

A STUDY OF RATINGS OF COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION
THEMES WHEN CERTAIN ELEMENTS ARE WEAKENED

By

Robert W. Starring

AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Michigan
State College of Agriculture and Applied Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

School of Education

August, 1952

Approved

Milosh Muntyan

I. Statement of the problem. The rating of comprehensive examination themes has been one of the duties of Written and Spoken English staff members since the beginning of the Basic College in 1944 at Michigan State College. The purpose of this thesis was to find out how the members of this department used a rating form to score these themes.

II. Methodology. The scheme of this experiment was to select a certain number of comprehensive examination themes and weaken an equal number in respect to each category of composition on the rating form, and to have these weakened versions rated by the same staff members three years later.

The themes selected were those of the Written and Spoken English Comprehensive Examinations of May, 1949. Of the approximately 2100 themes written at that time 150 cases in the score range of 98 - 78 were selected, 100 being the highest possible score. These 150 cases were re-written to weaken thirty themes in respect to conventions of grammar, thirty in respect to sentence structure, thirty in respect to diction, thirty in respect to organization, and thirty in respect to content.

These weakened versions were then copied in handwriting closely resembling that of the writer of the original version on paper identical to that used in the original writing of May, 1949. Then these weakened versions were shuffled and assigned new serial numbers, and allowed to age to acquire the appearance of the original versions.

These weakened versions were rated in May, 1952 by twenty-four members of the Department of Written and Spoken English with the same directions as those in 1949. The scores of the original version and the weakened version of each theme were tabulated. Change in total score and in the scores assigned to each category of the rating form was expressed in percentage of loss or gain.

III. Conclusions.

1. Weaknesses in the most carefully defined elements of written composition seem to be the easiest for raters to detect in these themes. If we assume Conventions of Grammar to be the most carefully defined category of composition elements, then these raters detect weaknesses in that category more easily than they do in any of the other four categories.

2. Versions of themes weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar produced an average total score loss of

41.3%, a loss greater than that produced in the versions weakened in respect to any of the other four categories. Therefore these raters score most severely that category of elements in which they can most easily detect weaknesses.

3. When these raters scored papers weakened in respect to Sentence Structure they detected weakness to the extent of lowering the average score of that category by 41.6%, but they evidently thought these themes weakest in Conventions of Grammar since that category suffered an average score loss of 43.9%. Therefore, these raters as a group do not make a distinction between weakness in Sentence Structure and weakness in Conventions of Grammar.

4. When these raters scored papers weakened in respect to Content, they discovered weakness to the extent of lowering the average score of that category by 40.0%, but they evidently thought these themes weakest in Organization, since that category suffered a score loss of 41.7%. Again, as a group, these raters do not make a distinction between weakness in Content and weakness in Organization.

5. The raters scored themes weakened in respect to Diction in a manner which produced an average score loss of 42.8 in that category, a loss greater by almost 7% than

the next greatest loss in any of the other four categories. Therefore, it would seem that these raters detect weaknesses in Diction and use the proper category to record their judgments.

6. Although the rating form is a list of five categories to be regarded as discrete and of equal weight, it is not so regarded by these twenty-five raters. In practice, the raters score a theme on the basis of three categories: 1) a combination of Conventions of Grammar and Sentence Structure, 2) Diction and 3) a combination of Organization and Content.

7. Apparently placing first on the rating form the category in which weaknesses are most easily detected causes these raters to score the following categories with a severity of the same order as the sequence of the other four categories. This pattern is illustrated in the fact that the raters, judging themes weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar, so scored these themes that Conventions of Grammar suffered an average score loss of 58.8%; Sentence Structure, 48.1%; Diction, 37.8%; Organization, 33.3%; and Content, 31.5%.

A STUDY OF RATINGS OF COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION
THEMES WHEN CERTAIN ELEMENTS ARE WEAKENED

By

Robert W. Starring

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Michigan
State College of Agriculture and Applied Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

August, 1952

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express his sincere thanks to the staff of Communication Skills for their cooperation in scoring the themes of this study, and to the many students in his classes whose help was indispensable.

VITA

Robert William Starring
candidate for the degree of
Doctor of Education

Final examination, August 2, 1952, 9:00 A. M., Morrill Hall

Dissertation: A Study of Ratings of Comprehensive
Examination Themes When Certain
Elements Are Weakened

Outline of Studies

Major Subject: Higher Education
Minor Subject: General Linguistics (Speech)

Biographical Items

Born, December 2, 1908, Kalamazoo, Michigan

Undergraduate Studies, Western Michigan College of
Education, 1926 - 30

Graduate Studies, University of Michigan, 1932-3
Michigan State College, 1946-52

Experience: Saline, Michigan High School, 1930-1,
Sturgis High School, 1935-41, Assistant
Professor and Head of Department of Speech,
University of Omaha, 1941-44, Instructor
in Written and Spoken English and Speech,
1944-46, Assistant Professor in Written
and Spoken English, Michigan State College,
1946-

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM AND METHODS OF THE STUDY	1
The problem	1
Statement of the problem	1
Importance of the study	1
Method of this study	3
Weakening elements in the themes	3
Rating the weakened versions	4
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	5
Methods of measuring composition skills.	6
Studies related to this work	7
III. SOURCE OF MATERIALS	13
Writing the original themes.	13
Procedure in rating the themes	14
The rating form	18
Training of rating personnel	19
Selection of cases for this study.	24
IV. PREPARATION OF THE WEAKENED VERSIONS	27
Division of the 150 cases into five	
equal groups	27
Principles controlling the weakening of	
the five elements	30
Writing the weakened versions.	31
Conventions of Grammar	32

CHAPTER	PAGE
Sentence Structure	40
Diction	47
Organization	54
Content	65
Mechanics of obtaining the final form of the weakened versions	75
V. RATING OF THE WEAKENED VERSIONS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS	78
Rating the weakened versions	78
Tabulation of scores	80
Interpreting the results	99
VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY	102
Summary	102
Conclusions	103
Implications of this Study	106
BIBLIOGRAPHY	107

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
I.	Element Score Averages	29
II.	Scores of Themes Weakened in Respect to Conventions of Grammar	82
III.	Scores of Themes Weakened in Respect to Sentence Structure	85
IV.	Scores of Themes Weakened in Respect to Diction	88
V.	Scores of Themes Weakened in Respect to Organization	91
VI.	Scores of Themes Weakened in Respect to Content	94
VII.	Averages of Scores of Original and Weakened Versions, Showing Score Loss in Percentage	98

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND METHOD OF THE STUDY

I. The Problem

Statement of the problem. In the Department of Written and Spoken English¹, Basic College, Michigan State College, the comprehensive examination has consisted of three parts, 1) a machine-scored examination, 2) a four-minute speech, 3) and a theme, all administered by the Board of Examiners² of Michigan State College. The staff of Written and Spoken English has served as raters of the speech and theme parts of the examination. It is with the ratings of the written compositions that this study is concerned. The purpose of this study was to find out how the staff used its rating form in scoring these comprehensive examination themes.

Importance of the study. The grading of great numbers of English compositions written by students in

1 This title was officially changed July 1, 1952 to Department of Communication Skills.

2 As of July 1, 1952 the Board of Examiners became a department of the Basic College.

required courses has made necessary the search for a defensible system of scoring these products. This has been particularly the case in the Department of Written and Spoken English, a three-term course required of all students in their first two years at Michigan State College. This theme scoring has become a matter of considerable importance when one considers the great numbers of readers and themes involved. For instance, in the spring term of 1949 approximately twenty-one hundred themes were written as part of the comprehensive examination, themes which had to be read and scored by the staff in a period of one week.

In an attempt to get defensible scores for these compositions the department has used since its beginning a rating form (not a scale) which has changed very little since December of 1944, when the first comprehensive examination was administered. This five-category rating form was arbitrarily devised by a committee of the Department of Written and Spoken English in November of 1944 and has undergone little change since that time. Because the theme scores produced by this instrument have contributed approximately one-third of the total raw score of the comprehensive examination, it is reasonable that a careful study be made

of the instrument with which these written compositions are scored.

II. Method Of This Study

Weakening elements in the themes. The rating form consisted of five categories of composition elements, which allowed a paper to be rated from 1 - 10 in each category, a system which yielded maximum and minimum total scores of fifty and five, respectively. The five categories were: 1) Conventions of Grammar, 2) Sentence Structure, 3) Diction, 4) Organization, and 5) Content. It was decided to weaken samples of comprehensive examination themes in respect to the categories of the rating form, and to have these weakened versions rated three years later by the same staff personnel. Accordingly, 150 comprehensive examination themes of May, 1949 were chosen from the whole batch of 2100 for the study. The method consisted of weakening thirty themes in respect to Conventions of Grammar, thirty in respect to Sentence Structure, thirty in respect to Diction, thirty in respect to Organization, and thirty in respect to Content. Then, over a period of approximately two years, these weakened versions were copied by students whose

handwriting closely resembled that of the original version in order that handwriting quality might be eliminated as a variable when the weakened versions were rated.

Rating the weakened versions. In May of 1952 these 150 weakened versions were rated by twenty-four Written and Spoken English staff members, twenty-one of whom had participated in rating the original papers in 1949. The other three had had at least two years of experience in rating comprehensive examination themes in the department. The rating of the weakened versions in 1952 was controlled in that all details of scoring were identical to those of 1949.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

After examining the literature of English composition as a school subject the following characteristics have been observed: 1) of the materials published in theses, professional and learned journals, bulletins, and textbooks, the greatest proportion of material is concerned with teaching methods, establishing goals and standards, and with course content; 2) of those materials which deal with the measurement of written composition the preponderance of research has been in the fields of elementary and secondary education; and 3) the studies of objective measurement of composition have been greater in number between 1912 and 1926 than from 1926 to the present date.

The reason for this dearth of objective studies probably can be explained in the difficulty inherent in the task of judging objectively such a subjective phenomenon as symbolic formulation. On this point Greene¹

¹ Harry A. Greene, Albert N. Jorgensen, and J. Raymond Gerberich, Measurement and Evaluation in the Secondary School (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1946), p. 310.

says that difficulty of measuring written composition objectively comes from the great complexity of the skills involved in writing good compositions and from the lack of consistency with which these skills have been recognized.

The greater number of studies before 1926 might be explained by the widening of the measurement of results of instruction to the broader field of evaluation. Pertinent to this assumption Travers² states that from about 1928 the emphasis has shifted from the measurements of the outcomes of instruction in English composition to the evaluation of these outcomes, because the term evaluation involves more than measurement and implies an assessment of the values inherent in the system of instruction.

Methods of Measuring Composition Skills.

The methods of measuring excellence of written composition seem to fall into three main categories:

1) grading the total merit of a writing by individual judgement; 2) using a rating form or check list in which scored elements yield a total value; and 3) the use of

² Robert M. W. Travers, "The evaluation of the Outcomes of Teaching in English," (unpublished paper read before the Michigan Conference in Higher Education at Ann Arbor, Michigan, January, 1947).

composition scales. The first method is represented in the literature by relatively few contributions, and those are of a philosophical nature not related to this study. Rating forms, or check lists probably are best represented in the English composition tests of the College Entrance Examination Board. Noyes³ reports the elaborate method of training readers to use the check-list-point-score system in grading English composition for the College Entrance Examination Board. Stalnaker⁴ reports a reliability of .90 of grades obtained for all College Entrance Board Examinations. The reliability of grades obtained in the English examination was .84, but it is to be noted that this examination consisted of areas besides that of composition.

Studies related to this work. It is within the area of composition scales that materials related to this study were found. Remmers defines the scale as ". . . . a set of samples or specimens of pupil behavior or of its

3 E. S. Noyes, "Recent Trends of the Comprehensive Examination in English", Educational Record, Supplement Number 13, Volume 21 (1940) pp. 107-119.

4 J. M. Stalnaker, "Essay Examinations Reliably Read", School and Society 46: 671-672 (1937).

products, arranged in order of merit, difficulty, or rarity, with which pupil behavior is to be compared."⁵

The list of composition scales is rather comprehensive, including such instruments as the following:⁶ Rice's Scale, the Hillegas Scale, Ballou's Harvard - Newton Scales, Thorndike's Extension of the Hillegas Scale, Trabue's Nassau County Supplement to the Hillegas Scale, the Breed and Frostic Scale, the Willing Scale, Van Wagenen's Minnesota English Composition Scales, the Hudelson Scale, and the Lewis Scales.

Of the studies concerning the derivation, use, and improvement of composition scales one is of particular relevance to this study, the famous "91" Study by Hudelson in the Twenty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. In this work Hudelson wanted to discover in detail what composition factors theme raters

⁵ H. H. Remmers, and N. L. Gage, Educational Measurement and Evaluation, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943), p. 215.

consider, and how much importance they place on these factors.⁷ In seeking answers to these questions Hudelson used the technique of "spoiling" or mutilating certain elements in selected student compositions.

In this "91" study seven original student themes of known value and of varying degrees of merit were "spoiled" in twelve different ways, one at a time. Thus, with the original versions, there were 91 versions in all. The broad areas to be defined were thought, structure, and mechanics. These areas were analyzed into their component parts, numbering twelve in all. These analyzed elements were described in the following listing:⁸

1. Original versions.
2. Original versions, with clearness obscured.
3. Original versions, with unity violated.
4. Original versions revamped into incomplete sentences.

⁷ Earl Hudelson, The Twenty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I (Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1922), pp. 20 - 30.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 21 - 22.

