COMMON ENGLISH ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND METHODS TO ELIMINATE THEM

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*These errors were found by the English instructor.

**These errors were found by the students.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is generally recognized by English instructors that the average high school student makes common errors[1] in English expression. Because of the importance of correct speaking and writing in our society, it is necessary to locate these weaknesses and to correct them.

According to McGrath,[2] "the basis of all social life is communication." Since it is the basis of all social life, the accent should rest upon correct self-expression.

The Montana State Board of Education considered this problem so important that in December of 1955, it proposed the following resolution:

> The State Board of Education is convinced something must be done to turn out high school graduates with a better command of the English language.
>
> The Board authorized Mary M. Condon, superintendent of public instruction to consult with high school principals and English teachers regarding revisions of courses now being taught in Montana and warned teacher training institutions under its direction that current usage of English by teachers themselves "is of no concern to this board."
>
> Informal discussion Monday brought suggestions that teachers, regardless of what fields they major in, should use good English and this deserves consideration when applications for certification are presented by graduates of colleges of education and universities.
>
> The tentative outline proposed that grammar be taught daily "as the need arises" in the freshman year, and that high school seniors go through a complete review of grammar, with persistent drill in rules as well as their applications, before becoming eligible to graduate.
>
> In line with modern methods of communication this outline suggests use of wire and tape recorders, phonograph records, and sound

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[1] The errors in such areas of English as punctuation, usage, and oral expression have been considered.

[2] McGrath, Earl James, editor, Communication in General Education (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company, 1949), p. v.

film, in addition to study of written words in texts, plays, and novels.[3]

The resolution was passed on December 14, 1955, by the Board of Education, stating that it was of the opinion that greater stress should be placed on the correct usage of the native tongue, and that teachers, regardless of the fields they majored in, should use good English. Because the importance of good usage was realized, this problem was undertaken.

The Problem

The problem was to determine these common English errors of the Fairfield High School students in English as well as in other academic subjects, to compare these to the errors made by the average high school student, and to suggest methods of elimination. It was the degree of importance placed on English in our education courses today and the answer to three key questions that led to the selection of the problem.

The problem resolves itself around the answers to the following questions in regard to the common English errors in written and oral expression:

1. What are the common English errors of the Fairfield High School students?

2. What are the common English errors of the average high school student, and how do they compare with the errors made by the Fairfield High School students?

3. What kind of remedial program would be available to improve these errors?

It was the belief of this investigator that the common errors made

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[3]"Board of Education Serious About Better English," Great Falls Tribune, December 13, 1955. p. 1.

by Fairfield High School students were the same or relatively similar to those made by high school students throughout the nation. The opinions of authorities in the field of English, along with personal experience, were the basis for the investigation.

The Procedure

The procedures used in answering these questions were:

1. Finding the common English errors of Fairfield High School students by:

   a. Determining and classifying the errors in written and oral expression made in English class by observing predominant mistakes of students.

   b. Having the teachers in other academic subjects note the predominant English errors made by the students in the above areas for a period of three weeks.

   c. Having the students determine and record errors by exchanging papers for a period of three weeks, and listening to reports.

2. Determining the errors of the average high school student through investigation of literature.

3. Finding differences, if any, between local and national errors through comparison.

The Limitations

There were certain natural limitations in this study. Time would not permit the covering of all high school students, so only particular classes were selected for the convenience of the investigator.

These classes included three English classes instructed by the wri-

ter, which were observed for the entire school year, and four academic classes, which were observed for a period of three weeks.

The study of errors in other academic classes was limited for reasons of gaining cooperation from the other teachers and manageable data.

It was felt that every phase of English expression would be covered through a local and national comparison of common English errors.

The Purpose

The purpose of this investigation in determining the common English errors made by students was to set up a criterion for correction.

Previous studies have been made to determine the common English errors of high school students. The majority of these studies, however, have been made in single areas such as Betts[4] classification of the causes of poor spelling and suggestions for improving these, and Sandol's[5] investigations in relation to grammar and usage.

This investigation has been concerned with various areas[6] in both written and oral communication. With this in mind, it was the writer's hope that this study would be of significant value to anyone interested in minimizing English errors.

The first task appeared to be to determine what constituted the common English errors in written and oral expression of Fairfield High School students. There were three distinct approaches to the solution of this problem. These are presented in Chapter II.

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[4]Betts, Emmett Albert, "What About Spelling," Education, 76:310-325, May, 1957.

[5]Sandol, Lorrain D., "A Transition Program in Grammar and Usage," English Journal, 45:195-200, April, 1956.

[6]Areas are defined by the investigator in footnote number one.

CHAPTER II

ERRORS IN ORAL AND WRITTEN ENGLISH MADE BY FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

There were certain common English errors made by students of Fairfield High School. The task of determining these errors was accomplished in three ways. The investigator observed three English classes daily throughout the school year of 1957-58, and recorded the students' mistakes. Secondly, other teachers observed and recorded the predominant English errors made in their individual classes for a period of three weeks. And, lastly, the students in the above classes recorded their own errors by exchanging papers and listening to reports.

After these errors were recorded, they were classified under two main headings, oral and written expression. These topics were again subdivided. Oral expression consisted of four main areas:[7] pronunciation, rate difficulties, inflection, and mannerisms.[8] Written expression involved spelling, capitalization, and sentence construction.

Common English Errors of Fairfield High School Students in Three English Classes as Found by the Instructor

Oral Expression. It was found that the errors in the four areas of oral expression, as classified in the preceding paragraph, fell into these main categories: pronunciation, rate difficulties, inflection, and mannerisms. They will be discussed in this order.

