which I should master to be a well rounded person.

STUDENT H. Speaking, writing, speaking did help improve my writing. It forced me to be more concious of how I wrote. I began to pay more attention to how I was expressing myself. I find that I don't find writing as formidable even though my writing is not excellent.

STUDENT I. Speaking, writing, speaking has helped improve my writing. It has helped me to learn to be more conscious of my writing habits because I acquaint myself with language orally and I express my ideas on paper. These two forms of expressing my ideas adjacently tends to make me more aware of my problems in writing. Then having descovered my problems in writing I can consciously work on them by attempting to prevent myself from making those errors.

STUDENT J. I feel that speaking writing, speaking has helped me improve my writing skills. I feel that by speaking I get a chance to listen to myself and many times I recognize errors in my writing that I never discovered because I hear how errors such as sentence fragment, inadequate development of an idea sound. This has tended to make me more aware of language and understand it better. Now, I'm less afraid of writing since I feel that I have an adequate grasp of language and structure and organization. Ironically, I find that I like to write to see how clearly I can express and convey my ideas.

STUDENT K. I find that speaking, writing, speaking has helped me a great deal. I find that if I use good speaking habits I tend to write reasonably well. In my case I have become more aware of myself in the area of writing--I have learned to present my thoughts on paper as well as seeing to it that they are put in order on my paper. This class taught me that writing is just one other way I can communicate.

STUDENT L. I think this method is a unique tool for teaching because it removes the fear one has in expressing oneself.

STUDENT M. The method used in this course has definitely improved my writing skills. It has helped me to observe the difference between the way I write and the way I speak linguistically. It therefore has the effect of making me more conscious of my writing style and as a result I find that I avoid making a lot of grammatical errors that I was unconscious of before.

Student responses also indicated that the Speak-Write-Speak method improved their writing skill specifically in the area of grammar specified with diction, organization of ideas, expressing ideas clearly and syntax. The students expressed this fact in the following manner:

STUDENT N. As a result of this class, I have learned how to express my ideas clearly. Before I could never write without getting all my words or phrases messed up and subsequently I could never get my point across. Now when I write I know exactly what I want to say, how to say it, and express it so others understand.

STUDENT O. The method, speaking, writing, speaking has helped me improve my writing. I find that I make fewer mistakes in my writing. I don't leave any words out of my sentences and I have fewer spelling mistakes. Because of this I feel more confident about my writing for I know what I am saying has meaning to it.

STUDENT P. This method of teaching writing skills has helped me overcome some of my writing deficiencies. Before this course I could not structure a composition properly, even though I knew what I wanted to say. I just didn't know how to

put it down on paper in a free flowing logical manner. Now it has become clear to me and has made the task of writing less difficult for me.

STUDENT Q. Speaking, Writing, Speaking has helped improve my writing habits. I can now write a paper that could be presented to a group. This method has improved my use of words and sentence structure. It has also made me aware of mistakes that I make in writing a paper. It also has made me somewhat flexible in how I write.

STUDENT R. The speaking, writing, speaking method has helped me improve my writing. It has enabled me to express my thoughts in a clear and understandable way on paper. It also has made more aware of how to punctuate properly. By speaking I have become aware of the purposes of the various punctuation marks and in writing now I use them more properly than before. (e.g. commas, etc.)

STUDENT S. This method of speaking, writing, speaking has helped improve my writing in many ways. It has helped me understand how to express and layout my ideas in a logical manner so that others can easily understand what I am saying. I have learned that all this time it wasn't that I didn't have anything to say but I didn't know how to structure and develop what I was saying so that others could understand.

STUDENT T. I can see that through speaking, writing, speaking, I am able to correctly use words, no longer placing words in the sentence that don't express exactly what I want to say. I am also able to form sentences that express my ideas in a clear way.

STUDENT U. The speak-write-speak method has helped me improve my writing. It has enabled me to use proper phrases and terms when necessary, so that whatever I am writing will make sense.

STUDENT V. This course has helped me improve in developing my ideas in writing. When I heard myself and others speak I recognized how incomplete and nonsensical many of my sentences were. Then I understood what my linquistic problems were. As a result of that understanding, I began to consciously work on developing my ideas in a clear fashion on paper.