5. Original versions, containing difficult words misspelled.
6. Original versions, expressed in "staccato" sentences.
7. Original versions, rendered grammatically faulty.
8. Original versions, "stepped up" into ornate diction.
9. Original versions, improved generally.
10. Original versions, containing easy words misspelled.
11. Original versions, expressed in run-on sentences.
12. Original versions, embodying words in their wrong form.
13. Original versions, faulty as to punctuation and capitalization.

Scientific methods were used to make all mutilations equally serious.⁹

The rating of these themes was accomplished by 150 or more carefully trained judges, who had an average deviation of not more than .5, or one complete step on the Hudelson scale. One-half of the judges scored the ninety-one themes in a given order, while the other half scored them in reverse

⁹ Ibid., p. 22.

order. All the judges were instructed to rate these themes by three methods: 1) on a percentage basis (0-100), assuming that the themes were written by ninth-grade pupils; 2) on a percentage basis, assuming that the themes were written by twelfth-grade pupils; and 3) using the Nassau County Composition Scale.⁹

Among the conclusions Hudelson drew from the "91" Study were the following:

1. Lack of clearness is considered the most serious defect in composition. Other structural weaknesses and punctuation and capitalization errors are also considered major offenses.

2. The most obvious qualities in composition are the most influential determiners of theme scores.

3. Teachers agree upon the value of very good or very poor writing more closely than they do upon the value of mediocre composition.¹⁰

This brief review of the literature of the measurement of merit in written composition, then, is concerned chiefly

⁹ Trabue's Nassau County Supplement to the Hillegas Scale, in which the unit of quality is the difference of quality that was recognized by exactly 75 per cent of the original judges and not recognized by the other 25 per cent.

¹⁰ Hudelson, op. cit., p. 30.

with scales in the first twenty-odd years of this century. There has been a notable lack of research in the use of rating-forms, or check-lists as instruments of measurement. For these reasons it is felt that there is a need for contemporary research involving the use of a rating form used to score merit of written composition on the college level. Therefore, this study has been undertaken to help supply information where such research has been sparse.

CHAPTER III

SOURCE OF MATERIALS

I. Writing the original theme. The comprehensive examination themes used in this study have been selected from those written in the spring term of 1949. At this time approximately twenty-one hundred students enrolled in Written and Spoken English of the Basic College participated in this comprehensive examination. The examinees all wrote at the same time, on the same topic, writing on official 8½ x 11 examination paper of a single fold with the following heading:

Student Number	Name
Date	Printed Last First Middle
NAME OF EXAMINATION
	Student No. Date

	Signature
<hr/>	
Board of Examiners Form BE-1	

The right upper half of this heading was perforated so that this portion could be torn out after the Board of Examiners had stamped serial numbers on each part of this heading. The perforated part was then torn out and filed

for the personal identification of each paper, and to preserve anonymity in the theme ratings. Each examinee was allowed to bring a dictionary and his own pen and ink. Apart from the official theme paper and scratch paper provided by the Board of Examiners, the student had recourse to no other materials or aids. Two hours were allowed for writing this composition. According to customary practice the staff of the department of Written and Spoken English served as proctors.

The topic assigned for this particular comprehensive examination of May 23, 1949 was printed on a loose sheet and supplied to each writer. The exact wording and form of the assignment was:

Written & Spoken English

Comprehensive Examination - Spring, 1949

TOPIC FOR ESSAY

"GOVERNMENT"

Choose some aspect of this topic and write 300-500 words. You may write either an expository or persuasive paper.

II. Procedure in rating the themes. While the staff of Written and Spoken English scored these themes, the Board of Examiners had the responsibility of administering the details - organization of rating teams, packaging

of sets, supplying rating instructions for rating, and recording the results.

A rating team consisted of three members, two first-readers and a chairman. Since there were approximately twenty-one hundred themes to be scored in May, 1949, there were twenty teams needed, with about one hundred and five papers per team. Packets containing these sets were distributed to the raters with the following instructions from the Board of Examiners:

To Theme Raters

Please pass your first set of themes to the second rater by _____, and your second set of themes to the chairman of your rating team by _____. If you can work ahead of this schedule, do so and give your chairman more time for rereading and for totaling scores for the rating sheets. (Give the rating sheets to the chairman as soon as a set of themes has been read.)

Each envelope contains themes and rating sheets. There are enough rating sheets in each envelope for one rater in judging two sets of themes; therefore, it is not necessary for you to pass on rating sheets to the second reader. Just send the themes on. However, if you have extra rating sheets, put them in the examiner's mail box.

Please write on the rating sheets:

1. Your name as a rater, in the lower left-hand corner of the sheet. (Do not use initials.)
2. The stamped (serial) number on the theme, in the upper left-hand corner of the sheet.
3. The date.
4. Your total score, in the lower right-hand corner of the sheet.

To Chairmen of Theme Rating Teams

All themes and rating sheets should be returned to the Written and Spoken English main office by _____
_____.

Please place the rating sheets for each student together and total the scores made in the right-hand margin of one of the rating sheets, as follows:

1. If the two raters of each paper agree within five points (i.e., if there is no more than five points difference between their scores), these two scores are added and become the student's final score on the essay. Papers scored, for example, 20 and 25, or 40 and 45 do not therefore, have to be re-read. For instance, if a paper has been rated 45 and 41, these two scores are entered on the right-hand margin of one of the rating sheets and totaled, the 86

resulting being the student's total score on the essay.

2. If the two raters disagree by more than five points, the paper has to be re-read by the chairman. When three scores are available for these moot papers, the scoring proceeds as follows:

(a) If it is found that any two of the three readers now agree within five points, the paper is given the total of these two closer scores, as was done above. For example: in the case of 40, 35, and 28, ignore the 28 and add 40 and 35 for a total score of 75.

(b) If none of the three scores is within five points of another, take the average of the three grades and double it. For example: if scores of 40, 32, and 21 are obtained, the average is 31. Multiplying 31 by two yields 62 as the total score. In case of fractions, give the score the benefit of any fractional value over a half.

Following these directions, then, each paper was read independently by at least two raters, and by a third where there was a disagreement of five points or more between the first two readers. This score on the comprehensive examination theme, added to the scores of the speech

and objective tests, yielded the total raw score for the whole comprehensive examination.

III. The rating form. This form, a list of five broad elements of composition, has been used by the department since 1946 and represents only a minor change from the original one of 1944. Its form and content can be represented in the following device:

THEME RATING SCALE¹

Name and/or Number Date.....

	Superior					Unsatisfactory				
	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
<u>Conventions of Grammar</u>										
<u>Sentence Structure</u>										
<u>Diction</u>										
<u>Organization</u>										
<u>Content</u>										
Rater						Total				

¹ The word "scale" here is a misnomer. See pages 7 and 8 for definition of scale.

It is important to note here that the order of the elements to be rated has remained the same in this form. The rating form as shown in the course syllabus² carries an order which has not appeared on actual rating forms used by the department. Since there is no zero point in this instrument, the lowest possible single rating is a total score of five. The maximum total score of a single rating is fifty. Thus the minimum and maximum total scores yielded by two raters are scores of 10 and 100, respectively.

This rating form, then, used in scoring the comprehensive examination theme has been a table of five equally-weighted composition elements, each offering a scoring range of one to ten points.

IV. Training of rating personnel. The customary practice of the Department of Written and Spoken English has been to hold weekly staff-meetings, alternating regularly between business meetings and in-service programs. The in-service programs have been planned by a permanent committee, whose job it was to bring before the staff such

² Written and Spoken English Syllabus, Fifth Revision, Sixth Edition (Michigan State College Press, 1950), p. 17.

speakers, discussion groups, reports and materials which would help the staff to understand better the problems involved in teaching the course.

Since the beginning of these in-service programs in 1944 approximately six one-and-one-half-hour periods per year have been devoted to the study of rating written composition. At these meetings duplicated copies of actual student writing have been distributed to the staff. Generally these compositions represented (in the judgment of the rating committee) examples of poor, fair, and good writing. Each member of the staff was supplied with copies of the several specimens and of the previously discussed rating forms. Without any special directions, and without inordinate discussion beforehand, the members of the entire staff rated these themes independently, just as they would in regular practice.

After the individual ratings had been completed, the results were studied by recording on a master form on the board all the raters' scores of the five categories for each paper. After the group average for each of the five elements had been computed, those individuals whose scores deviated extremely from this measure of central

tendency were asked to explain on what basis they made their judgments. It was at this point that differences in standards and the ability to discriminate among the elements of the rating form were made evident. The chairman of the program moderated the discussion to try to achieve greater agreement among the raters.

After about three or four meetings of this kind during 1944-45 it was discovered that a more comprehensive definition of the categories of the rating form was needed. Although such definitions had previously been printed in the syllabus of Written and Spoken English, the discussion of dissenting raters in these in-service meetings revealed that these definitions needed revision and that further practice was needed in their application to the problem of rating written composition.

Accordingly several committees in the department worked together to produce a more comprehensive analysis of the five elements of the rating form. This analysis appears in the latest revision of the syllabus as follows:

CONVENTIONS OF GRAMMAR

Conventions of grammar refers to such matters as reasonable spelling, correct punctuation at

major junctures, the usual grammatical agreements (subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent), and the correct use of possessives. It refers also to the avoidance of sentence fragments, comma faults, period faults, and dangling modifiers.

SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Effective sentence structure means the strategic use of such things as the periodic sentence, subordination, and parallelism. It means that by a variety in sentence length, in sentence structure, and in sentence order, monotony and childishness of expression may be avoided and variety and maturity of expression achieved. It means sentences which are free from awkwardness and obscurity. It means that successful attention has been given to the requirements of sentence euphony and rhythm.

DICTION

Good diction means the use of words well chosen to express the writer's meaning. It means the avoidance of expressions which are crude or trite, of wordiness, of pompousness. It means the use of accepted idioms, of expressions which are vigorous and alive, of the specific and concrete in preference to the general and abstract.

ORGANIZATION

The size of the topic should fit the length of the paper. The theme as a whole should have a single, controlling idea or purpose, expressed or clearly implied, to which each part of the theme contributes. Each paragraph should be recognizable as a unit (i.e. developing a single topic or sub-topic) in the development of the theme. The ideas

presented should be smoothly and logically linked together. Such linking is achieved by a recognizable pattern of development and by the use of such transitional devices as the connective, parallelism, pronoun reference, and repetition. By the use of such things as position, proportion, and repetition, that which is of most importance in the theme should be made to seem so to its reader.

CONTENT

Content refers to the quality and adequacy of the substantiating material (examples, statistics, arguments) employed in support of ideas expressed in the paper. A theme of college caliber should concern itself with matter worthy of adult consideration and express a reasonably mature point of view.³

After the above definitions of each element of the rating form had been produced, they were duplicated and distributed to staff members of Written and Spoken English in the theme-rating sessions of the in-service programs. Up to this writing there have been no published studies of theme rating in this department, and therefore no exact statements can be made concerning how the staff uses its rating form. However, several general observations drawn from in-service theme-rating sessions of Written and Spoken English staff since 1948 might be made. 1) When

³ Ibid., pp. 17-18.

theme raters had with them the definitions of the elements of the rating form, they have seemed to spend less time discussing which category should be used to reflect their judgments of certain weaknesses in composition. 2) Continued practice in using the theme rating form has not seemed to produce much agreement as to standards of excellence within the elements, especially in conventions of grammar and in content. 3) A minority of raters have continued to allow one discovered weakness of composition to influence their scoring of categories in the rating form not related to this weakness. This has often occurred when a rater has rated a theme low in Conventions of Grammar. Such a tendency might indicate that some raters have not agreed that the equal weighting of the five elements of the rating form can yield a total score consonant with their standards of excellence of written composition.

V. Selection of cases for this study. Before the production of weakened versions of the themes of the 1949 comprehensive examination could be effected, the problem of choosing the cases had to be considered. This problem involved two major desiderata, finding papers on which there was the best agreement among the raters, and finding

papers which would allow a downward scoring range for the rating of weakened versions. The range of total scores for these twenty-one hundred themes was 98 - 11, the possible maximum and minimum scores being 100 and 10, respectively.

In reviewing the scoring procedure in Section II of this chapter it can be seen that when the two first-readers disagree on a paper by more than five score points, they pass the paper on to their chairman for a third reading. If the third reader disagrees with either of the first two by more than five score points, he uses twice the average of the three scores to compute the total score. It would seem desirable to select only those cases whose total scores represent the sum of two agreeing raters, since such scores seem to be the most defensible ones in this system of rating.

Papers at the lower end of the range of 40 - 11 were rejected for this study because such low scores would permit a very limited range downward in rating the weakened versions. It was decided to examine the distribution of cases in the two total score ranges of 98 - 78 - and 77 - 41. In the first range there were 161 papers, with eleven cases of moot total scores. In the second range there were 1789

papers. By sampling every tenth score sheet in this latter range, fifty-nine moot cases were found. In the range 98 - 78, then eleven papers, or about 7% of the cases would have had to be rejected. In the range 77 - 40, five hundred and ninety cases, or about 30% of the cases would have had to be rejected. In view of these findings it was decided to select the papers in the range of 98 - 78. By rejecting the eleven moot cases, 150 themes remained as cases for this study.