Fairfield High School students made twenty major errors in pronuncia-

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[7] Classification into the four areas was set up after examining errors.

[8] Mannerisms denotes any gesture or feature accompanying a speech.

tion in English class during the school year. These words, along with their correct pronunciation, are listed in Table 1.

The principal difficulties in rates of speech were found to be speaking too rapidly, speaking too slowly, and mumbling. Speaking too rapidly was the most common error of students; failure to pause correctly accompanied this. Speaking too slowly caused a tendency of students to insert sounds (and-er, er-er) to fill in for lack of something to say. Mumbling was characterized by a weak voice with flat tones.

Any variation of pitch in speaking is defined as inflection. Most students tended to raise their pitch when giving a speech or in recitation, due to nervousness. Some boys had trouble with cracking voices, but, although this is often classified as inflection, it is due to puberty. The girls had a tendency to speak in a monotone.

The most common error in mannerisms was fidgiting. This was found to include shifting of weight from one foot to the other, crumpling of paper in the hand (probably the speech or report outline), jingling change in the pants pocket, and leaning against the black board or podium. Another pertinent error in mannerisms was the lack of accompanying gestures and facial expression, and poor audience contact.

Common English Errors of Fairfield High School Students in Three English Classes as Found by the Instructor

Written Expression. The three main areas of written expression were found to be spelling, capitalization, and sentence construction, which in turn is subdivided into punctuation, subject and verb agreement, run-together sentences, sentence fragments, double negatives, and word usage. These were the common fields where errors in written expression occurred in English classes of the Fairfield High School.

TABLE 1. COMMON PRONUNCIATION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THREE ENGLISH CLASSES*

No.	Word Mispronounced	As Pronounced	Correct Pronunciation**
1.	ask	ast	ask
2.	adult	ad'dult	ə-dult'
3.	escape	ex'cape	es-kēp'
4.	glycerine	glĭs'e-rĕen	glĭs'ĕr-ĭn
5.	library	li'berry	lai'brə-ri
6.	hoop	hup	hōōp
7.	not at all	not'a tol''	nŏt ăt ol
8.	poor	pur	pōōr
9.	roof	ruff	rōōf
10.	human beings	human beans	hū'man bēns being
11.	creek	krĭk	krēk
12.	toward	too-ward'	tə'ərd
13.	literature	lit'er-a-cher	lit'ər-ə-tiūr
14.	February	Feb'u-ary	Fĕb'ru-ē-ri
15.	athletic	ath'e-let-ik	ath-let'ik
16.	drowned	drown'ded	drəund
17.	across	acrosst	ə-krēs
18.	idea	i-dear'	ai-dī'ə
19.	attacked	at-tact'ed	a-takt'
20.	going	goen'	gō'ing

*These errors were found by the English teacher.

**The authority used by the investigator was Frank H. Vizetelly's A Desk-Book of 25,000 Words Frequently Mispronounced (New York and London: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1929), 906 pp.

There were twenty-five main errors in spelling that were predominant throughout the school year in English class. These are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2.* COMMONLY MISSPELLED WORDS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THREE ENGLISH CLASSES AND INDICATED POINTS OF SPELLING DIFFICULTY**

No.	Word	No.	Word	No.	Word
1.	accomodate	10.	cemetery	18.	February
2.	business	11.	religion	19.	angel-angle
3.	souvenir	12.	writ(e)ing	20.	altar-alter
4.	al(l)ready	13.	occurred	21.	preferred
5.	benefited	14.	toward	22.	capital-capitol
6.	bathe	15.	Wednesday	23.	conscience-conscious
7.	committee	16.	government	24.	breathe-breath(e)
8.	heroes	17.	separate	25.	choose-chose
9.	careful(l)				

*The underscored part of the word indicates misspellings.
**These errors were found by the English instructor.

The students of Fairfield High School committed eight major types of capitalization errors in English classes. These fell into the categories of names of school subjects, school classes, schools and colleges, seasons, family relations, regions and directions, titles of people and officials, and titles of books. These are explained in Table 3.

For the purpose of making this paper clearer to the reader, the section of sentence construction has been broken into six subdivisions: subject and verb agreement, run-together sentences, sentence fragments, double negatives, punctuation, and word usage. In Table 4 the common errors in each of these divisions are illustrated.

TABLE 3. COMMON CAPITALIZATION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THREE ENGLISH CLASSES*

No.	Category	Student Error	Example
1.	School subjects	capitalized names of all school subjects.	Incorr. History, American Literature. Corr. history, american literature.
2.	School classes	names of classes were always capitalized.	Incorr. Freshman, Senior play. Corr. freshman, senior play.
3.	Schools and colleges	names of schools and colleges were always capitalized.	Incorr. to High School, to College. Corr. to high school, to college.
4.	Seasons	oftentimes capitalized.	Incorr. Autumn, Spring. Corr. autumn, spring.
5.	Family relations	capitalized names that showed family relationships when they followed possesives.	Incorr. your Dad, their Mother. Corr. your dad, their mother.
6.	Regions and directions	capitalized when used as directions.	Incorr. drove West, turn East. Corr. drove west, turn east.
7.	Titles of people and officials	capitalized when they appeared after the names of officials.	Incorr. Mr. Bruce, Principal; Mr. Burdette, Athletic Director. Corr. Mr. Bruce, principal; Mr. Burdette, athletic director.
8.	Titles of books	articles and prepositions capitalized when not the first word of title.	Incorr. The Call Of The Wild. Corr. The Call of the Wild.