When students were asked to compare the effectiveness of the method used in Speech-Comp with that of their English class in teaching writing skills they tended to feel that the Speech-Comp method was a better method. The precise question that the students were asked was: Is this method of teaching writing skills a better method than that used in your English class? If so, why? An examination of the empirical response reveals that most of the students felt categorically that the Speech-Comp method was a better method. The specific responses were:

| NO | Don't know | Equally as Effective | Yes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | 3 | 1 | 24 |

We account for the "Don't Know" category in that these students indicated that they had not taken an English course yet. What proved to be more interesting are the reasons why the students felt the Speech-Comp was a better method. Essentially the responses reflected that students expressed favoritism for the Speech-Comp method out of a framework of criticism and rejection of the various methods which they had been exposed to in English Composition classes. Therefore this question revealed clearly the types of methods that English composition teachers used that students find objectionable.

Students in their responses favored this method because this method put an emphasis on making students conscious and aware of their linguistical problems. They highly praised the "oracy" emphasis as an exceptionally good tool for making

them more aware of the process of writing, they also tended to like the course better because they could see a purpose behind writing or expressing oneself. They felt, English classes put too much emphasis on just grammar, not the process of writing. Another reason for this favoritism was that the Speech-Comp method imparts an easier understanding of language.

In contrast, the specific English composition teaching techniques that contributed to their favoring the Speech-Comp method were the practice of teachers not grading themes, assigning too few themes, not detailing the specific errors in themes but merely putting a grade on them and admonishing students to try and write better. All of these findings were revealed by the various comments of our experimental classes in "Speech-Comp".

STUDENT A. Yes, this method of teaching writing skills is better than that used in English Composition because one becomes keenly aware of their problem with language because of exposure to two modes of expression, oral and written. In English Composition classes students submit themes for grading. Sometimes you get them back. The instructor never explains in detail what the mistakes are and why they were made. Students don't benefit from this.

In the Speech-Comp method you not only become aware of your problems with language but the problems of others also. This proves by far more enlightening.

STUDENT B. Yes, this method is a better method for teaching writing skills then that used in English Composition class because when you include oral communication you can catch on quicker.

But in an ordinary English class you deal basically with punctuation, grammar and vocabulary. But to use your imagination to write down what you want to talk about then to talk about it is more interesting.

STUDENT C. To me this is a better method because in your English class you don't go as deep into writing as in this class. One becomes aware of the various different reasons why people write and can see a real purpose both for writing and speaking. In an English class you seem to write for the sake of writing. Thus the method adds diversion which arouses my curiousity and interest in learning to write and speak properly.

STUDENT D. Yes, this is a better method than the one used in an English class because you acquire more knowledge and skills in communication. Also this method makes the process of learning how to write less difficult since it incorporates oral communication as a means to enhance one's writing skills and understanding of language.

STUDENT E. Yes, this is a better method then the one used in an English class because with this method you have greater opportunities for grasping an understanding of language. In English you only are exposed to one mode of language, written form, and if you have problems understanding it clearly as was my case you will never leave the course with improvements in your writing.

STUDENT F. Yes, this method of teaching writing skills is much better than the method used in English classes. In an English class you are taught to use verbs, adverbs, nouns and pronouns in the proper way to get an organized well written sentence. After the sentence comes a paragraph and then a theme. What good is this if it doesn't mean much. In the Speech-Comp class you use these things and add to it, the task of learning to express what you have written by expressing it orally enhances the understanding of language and its usage.

STUDENT G. Yes, this is a better method than the one used in English because this method enables you to write better and understand better how you write. In English classes, all you have to do is write the theme and turn it in to the teacher and he or she will merely put a grade on it.

The final area of concern was to determine if the method used in the Speech-Comp class had any impact on the speaking

skills of students. The following question was posed to our experimental classes: Has the method used in this class improved your speaking skills? If so how?

The responses of the students revealed that the overwhelming majority felt that there had been an improvement in their speaking. On the empirical level the responses took this shape:

| Yes | No |
|---|---|
| 38 | 3 |

In explaining how the Speech-Comp method had improved their speaking skills the students alluded to two basic areas, they had obtained confidence and a security about speaking and they had learned how to speak more effectively.

The students' explanations of the impact of the Speech-Comp course on their speaking skills were expressed specifically in the following ways:

STUDENT A. Yes, the methods used in this course has helped improve my speaking skills. When I first walked into this class I admit I was a scared soul. At the time I quit coming to class for a while. But when I began to understand that the use of language in speaking was the same as in writing and that you didn't have to have some special talent to speak as I had always thought, I soon overcame my fear. I found myself looking forward to speaking before the class.