CHAPTER IV

PREPARATION OF THE WEAKENED VERSIONS

I. Division of the 150 cases into five equal groups. Chapter III has described how the 150 cases for this study had been selected. The next problem was to determine what themes of this total number were to be weakened in respect to each of the categories of the rating form. Two assumptions governed this choice: 1) there should be the same number of compositions weakened in respect to each category, and 2) if a paper showed from the original ratings that one category of a case had been rated as low as, or lower than, any other category in this writing, that case should be further weakened in respect to that already low-scored category. For example, a paper might have received the following average scores in each of the five categories: Conventions of Grammar = 5.5, Sentence Structure = 6.0, Diction = 6.5, Organization = 8.5, and Content = 9.0. This case, then, should be weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar.

There seems to be an argument to support the assumption that the weakest element of an original paper

should be further weakened to produce the second version of that paper. First, all scores of these papers have been determined by a group of trained raters who have seemed to score some elements in the papers lower than other elements. If weakened versions were to be returned to them for re-rating, these versions should contain a further weakening of those elements which they have already recognized by scoring them lower than the other elements. Secondly, if weak elements are further weakened there would be less danger of accidentally mutilating other elements. Therefore, this technique would seem to produce versions likely to be accepted by the raters as real specimens of actual writing, rather than artificial products.

Guided by this principle of further weakening already weak elements, it was necessary to examine the tabulated results of the original ratings to see whether among these 150 selected cases there could be found 30 papers scored weakest in Conventions of Grammar; 30 in Sentence Structure; 30, in Diction; 30, in Organization; and 30, in Content. This search was implemented by going through all the rating sheets and checking them in respect

to their lowest rated element. Then these sheets were sorted into five piles, each pile representing those papers in which one element had been scored lower than, or as low as, the other elements on which the paper had been judged.

After several sortings of the rating sheets a satisfactory grouping was found so that there were 30 cases in each group. In the following table the group numbers designate sets of 30 papers; the scores under the elements are the average scores of the five elements within each group.

TABLE I. ELEMENT SCORE AVERAGES

Group	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Struct.	Dict.	Org.	Content
1	<u>6.8</u>	8.1	8.2	9.0	9.2
2	8.2	<u>7.7</u>	8.5	9.1	9.0
3	8.0	8.3	<u>7.7</u>	9.2	8.2
4	8.6	8.6	8.6	<u>8.6</u>	8.9
5	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	<u>7.5</u>

Inspection of Table I shows that the specifications

set up for the division of the 150 cases into five equal groups have been met. Therefore, the themes of group one have been weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar; the themes in group two have been weakened in respect to Sentence Structure, etc., since one element in each group has been scored lower than, or as low as, any of the other elements in that group of cases.

II. Principles controlling the weakening of the five elements. In producing the weakened versions of the selected 150 cases, these considerations have guided this author's re-writing of the original versions: 1) The quality of the weakening has been determined by the definitions of each element as found in the Written and Spoken English Syllabus; ¹ 2) care has been taken to prevent a "spilling-over" of the weakening into other elements; 3) the quality of the weakness of the low-scored element in each theme has been carefully analyzed so that qualities extraneous to the nature of the original paper were not introduced; and 4) there has been no attempt to control exactly the quantity of

¹ Written and Spoken English Syllabus, Fifth Revision, Sixth Edition (Michigan State College Press, 1950), pp. 17 - 18.

weakening, since there is no basic point in the system of rating which might serve as an origin of known value from which quantity can be measured. Even though the weakening has not been scientifically controlled as to quantity, care has been taken to avoid such inordinate mutilation as might make the weakened versions seem artificial.

III. Writing the weakened versions. In order to abide by the guiding principles set down in Section II of this chapter it has been necessary to pay particular attention to one of them - the definition of the elements of composition found in the Written and Spoken English Syllabus. It will be noticed that these definitions are written in paragraphs of continuous discourse, a kind of writing which made analysis into their components difficult. To make these definitions clearer they have appeared in outline form throughout this chapter.²

² To test the validity of these definitions in outline form, they have been used in theme-rating sessions of the regular in-service meetings to complement the definitions in the syllabus. The behavior of raters has seemed to indicate that the content of these outlines has faithfully represented the points in the syllabus.

A. Conventions of Grammar

The thirty themes³ selected for weakening in respect to Conventions of Grammar have been analyzed in this study on the basis of the following outline of the definition of Conventions of Grammar as found in the syllabus:

1. Reasonable spelling and capitalization.
2. Correct punctuation at major junctures.
3. The usual grammatical agreements (subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent).
4. Correct use of possessives.
5. Avoidance of:
 - a. Sentence fragments.
 - b. Comma faults.
 - c. Period faults.
 - d. Dangling modifiers.

The purpose of analyzing these thirty themes was to discover in each case what elements in the category of Conventions of Grammar had been violated. After the quality of these violations had been determined, these individual themes were revised so that these discovered weaknesses would be amplified. This further weakening has been so contrived that the revision would not produce errors which might be construed by the raters

³ See Table II, pages 82-84 for their original serial numbers.

as belonging in one of the other four major categories. To that end no new material has been added, nor has any original material been deleted from the themes in the cases of Conventions of Grammar, Sentence Structure, and Diction. If new material were added for the sake of producing more errors in subject-verb agreement, for example, this new writing might be judged by the re-raters in respect to Sentence Structure, or Content, etc. Similarly, if original material were deleted, that material might have been judged originally in respect to Content. Careful attention, then, has been paid to the production of new errors to magnify only those weaknesses already present in the papers, by revising sentences, phrases, and words which the writer of the original theme had set down himself. Also, in the process of this revision to produce more errors in the themes, the degree of seriousness of these new errors has been restrained so that obviously artificial writing might be avoided.

In the section that follows examples of manufactured errors or weakness are represented under the headings of the several elements of the broad category Conventions of Grammar. Of course, the examples have been taken out of their contexts, but they serve to illustrate the method

of revision to produce weakened versions of the original themes. The number following the example is the original serial number of the composition from which the example was taken. In the following examples the material from the original version precedes its weakened counterpart.

I. Reasonable spelling and capitalization.

(A) Reasonable spelling:

1. believe - beleive (1577)
2. depression - deppression (1478)
3. council - consule (1364)
4. tragedy - tradgedy (821)
5. democracy - democratcy (1770)
6. paid - payed (150)
7. balances - ballences (1636)
8. concept - consept (518)
9. whether - wheather (1599)
10. eccentric - ecsentric (256)

(B) Capitalization:

1. ...this country of ours...this
Country of ours...(217)
2. ...communism (in the general sense)...
Communism (1599)
3. ...to make politics...to make Politics (518)
4. Constitution (of U.S.A.) ...constitution
(1636)
5. Declaration of Independence ... declaration
of independence (310)
6. Athenian - athenian (518)
7. ...what we call countries today
...what we call Countries today (623)
8. ...on the south side ofon the
South side of ... (1479)
9. American Congressman ... American
congressman (1589)
10. Others learned ... (beginning of sentence)
...others learned ... (945)

II. Correct punctuation at major junctures.

1. The causes of Metternichs rise to power are mainly these: the absence of a solitary powerful ruling force

The causes of Metternichs rise to power are mainly these; the absence of a solitary powerful ruling force...(868)

2. What is wrong with our present educational system?

What is wrong with our present educational system. (1748)

3. ...since I am limited to five hundred words in this essay, it is apparent....

...since I am limited to five hundred words in this essay; it is apparent...(310)

4. The communists, however, are determined to...

The communists; however are determined to...(1599)

5. How many even know the names of their congressmen?

How many even know the names of their congressmen. (1521)

6. The two political parties of paramount importance in the 19th century, were the liberals....

The two political parties of paramount importance in the 19th century; were the liberals....(1370)

7. This is definitely government "by the people", for they are the ones who....

This is definitely government "by the people"; for they are the ones who....(1435)

8. One man makes the statement, "Those darn negroes, they are all alike."

One man makes the statement, Those darn negroes, they are all alike. (1593)

9. ...such countries as England, Sweden, Brazil, Germany and Greece, where....

...such countries as England, Sweden, Brazil, Germany and Greece; where....(1500)

10. A representative was heard to say "Give them another R. O. T. C. and they..."

A representative was heard to say Give them another R. O. T. C. and they...(1144)

III. The usual grammatical agreements (subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent).

1. ...none of the so-called authorities seemed willing to assert himself on the question.

...none of the so-called authorities seemed willing to assert themselves on the question. (1144)

2. Whether these three goals can be attained through governmental exchange scholarships remains to be seen.

Whether these three goals can be attained through governmental scholarships remain to be seen. (1500)

3. In all walks of life there is government by the people?

In all walks of life there are government by the people? (1435)

4. ...there were many conflicts....

...there was many conflicts.... (1370)

5. He has little time to think of such things. To him international government....

He has little time to think of such things. To them international government....(217)

6. ...that the bureaucratic conditions of the government has been a

...that the bureaucratic conditions of the government have been a (821)

7. ...these three divisions of government are necessary.

...these three divisions of government is necessary. (291)

8. The way high schools of our country are governed is, I believe, of vital importance.

The way high schools of our country are governed are, I believe, of vital importance. (1364)

9. The Greek was not interested...
The Greek were not interested...(518)

10. The foundations of our government are strong.
The foundations of our government is strong. (1430)

IV. Correct use of possessives.⁴

1. ...to reduce the condition's seriousness.
...to reduce the conditionss seriousness. (1748)
2. ...and more readily appreciate its benefits.
...and more readily appreciate it's benefits. (887)
3. ...we hear the speaker's solution to the problems.
...we hear the speakerss solution to the problem's.
(1593)

V. Avoidance of sentence fragments, comma faults, period faults, and dangling modifiers.⁵

1. Under a program set up by our government in conjunction with several European governments, students are selected to....

Under a program set up by our government in conjunction with several European governments, Students are selected to(1500)

⁴ The three examples here are typical of all produced errors in this section.

⁵ No cases of dangling modifiers were produced; to do so would have necessitated writing additional content which might influence Sentence Structure.

2. I think the spirit of democracy can best be exemplified by the government of ancient Athens. Here everyone....
 I think the spirit of democracy can best be exemplified by the government of ancient Athens, here everyone
(981).

3. In California oranges are lying in the fields spoiling. They are within sight of people....
 In California oranges are lying in the fields spoiling, they are within sight of people....(1884)

4. ...but feeling that it is enough is very wrong. This is where Do-Democracy comes in.
 ...but feeling that it is enough is very wrong, this is where Do-Democracy comes in. (1593)

5. The merchandising business is practically all governed "by the people". Buying and selling in any market is.....

The merchandising business is practically all governed "by the people", buying and selling in any market is.....(1435)

6. The result, was, that communities were represented, which no longer were occupied, while new communities had no representation at all.

The result, was, that communities were represented, which no longer were occupied. While new communities had no representation at all. (1370)

7. The fellows and girls in Europe have little hope for the future. They live....

The fellows and girls in Europe have little hope for the future, they live....(217)

8. We can organize groups which will aid us in alleviating our frustrations and no one will step on us for doing so. We can own....

We can organize groups which will aid us in alleviating our frustrations and no one will step on us for doing so, we can own....(1577)

9. There was no middle of the road this time. They had to choose....

There was no middle of the road this time, they had to choose....(1478)

10. A one man rule, such as that enjoyed by Louis Johnson, is dangerous, not only to the Navy but to the entire nation as well.

A one man rule, such as that enjoyed by Louis Johnson, is dangerous. Not only to the Navy but to the entire nation as well. (892).

B. Sentence Structure

The thirty themes⁶ chosen for weakening in respect to Sentence Structure have been analyzed on the basis of the following outline of the definitions of Sentence Structure as found in the syllabus:

1. Strategic use of:
 - (a) Periodic sentences.
 - (b) Subordination.
 - (c) Parallelism.
2. Maturity of expression through:
 - (a) Variety in sentence length.
 - (b) Variety in sentence structure.
 - (c) Variety in sentence order.
 - (d) Freedom from:
 1. Awkwardness.
 2. Obscurity.
3. Careful attention paid to:
 - (a) Sentence euphony.
 - (b) Rhythm.

Inspection of the elements of this definition shows that there is overlapping among the items. For example, maturity of expression may be achieved through attention paid to all the elements in the definition. This is probably true because the word "maturity" denotes a quality difficult to define. Freedom from awkwardness and obscurity can be achieved by attention to proper subordination, parallelism (lexical and structural), etc. This

⁶ See Table III, pages 85-87 for their original serial numbers.

overlapping of the elements of the definition might be explained by the fact that sentence structure and style seem to be closely related and are difficult to analyze into mutually exclusive components. The definition of Sentence Structure here seems to have been written in terms of general symptoms of good writing, rather than in terms of the specific elements which are discovered in effective composition.

Because of the vagueness with which the definition treats Sentence Structure, it was necessary in this study to narrow this broad definition to fewer, and perhaps more easily recognized elements. An examination of the quality of weakness of sentence structure in the thirty papers selected for revision showed that the major faults could be classified under obscurity and improper (or lack of) use of periodic sentences. The failure to use periodic sentences was reflected in the tendency to write long sentences, the clauses of which were joined by coordinating conjunctions, or to write many short sentences which could have been cast in periodic form, using proper coordinating conjunctions and relative pronouns.

Since these two major weaknesses (obscurity and failure to use periodic sentences) had been found

consistently throughout the thirty themes, these two kinds of weakness have been the basis on which the weakened versions were written. It must be admitted here that these two symptoms of weakness are still overlapping.