*These errors were found by the English instructor.

TABLE 4. COMMON SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THREE ENGLISH CLASSES*

No.	Category	Student Error	Example
1.	Subject and verb agreement	used indefinite pronouns as subjects of sentence which didn't agree with the verb.	Incorr. Neither of the boys were guilty. Corr. Neither of the boys was guilty.
2.	Run-together sentences	wrote two sentences incorrectly as one.	Incorr. Mary plays the piano she is very talented. Corr. Mary plays the piano. She is very talented. Corr. Mary plays the piano; she is very talented. Corr. Mary plays the piano, and she is very talented.
3.	Sentence fragments	word group, which resembled a dependent clause, was found to be written as a sentence when it was only a fragment.	Incorr. The football team leading in the first half of the game. Corr. The football team was leading in the first half of the game. Corr. The football team leading in the first half of the game, went down in defeat.
4.	Double negatives	tendency to use not with hardly, only, no one, and scarcely.	Incorr. There was not hardly any rain at the picnic. Corr. There was hardly any rain at the picnic.

*These errors were found by the English instructor.

TABLE 4 (SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION continued). COMMON PUNCTUATION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THREE ENGLISH CLASSES*

No.	Punctuation Mark	Student Error	Example of Error
1.	Question mark	incorrectly used by placing them at the end of indirect questions and requests.	Incorr. He asked where the house was? Corr. He asked where the house was. Incorr. Will you please send the money at once? Corr. Will you please send the money at once.
2.	Hyphen	omitted in joining words combined into a single adjective modifier, and compound numbers.	Incorr. self supporting. Corr. self-supporting. Incorr. twenty three. Corr. twenty-three.
3.	Semicolon	replaced by commas between two clauses of a compound sentence when they were not joined by a conjunction.	Incorr. He went to town, it was a long way. Corr. He went to town; it was a long way.
4.	Comma	misused in dates, quotations, and appositives.	Incorr. They were married on Wednesday June 8, 1948 in the First Methodist Church. Corr. They were married on Wednesday, June 8, 1948, in the First Methodist Church. Incorr. "It was cold" Mary said. Corr. "It was cold," Mary said. Incorr. Mary, a student won a prize. Incorr. Mary a student won a prize. Corr. Mary, a student, won a prize.

*These errors were found by the instructor.

TABLE 4 (SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION continued). COMMON WORD USAGE ERRORS* OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THREE ENGLISH CLASSES**

No.	Word	No.	Word	No.	Word
1.	too-to	8.	may-can	15.	quite-quiet-quit
2.	its-it's	9.	let-leave	16.	there-their-they're
3.	whose-who's	10.	learn-teach	17.	indefinite pronouns
4.	don't-doesn't	11.	you're-your	18.	should of-should have
5.	where-were	12.	no-know	19.	principal-principle
6.	hear-here	13.	sit-set	20.	stationary-stationery
7.	loose-lose	14.	knew-new		

*These errors were found by the English instructor.

**Some books classify these words as spelling errors; however, according to the investigator, the words are used incorrectly by students to convey meanings.

As a check on the types of errors detected in English class, the cooperation of teachers in other academic subjects in Fairfield High School was secured in order to discover whether the latter errors are the same or relatively similar to those found in the English classes.

The errors of the students were observed and recorded in four other academic subjects: biology, home economics, general science, and United States History. These errors were made in both oral and written expression, and are found in the tables following this page.

Common English Errors of Fairfield High School Students in Other Academic Classes

Oral Expression. Twenty per cent of the errors in pronunciation made by the students in other academic classes were the same as those made in English class. A list of all of the errors committed in the other classrooms may be found in Table 5.

The principal difficulties in rate of speech were speaking too rapidly and speaking too slowly. The former error was predominant in other academic subjects, as well as in English.

Fidgiting was the most common mannerism error. The characteristics of this habit were relatively similar to those that appeared in English class. Lack of accompanying gestures and poor audience contact were also much in evidence.

Common English Errors of Fairfield High School Students in Other Academic Classes

Written Expression. The three main areas of written expression were
(discussion continued on page 15 because of intervening table)

TABLE 5. COMMON PRONUNCIATION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OTHER ACADEMIC CLASSES

No.	Word Mispronounced	As Pronounced	Correct Pronunciation*
1.	raw	raw'r	rə
2.	humble	um'ble	hum'bl
3.	legislator	leg'is-la"ter	lej'is-lē"ter
4.	Missouri	Mis-sou'ra	Mi-zu'ri
5.	Detroit	Dee'troit	Di-troit'
6.	Chisholm	Chis'home	Chiz'əm
7.	library	li'berry	lai'brə-ri
8.	temperature	tem'per-a-tour	tem'pər-ə-chur
9.	escape	ex-cape'	es-kēp'
10.	corps	corpse	kōrps
11.	government	gov'er-ment	guv'ərn-ment
12.	February	Feb'u-a-ry	Feb'ru-ē-ri
13.	drowned	drown'ded	drəund
14.	recognize	rec'a-nize	rek'əg-naiz
15.	probable	pro'ble	prōb'ə-bl
16.	when	whin	hwen
17.	toward	too-ward'	tō'ərd
18.	giant	gi'nt	jai'ənt
19.	idea	i-dear'	ai-dī'ə
20.	once	onc't	wuns

*The authority used by the investigator was Frank H. Vizetelly's A Desk-Book of 25,000 Words Frequently Mispronounced (New York and London: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1929), 906 pp.

found to be spelling, capitalization, and sentence construction, which consisted of paragraphing, subject and verb agreement, run-together sentences, sentence fragments, punctuation, and word usage. These areas, with the exception of paragraphing, were the same as those found in English class.