STUDENT B. Yes, the methods used in this course has definitely improved my speaking skills. When I made my first speech I was very nervous, but then I began to feel more confident when I noticed that many students had the same problems that I had.

STUDENT C. Yes, this method of Speech-Comp has improved my speaking skills. Before taking this class I always thought that there was a radical difference between speaking and writing, therefore, I always feared speaking more. But when I became

aware as a result of this class that they both essentially were concerned with expressing ideas thru language I began to feel less fearful about speaking. I began to transfer psychologically my knowledge of language that I possessed with respect to writing to my attempts to express myself orally. I found astonishing results. I found that I was more confident about speaking and that I was rapidly learning how to speak effectively.

STUDENT D. Yes, this course has helped improve my speaking ability. I have definitely learned to speak more clearly so that I can be understood better. I have learned to look at whoever I am talking to, to retain the interest of the person to who I am speaking (eye contact). In other words I have noticable learned how to be an effective speaker.

STUDENT E. Yes, I think so because when I first came into this class, and we had to give a speech I was really lost for words. But after seeing the relationship between speaking and writing I found myself more secure about speaking before the class.

I've become aware of some of my bad habits in speaking before a group, such as hand movements lip smacking and the frequent use of "you know".

I also like listening to other people speak, observing how well or bad they do, helps me to become more aware of problems in speaking which I can attempt to avoid.

I find the methods of this course very interesting and beneficial to me and feel that I will become a more effective speaker.

STUDENT F. Yes, this course has improved my speaking ability. I have been able to express myself on different subjects that were of interest to me. I have learned the skills and concepts of successful communication. I am able to express my thoughts and ideas clearly to people. This course has further enabled me to stand before a group of people and speak without getting nervous.

## FOOTNOTES

[1]Arthur M. Cohen, "Assessing College Students' Ability to Write Compositions," Research In The Teaching of English, vol. 7 (Winter ed., 1973), p. 356-357.

[2]It should be pointed out here that the nature of the instrument is such that we are not evaluating the effectiveness of the Speech-Comp model, but rather its effectiveness as apparent to the students based on their evaluative responses on their levels of performance on various speaking and writing assignments. It is important to point this out because of the implications for the reliability of the study. What the student responses tell us is that the Speech-Comp model was perceived by this group of students as beneficial. It is not the contention of this study to verify the practical value of the Speech-Comp model, but it does give reasons for guarded optimism, and it does argue for the desirability of further investigation by researchers employing the full battery of traditional investigative methods, with all the safeguards normally implied by the use of such techniques.

# CHAPTER V

# CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research has been to provide an alternative approach to teaching communication skills at the community college level.

Our alternative model has been called "Speech-Comp." It is an outgrowth of a recognized failure of English composition courses to improve the writing skills of students in college all over the country. Secondly, it is an outgrowth of the "English in Every Classroom" concept and the idea of discipline reinforcement in all courses.

The "Speech-Comp"model is primarily based on the idea of creating a writing course based on integrating the teaching of literacy skills, writing and reading, and oracy skills, speaking and listening. This approach is based on verified data that the community college student possesses better oral or speaking skills than writing skills, while at the same time many of his problems in writing parallel those in speaking.

Further assumptions of the "Speech-Comp" model were that literacy skills or writing skills could be significantly improved if students were made aware that the same language process was at work when one speaks and that the only difference between the two was the mode of expression. Finally, the model was predicated on the idea that if the student was made aware of a real application in the context

of a course of good writing and speaking skills he would be more willing to try to acquire and improve these skills.

When we designed and applied the "Speech-Comp" model in an urban community college our results tended to verify our assumptions. We found that the major problems which English composition teachers have identified as the barriers to improving the writing skills of students, motivation, attitudes, and developing skills, were significantly overcome by the "Speech-Comp" model.

We found that students were highly motivated to write, their attitudes toward writing became positive, and that they improved their writing skills in specific areas, organization of themes and ideas, grammar, structuring of themes, and in expressing ideas clearly. Therefore there were definite cognitive skills acquired from the use of the "Speech-Comp" model.

Further we found that students felt that the "Speech-Comp" model was a better method for teaching writing skills than those used in their English course, and that they recognized a significant improvement in their speaking skills.