The weakening of the papers in respect to sentence structure is illustrated in the examples which follow. The first entry in each item is the original version; the second entry, the weakened version. The number in parentheses following the item is the serial number of the paper from which the example was taken.

I. Obscurity

1. Socialized medicine as it has been adapted in England and how it is advocated here is always characterized by governmental red tape and bureaucratic inefficiency.

Socialized medicine as it has been adapted in England and how it is advocated is always characterized by governmental red tape and bureaucratic inefficiency here. (913)

2. But doesn't the fact that we can only have a choice between a few men put up by political parties make the first statement sound ridiculous!

But doesn't the fact that we can only have a choice put up by political parties between a few men make the first statement sound ridiculous! (691)

3. Finally, after realizing the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, a convention was called in 1787. The purpose of this convention was to amend the Articles.

Finally, after realizing the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, a convention was called in 1787, which the purpose of this convention was to amend the Articles. (236)

4. Then, too, there is the Klu Klux Klan, an organization which frightens negroes away from the polls during elections.

Then, too, there is the Klu Klux Klan, an organization during elections which frightens negroes away from the polls. (403)

5. With this principle in mind we can intelligently approach the problems that confront our own people.

With this principle in mind we can approach the problems that confront our own people intelligently. (1444)

6. The student council of this school is similar to councils in the other schools in that it is composed of two representatives from each class, which are elected by the students. The boys and girls serve on the council for one year.

The student council of this school is similar to councils in the other schools in that it is composed of two representatives from each class, which are elected by the students, which the boys and girls serve on for one year. (443)

7. However, there is no luxury tax on the pockets in a pair of men's trousers. Performance of the same function becomes luxurious for the female and necessary for the male.

However, there is no luxury tax on the pockets in a pair of men's trousers. Performance of the same function becomes luxurious for the female and necessary for the male as to pockets. (203)

8. The points brought forth in this code are such suggestions as contour plowing, terracing the land, the use of marginal bands and wind-breakers, and many other tips for the proper conservation of the soil.

The points brought forth in this code are such suggestions as contour plowing, terrace the land, use marginal lands and windbreakers and many other tips for the proper conservation of the soil. (822)

9. This process is often time-consuming due to the general ignorance on the part of the people concerning parliamentary law.

This process is often time-consuming concerning parliamentary law's ignorance on the part of the people. (295)

10. And the question formed from this statement reads, "is this the beginning or the end"? Which will it be?

And the question formed from this statement reads, "is this the beginning or the end"? Which it will be. (928)

II. Failure to use periodic sentences and/or proper subordination.

1. The next highest rating is that of the engineering officer, who hold the rate of chief engineman. He is responsible for all of the ships machinery, and he directs the operation of the engine room at all times. (476).

The next highest rating is that of the engineering officer. He holds the rate of chief engineman. He is responsible for all of the ships machinery. He directs the operation of the engine room at all times. (476)

2. If a girl has gotten late minutes because of some unavoidable situation, she may petition to AWS and her case will be considered.

A girl may have gotten late minutes because of some unavoidable situation, and she may petition to AWS and her case will be considered. (1403)

3. I went to my government teacher with a plan for revision of the government class. My teacher discussed the plan with me and made suggestions. He suggested that I lay my plan on paper and....

I went to my government teacher with a plan for revision of the government class and my teacher discussed the plan with me and made suggestions and he suggested that I lay my plan on paper and (1046)

4. The executive branch of the national government is headed by the president. He has under him a cabinet composed of ten men. Each cabinet member is responsible to the president----.

The executive branch of the national government is headed by the president and he has under him a cabinet composed of ten men and each cabinet member is responsible to the president----. (1517)

5. The conditions under which these serfs worked was appalling. They lived in disreputable one-room huts, with dirt floors, resembling a pig pen of today. They had no modern conveniences whatsoever.

The conditions under which these serfs worked was appalling, and they lived in disreputable one-room huts, with dirt floors, resembling a pig pen of today, and they had no modern conveniences whatsoever. (874)

6. Because of the great responsibility the strong-mayor-type of city government puts on the individual, the occupant of this office must be aggressive, farsighted, and intelligent.

This type of government puts great responsibility on the individual, and the occupant of the office must be aggressive, farsighted, and intelligent. (1025)

7. Although there are many reasons which are in support of my foregoing statement, I will present only the three most important reasons. These reasons concern first----.

There are many reasons which are in support of my foregoing statement, and I will present only the three most important reasons, and these reasons concern first----. (1747)

8. We who today are witnessing one of the greatest political upheavals in the history of the world have come to think of government only as a gigantic organization set up to run a huge nation or state.

We are today witnessing one of the greatest political upheavals in the history of the world and have come to think of government only as a gigantic organization set up to run a huge nation or state. (830)

9. Since money is needed for this project, a bill is drawn up to be presented in Congress.

Money is needed for this project and a bill is drawn up to be presented in Congress. (446)

10. This substance contains a drug which has been known to cause the death of several people---.

This substance contains a drug and it has been known to cause the death of several people---. (1492)

C. Diction

The thirty themes selected for weakening in respect to Diction have been analyzed on the basis of the following definition of Diction in the Written and Spoken English Syllabus:

Good diction means the use of words well chosen to express the writer's meaning. It means the avoidance of expressions which are crude or trite, of wordiness, of pompousness. It means the use of accepted idioms, of expressions which are vigorous and alive, of the specific and concrete in preference to the general and abstract.⁷

To facilitate the analysis of themes in this section the above definition of Diction has been re-cast into outline form which shows the qualities of diction to be avoided. These four qualities to be avoided are:

1. Poor choice of words to express the writer's meaning.
2. Use of expressions which are trite, wordy, or pompous.
3. Use of unidiomatic expressions.
4. Use of general and abstract instead of specific and concrete words.

In weakening the thirty themes in respect to

⁷ Written and Spoken English Syllabus, Fifth Revision, Sixth Edition (Michigan State College Press), p. 17.

Diction, the principle of further weakening already weak elements has been followed. For example, if a paper showed a tendency to use general instead of specific words, that paper has been revised, changing specific words to general ones; a paper which used unidiomatic expressions has been further weakened by producing other unidiomatic expressions; etc. Again, as in the cases of Conventions of Grammar and Sentence Structure, restraint has been exercised in the weakening of diction to avoid the production of obviously artificial writing.

The following samples of weakened diction have been selected to show how the principle of weakening has operated. The first item of each pair is the sample of the original version; the second item, the weakened version. The number in parentheses at the end of the pair is the original serial number of the theme.⁸

I. Poor choice of words to express
the writer's meaning.

1. There are three main types of governments in the world today.

There are three main ways of governments in the world today. (1027)

⁸ See Table IV pages 88- 90 for their original serial numbers.

2. Bayer aspirin is another example of fraudulent advertising by inference.

Bayer aspirin is another example of fraudulent advertising by reference. (2009)

3. Only then can we maintain the harmony and ideals our predecessors strove so earnestly to obtain.

Only then can we maintain the harmony and ideals our descendants strove so earnestly to obtain. (1142)

4. Therefore, private interests have wastefully exploited our resources to an extreme.

Therefore, private interests have wastefully employed our resources to an extreme. (1477)

5. In November of 1948 nearly half of the eligible population of this country turned out to vote for their government.

In November of 1948 nearly half of the possible population of this country turned out to vote for their government. (1456)

6. In order that we may comprehend fully the effect of "parental government" on the adolescent, we must understand that there is no one "right" method of governing a child's life.

In order that we may apprehend fully the effect of "parental government" on the adolescent----. (1629)

7. Town meetings within the community are part of our American heritage.

Town meetings within the community are part of our American heirloom. (264)

8. Everything in the Communist State is responsible to this party.

Everything in the Communist State is responsive to this party. (1178)

9. These men were given responsibilities which they assumed as well as the older men.

These men were given responsibilities which they did as well as the older men. (1674)

10. Socialism is found in many parts of the world, but the country that exemplifies this form of government most eminently is England.

Socialism is found in many aspects of the world, but the country that has this form of government most eminently is England. (1626)

II. Use of expressions which are trite, wordy, or pompous.

1. You who read this essay are concerned too.
You who read this tome are concerned too. (1043)

2. Since we are living in a competitive world, it is easy to see why there would be distrust among the nations.

Since we are living in a competitive world, it is easy to see why there would be distrust among the nations at all times. (1020)

3. For example, John Doe dislikes concerts, but his wife loves them.

For example, John Doe despises concerts, but his wife simply adores them. (1562)

4. The more efficient the group the better the program of action will be.

The more efficient the group the better the program of action will be at all times. (1623)

5. In order to be a good citizen of tomorrow, each one should understand the problems that the state faces today, for similar problems are likely to be faced in the future.

In order to be a good citizen of tomorrow, each one should understand the problems that the state faces today, for similar problems are likely to be faced in the future of tomorrow. (1483)

6. ---there is a feeling of hostility and resentment in the child toward his parents.

---there is a feeling of hostility and resentment in the child in regard to his parents. (1629)

7. I am going to take myself from this group and see just what democracy means to me as an individual.

I am going to absent myself from this group and see just what democracy means to me as regards an individual. (1443)

8. The writers do not take into consideration that this is a different age than their fathers lived in.

The writers do not take into consideration in their minds that this is a different age than their fathers dwelt in. (1406)

9. Every student must jump at her beck and call.

Every student must jump at her beck and call at all times. (126)

10. These laws would help to prevent filibuster which is the biggest barricade to speedy law making.

These laws would help to prevent filibuster which is the biggest barricade to speedy law making in regard to legislation (1504)

III. Use of unidiomatic expressions.

1. Another disadvantage to the american system is that when a man is elected for a term of office weather it is two, four or six years he will serve out his term unless he dies or---.

Another disadvantage to the american system is that when a man is elected for a term of office weather it is two, four or six years he will continue his term unless he dies or----. (504)

2. These are a few of the methods --- a citizen might use during his campaign for a government office.

These are a few of the methods --- a citizen might use during his search for a government office. (1434)

3. The top 10% of the people living in the United States had a total income equal to that of the other 90% of the population.

The high 10% of the people living in the United States had a total income equal to that of the other 90% of the population. (1559)

4. Laws, governing the length of time a man can speak on the floor of Congress, should be made and enforced.

Laws, governing the extent of time a man can speak on the floor of Congress, should be made and enforced. (1504)

5. The Legislative body is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

The Legislative body is made up in the Senate and the House of Representatives. (1029)

IV. Use of general and abstract instead of specific and concrete words.

1. I'd like to let you in on some good points which have been experienced by myself and my family.

Id like to let you in on some good aspects which have been experienced by myself and my family. (934)

2. I will speak of it as the type of communism known to be practiced in Soviet Russia today.

I will speak of it as the type of communism known to be worked in Soviet Russia today. (1178)

3. The position of city manager is a professional position and requires a thorough training in government and the problems of government.

The position of city manager is a professional position and requires a thorough training in government and the aspects of government. (499)

4. To obtain a better understanding of how the Commission-Manager Plan accomplishes these aims, let us consider the structure of this type of city government.

To obtain a better understanding of how the Commission-Manager Plan accomplishes these things, let us consider the structure of this type of city government. (1731)

5. ---selecting members who are good leaders and good thinkers, and who will also voice the point of

view of the majority.

---selecting members who are good leaders and good thinkers, and who will also tell the point of view of the majority. (126)

6. Today, America stands as a great democracy leading and encouraging nations throughout the world to adopt what we proclaim to be the best form of government, democracy.

Today, America exists as a great democracy leading and encouraging nations throughout the world to adopt what we say is the best form of government, democracy. (1522)

7. We have failed in this step before but we must not fail again.

We have failed in this factor before but we must not fail again. (1442)

8. With the introduction of such a system of city government a new age of progressive government has been ushered into our lives.

With the introduction of such a system of city government a new age of progressive government has been made into our lives. (499)

9. We have witnessed one deadly depression, and perhaps we will be hosts to another in the future.

We have been in one deadly depression, and perhaps we will be hosts to another in the future. (1559)

10. During a filibuster some of the Congressmen may learn how to bake a cake by a secret recipe or they may hear passages from the Bible.

During a filibuster some of the Congressmen may learn how to bake a cake by a secret recipe or they may hear things from the Bible. (1504)

D. Organization

The definition of Organization⁹ has been analyzed into these components:

1. Size of the topic should fit the length of the paper.
2. Theme as a whole should have a single, controlling idea or purpose, expressed or clearly implied, to which each part of the theme contributes.
3. Each paragraph should be recognizable as a unit (i.e., developing a single topic or sub-topic) in the development of the theme.
4. Ideas should be smoothly and logically linked together:
 - (a) Through a recognizable pattern of development.
 - (b) By use of transitional devices:
 1. the connective.
 2. parallelism.
 3. pronoun reference.
 4. repetition.
5. Importance of ideas should be pointed up by:
 - (a) position
 - (b) proportion
 - (c) repetition

The problems involved in producing versions weak in respect to Organization differ from those encountered in Conventions of Grammar, Sentence Structure, and Diction in that Organization seems to be concerned with composition in its entirety rather than with the lexicality and structure of parts of composition.

⁹ See Chapter III, p.22 for statement in the syllabus.

Because of this difference, entire themes have been reproduced in this section to illustrate how the weakening in respect to Organization has been accomplished. Two themes have been selected as examples which typify the weakening of the thirty cases in respect to Organization. The first sample of each pair is the original version; the second, the weakened version. An analysis follows the weakened version, describing the nature of the weakening. The number in parentheses is the original serial number of the theme.¹⁰ The paragraphs of the two versions have been numbered for purpose of reference.