There were twenty-three major spelling errors that the students made in other academic classes. Separate, describe, and experience were words that were misspelled in all of the academic classes observed. These errors are listed on Table 6.

TABLE 6. COMMONLY MISSPELLED WORDS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OTHER ACADEMIC CLASSES AND INDICATED POINTS OF SPELLING DIFFICULTY*

No.	Word	No.	Word	No.	Word
1.	committee	9.	experiment	17.	usually
2.	government	10.	pleasant	18.	potatoes
3.	separate	11.	together	19.	necessary
4.	business	12.	clothes	20.	appearance
5.	argument	13.	com(e)ing	21.	different
6.	describe	14.	definite	22.	existence
7.	stopped	15.	beginning	23.	capital-capitol
8.	experience	16.	din(e)ing		

*The underscored part of the word indicates misspellings.

Only three errors in capitalization were the same in both English and in other academic classes. The students commonly capitalized regions and directions, articles and prepositions when they were not the first word of a title, and names of all school subjects in all of the observed classes.

Table 7 contains a list of the capitalization errors in classes other than English.

TABLE 7. COMMON CAPITALIZATION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OTHER ACADEMIC CLASSES

No.	Category	Student Error	Example
1.	School subjects	capitalized names of all school subjects.	Incorr. in Science. Corr. in science.
2.	Regions and directions	capitalized when used as directions.	Incorr. South of town. Corr. south of town.
3.	Titles of books	articles and prepositions capitalized when not the first word of the title.	Incorr. War And Peace. Corr. War and Peace.

In sentence construction the students failed to organize sentences and paragraphs correctly; this did not occur in English class. Mistakes in subject and verb agreement were almost identical, as were those in run-together sentences and sentence fragments. Quotation marks were misused in classes other than English, while double negatives were more common in English class. Three-fifths of the word usage errors in other academic subjects were the same as those committed in English. Sentence construction errors in other academic classes appear in Table 8.

Common English Errors of Fairfield High School Students in Three English Classes as Found by the Students

Oral Expression. These errors, as determined by the English students, were based on critical notes which they took on speeches and oral reports given during a three-week period.

(discussion continued on page 20 because of intervening tables)

TABLE 8. COMMON SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OTHER ACADEMIC CLASSES

No.	Area	Student Error	Example
1.	Paragraphing	sentences lack unity; paragraphs lack unity.	Every sentence does not always have a direct bearing on the subject. Paragraphs often combined.
		sentences lack coherence; paragraphs lack coherence.	Sentences and paragraphs are not arranged in logical order.
2.	Subject and verb agreement	use of a singular subject with a plural verb, or the wrong participle form in the verb.	Incorr. She don't care. Corr. She doesn't care. Incorr. Kim had gave her a present. Corr. Kim had given her a present.
3.	Run-together sentences	failure to put punctuation mark between two short sentences.	Incorr. We stayed in Yellowstone Park we learned about science. Corr. We stayed in Yellowstone Park. We learned about science.
4.	Sentence fragments	punctuation mark at the end of a group of words which lack either a verb or a subject.	Incorr. Wanting to win the American Legion award. Corr. Wanting to win the American Legion award, I wrote an essay.

TABLE 8 (SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION continued). COMMON PUNCTUATION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OTHER ACADEMIC CLASSES

No.	Punctuation Mark	Student Error	Example
1.	Question mark	incorrectly used by placing them at the end of indirect questions.	Incorr. We asked a question concerning air? Corr. We asked a question concerning air.
2.	Hyphen	omitted in joining words combined into a single adjective modifier, and in hyphenization of words.	Incorr. bluegreen Corr. blue-green Incorr. co-al Corr. coal
3.	Semicolon	replaced by commas between two clauses of a compound sentence when they were not joined by a conjunction.	Incorr. Washington was the first president, he was a great general. Corr. Washington was the first president; he was a great general.
4.	Comma	misused in appositives, and omitted after adverbial clauses preceeding main clauses.	Incorr. Jamestown, the first English settlement was founded in 1607. Corr. Jamestown, the first English settlement, was founded in 1607. Incorr. If you expect to play the piano well you must practice. Corr. If you expect to play the piano well, you must practice.
5.	Quotation mark	forget to close them, or forget to use them entirely.	Incorr. "I don't know you, she said. Corr. "I don't know you," she said. Incorr. She said, Have we met before? Corr. She said, "Have we met before?"

TABLE 8 (SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION continued). COMMON WORD USAGE ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OTHER ACADEMIC CLASSES

No.	Word	No.	Word	No.	Word
1.	its-it's	8.	your-you're	15.	either nor
2.	to-too	9.	may-can	16.	into-in
3.	don't-doesn't	10.	sit-set	17.	loose-lose
4.	learn-teach	11.	then-than	18.	their-there-they're
5.	maybe could	12.	effect-affect	19.	principal-principle
6.	take-bring	13.	accept-except	20.	should of-should have
7.	leave-let	14.	neither or	21.	could of-could have

The students had a criterion[9] for better speaking which they, with the assistance of the instructor, decided upon at the beginning of the school year. They used this to help determine errors.

Approximately 10% of the errors in pronunciation that were found by the students in English class were the same as those made in other academic subjects. However, only one word, escape, was the same as the English instructor's findings. These errors may be found in Table 9.