However, we must caution that all these results must be qualified by noting that the experimental speech classes in which this model was applied represented a specific spectrum of the student population in this country. They were urban community college students with all of the demographic and academic profile of such typical students

in this country. Therefore, it is necessary to say that we should interpret these results by saying that the "Speech-Comp" model has the aforementioned benefits for this type of student. We do this to insure that we do not promise these blanket results for all students enrolled in communication courses.

Finally, it becomes necessary to make the broader observation that we by no means are advocating that the "Speech-Comp" model is a panacea for the problem of teaching writing skills or speaking skills but that we have some safe indications that it can effectively alleviate some of the major problems which scholars have identified with this issue.

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# APPENDIX A

## SUMMARY OF MULTI-DISCIPLINE MODELS

School: Barber Scotia College

Project: A Study In Population Growth

I. Goals: The project will attempt generally to do the following:

A. Enable students to collect and use information and materials, to listen and observe, and to formulate conclusions based on data collected and the analysis thereof via classroom participation;

B. Acquaint students with generalized concepts of changes as these concepts relate to particular disciplines (interrelatedness)

C. Aid student learning via various strategies such as inductive discovery, student involvement, flexible classroom organization.

II. Objectives-Activities

The activities which have been formulated include the collection of data by the student via readings. etc; the analysis of such data via computer use as well as oral and written reports, class discussions; the formation of hypotheses which may be proven via experimentation.

III. Abstract of Model

The project is designed to acquaint students with the concept of change as it relates specifically to urban population growth and migration, and the reasons for such growth and/or change in social structures-past, present, and future. It is further designed to demonstrate emphatically that there are no "hitching posts in the universe" and hence everything is relative.

IV. Implementation

The project will commence with the comparing and contrasting of two selected cities based on mathematical analysis of past, present, and future rates of growth. Some variables obviously include technology employment opportunities, political and educational philosophies, availability of health facilities and living conditions in general.

Further analysis of population growth in urban areas involves the discovery and the discussions of: factors which influence black urban migration as contrasted with white; factors which influence migration to northern urban areas as contrasted with southern urban areas; philosophical changes in religious, social, political concepts based on geographic distribution; humanities and changes influencing music and art and their relevance.

V. Evaluation of Model

All initial introductions to any discipline will be preceded by evaluative techniques. These will include testing, questionnaires, oral approaches or any measuring device which will yield results relative to skills. Post-evaluative procedures will follow the same basic pattern. The end evaluation is specifically to discover or determine if the project was successful as it pertains to the acquisition of new skills and new information concerning the present and/or future crisis of population expansion!

# SUMMARY OF MLE MODEL

## University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Theme: Building Learning Concepts Through Travel

Goal:

To demonstrate techniques and approaches that can be employed through the multi-disciplinary concept for the academic, social and emotional development of students.

Objectives:

1. To compare and contrast-show similarities and differences between various locations.

2. To make logical judgements-develop standards of judgement and interpretation, and evaluate sources.

3. To refine comprehension skills-

   A. Obtain main idea from details of what is stated or shown.

   B. Interpretative-see relationships not stated, determine sequence and organization.

   C. Critical-evaluate, discriminate and make applications.

Abstract of Model:

This is a basic skills model which begins by utilizing a poem developed by participants. The content of the poem has cross reference to each discipline which pertains to a travelogue from Pine Bluff, Arkansas to Boston, Massachusetts. Each discipline selects a stanza of the poem and demonstrates how his/her discipline is interrelated to other disciplines. Specific disciplines then reinforce the basic skills objectives using specific discipline content interrelated through the regional travelogue theme, i.e., concepts of Math. uniform motion, Humanities--architecture and environment, Biology--environment and species growth and distribution, Social Science-social change and regionalism, English--creative and expository writing and exploration of regional differences in vocabulary and pronunciation, Physical Science--pollution and its effects, Reading--levels of comprehension and multi-word meanings.

Evaluation of Model:

Each instructor will construct his/her own instrument of evaluation emphasizing the muli-learning experience approach.

WINSTON-SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

AREA: Interdisciplinary Studies
COURSE: Culture and Human Values
Theme -- "Death and Dying"

I. Rationale

To introduce to students some of the complexities of the theme of death and dying via a cross-media slide/tape presentation.

II. Objectives

To reveal to students how areas usually studied separately interact in studying issues relative to death and dying.