¹⁰ See Table V, pages 91-93 for the original serial numbers of these themes.

(457)

Democracy in the Home
(Original version)

(1) At last it was here! It was June sixth and the annual state fair would open today in Monroeville. Sam Thomas and his wife had been preparing for weeks, in fact all year, for this event and so had their two children, Jim and Mary. They had very impatiently awaited this all important day.

(2) Let's go back to last fall when the Thomas family first moved to their farm in Monroeville and began making plans for the state fair. Dad was definitely the boss of the family but never passed sentence until Sarah, Jimmy and Mary had been consulted and had their say in the situation. Whenever a problem for debate or argument would arise, the four of them would take stand around the kitchen table and have a typical family battle-royal until some compromise or conclusion was reached. You see this was a democratic family, each interested in what the other had to say and willing to give in a little and compromise.

(3) It was at these democratic meetings plans were made for this important day. Mary had decided to forget all about the new dress she wanted and put the money into the fund for the livestock entering fee. Mom and Dad compromised many times along the way, and they all unanimously decided to cut down on the budget and do many other things to save and prepare for the fair. Together they worked planned, compromised and co-operated for their common goal.

(4) Mary had canned and made a dress she was entering. This she had done all by herself. There had been no one dictating to her or telling her what she could do or couldn't do.

(5) Jim was entering a pig, his own pig. Just like Mary he had been entirely responsible for taking care of his entry. He felt proud inside, because he knew this was his very own product.

(6) This is the way Sam and Sarah were teaching Jim and Mary about democracy within the family, through practical experience. They made decisions as a group, they had their own responsibilities and they worked together; because of this they felt pride in the product. They knew they had shared and planned in its production.

(7) Democracy in the home is not a take but don't give game. It is an honest, straight from the heart co-operation; a feeling of participating, planning, and working together; a tie of equality between the members. Democracy starts in the home. This is where it must be practiced, and this is where it must continue to be practiced if it is to survive!

(8) Sarah just put the last things in the car. They're ready to leave. Yes, there they go, the four of them together.

(457)

Democracy in the Home
(Weakened version)

(1) At last it was here! It was June sixth and the annual state fair would open today in Monroeville. Sam Thomas and his wife had been preparing for weeks, in fact all year, for this event and so had their two children, Jim and Mary. They had very impatiently awaited this all important day.

(2) Let's go back to last fall when the Thomas family first moved to their farm in Monroeville and began making plans for the state fair. Dad was definitely the boss of the family but never passed sentence until Sarah, Jimmy and Mary had been consulted and had their say in the situation. Whenever a problem for debate or argument would arise, the four of them would take stand around the kitchen table and have a typical family battle-royal until some compromise or conclusion was reached.

(3) Mary had decided to forget about the new dress she wanted and put the money into the fund for the livestock entering fee. Mom and Dad compromised many times along the way, and they all unanimously decided to cut down the budget and do many other things to save and prepare for the fair. Together they worked, planned, compromised and co-operated for their common good.

(4) Mary had canned and made a dress she was entering. This she had done all by herself. There had been no one dictating to her or telling her what she could or couldn't do.

(5) Jim was entering a pig, his own pig. Just like Mary he had been entirely responsible for taking care of his own entry. He felt proud inside, because he knew this was his very own product.

(6) They made decisions as a group, they had their own responsibilities and they worked together; because of this they felt pride in the product. They knew they had shared and planned in its production.

(8) Sarah just put the last things in the car. They're ready to leave. Yes, there they go, the four of them together.

Analysis of Theme 457

The weakening of theme number 457 has been accomplished by 1) deleting parts which state the controlling idea of the composition, 2) deleting topic sentences of paragraphs, 3) and by destroying transitional devices.

The last sentence of the second paragraph states the controlling idea of the paragraph and leads into the first sentence of the third paragraph. The deletion of the two sentences weakens the points of the second and third paragraphs and destroys the logical transition between these two paragraphs.

Paragraph number seven states the controlling idea of the whole composition and serves to emphasize by summary and repetition the point of the illustrations. Omitting this entire paragraph weakens the whole composition by producing a version which seems to have no clearly expressed main point.

(1470)

The U.S. Government must take Control
of Stream Pollution
(Original version)

(1) When the late Mr. Roosevelt became president he, among other things, advocated a strong conservation program. In this program many phases of conservation were taken up but one of great importance was all but left out. That phase was stream pollution, one of nature's greatest enemies.

(2) Do you realize what is happening to the rivers and streams of our country? Are you aware that they are being converted into stinking sluggish ditches? All of the fish and other wildlife of the rivers are slowly dying off and leaving barren banks and empty rivers. Riverside parks which once resounded with the sound of children splashing in the water are now quiet for all that remains is a sign telling the people that the water is poisonous and condemned. In some cases the states have taken control and are doing a good job of fighting stream pollution but in most cases the state government cannot or will not try to fight stream pollution.

(3) Why is all this happening? Who has brought this shameful situation upon us? Most people think that it is the large manufacturing plant or chemical plant pouring their waste products into the rivers that are all to blame. While it is true that they are partly to blame much fault lies in the irresponsible citizens living along the banks of the rivers. Instead of having some type of filtration system for their waste water products they simply run a pipe into the river. One example of this is seen in the Red Cedar River in East Lansing, Michigan where almost every house along the river has a pipe emptying a thick grey sludge into what was once a beautiful river.

(4) Another situation which could cause a pollution problem would be a city which does not have an adequate sewerage disposal unit.

(5) It is the duty of the U. S. Government to do something about stream pollution. Not only are our rivers one of our most important natural resources of water power but they also provide transportation routes and serve many millions of people as holiday playgrounds. If some control is not administered our rivers could be the breeding places of countless diseases and plagues.

(6) When the government takes control of this phase of conservation they should put enough weight behind the legislation to make the people aware of what will happen if they are caught. What little state legislation was passed was too weak to do any good. Any legislation should be backed up by heavy fines or jail sentences. A board of investigators should be set up in each state to watch for violations and these investigators should have enough authority to take action against any violators. This may (seem) like quite drastic action but when a situation has gone this far drastic action is needed.

(7) For some years now conservation-minded men have been trying to get more government control of stream pollution. If every one would get behind this drive our government would have to take action on this issue.

(1470)

The U.S. Government must take Control
of Stream Pollution
(Weakened version)

(1, 2) When the late Mr. Roosevelt became president he, among other things, advocated a strong conservation program. Do you realize what is happening to the rivers and streams of our country? Are you aware that they are being converted into stinking sluggish ditches? All of the fish and other wildlife of the rivers are slowly dying off and leaving barren banks and empty rivers. Riverside parks which once resounded with the sound of children splashing in the water are now quiet for all that remains is a sign telling the people that the water is poisonous and condemned. In some cases the States have taken control and are doing a good job of fighting stream pollution but in most cases the state governments cannot or will not try to fight stream pollution.

(3) While it is true that plants are partly to blame much fault lies in the irresponsible citizens living along the banks of these rivers. Instead of having some type of filtration system for their waste water products they simply run a pipe into the river. An example of this is seen in the Red Cedar River in East Lansing, Michigan where almost every house along the river has a pipe emptying a thick grey sludge into what was once a beautiful river.

(5) It is the duty of the U.S. Government to do something about stream pollution. Not only are our rivers one of our most important natural resources of water power but they also provide transportation routes and serve many millions of people as holiday play grounds. If some control is not administered our rivers could be the breeding places of countless diseases and plagues.

(7) For some years conservation-minded men have been trying to get more government control of stream pollution. If everyone would get

behind this drive our government would have to take action on this issue.

(6) What little state legislation was passed was too weak to do any good. Any legislation should be backed up by heavy fines or jail sentences. A board of investigators should be set up in each state to watch for violations and the investigators should have enough authority to take action against any violators. This may (seem) like quite drastic action but when a situation has gone this far drastic action is needed!

Analysis of Theme 1470

Paragraph one (of the original version) introduces the theme and contains the controlling point of the composition in the second sentence. Deleting this second sentence of the opening paragraph and combining paragraphs one and two weakens the introduction and produces an abrupt change of thought without transition.

The omission of the topic sentence of paragraph three destroys the transition between paragraphs two and three and leaves paragraph three without its topic sentence.

Deleting all of paragraph four destroys the device which carries the discussion from a general point to consideration of specific responsibilities in the problem of river pollution.

Paragraph seven is a final plea to accept the propositions of the paper. Taking it from its original position and placing it in the next-to-last position weakens the point.

The first sentence of paragraph six is the topic sentence of its paragraph and serves as transition between paragraphs; therefore, its deletion joins ideas which are not smoothly and logically linked together.

E. Content

In producing the versions of the thirty themes selected for weakening in respect to Content the following outline of the statement of the syllabus definition¹¹ of Content has been used to itemize the component elements of good Content:

1. Supporting materials (examples, statistics, arguments) should be adequate.
2. The theme should be of college caliber in that it:
 - (a) concerns itself with matters worthy of adult consideration.
 - (b) expresses a reasonably mature point of view.
3. The theme should conform reasonably with limitation of number of assigned words.

To illustrate how the thirty cases have been weakened in respect to Content two typical themes have been reproduced in their entirety in this section. The number in parentheses following the title of the theme is the original serial number of the paper. The first sample of each pair is the original version; the second, the weakened version. An analysis follows the weakened version to

¹¹ See Chapter III, p.23 for exact wording of the definition in the syllabus.

describe the quality of the weakening. The paragraphs of the two versions have been numbered for the purpose of reference.

(1606)

Prevailing Forms of government
(Original version)

(1) Since the beginning of the human race, man has recognized a need for some kind of control or regulation of the group in which he lives. He has found that certain rules must be formulated and adhered to if order is to prevail in the group. The rules or laws, at first, were simple unwritten agreements dealing only with a few of the aspects of social control. As time progressed and as the economic and social development became more complex, however, laws also became more complex. With the growing complexity of laws we find the uprising of an organization necessary to formulate, codify, and administer these laws. This organization we may define as government.

(2) Through the ages numerous forms of government have sprung up to conform to the needs of the specific peoples. Some of the more prevailing forms will be discussed. These forms are classified as: Autocracy, Anarchy, Monarchy, and Democracy.

(3) Autocracy

Autocratic government is government by one invested with uncontrolled authority. This type of government is employed, very often, by rulers who have a lust for power and economic control.

(4) Anarchy

An Anarchial form of government is characterized by the rule of a small group. In a society such as this, the theory of absolute individual liberty prevails even to the point of an absence of any government regulation.

(5) Monarchy

Monarchial government may be defined as a government in which a king or emperor holds the supreme power. This form of government tends to develop concentration of ruling in the hands of generations of the same family.

(6) Democracy

Democracy, the prevailing form of government in the United States, is rule by the people. In a

democratic government all of the citizens take a direct or indirect part in its actual workings. Whether it be direct or indirect depends upon the degree to which the ideal of democracy is practised.

(7) As we can see, government is not a product of our day but, instead, a product of the slow evolution of the ideas and ideals of centuries of people deeply concerned with the preservation of order, peace, and security.

(1606)

Prevailing Forms of Government
(Weakened version)

(1) Since the beginning of the human race, man has recognized a need for some sort of control or regulation of the groups in which he lives. He has found that certain rules must be formulated and adhered to if order is to prevail in the group. These rules or laws, at first, were simple unwritten agreements dealing only with a few of the aspects of social control. As time progressed and as the economic and social development became more complex, however, laws also became more complex. With the growing complexity of laws we find the uprising of an organization necessary to formulate, codify, and administer these laws. This organization we may define as government.

(2) Through the ages numerous forms of government have sprung up to conform to the needs of the specific peoples. Some of the more prevailing forms will be discussed. These forms are classified as: Autocracy, Anarchy, Monarchy, and Democracy.

(3) Autocracy

Autocratic government is government by one invested with uncontrolled authority.

(4) Anarchy

An Anarchial form of government is characterized by the rule of a small group.

(5) Monarchy

Monarchial government may be defined as a government in which a king or emperor holds the supreme power.

(6) Democracy

Democracy, the prevailing form of government in the United States, is the rule by the people. In a democratic government all the citizens take a direct or indirect part in its actual workings.

Analysis of Theme 1606

In weakening this theme, violations of two elements of content have been produced - number of assigned words and adequate supporting materials.

The original version used 345 words, while the weakened version has been reduced to 225. Deleting supporting material in paragraphs three through seven leaves the definitions of the four kinds of government without any statements to characterize them with any degree of specificity.

(325)

Nationalism does Exist in our Government
(Original version)

(1) Many people in the United States do not stop to realize that our democracy is actually a form of nationalism. We condemn the Nazi regime for having been a nationalistic government, but we do not admit or want to admit that ours is also. We are not as fanatic as the Nazis were, but many comparisons can be made between the two governments.

(2) Rituals play an important part in nationalism. In the Nazi government we find such a ritual as saluting the Fhurer or Swastika - an upward sweep of the right arm, with palm turned downward, while repeating the phrase, "Heil Hitler". In our democracy of the United States, we can enter any grade or high school classroom, at the beginning of the day, and see the boys and girls perform a ritual comparable to the German "Heil". Our children stand with right hands placed over their hearts, while facing the American flag, and say the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the United States. In both governments these ceremonies are usually carried out in a mechanical manner - similar to puppets on a string.