Mannerisms were the only other errors that the students could detect in oral expression. They classified them as fidgiting (shifting of weight from one foot to another), and little or no audience contact on the part of the speaker.

Common English Errors of Fairfield High School Students in Three English Classes as Found by the Students

Written Expression. The three main areas in which the students were able to determine errors in written expression were spelling, capitalization, and sentence construction. The only phases within sentence construction that they could locate were sentence fragments, punctuation, and word usage.

In spelling the one error that was the same as those found by the English instructor was in the word preferred. There were no misspellings that were the same as those in other academic classes. A list of these words is found in Table 10.

No one of the errors in capitalization found by the students was the same as those determined in other academic classes; however, all of them were the same as those found by the English instructor. The capitalization errors found by the students are presented in Table 11.

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[9]Criterion included such things as posture, audience contact, and rate of speech.

TABLE 9. COMMON PRONUNCIATION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THREE ENGLISH CLASSES*

No.	Word Mispronounced	As Pronounced	Correct Pronunciation**
1.	definite	def'nit	def'i-nit
2.	escape	ex-cape'	es-kēp'
3.	borrow	bor'rah	bər'o
4.	film	fil'lum	film
5.	picture	pit'cher	pik'tiur
6.	athlete	ath'a-lete	ath'līt
7.	friend	fren	frənd
8.	climate	cli'mit	klai'mēt
9.	chimney	chim'a-ney	ʧim'ni
10.	gesture	gues'ture	jes'ʧur
11.	kindergarten	kin'da-gar"den	kin'dər-gar"tn
12.	coupon	cue'pon	kū'pon
13.	aviation	a"vi-a'tion	ē"vi-ē'ʃun
14.	Italian	E-tal'ian	I-tal'yən
15.	recognize	rec'a-nize	rek'eg-naiz
16.	often	of'ten	ef'n

*These errors were found by the students.

**The authority used by the investigator was Frank H. Vizetelly's A Desk-Book of 25,000 Words Frequently Mispronounced (New York and London: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1929), 906 pp.

TABLE 10.* COMMONLY MISSPELLED WORDS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THREE ENGLISH CLASSES AND INDICATED POINTS OF SPELLING DIFFICULTY**

No.	Word	No.	Word	No.	Word
1.	tragedy	8.	against	15.	preferred
2.	pursu(e)ing	9.	probably	16.	repetition
3.	until(l)	10.	library	17.	om(m)itted
4.	countries	11.	familiar	18.	extremely
5.	wonderful(l)	12.	discussion	19.	surprise
6.	sophomore	13.	recommend	20.	stories
7.	hop(e)ing	14.	referred	21.	occur(r)

*The underscored part of the word is where the misspellings appeared.
**These errors were found by the students.

TABLE 11. COMMON CAPITALIZATION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THREE ENGLISH CLASSES*

No.	Category	Student Error	Example
1.	School classes	capitalized names of all school subjects.	Incorr. I am a Junior. Corr. I am a junior.
2.	Family relations	capitalized names that showed family relationships when they followed possesives.	Incorr. my Sister; Barbara's Father. Corr. my sister; Barbara's father.
3.	Titles of people and officials	capitalized when they appeared after the names of officials.	Incorr. John Smith, President of the Spanish Club. Corr. John Smith, president of the Spanish Club.

*These errors were found by the students.

The students found only three different types of errors in sentence construction. Sentence fragments written as a complete sentence were present here, as they were in the other two phases of this investigation, with the exception that the students found fewer mistakes. Three errors that the students located in punctuation were the same as those in English and other academic classes. They were question marks, hyphens, and commas. Two errors were not the same: exclamation points and periods. Word usage errors found by the students, though fewer in number, were identical to those discovered by the English instructor and other teachers. All of the preceeding errors in sentence construction are given in Table 12.

The common English errors of the average high school student in written and oral expression will be presented in the chapter following Table 12.

TABLE 12. COMMON SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THREE ENGLISH CLASSES*

No.	Category	Student Error	Example
1.	Sentence fragments	punctuation mark at end of a group of words which lack either a subject or a verb.	Incorr. While the team was playing in the tournament. Corr. While the team was playing in the tournament, we took exams.
2.	Punctuation mark	Question mark. omit in carelessness, failure to place after direct questions.	Incorr. What time is it. Corr. What time is it?
		Hyphen. omitted in joining words combined into a single adjective modifier.	Incorr. hardheaded, self educated. Corr. hard-headed, self-educated.
		Comma. omitted after introductory words.	Incorr. Yes who knows the answer? Corr. Yes, who knows the answer?
		Period. placed incorrectly at the end of sentence fragments.	Incorr. Mary, a girl in my class. Corr. Mary, a girl in my class,
		Exclamation mark. omitted after exclamatory words or sentences.	Incorr. Help. Corr. Help!
3.	Word usage	Incorrect word used to convey meaning in written and oral expression.	too-to there-their-they're its-it's don't-doesn't principle-principal learn-teach

*These errors were found by the students.

CHAPTER III

COMMON ENGLISH ERRORS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN GENERAL

The high school student in general makes specific errors in both written and oral expression in English as well as in other academic classes. It was the purpose of the writer, through investigation of literature, to locate and record the common English errors of the average high school student, and, later in this study, to compare them with the common English errors of Fairfield High School students. The errors in oral expression will be presented first.

Common English Errors of High School Students in General in Oral Expression

The areas in oral expression where the common English errors appeared were pronunciation, delivery, and physical factors. This is the order in which they will appear in this chapter.