To strengthen critical thinking skills.

To explore ways fundamental ideas influence individuals and society.

To discuss issues of death and dying that have been overlooked amid the fear and mystery of the subject.

To develop an awareness of the ethical, moral, religious, medical, and legal complexities of death and dying as a topic of study.

To strengthen verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills.

To encourage examining individual thoughts and attitudes via differentiating factual information from the imaginery.

III. Description

The cross-media production is designed to project a pictorial and visual overview of what is to be developed as the course progresses. From these long-range capsulated ideas, students should be able to view and to verbalize their own interests in the subject.

Three screens will be used to continuously flash the ideas via symbols, words, and phrases. The first screen will depict Cycles of Existence--the natural life cycle, chiefly of man: birth, infancy, adolescence, graduation, marriage, adulthood, parenthood, the worker (occupations), old age and funeral scenes. Pictures

other than human beings might include pets, flowers, trees, and/or wild animals, insects, etc.

On the third screen, captioned Threats to Existence, will be words and images depicting: cancer, pollution, floods, hurricanes, obesity, smoking, alcoholism, obituary columns, life termers, etc.

The second screen (center screen) will have no caption but flashed onto it will be symbols and images of death, such as: condolence card, hearse, cigarettes, skull and bones, the Grim Reaper, tombstones, sunset, sinking ship, dead trees, plane crash, wrecked cars, etc.

Have music stop. Silence. Follow quickly with a taped reading of Langston Hughes' "An Auto-Obituary" or the recording of Nichols and May's "Funeral Arrangement" or some light satirical selection.

IV. Implementation

This presentation will be given the second class meeting for the course. After having viewed the cross-media production, a brainstorming session would be initiated. Students would then be asked to write a brief paragraph or two on their reactions to what they have just seen/heard. The idea is to get them to respond to what will become basic topics for the content of the course.

When the discussion seems to have reached a high point, suggest that a student write on the newsprint all of the ideas made.

Materials from this brainstorming session are to be organized and compiled into a questionnaire to be future class activities. Ask volunteers to form a committee to organize the questionnaire using materials collected from discussion.

The assignment for the next class period would be the reading of the following literature:

DEATH AS A FACT OF LIFE--David Hendin
DEATH AND THE COLLEGE STUDENT--Edwin Schneidman
(short essay)

Activities growing out of initial questionnaire would include enlarging the sample to include the university family.

V. Evaluation

Faculty-team review the effectiveness of the follow-up discussion.

Norfolk State College, Livingston College, and Edward Waters College

Theme: Change: 1890-1910 from the Black Perspective

General Goal: To understand how the tension between oppression and desire for freedom of expression affected Blacks in areas such as family life, religion, psychological attitudes, artistic creations and scientific research.

Implementation: Each discipline will be responsible for its own content and activity. However, some crossover will occur out of necessity, for some things in one discipline grow out of things in other disciplines.

History:

Content- Follow the migration northward and change that took place for Southern rural Blacks. Introductory Activity- introduce transparancies showing distribution of Blacks prior to 1910 and after. Trace the migration routes of Blacks. Pictures showing housing conditions that Blacks found. Discipline Goal- To relate the ways Blacks reacted politically, educationally, and geographically to the forces of oppression.

English·

Content- Black Literature and poetry will be emphasized. Ex: The House Behind the Cedar, "Jimsella," "Ode to Ethiopia," The Souls of Black Folks. Introductory Activity- Filmstrips pertaining to the period will be shown. Records will played to indicate the emotional climate of the period. Discipline Goal- To relate how Blacks reacted to and dealt with oppression through writing, music, and other methods of expression.

Economics:

Content- Emphasis will be placed on the displacement of farm works because the Boll Weevil destroyed the cotton crops. New commodities were introduced, thereby changing the economic situation for Blacks. Introductory Activity- Tape presentations of work songs. Importance of train transportation for Blacks. Relate this to economic oppression of Blacks during this period. Discipline Goal- To relate the reasons for the economic struggles of Blacks as they migrated from the rural south to the urban north in search of a better way of life.

Humanities:

Art content- Black art of this era will be displayed.

Meta Warrick, Mary Jackson, Henry Jackson. Music content- listening to music from minstrel shows to vaudeville. Poetry. Introductory Activity- Listen to "Saturday Night Blues" and "Whoa Buck" prison song- discuss purpose/function of such songs in the lives of Blacks. Discipline Goal- To relate the ways in which Blacks dealt with oppression through music art and other mediums.