(3) After these rituals are performed we can listen to national songs. Yes, both governments have them! The Nazis sang songs of praise to Hitler, of the victorious and prosperous days he would bring to them, and of the heroic deeds performed by his famed "S. S. Men". We, in the United States, have our "Star Spangled Banner", "God Bless America", "Johnny Got a Zero", and "Amidst the Ruins of Berlin".

(4) Religion can also be used to show that nationalism does exist in our government. During the Nazi regime the religion which existed was used by the government as a "mouthpiece" or as a salesman of the reigning German party. During World War II, "Help Our Government" was the topic of many sermons in our American churches. Nationalism seems to be overpowering religion. Two things, government and

religion, which should be kept as interdependent as water and oil, have become as one, even in our United States.

(5) By the comparison of these three important factors of nationalism - rituals, songs, and religion - in the Nazi and American governments, we can see that, although we are not fanatics in nationalism it does exist in the United States. We must make sure it remains only as a factor in our government for maintaining loyalty to our country, plus respect for other countries, and not as an excuse to become as narrow-minded as our enemies of World War II.

(325)

Nationalism does Exist in our Government
(Weakened version)

(1) Many people in the United States do not stop to realize that our democracy is actually a form of nationalism. We condemn the Nazi regime for having been a nationalistic government, but we do not admit or want to admit that ours is also. We are not as fanatic as the Nazis were, but many comparisons can be made between the two governments.

(2) Rituals play an important part in nationalism. In the Nazi government we find such a ritual as saluting the Fhurer or Swastika - an upward sweep of the right arm, with palm turned downward, while repeating the phrase, "Heil Hitler". We also have rituals, songs, and ceremonies.

(3) Yes both governments have them! The Nazis sang songs of praise to Hitler, of the victorious and prosperous days he would bring to them, and of the heroic deeds performed by his famed "S. S. Men". We, in the United States, have our songs, too.

(4) Religion can also be used to show that nationalism does exist in our government. During the Nazi regime the religion which existed was used by the government as a "mouthpiece" or as a salesman of the reigning German party. During World War II there was nationalism in our Government. Two things, government and religion, which should be as interdependent as water and oil, have become as one, even in the United States.

(5) By the comparisons of three important factors of nationalism - rituals, songs, and religion - in the Nazi and American governments, we can see, that although we are not fanatics in nationalism it does exist in the United States. We must make sure it remains only as a factor in our government for maintaining loyalty to our country, plus respect for other countries, and not as an excuse to become as narrow-minded as our enemies of World War II. The solution, of course, is in a revival of religious faith.

Analysis of Theme 325

The quality of content in this composition depends on the illustrations and examples used to support the series of comparisons of nationalism in the United States and Nazi Germany. By giving examples of rituals, songs, and religion as they are practiced in each country, the writer has developed here a balance in the series of comparisons. Omitting the specific examples of rituals, songs, and religious practice in the United States weakens the content of the writing as a whole, since specific examples remain to illustrate the points only in the case of Nazi Germany.

The last paragraph (5) of this writing is an adequate conclusion to the paper, in that it is a generalized summary which clinches the main point, bringing in no material extraneous to the theme idea. The addition of the last sentence "The solution, of course, is in a renewal of religious faith" introduces an idea not stated anywhere in the paper and weakens the content of the conclusion.

IV. Mechanics of obtaining the final form of the weakened versions. After the 150 selected cases had been revised and rewritten so that 30 themes had been weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar, thirty in respect to Sentence Structure, thirty in respect to Diction, thirty in respect to Organization, and thirty in respect to Content, it was necessary to get these weakened versions into a physical form which would be accepted by the re-raters as samples of bona fide comprehensive examination themes. To accomplish this objective the weakened versions have been copied by students whose hand-writing matched that of the original version, have been assigned new serial numbers, and have been artificially aged.

A. Copying in matching handwriting. In order that handwriting quality and appearance of the weakened version might not operate as a variable in the rating of these weakened versions, the attempt has been made to have the papers copied by students whose handwriting closely resembled that of the original paper.

As soon as a group of weakened versions had been prepared they were given to students in the author's

Written and Spoken English sections, who were instructed, without explanation as to the purpose of the activity, to copy these versions in their regular handwriting. The matching of handwriting quality has been achieved by getting sample papers from over five hundred students in Written and Spoken English sections and by noting cases where their handwriting closely resembled that of the original theme. Whenever good matches in handwriting have been observed the students were supplied with the weakened versions of the original themes, the same kind of paper on which the original versions had been written, and with the same color of ink as on the original version. In this copying the students have been instructed to copy the original date of May 23, 1949, and the student number of the original theme on the heading of the official comprehensive examination papers. Care has been taken to omit the stamped original serial number from the headings of the copied themes. This process of copying themes to produce the form of the final version has run through a period from February, 1950 through March 1952.

B. Assigning new serial numbers to the weakened versions. After all of the 150 themes had been produced

in matching handwriting on official comprehensive examination theme papers, they were thoroughly shuffled and stamped serially, beginning with number 1102 and ending with number 1251*. These new serial numbers were stamped on the weakened versions on the same place on the paper, with the same machine, and with the same color of ink as in the case of the original versions. The shuffling of papers was to insure that the rating teams would get batches of papers with a fair distribution of cases of weakened elements. The assignment of new serial numbers from 1102 - 1251 was intended to produce the appearance of taking 150 original themes without any designed basis of selection.

C. Aging the weakened versions. After the weakened versions had been shuffled and assigned new serial numbers, they were placed in an attic in fanned-out order, where the sun and dust produced a soiling and fading like that of the original versions.¹²

¹² The author feels that papers of bona fide appearance had been produced, because in talking with Written and Spoken English staff members after the re-rating had been completed, he discovered that without exception they thought that they had been re-rating original themes taken from the Board of Examiners' files.

* Actually the last serial number was 1257, because faulty stamping deleted numbers 244, 256, 898, 1608, 831, and 1901.

CHAPTER V
RATING OF THE WEAKENED VERSIONS
AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

I. Rating the weakened versions. Chapter IV has described how the weakened versions of the 150 cases had been shuffled and assigned new serial numbers. The weakened versions were now ready for rating.

Twenty-four readers were chosen for rating of the weakened versions. Of these twenty-four raters chosen from the Department of Written and Spoken English all but three had participated in the rating of the original comprehensive examination themes of May 23, 1949. These three raters joined the department in 1949-50 and have had two school years of experience in rating comprehensive examination themes and have participated in in-service training programs in which sample themes were rated, using the rating form described in this study. It was not possible to have the services of all twenty-four raters used in 1949 because of leaves, terms-off, or resignations of members of the staff.

Following the same rating procedure as in 1949, these twenty-four raters were divided into eight teams of three members each. Six of the teams were given nineteen papers each, and two teams were given eighteen papers each

to rate.

To conceal from the staff the reason for this rating and to help prevent knowledge of this study, Professor Paul D. Bagwell, the Chairman of the Department of Written and Spoken English distributed the following note to each of those chosen for rating the weakened versions:

May 19, 1952

Some of the research in our department is concerned with the rating of written work. To help us in one of our studies, we ask your help in re-rating some Comprehensive Examination Themes written in spring term of 1949. We feel this work is important and certainly thank you for your cooperation.

(Signed)
Paul D. Bagwell

The themes were placed in envelopes identical to those used in 1949, with the same rating directions¹ as those of 1949 pasted on each cover.

The envelopes were distributed to the raters on May 19, 1952 and the ratings were completed on May 24, under conditions approaching as closely as possible those of the 1949 rating. The secretary of the Department of

¹ See Chapter III, page 15 for these directions to the raters.

Written and Spoken English administered all the details of distribution and collection. To help conceal the nature of this rating exercise this writer received a dummy envelope with his name on it, since all the packets, with raters' names on them were laid out on the office counter.

II. Tabulation of Scores. Tables II - VI show the division of the 150 themes into five groups of thirty each, to indicate which cases have been weakened in respect to the categories of the rating form, and to show the original and re-rated total scores and scores of the five categories of each theme. These tables should be read as follows: the titles of the tables indicate in respect to which category the thirty cases have been weakened. The first row in each pair of entries shows the data of the original version of each theme; the second row, the data of the weakened version of the theme. Example: (Table II, first entry) Theme number 150 was weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar. The rating of the original version in 1949 gave it a total score of 81, and scores of 7.0 in Conventions of Grammar, 8.0 in Sentence Structure,

9.0 in Diction, 8.5* in Organization, and 8.0 in Content. The same theme (with new serial number 1245), after it had been weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar, earned a total score of 58, and scores of 2.0 in Conventions of Grammar, 5.6* in Sentence Structure, 7.6 in Diction, 7.0 in Organization, and 7.0 in Content.

* Scores of the categories in the case of the rating of the original versions are the averages of two raters who agreed within five points on their total scores; therefore, decimals of .5 only appear. In the case of the rating of the weakened versions the scores of the categories may show decimals of .3 and .6, since in such cases these are the averages of three raters. (See Chapter III, page 25 for basis upon which the 150 cases were selected.)

TABLE II
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO CONVENTIONS
 OF GRAMMAR

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
150	81	7.0	8.0	9.0	8.5	8.0
1245	58	2.0	5.6	7.6	7.0	7.0
217	79	6.0	8.0	8.0	7.5	10.0
1197	45	3.5	5.0	5.5	3.0	5.5
291	78	6.5	7.5	7.5	8.5	9.0
1153	55	4.5	4.0	3.5	8.5	7.0
310	78	6.0	7.5	8.5	9.0	8.0
1143	39	3.0	3.0	4.5	4.5	4.5
518	79	7.5	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
1217	63	3.5	5.5	5.5	8.0	9.0
598	78	6.5	7.5	7.5	8.5	9.0
1155	52	2.3	5.0	5.3	5.3	6.3
623	78	6.5	7.5	8.0	7.5	9.5
1256	56	1.0	8.0	5.0	5.0	8.5
821	78	6.5	7.0	8.0	9.5	8.0
1231	42	2.5	4.0	5.0	5.0	4.5
868	83	7.0	8.0	7.5	9.5	9.5
1170	66	5.0	4.5	6.5	8.0	9.0
887	87	7.5	8.0	9.0	9.5	9.5
1145	18	1.5	2.5	1.0	3.0	2.5

TABLE II (Continued)
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO CONVENTIONS
 OF GRAMMAR

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
892	80	6.0	8.5	8.0	7.5	10.0
1171	39	1.0	3.5	3.5	5.5	6.0
945	85	7.5	8.0	8.0	10.0	9.0
1162	30	2.0	3.0	4.5	4.0	2.5
981	95	8.5	9.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
1226	49	4.5	2.5	6.5	5.5	5.5
1144	87	7.0	8.0	8.5	10.0	10.0
1104	22	3.0	2.0	4.0	5.5	5.5
1364	81	6.5	8.0	8.0	9.0	9.0
1194	47	1.0	5.5	5.0	6.0	6.5
1370	79	6.0	7.0	7.5	9.5	9.5
1121	69	6.0	5.5	7.5	8.0	7.5
1130	81	7.0	8.0	8.0	8.5	9.0
1165	35	3.0	2.0	5.0	3.5	4.0
1435	84	6.5	8.5	8.0	9.5	9.5
1115	47	2.0	3.5	4.0	7.5	6.5
1478	86	7.5	8.5	8.0	9.5	9.5
1191	61	4.5	7.5	6.0	6.5	6.0
1479	84	6.0	8.0	9.0	9.5	9.5
1246	69	1.5	4.0	8.0	8.5	9.0

TABLE II (Continued)
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO CONVENTIONS
 OF GRAMMAR

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
1500	88	7.5	9.0	8.5	9.5	9.5
1107	61	2.0	4.5	7.5	8.0	8.5
1521	86	7.0	9.0	8.5	9.0	9.5
1181	48	3.5	3.5	6.5	5.0	5.5
1577	80	6.5	9.0	7.5	8.5	8.5
1189	50	1.0	6.5	6.5	4.0	7.0
1589	87	7.0	9.0	8.5	10.0	9.0
1159	62	2.0	5.0	5.0	9.5	9.5
1593	86	7.5	8.5	8.5	9.0	9.5
1113	48	3.0	3.5	5.5	5.5	6.5
1599	78	7.5	8.0	6.0	9.0	8.5
1127	45	3.3	3.3	4.6	6.3	5.0
1636	82	6.0	6.5	9.0	9.5	10.0
1208	38	2.0	2.5	3.0	5.5	6.0
1748	83	7.0	8.0	8.0	9.0	9.5
1185	50	2.0	3.5	5.0	6.5	8.5
1770	82	7.0	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5
1144	32	1.5	2.5	2.5	6.5	3.0
1884	80	6.0	8.0	7.5	9.0	9.5
1253	39	1.0	2.5	5.0	5.5	5.5

TABLE III
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO
 SENTENCE STRUCTURE