Average high school students make many errors in pronunciation. The two hundred and ten words most often mispronounced by high school students, according to Ginn and Company[10] (publishers of the Better English series for high schools), are presented in Figure 1.

The most typical speech faults encountered by students in everyday speaking, according to Fields and Bender[11] in their book Voice and Diction, along with an explanation and an example of each, are listed in Table 13.

(discussion continued on page 28 because of intervening tables)

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[10]Herzberg, Max J.; Guild, Florence C.; Hook, J. N.; and Stevens, Robert Lowell; Better English (Ginn and Company: Boston, New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, Columbus, San Francisco, Toronto, and London, 1955).

[11]Fields, Victor A. and Bender, James F., Voice and Diction (The Macmillan Company: New York, 1950), pp. 2-4.

FIGURE 1. 210 WORDS MOST OFTEN MISPRONOUNCED BY AVERAGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

advertisement	contrary	partner	sword	umbrella
daughter	creek	preferable	data	vehicle
just	drowned	slept	status	coupon
camera	theater	February	strictly	horizon
library	government	favorite	forehead	perfume
deaf	industry	often	across	since
Arctic	midst	roof	ally	probably
cello	statistics	entire	because	romance
bade	accessories	toward	chimney	quanity
coffee	mischievous	climbed	window	rinse
chocolate	quiet	wash	athletics	champion
geography	quite	while	aviation	children
environment	ridiculous	admirable	barbarous	column
hundred	sophomore	apron	battery	different
idea	surprise	arithmetic	cartridge	elm
film	Italian	poem	strength	interested
general	laboratory	pumpkin	suppose	picture
genuine	mystery	recognize	wrestle	positively
height	perhaps	sandwich	eczema	Iowa
detritus	almond	amicable	auxiliary	baptize
brethren	chafe	combatant	comely	debris
deluge	diphtheria	eccentric	hypocrisy	inaugurate
infamous	lichen	lilac	lithe	mercury
municipal	orchestra	orgy	presume	reputable
species	subtle	superfluous	vegetable	grievous
lightning	tremendous	adjective	aluminum	attacked
formidable	grimace	encore	extraordinary	guarantee
hearth	ignorance	incomparable	kindergarten	licorice
museum	overalls	peony	percolator	ptomaine
Saturday	vehicle	voluptous	yesterday	transient
sonorous	sinewy	solace	preference	innovation
devastate	arid	ludicrous	primeval	discreet
wreathe	imperious	askance	aghast	strata
existence	initiate	boisterous	diagnose	impertinence
druid	economics	vase	harass	juvenile
despicable	omniscient	poignant	incongrous	docile
sabotage	alias	asterisk	clique	elite
exquisite	foliage	perspire	thresh	apropos
aye	condolence	decade	gesture	ignoble
impotent	inexorable	irrelevant	learned	mauve
vaudeville	nuptial	fiancee	ominous	precedent
squalor	tarpaulin	bowline	tentative	vehement

TABLE 13. TYPICAL SPEECH FAULTS OF THE AVERAGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

No.	Area	Student Error	Example
1.	Indistinctness	grows out of careless, hurried, or slovenly articulation.	"What did you say?" is a fair indication that the student's speaking is indistinct.
2.	Slurring	omission, assimilation, or "telescoping" of sounds.	Incorr. guvment. Corr. government. Incorr. Artic. Corr. Arctic. Incorr. Avnew. Corr. Avenue.
3.	Intrusions	extraneous sounds that mar good pronunciation.	Incorr. diminu-a-tive. Corr. diminutive. Incorr. ath-a-lete. Corr. athlete.
4.	Substitutions	ignorance, carelessness, or dull hearing affect both vowels and consonants.	Incorr. boid. Corr. bird. Incorr. pinny. Corr. penny.
5.	Rate difficulties	over-rapid, extremely slow or spasmodic utterances in which student is unable to vary word frequency or duration of speech sounds and pauses at will.	Inability to accelerate without faltering is monotonous: Too slow--and-er. Stuttering--s-s-s-stand.
6.	Phonation difficulties	impairment of vocal tone at its inception in the larynx.	Harshness of tone, breathiness, weak, hoarse, or strained voice.
7.	Pitch difficulties	habitual abnormal raising of voice while speaking.	Boys, during adolescence, harsh breaking voice. Abnormally low pitch and monotone.

(continued on the next page)

TABLE 13 (continued). TYPICAL SPEECH FAULTS OF THE AVERAGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

No.	Area	Student Error	Example
8.	Resonance difficulties	the emission of voice through nasal passage.	Nasality. Throatiness.
9.	Cognate confusions	throatiness--constricting the tongue and throat muscles; inactivity of vocal chords when they should provide vocal accompaniment for certain consonants; dull or uneducated hearing, poor coordination between organs of voice and articulation, and carelessness.	Incorr. collich. Corr. college. Incorr. chuch. Corr. judge.
10.	Projection difficulties	inability to add volume to voice without strain, tensions, or breathiness.	Coughing, shallow breathing, uncontrollable elevation of pitch, and increased speed and increased loudness.
11.	Diction difficulties	vocabulary errors, syntax-errors.	Slang, mispronunciation, misuse of words.
12.	Interpretational and emotional difficulties	dreary mechanical enunciation qualities of the voice.	No response of feeling in thoughts of speech; chronic nervousness, resentment, and anger.
13.	Posture difficulties	often cause vocal constriction and breathiness.	Flat chest, drooping shoulders, and slouching.
14.	Action difficulties	interfer with effective communication.	Facial tensions, fidgits, immobility of features.
15.	Breathing difficulties	poor voice quality and pausing defects.	Panting, gasping, and choppy phrasing.