Biology:

Content- Discussion of crop rotation, natural fertilizer and experimentation on cross breeding of farm animals. Ex: Holstein, Jersey cows. Introductory Activity- Show film of Dr. Carver's work on soil conservation. Discuss ideas that grew out of land misuse in the south.

Alcorn State University
Class activity: Commander Grog from the planet Lawg

I. The goal is to enforce basic and interdisciplinary skills by having students formulate questions and write short essay responses dealing with separate disciplines.

II. The objective is to have students listen, formulate and then respond. All disciplines may be represented in each group, or one discipline may be assigned to each group.

III. Students in groups ask questions from a variety of disciplines to a creature from outer space (a student, the teacher, or someone from outside of class), and the creature responds with brief explanations, yes/no responses, or possibly lies. Explanation : Sample question: What is used for money on Lawg? Answer: Gold is plentiful and concrete is not. Therefore, concrete is used as money.

IV. Essay responses as well as questions the groups formulate would be the basis for evaluation. The groups could also be asked to explain to Grog our own planet's culture and this explanation could also be evaluated.

Alcorn State University
Class activity: Science Fiction Story Writing Project

I. The goal is to help the student utilize basic skills, English discipline skills such as plotting and narrative, and other discipline skills as they may arise in the story.

II. Students must listen and write throughout the activity as well as contribute at least one line to the dialogue.

III. Students develop a situation for a science fiction story after reading one in class. Each student contributes one line in alphabetical order or any order at all. All students write down script and then read it or act it out. Story becomes a radio dialogue or a short play.

IV. Evaluation would depend on the student's participation and the accuracy of his script. Further evaluation could occur with an essay exam on the script, treating it as a reading assignment like any other in the course.

# DISCOVERING ITTA BENA: A COMMUNITY STUDY

## Mississippi Valley State University

Goals:

1. To use the immediate environment as a teaching/learning center (TLC).
2. To bring about faculty interaction.
3. To bring about an awareness of and respect for the cultural diversity of Itta Benna.
4. To utilize the tools of the various disciplines to study the problems of the community.
5. To motivate people to improve the quality of life in the problems of the community.
6. To enhance communication between the community and the university.
7. To plumb for a more innovative teaching methodology.

Objectives:

1. To initiate an MLE program that uses Itta Bena, Mississippi as a teaching resource.
2. To let the participating teachers and others begin a dialogue for exploring community problems.
3. To develop curricula that will foster attitudes of concern and appreciation for community problems by emphasizing the specific methodology of the various disciplines.
4. To establish meaningful dialogues through such vehicles as forums, seminars, etc. on specific issues.

Abstract:

Biology: The discipline of biology will attempt to meet the program goals by (1) involving students in community studies that reflect environmental themes and (2) conducting a number of environmental impact studies. These studies are designed to identify as many of the characteristics of the community as possible in order to assess or predict changes that have taken place or which may result from future development.

English: The discipline of English will contribute to the program goals through activities focused on studying language patterns in Itta Bena and by studying varying perceptual viewpoints of people representing different segments of the community. It will also deal with concepts of social alienation and self identification in the community.

Humanities: The humanities section of MLE has chosen to do a dialectal study of the immediate Itta Bena communtiy using the tape recorder as the primary source of record. Hopefully this type of activity of study will bring the community and the university much closer in realizing their interdependecy. The humanities will sponsor a follow up lyceum attraction for community participation.

Philosophy: Philosophy will use important statements in the philosophy of religion and in black theology to give the student a deeper understanding of the philosophical and theological views of God-related issues to help him clarify his own thinking and make his own decisions about the issues. Contact with Itta Bena black ministers and church members will make the black theology segment a basis for the Multiple Learning Experience.

Physical Science: Students enrolled in Physical science will report on the impact of several aspects of physics, chemistry, and geology upon the existence of Itta Bena and its inhabitants. Key aspects of students' English usage and consideration of sociological and biological factors will be stressed for these reports.

Social Science: The Social Science Department, working in conjunction with the other disciplines, will carry out the objectives of MLE in our theme and hope to successfully reach our goals in the Itta Bena community through periodic seminars, debates, forums, etc.