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
203	93	9.5	9.0	9.0	10.0	9.0
1202	67	3.5	5.0	5.5	5.0	4.5
236	83	8.5	8.0	8.5	8.0	8.5
1108	47	3.5	3.0	5.0	6.5	5.5
261	85	7.0	7.5	9.0	9.0	10.0
1109	40	3.0	2.0	4.0	5.5	5.5
295	84	8.0	8.0	8.5	9.0	8.5
1201	44	1.0	3.5	4.5	5.5	7.5
403	86	8.0	8.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
1105	57	5.0	5.5	6.0	6.0	6.0
443	84	8.5	8.0	8.5	8.5	8.5
1203	62	4.5	6.0	5.5	6.0	9.5
446	79	8.0	7.5	8.5	7.5	8.0
1169	59	6.5	5.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
453	86	8.0	8.0	8.5	9.5	9.0
1196	74	7.0	7.0	7.0	8.0	8.0
476	95	9.0	9.0	9.5	10.0	10.0
1238	45	6.0	4.5	4.5	3.5	4.0
484	81	7.5	7.5	8.5	8.5	8.5
1207	41	3.5	3.0	4.0	5.0	5.0

TABLE III (Continued)
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO
 SENTENCE STRUCTURE

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
691	84	8.5	8.0	8.0	8.5	9.0
1116	66	6.5	6.0	6.0	8.0	6.5
815	91	8.5	8.0	9.0	10.0	10.0
1227	37	2.5	2.0	4.0	4.5	5.5
820	92	9.0	9.0	9.5	10.0	8.5
1205	62	4.5	4.5	6.0	8.0	8.0
822	89	9.0	8.5	9.0	9.5	8.5
1161	54	5.0	4.5	5.0	7.0	5.5
830	82	8.0	7.5	8.0	9.0	8.5
1184	63	6.0	6.0	5.5	7.0	7.0
874	80	8.0	7.0	7.5	9.0	8.5
1122	44	5.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	4.0
877	83	8.0	7.5	8.0	8.5	9.5
1254	56	5.0	7.0	5.0	5.5	5.5
889	90	9.0	8.0	8.0	10.0	10.0
1190	59	5.0	4.5	6.5	7.0	6.5
913	79	7.0	7.0	7.5	8.5	9.5
1119	49	6.0	4.5	5.0	4.5	4.5
928	81	7.5	7.5	8.0	9.0	8.5
1177	32	2.5	5.0	4.5	2.0	2.0

TABLE III (Continued)
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO
 SENTENCE STRUCTURE

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
1025	84	8.5	7.0	8.5	9.0	9.0
1230	60	5.0	5.0	7.0	6.5	6.5
1046	79	8.0	6.0	8.0	8.5	9.0
1180	55	3.5	4.0	4.5	7.5	8.0
1318	82	7.5	7.0	8.5	8.0	10.0
1130	56	4.5	4.5	4.0	7.0	8.0
1383	85	8.0	7.0	8.5	9.5	9.5
1221	48	4.0	3.0	5.0	6.5	5.5
1403	92	9.0	8.5	9.0	10.0	9.5
1218	58	4.0	4.0	5.0	7.0	9.0
1444	93	9.0	9.0	9.5	10.0	9.0
1214	66	5.5	4.0	5.5	9.0	9.0
1492	79	7.0	7.0	9.0	8.5	8.0
1128	49	4.0	4.0	3.0	6.5	7.0
1517	80	8.5	6.0	7.0	9.5	9.0
1138	50	4.5	4.5	4.0	5.5	6.5
1604	87	9.0	7.5	8.5	9.5	9.0
1176	72	5.0	5.5	7.0	9.0	9.5
1747	79	6.5	6.5	8.5	9.0	9.0
1252	42	2.5	2.0	5.5	5.0	6.0

TABLE IV
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO DICTION

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
126	79	8.5	7.5	7.0	8.5	8.0
1110	41	4.0	2.5	2.5	5.5	6.0
264	81	7.5	7.5	7.0	9.5	9.0
1249	26	3.0	2.5	1.0	3.5	3.0
447	79	7.0	8.0	7.5	8.5	8.5
1131	59	5.3	5.3	5.0	7.3	6.6
493	79	7.5	7.5	7.5	8.5	8.5
1164	59	7.0	5.5	4.0	6.0	6.5
499	86	7.5	8.5	8.0	9.5	9.5
1123	57	5.5	5.5	4.5	6.5	6.5
504	78	7.0	7.5	7.0	9.5	8.0
1251	59	5.0	6.0	4.5	7.0	7.0
934	82	9.0	7.0	7.0	9.0	9.0
1117	50	5.5	4.0	5.0	5.5	5.0
1020	81	8.0	8.0	7.0	9.0	8.5
1233	54	7.5	5.5	3.5	5.5	5.0
1027	83	8.0	8.0	7.5	9.5	8.5
1186	69	6.5	5.5	6.5	6.5	9.5
1029	91	8.5	9.0	8.5	10.0	9.5
1129	78	8.0	7.5	7.0	8.5	8.0

TABLE IV (Continued)
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO DICTION

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
1045	90	8.0	9.0	8.5	10.0	9.5
1236	81	8.3	8.3	8.0	8.0	7.6
1142	83	7.5	8.0	8.0	9.0	9.0
1106	58	5.5	3.5	4.5	7.5	8.0
1178	87	9.0	8.5	7.5	9.5	9.0
1243	56	7.3	6.3	4.3	4.6	5.3
1406	94	9.0	9.0	9.0	10.0	10.0
1200	63	6.0	4.5	5.0	7.0	9.0
1434	81	7.0	7.5	7.5	9.5	9.0
1195	50	6.0	6.0	4.5	4.5	4.0
1442	82	7.0	8.5	7.5	9.0	8.0
1237	46	6.5	6.5	4.0	3.0	3.0
1443	81	7.5	8.5	7.5	8.5	8.5
1137	48	5.5	5.5	5.0	4.5	3.5
1456	81	7.5	8.0	7.5	9.0	9.0
1220	53	5.0	4.5	4.5	6.0	6.5
1479	95	9.5	9.0	9.0	10.0	10.0
1219	57	4.0	5.0	4.0	7.5	8.0
1483	91	9.0	9.0	8.5	9.5	9.5
1178	35	4.0	4.0	2.0	3.5	4.0

TABLE IV (Continued)
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO DICTION

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
1504	78	7.5	7.0	7.0	8.5	9.0
1239	43	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.0	4.0
1522	93	8.0	9.5	9.0	10.0	10.0
1228	74	6.5	8.0	6.5	8.5	7.5
1559	88	8.0	9.5	7.5	9.5	9.5
1179	55	3.5	4.5	5.5	7.0	7.0
1562	84	7.5	9.0	8.0	9.5	8.0
1151	62	6.0	5.5	5.0	7.5	7.0
1623	85	7.5	9.5	7.0	9.0	9.5
1179	52	7.5	6.0	4.0	5.0	4.0
1626	79	8.5	7.0	7.0	8.5	8.5
1142	33	2.5	4.0	1.5	5.0	4.0
1629	94	9.0	9.5	8.5	10.0	10.0
1204	57	5.0	5.0	4.0	6.5	7.0
1674	86	8.0	8.5	8.5	9.0	9.0
1148	40	3.0	3.5	3.0	4.5	5.0
1731	79	8.0	8.5	7.0	8.0	8.0
1206	59	5.0	5.0	4.0	7.5	8.0
2009	78	7.0	7.0	7.5	8.5	9.0
1187	88	8.0	9.0	8.5	8.5	10.0

TABLE V
SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
IN RESPECT TO ORGANIZATION

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
100	86	8.5	8.5	9.0	8.5	8.5
1136	75	7.5	8.0	7.5	8.0	6.5
136	85	9.0	8.0	8.0	9.0	8.5
1150	79	8.5	7.0	7.5	8.0	8.5
246	86	8.0	9.0	9.0	8.5	8.5
1123	44	4.5	5.5	4.0	3.0	5.0
280	88	8.0	9.0	8.5	9.0	9.5
1193	75	9.0	8.0	8.0	7.0	5.5
286	86	8.0	9.0	8.5	8.5	9.0
1157	29	2.0	3.5	2.0	3.0	4.0
318	81	7.5	8.5	8.0	8.0	8.5
1173	68	9.0	6.0	6.0	6.5	6.5
349	89	8.5	9.0	9.5	9.0	8.5
1215	74	7.5	6.0	7.0	8.5	8.0
393	91	8.5	9.0	9.5	9.0	9.5
1211	64	5.5	5.5	5.5	7.0	7.0
457	88	8.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
229	51	5.5	5.5	5.5	4.5	4.5
538	84	8.0	8.5	8.5	8.0	9.0
1240	59	4.0	6.0	6.5	4.0	9.0

TABLE V (Continued)
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO ORGANIZATION

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
539 1141	90 84	8.5 8.5	8.5 9.0	9.5 8.5	9.0 8.5	9.5 7.5
819 1224	90 50	8.5 4.0	10.0 7.0	8.5 7.0	9.0 3.5	9.0 3.5
875 1147	88 37	8.5 3.5	8.5 5.0	8.5 2.5	8.5 3.5	10.0 4.0
1052 1183	88 26	8.0 7.5	8.5 7.0	9.0 6.0	9.5 2.5	9.0 3.0
1445 1244	88 51	9.0 5.3	8.5 5.3	8.5 5.6	9.0 4.6	9.0 4.3
1470 1235	90 58	8.5 5.0	9.0 6.5	9.5 6.5	9.0 5.5	9.0 5.5
1488 1213	89 65	8.0 6.5	8.0 6.5	9.5 7.0	9.5 7.0	9.5 6.0
1520 1111	80 53	8.0 6.5	8.5 5.5	7.0 5.5	8.5 4.5	8.5 4.5
1542 1248	89 56	8.5 7.0	9.0 6.3	8.5 6.6	9.0 3.3	9.5 4.6
1556 1167	86 73	7.5 6.0	9.5 7.0	8.5 7.0	8.0 8.5	9.5 8.0

TABLE V (Continued)

SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED

IN RESPECT TO ORGANIZATION

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
1560	91	8.0	9.5	9.0	9.5	9.5
1102	68	8.5	7.0	6.5	5.0	7.0
1579	78	7.0	7.5	8.0	7.5	9.0
1163	80	8.5	8.0	8.0	7.0	8.5
1647	91	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.5
1125	58	7.5	7.0	6.0	4.0	4.5
1725	82	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.5	8.5
1250	80	9.0	9.0	8.0	6.5	7.5
1767	78	7.0	8.0	8.0	7.5	8.5
1242	68	8.6	7.0	8.0	6.3	7.6
1844	79	8.0	7.5	7.5	8.0	8.5
1118	73	7.5	8.0	7.5	4.5	8.5
1856	80	7.5	8.0	8.5	8.0	8.0
1124	57	6.0	5.5	5.0	6.0	6.0
1860	91	9.5	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
1257	80	5.5	8.5	9.5	7.5	9.0
1939	83	8.5	8.5	9.0	7.0	8.5
1158	44	4.0	5.0	6.0	4.0	3.6
2059	81	8.5	8.0	8.5	7.5	8.0
1199	55	6.5	6.0	8.0	1.5	6.0

TABLE VI
SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
IN RESPECT TO CONTENT

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
13	86	9.0	8.5	9.0	8.5	8.0
1172	61	7.5	6.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
38	83	8.5	9.0	8.5	8.0	7.5
1216	57	6.0	6.5	4.5	5.0	5.5
39	82	8.5	8.0	8.0	8.5	8.0
1135	41	5.0	5.0	5.5	3.5	1.5
124	83	8.5	8.5	8.0	8.5	8.0
1255	52	7.0	5.6	3.0	5.6	4.3
325	78	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.5	6.5
1188	41	5.5	5.5	5.0	1.5	3.0
326	83	8.0	9.0	8.5	8.5	7.5
1140	60	7.0	6.0	6.5	6.0	4.5
351	88	9.0	9.0	9.0	8.5	8.5
1146	73	7.0	8.0	7.5	7.0	7.0
362	87	8.0	9.0	10.0	9.0	7.5
1247	33	6.5	4.0	3.0	1.5	1.5
389	81	8.0	8.0	8.5	8.0	8.0
1133	79	8.0	9.0	8.5	7.0	7.0
409	80	8.0	8.0	8.5	8.0	7.5
1210	49	5.0	4.5	5.5	4.5	5.0

TABLE VI (Continued)
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO CONTENT

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
729	78	9.0	7.5	8.0	7.0	7.5
1241	54	4.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	6.0
841	83	8.5	8.0	8.0	9.0	8.0
1154	47	4.5	4.5	4.0	5.5	5.0
850	78	8.0	8.0	7.5	8.5	7.0
1149	56	5.5	6.0	6.5	4.0	5.5
853	80	8.0	7.0	8.0	9.5	7.5
1225	55	6.0	6.5	6.5	5.0	3.5
867	81	8.5	8.0	8.0	8.5	7.5
1192	60	7.5	6.0	6.0	5.5	5.0
884	81	8.5	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
1132	55	6.5	5.5	5.0	5.5	5.0
890	79	9.0	8.0	8.0	7.0	7.5
1103	51	6.0	5.0	5.0	4.5	5.0
901	81	8.5	8.0	8.0	8.5	7.5
1232	51	6.5	4.5	5.0	5.5	4.0
950	80	8.5	8.5	8.5	7.5	7.0
1222	48	4.5	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.5
969	88	9.0	9.5	9.5	8.0	8.0
1114	61	7.0	7.5	6.5	4.5	5.0

TABLE VI (Continued)
 SCORES OF THEMES WEAKENED
 IN RESPECT TO CONTENT

No. of Theme	Total Score	Conv. of Gr.	Sent. Str.	Dict.	Org.	Cont.
977	79	7.0	9.0	7.5	8.5	7.5
1112	51	5.0	6.0	7.0	4.5	3.0
1429	82	9.0	8.5	8.0	8.5	7.0
1120	42	6.0	5.0	4.0	3.5	2.5
1448	81	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.5	8.5
1212	60	6.5	6.5	5.0	6.5	5.5
1512	82	9.5	8.5	8.0	8.5	6.5
1182	65	8.5	7.5	8.5	5.5	2.5
1555	80	7.5	9.0	9.0	8.5	6.0
1168	52	5.5	6.0	6.0	4.5	4.0
1592	79	8.0	7.0	8.0	9.0	7.5
1156	52	3.5	4.0	4.0	8.5	6.0
1606	79	7.5	8.0	7.5	9.5	7.0
1126	50	6.3	6.0	5.6	3.6	3.0
1694	80	9.0	8.5	8.5	7.0	7.0
1198	48	7.5	8.0	6.5	1.5	1.0
1713	87	8.5	8.5	9.5	9.0	8.0
1234	49	5.0	5.5	7.5	2.5	4.0
1841	81	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.5	8.0
1209	56	5.5	5.5	6.0	5.0	6.0

In order to interpret in an orderly fashion the scores contained in Tables II - VI it was necessary to treat these data in such a way that certain comparisons could be made. Because of the nature of the scores obtained from the rating form used to score the comprehensive examination themes, no elaborate statistical treatment of the data seemed appropriate. It would seem, for instance, that a method of testing for significance of difference between measures would assume, without proof, a zero-point in a rating form which allows scorers merely to rate a certain category of composition within a ten-valued range.