The visual aspects of speech are also included in Table 13, as the investigator feels that any of these physical factors reduce the effectiveness of the speech.

Common English Errors of High School Students in General in Written Expression

The common English errors in written expression committed by the average high school student fall into three main sections: spelling, capitalization, and sentence construction. Sentence construction includes punctuation, word usage, and grammatical usage. These errors were derived from several different sources, and they will be documented as they are discussed in this chapter.

Students miss certain specific words. "It is said that more than 6% of the words missed by 2414 students taking college entrance exams are the following: believe, committee, its, pleasant, principal, separate, therefore, their, together, too."[12]

Spelling demons are words so generally misspelled that they are called "demons." "One Hundred Spelling Demons collected by F. W. Jones is the list most commonly known."[13] No one student will miss all of them, but one may miss twelve and another, fifteen, and so on. Unless the students master these words, they will continue to misspell them throughout their lifetimes. Jones' 100 Demons are presented in Figure 2.

Word usage errors are "trouble spots" for all students. "The correct

(discussion continued on page 31 because of intervening figure)

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[12]Blaisdell, Thomas C., Ways to Teach English (Doubleday, Doran and Company Inc.: Garden City, New York, 1930), p. 541.

[13]Cross, E. A. and Carney, Elizabeth, Teaching English in the High School (The Macmillan Company: New York, 1939), p. 192.

FIGURE 2. JONES' LIST OF ONE HUNDRED SPELLING DEMONS

ache	could	here	read	too
again	country	hoarse	ready	trouble
always	dear	hour	said	truly
among	doctor	instead	says	Tuesday
answer	does	just	seems	two
any	done	knew	separate	used
beginning	don't	know	shoes	very
been	early	laid	since	wear
believe	easy	loose	some	Wednesday
blue	enough	lose	straight	week
break	every	making	sugar	where
built	February	many	sure	whether
business	forty	meant	tear	which
busy	friend	minute	their	whole
buy	grammar	much	there	women
can't	guess	none	they	won't
choose	half	often	though	would
color	having	once	through	write
coming	hear	piece	tired	writing
cough	heard	raise	to-night	wrote

usage of over forty words is confusing to high school students. These words cause from one-fourth to one-third of all the written errors made by high school classes."[14] Table 14 is a composite of these words.

> There are really fewer errors than one has come to expect. These few are heard so many times in the course of a day that one gets the impression that there are thousands of them. The Pittsburg Study, made some years ago under the direction of W.W. Charters, listed 25,676 errors. Fifty-six per cent of these were made on only twenty-three items. The use of was for were occurred 1555 times. Seen for say occurred 1515 times. Ain't scored 1361, and can for may 1150. Here, then, are four items with a total of 5579 out of 25,676. These four accounted for more than one-fifth of the total. The other nineteen items that contributed their part to the fifty-six per cent were: didn't have no; them things; ain't got; that there; have got (often very acceptable); ain't got no; come for came; it is me (or was, or ain't); why, there was; didn't do nothing; lay for lie; off for from; went for gone; and give for gave.[15]

A list[16] of the most common high school English errors that resulted from a combination of serveral studies made in various school and cities is presented in Table 15.

A recent study by James Binney[17] of one hundred and twenty college freshman resulted in the discovery of the prevailing factors which prevented students from writing as teachers would like them to write. The students were typical high school graduates, according to the author, a majority from the upper two-fifths of their classes. They wrote two paragraphs during a fifty-minute period which allowed twenty-five minutes for writing and twenty-

(discussion continued on page 35 because of intervening tables)

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[14]Blaisdell, op. cit. p. 541.

[15]Cross and Carney, op. cit. p. 88.

[16]Cross and Carney, op. cit. p. 89.

[17]Binney, James, "Short Report Concerning Grammar," Education, 76:472-77, April, 1956.

TABLE 14. WORDS USED INCORRECTLY BY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN GENERAL

No.	Word	No.	Word	No.	Word	No.	Word
1.	too	14.	any one	27.	your	40.	new
2.	to	15.	some one	28.	you're	41.	knew
3.	there	16.	every one	29.	anyone	42.	its
4.	their	17.	no one	30.	someone	43.	it's
5.	they're	18.	each one	31.	everyone	44.	loose
6.	where	19.	either	32.	principle	45.	lose
7.	were	20.	anybody	33.	principal	46.	no
8.	may	21.	somebody	34.	whose	47.	know
9.	can	22.	nobody	35.	who's	48.	now
10.	teach	23.	none	36.	should of	49.	quit
11.	learn	24.	neither	37.	should have	50.	quiet
12.	don't	25.	clothes	38.	leave	51.	quite
13.	doesn't	26.	cloths	39.	let		

TABLE 15. COMMON HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH ERRORS

No.	Area	Student Error	Example
1.	The "loose" and, an' nen, and so, etc.	running all of one's speech together by using and's to connect the statements.	They went to town, and went out to dinner, and went to the show.
2.	Lack of sentence sense	may either run two complete, independent statements together with no punctuation between, or with only a comma.	Mary left on the bus at two o'clock, this was not expected.
3.	The habit of beginning sentences with well, why, etc.	occasional use of these expressions in free speech is not bad, only when they become a habit.	Well, we went to town. Well, when we got there, it started to rain.
4.	Faulty pronunciation and enunciation of words.	not two students will have same set of troublesome words; the lists overlap.	wuz for was. gits for gets. gonna for going to.
5.	The irrelevant so.	is used between two statements when the second is not conclusive to the first.	I am going to the show tonight, so next month the movie Teacher's Pet is playing.
6.	The 'cause-and because chain	instead of connecting all sentences by using loose and, or and so, 'cause and because are used for the same purpose.	You can go to the park because you have not gone yet this year because we've been out of town.
7.	The false conditional	use of would for are.	Three and four would be seven.
8.	Definition	use of a time or place clause.	An eclipse is when the earth is between the sun and the moon.
9.	Wrong approach to a statement	statements have awkward beginning.	To eat correctly if you go on a diet, why you must count calories.