Evaluation

At the end of the semester the participating faculty will conduct an evaluation seminar to review the program goals and objectives and the work completed. They will make a presentation to the general faculty during spring semester orientation.

# CURRENT ISSUES AND HUMAN VALUES

## FORT VALLEY STATE COLLEGE

RATIONALE:

"The thinking process," a necessity for complete understanding, is an activity that involves analytical reasoning. This type of reasoning does not necessarily confine itself to "channel training," but would be a definite product of an interdisciplinary venture. The many facets that contribute to complete understanding of issue-oriented courses can invoke the minds of philosophers, statisticians, and other disciplinarians including, political scientists, nutritionists, economists, physical therapists, biologists and humanists, all explaining different facets of one major issue. Then and only then do we present and achieve a total well-rounded education.

Goals:

A. To foster cooperation and team teaching between teachers within and across disciplines.

B. To guide students in analyzing and evaluating issues that have a direct effect on their lives and their environment in general.

C. To provide adequate historical background for the key factors contributing to the present state of affairs.

Objectives:

When the students have completed this course, each should be better able to:

1. Identify and examine the human values associated with each of the issues to be discussed.
2. Examine the fairness of laws and customs pertaining to each of the issues.
3. Exhibit literacy within and across the disciplines involved in this course.
4. Relate current issues to actual life experiences.
5. Form new attitudes and perspectives regarding the highly complex, technical world in which we live.
6. Become cognizant of the effect of "change" on human values and human life.

Abstract:

This course is designed to deal with health-related

issues and the discrimination presently embedded in our society that affects these issues. Students will study in depth: Malnutrition, Life & Death Issues, Emotional and Mental Problems, Genetic Diseases and Life Support/ Technology. The discrimination sections incorporated in each of these are: sexism, age, religion, life styles, ethnocentrism, racism, and laws and customs. The major issues will be presented with the students' present and future interests in mind and will be projected in a manner that will encourage the student to interpret and analyze. The methods used will incorporate I.S.E. summer training, knowledge of student body and institutional mission statement.

Evaluation:

A. The evaluation of students will be done on a weekly basis either in the form of exams or in the form of performing activities pertinent to the issues discussed that week, or a combination of both.

B. The evaluation of the course and the teaching team will be done through the administration of a pre-and post-test questionnaire to the students.

C. Using the expertise of interdisciplinary presentation (team teaching, utilizing each team member, the team will present, explain and analyze the subject matter presented.

School: Huston-Tillotson College

Model: Basic Skills Model

I. Goals

To assist the student in his acquisition and development of--

1. an interpretation, appreciation, and application of the college's philosophy of education.

2. the cognitive processes involved in mastery of the college curriculum.

3. an identification and appreciation of self and the potential he has for making a positive contribution to the human race.

4. an adequate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor base in order that he may positively become involved.

5. an attitude of living together with his fellow man.

II. Objectives

1. The student will demonstrate ability to listen as reflected by improvement in oral responses, written materials, and as indicated by overall comprehension.

2. The student will demonstrate increased facility in orally communicating in Standard English as reflected by improvement in the use of articulate, organized, coherent and meaningful oral expression of ideas.

3. The student will exhibit a sophisticated level of processing knowledge through applying the appropriate reading skills of recognizing, analyzing, locating, appraising, organizing, and reproducing information.

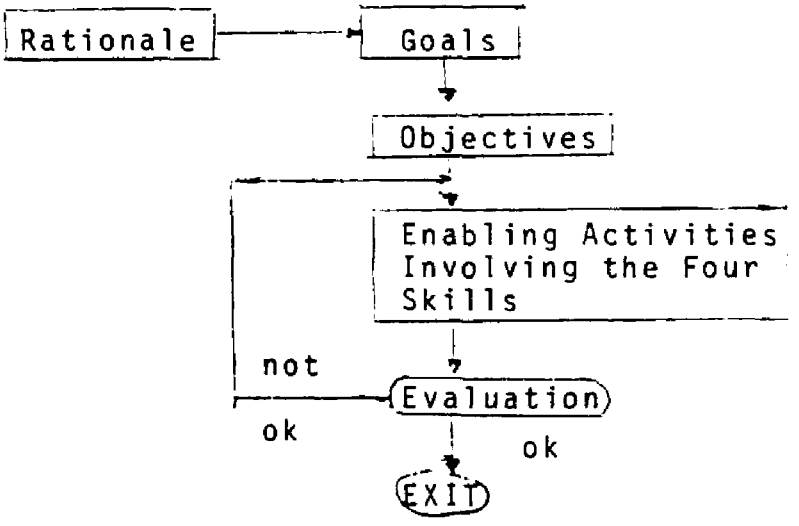
4. The student will utilize Standard English in communicating effectively through written composition, recognizing the principles of selection of material, organization, grammar, and spelling.