The most useful basis for studying effects on these themes when certain elements of composition had been weakened was to show change of score points in terms of percentage. This expression of change is readily apparent in Table VII. Since the effect of weakening themes in respect to any one of the five categories of the rating form lowered in every case the average total scores and average elements scores of such themes, all changes are ones of loss as shown in the following table.

TABLE VII
AVERAGES OF SCORES OF ORIGINAL AND
WEAKENED VERSIONS, SHOWING
SCORE LOSS IN PERCENTAGE

Weakened Category	Conv. of Grammar			Sent. Str.			Diction			Org.			Content			Total Score		
	O*	W*	-%	O	W	-%	O	W	-%	O	W	-%	O	W	-%	O	W	-%
Conv. of Gr.	<u>6.8</u>	<u>2.8</u>	<u>58.8</u>	8.1	4.2	48.1	8.2	5.1	37.8	9.0	6.0	33.3	9.2	6.3	31.5	82.7	48.5	41.3
Sent. Str.	8.2	4.6	43.9	<u>7.7</u>	<u>4.5</u>	<u>41.6</u>	8.5	5.2	38.9	9.1	6.2	31.8	9.0	6.4	28.9	85.3	54.4	36.7
Dict.	8.0	5.4	32.5	8.3	6.2	25.3	<u>7.7</u>	<u>4.4</u>	<u>42.8</u>	9.2	5.9	35.9	8.9	5.9	33.7	84.5	53.9	36.2
Org.	8.6	6.5	24.4	8.6	6.6	23.2	8.6	6.5	24.4	<u>8.6</u>	<u>5.4</u>	<u>37.2</u>	8.9	6.1	31.5	86.0	61.0	29.1
Cont.	8.4	6.1	27.4	8.4	5.9	29.7	8.4	5.8	30.9	8.4	4.9	41.7	<u>7.5</u>	<u>4.5</u>	<u>40.0</u>	82.0	54.5	33.5

* "O" and "W" in the box headings head columns of averages of scores of original and weakened versions, respectively.

NOTE: This table should be read as follows: the thirty cases weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar (first stub heading) show that they earned an average of 9.0 in Organization (fifth box heading) in the original versions; and that they yielded an average score of 6.0 in Organization in the weakened versions, equivalent to a score loss of 33.3%.

III. Interpreting the results.

1. The seriousness of the effect of weakened elements on total scores is of the following order:

- (a) Conventions of Grammar.
- (b) Sentence Structure.
- (c) Diction.
- (d) Content.
- (e) Organization.

2. It might be assumed that the raters in this study did not make a clear distinction between weaknesses in Conventions of Grammar and Sentence Structure. This assumption is based on the evidence that weakening of Sentence Structure produced a greater loss in Conventions of Grammar than it did in Sentence Structure.

3. The raters did not seem to distinguish between weakness in Organization and weaknesses in Content, since weakening of Content caused a greater loss in Organization than it did in Content.

4. The raters have assigned the lowest scores to the themes weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar. Since this category seems to be more clearly and specifically defined than the other categories, the most clearly defined element seems to have received the most severe treatment by the raters.

5. The general lowering of scores produced by the weakened versions might be explained by the operation of a negative halo effect. It is interesting to note in this connection that the weakened category which produced the greatest loss in scores appears first on the rating form. The versions weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar produced a descending loss in the other categories in the same order as their listing on the rating form. Versions weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar produced a 58.8% loss in Conventions of Grammar, a 48.1% loss in Sentence Structure, a 37.8% loss in Diction, a 33.3% loss in Organization, and a 31.5% loss in Content. Weakening of themes in respect to categories which appear last and next to last on the rating form, namely, Content and Organization, produced a score loss ranking last and next to last.

6. Organization and Content seem to be the two categories defined in the least concrete terms. Versions weakened in respect to these two categories produced losses ranking last and next to last.

7. The over-all, serious score losses which the weakened versions produced might be explained by the

increased emphasis put on the practice of distributing grades over a greater range during the past three years.

8. In this study the twenty-four raters seem to have considered the other four elements of composition subordinate to Conventions of Grammar, in view of the greatest loss in total score when the category Conventions of Grammar was weakened.

CHAPTER VI
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND
IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

I. Summary. The purpose of this thesis was to study the effects on the rating of comprehensive examination themes when certain composition elements were weakened. The themes selected were those of the comprehensive examination of Written and Spoken English, Basic College, Michigan State College in May of 1949. Of the approximately 2100 themes written at that time 150 cases in the score range of 98-78 were selected. The versions were weakened in respect to the five categories of the rating form regularly used in scoring comprehensive examination themes. Thirty themes, then, were weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar, thirty in respect to Sentence Structure, thirty in respect to Diction, thirty in respect to Organization, and thirty in respect to Content.

These weakened versions were then copied on paper identical to that of the original versions in handwriting closely resembling that of the original writer. The rating of these weakened versions was performed in May of 1952, with the same rating form, set of scoring directions, etc. which obtained in the rating of the original versions.

Of the twenty-four raters used in the 1952 scoring, twenty-one had participated in the 1949 scoring. All but three raters used in this study have had at least three school-years of experience in rating comprehensive examination themes in the Department of Written and Spoken English. The three, however, have had two school years of theme-rating experience in this department.

The results of these ratings were tabulated so that the effects of weakening themes in respect to the categories of the rating form could be interpreted.

II. Conclusions. The following conclusions are drawn from the evidence within the dimensions of this study and are not intended to apply generally to the measurement of written composition.

1. Weaknesses in the most carefully defined elements of written composition seem to be the easiest for raters to detect in these themes. If we assume Conventions of Grammar to be the most carefully defined category of composition elements, then these raters detect weaknesses in that category more easily than they do in any of the other four categories.

2. Versions of themes weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar produced an average total score loss of

41.3%, a loss greater than that produced in the versions weakened in respect to any of the other four categories. Therefore these raters score most severely that category of elements in which they can most easily detect weaknesses.

3. When these raters scored papers weakened in respect to Sentence Structure they detected weakness to the extent of lowering the average score of that category by 41.6%, but they evidently thought these themes weakest in Conventions of Grammar since that category suffered an average score loss of 43.9%. Therefore, these raters as a group do not make a distinction between weakness in Sentence Structure and weakness in Conventions of Grammar.

4. When these raters scored papers weakened in respect to Content, they discovered weakness to the extent of lowering the average score of that category by 40.0%, but they evidently thought these themes weakest in Organization, since that category suffered a score loss of 41.7%. Again, as a group, these raters do not make a distinction between weakness in Content and weakness in Organization.

5. The raters scored themes weakened in respect to Diction in a manner which produced an average score loss of 42.8 in that category, a loss greater by almost 7% than

the next greatest loss in any of the other four categories. Therefore, it would seem that these raters detect weaknesses in Diction and use the proper category to record their judgments.

6. Although the rating form is a list of five categories to be regarded as discrete and of equal weight, it is not so regarded by these twenty-five raters. In practice, the raters score a theme on the basis of three categories: 1) a combination of Conventions of Grammar and Sentence Structure, 2) Diction and 3) a combination of Organization and Content.

7. Apparently placing first on the rating form the category in which weaknesses are most easily detected causes these raters to score the following categories with a severity of the same order as the sequence of the other four categories. This pattern is illustrated in the fact that the raters, judging themes weakened in respect to Conventions of Grammar, so scored these themes that Conventions of Grammar suffered an average score loss of 58.8%; Sentence Structure, 48.1%; Diction, 37.8%; Organization, 33.3%; and Content, 31.5%.

III. Implications of this study. Because the Department of Written and Spoken English is constantly seeking to improve its techniques of evaluating student performance, these findings might encourage the staff to examine the form they use for rating written composition.

They might find the present instrument satisfactory if all five categories of the rating form could be equally clearly defined, so that weaknesses of composition elements among the categories could be equally easily detected. Failing this, they might devise an instrument based on errors and weaknesses in composition elements which they actually discover and can group, as far as possible, in mutually exclusive categories.

In any case, the successful use of an instrument will depend on their continuing to use it in in-service theme-rating programs, in which thorough discussion will reveal adequacies and inadequacies of the instrument being used.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

- Brigham, C. C. The Reading of the Comprehensive Examination in English. Princeton: Princeton University Press 1934, 50 pp.
- Fries, C. C. American English Grammar. New York: Appleton, Century Crofts, Inc., 1940, 313 pp.
- Greene, H. A., Jorgensen, A. N., and Gerberich, J. R. Measurement and Evaluation in the Secondary School. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1946, 670 pp.
- Hinton, E. M. An Analytical Study of the Qualities of Style and Rhetoric Found in English Compositions. Contributions to Education, No. 806. Teachers College, Columbia University, 1940. 135 pp.
- Hudelson, E. English Composition: its aims, methods, and measurement. The Twenty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1923, 172 pp.
- Perrin, P. Writer's Guide and Index to English. Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1942, 800 pp.
- Pooley, R. C. Teaching English Usage. New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, Inc., 1946, 265 pp.
- Remmers, H. H. and Gage, N. L. Educational Measurement and Evaluation. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943, 580 pp.

B. PERIODICAL ARTICLES

- Breed, F. S. and Frostic, F. W. "A Scale for Measuring the General Merit of English Composition in the Sixth Grade". Elementary School Journal, 17:307-325, 1917.

- Diederich, P. B. "Measurement of Skill in Writing". School Review, 54: 584-592, December, 1946
- Gordon, K. "A Class Experiment with the Hillegas Scale". Journal of Educational Psychology, 9: 511-513, 1918.
- Hatfield, W. W. "Basis for Grading Themes." College English, 11:39, October, 1949.
- Hillegas, M. B. "Scale for the Measurement of Quality in English Composition by Young People". Teachers College Record, 13: 331-384, 1912.
- Hudelson, E. "The Effect of Objective Standards upon Composition Teachers' Judgements". Journal of Educational Research, 12: 329-340, 1925.
- Murphy, H. E. "Some Aids in Marking English Composition". Scholastic (Secondary Education), 33: 419-422, January, 1945.
- Noyes, E. S. "Recent Trends of the Comprehensive Examination in English". Educational Record, Supplement Number 13, 21: 107-119, 1940.
- Stalnaker, J. M. "Essay Examinations Reliably Read". School and Society, 46: 671-672, 1937.
- Stalnaker, J. M. "Testing and Ability to Organize". English Journal (College Edition), 22: 561-67, September, 1933.
- Stewart, M. "A Scale for Measuring the Quality of Conventional News Stories in High-School Journalism". English Journal (High School Edition), 23: 209-15, March, 1934.
- Theisen, W. W. "Improving Teachers' Estimates of Composition Specimens with the Aid of the Trabue Nassau County Scale". School and Society, 7: 143-150, 1918.
- Thorndike, E. L. "A Scale for Merit in English by Young People". Journal of Educational Psychology, 2:361-368, 1911.

- Trabue, M. R. "Supplementing The Hillegas Scale". Teachers College Record, 18: 51-84, 1917.
- Van Wagenen, M. J. "The Minnesota English Composition Scales: their derivation and validity". Educational Administration and Supervision, 7: 481-499, 1921.
- Virtue, J. B. "Proficiency Examination in English Composition at the University of Kansas". College English, 9: 199-203, January, 1948.
- Willing, M. H. "The Measurement of Written Composition in Grades IV to VII". English Journal, 7: 193-202, 1918.

C. MISCELLANEOUS

- Huddleston, E. M. "Recent Studies of the English Composition Test". The College Board Review. Vol. 1, No. 4. Princeton, New Jersey, 10 pp., Spring, 1948.
- Monroe, W. S., editor, Encyclopedia of Educational Research. 1 vol.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950.
- Travers, R. M. W. "The Evaluation of the Outcomes of Teaching in English". Unpublished paper read before the Michigan Conference on Higher Education, Ann Arbor, Michigan, January, 1947.
- Written and Spoken English Syllabus. Fifth Revision (Sixth Edition). East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State College Press, 1950, 122 pp.