5. The student will think positively about himself and others in academic, social, cultural, and economic settings.

## III. Abstract

Huston - Tillotson College will institute a program which will reinforce four basic skills--speaking, listening, reading, and writing. To facilitate this goal a model was designed with the following features:

BASIC SKILLS MODEL




## IV. Evaluation of the Model

The evaluation of activities will be done by each instructor on a daily basis. Teachers will be periodically polled to determine the overall effectiveness of the model.

## V. Implementation

A. Each teacher will reinforce the four selected skills on a daily basis.

B. Special techniques and strategies for encouraging participation of all students are as follows:

Class participation may be limited unless special techniques and strategies are mastered by individual teachers.

Module: The Physical Structure and Psychology of the City

School: Shaw Community College (Detroit)

Summary:

This model concerns itself with a city . . . any city where the inhabitants rely on all of the facilities within that city for their livelihood, their recreation.

The approach to the topic we have chosen is to tear this city down into its most intricate parts and look at how it is designed to meet its citzens' needs and how these citizens respond, and has as its primary goal preparing future social and natural scientists to handle the city, not as a structure or as a mass of people, but as both.

The student involved in this model will hear viewpoints from many disciplines with each reinforcing the other. He will examine the inhabitants of that city and study their social habits. How do these inhabitants influence their social and educational institutions? What impact do these institutions have and what have they used as guidelines to cater to the needs of the city? How does the media reflect the citizens and is each media mode representative of the groups that live there? They live there in neighborhoods that very often bespeak the group that occupies the section. How does the architecture look? Do the buildings provide the space, the style, reflect the culture? Is there room for improvement, and/or expansion? Can the history of the city be seen in its

architecture? If all of these questions are not positive, how is the individual coping with all of this? Is he showing signs of wear or are there outlets for him to vent the pressures that he has to deal with constantly. The student should emerge with answers to all of these questions, but more important he will emerge with solutions. The model will have succeeded if at the end of the course, the student can show an 85% proficiency in dealing with a model city and its theoretical problems. The model will also have succeeded if the student who takes advantage of it is a worker in the city and works to help the individual cope with the physical structure.

# APPENDIX B

ENGLISH COMPOSITION AND SPEECH SURVEY

1. How many years have you taught English Composition?_____
   (If more than 0, skip to question 3)

2. How many years have you taught Speech?____

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3. Based on my experience, most of mystudents write differently from the way they speak. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Based on my experience, most of my students possess better oral communication skills than writing skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Based on my experience, most of my students possess better writing skills than oral communication skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Based on my experience, most of my students speak as well as they write. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

| | Need Great Improvement | Need Little Improvement | Need No Improvement |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7. Based on my experience, the speaking or oral communication skills of most of my students | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. Based on my experience, the writing skills of most of my students | 1 | 2 | 3 |

| | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| 9. Does your college have a Speech Department? | | |

QUESTIONS 10-18 TO BE COMPLETED BY SPEECH FACULTY ONLY

10. What types of courses (the areas of Speech) are offered by the Speech Department at your college? (Write answer on back)

11. What are the general objectives of the Speech Department at your college? (Please write answer on back of page.)

12. Are there any required courses in speech for all students at your college? Yes No

13. What are the required courses in speech for all students at your college?

| | | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14. | One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is in expressing ideas. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. | One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is syntax. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. | One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is incorrect grammar. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. | One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is the lack of an adequate vocabulary. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. | One of the severe problems most students have in oral communication is diction. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

QUESTIONS 19-23 TO BE COMPLETED BY ENGLISH FACULTY ONLY

19. What are the general objectives of the English composition courses of the English Department at your college? (Please write answer on back of page).

| | | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20. | One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is in expressing ideas. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 21. | One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is syntax. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

| | | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22. | One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is incorrect grammar. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 23. | One of the severe problems most students have in written expression is the lack of an adequate vocabulary. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 24. | Name of your College | | | | |

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