(continued on the next page)

TABLE 15 (continued). COMMON HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH ERRORS

No.	Area	Student Error	Example
10.	Wandering thought	speaker is not clear on what he has to say.	"Well-a," "why-a," "and-a," "and stuff," "and everything."
11.	Double negatives	two negatives in a sentence.	He didn't do nothing.
12.	Pleonasm and tuntology	use of two subjects consisting usually of a noun and a pronoun; use of unnecessary words.	Jane she went to town. Where are you at?
13.	Vulgarisms	use of words and forms of speech which are not used at all by cultivated or educated people.	Ain't, this here, hadn't orter.
14.	Provincialisms	constructions which are not generally used in all the English-speaking world.	Like I said. Some place. All the farther.
15.	Mistakes in use of nouns	wrong form of plural, possessive in writing.	Brother in laws. Cupfulls.
16.	Mistakes in use of pronouns	wrong form and vague use of it.	Hisself, theirselves; it says in the rules.
17.	Mistakes in use of adjectives	pronoun used for adjective; miscellaneous faults.	much and lot for many; these kind of; they was.
18.	Mistakes in use of verbs	disagreement of verb in person or number with subject.	each were.
		confusion of subject and verb.	she run up and said.
		regular and irregular verb forms.	suspicioned for suspected.
		wrong verb.	set for sit.
		indiscriminate use of shall and will.	we will go.
		telescoping words in pronouncing.	gotta for got to.

five minutes for re-writing.

The only over-all errors made by these one hundred and twenty college students was in usage, which consisted of lack of unity and coherence in paragraphs, indefinite reference, and monotony in sentence structure. The remaining errors are presented in Table 16.

TABLE 16.* ERRORS OF ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY COLLEGE FRESHMEN**

1. Sentence fragments (of unacceptable type)	present in 15 papers
2. Comma splice	present in 12 papers
3. Confusion with punctuation, especially the semicolon used where the writer mistook a group of words for a clause	present in 16 papers
4. Run-on sentences	present in 9 papers
5. Tense errors	present in 5 papers
6. Awkward sentences (misplaced modifiers, faulty parallelism, etc.)	present in 10 papers
7. Sentences involving faulty understanding of the subjective complement present in many papers to some degree--some uses may be debatable.	

*This table is taken directly from Mr. Binney's article listed in footnote number seventeen.

**The number represents the number of papers which had the errors, not the individual errors.

There have been thirty-three investigations contacted of written and oral errors made by pupils. None of these is complete or comprehensive, however, due to one or more of several causes. The investigation may have no included a sufficient number of persons; it may have been limited to a particular area which revealed certain unique errors and omitted others; or the

treatment of data may have neglected specific items.

The results of these thirty-three investigations have been placed in a list, but it is not an original contribution. It has specific advantages over any previously reported by other authors. It is more comprehensive; each error is given specifically, as it should be treated in class work, and nearly every error is followed by a specific example.

The frequency of occurences of these errors is not stated because various investigators have used individual methods to record their findings. Some were recorded by type, some by rules of grammar, and others by simple illustration.

Following is a list of the most common errors in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure, as compiled by Donald M. Wolfe. The Arabic numbers represent items which should be treated as separate units for specific instruction.

I. Verbs

1. Disagreement of a verb with its subject in person. don't for doesn't.
   Disagreement of a verb with its subject in number.
2. Wrong number of verb with expletive there. There remains three boys to see.
3. Agreement with a singular noun that has a plural ending. Athletics are.
4. When separated from subject by a phrase. Not one of our friends were there.
5. Singular verb with a compound subject joined by and. How is John and his brother.
6. After a pronoun whose antecedent is overlooked. She is one of those who is easily overlooked.
7. After neither. Neither of us deserve the prize.
8. Hair are; was for were; is for are.
   Wrong past tense.
   seen for saw; 10. come for came; 11. begun for began; 12. done for did; 13. give for gave; 14. run for ran; 15. laid for lay; 16. swum for swam; 17. drunk for drank; 18. would run for ran; 19. use for used; 20. sung for sang;

21. says for said; 22. dove for dived; 23. was for were.

24. Failure to use the past perfect tense. I found him almost recovered though he was quite ill.

25. Failure to use present perfect tense. See me after you see Mr. Smith.

26. Change of tense in main clause.
Wrong past participle.
27. went for gone; 28. did for done; 29. saw for seen; 30. froze for frozen; 31. came for come; 32. broke for broken; 33. laid for lain; 34. swam for swim; 35. tore for torn.

36. Use of double negative.
could not hardly for could hardly; use of didn't have no; ain't got no; didn't do nothing; hadn't no for hadn't.
Use of wrong verb.
37. lay for lie; 38. leave for let; 39. lend for borrow; 40. sat for set; 41. set for sit; 42. learn for teach; 43. can for may.

44. Use of have got for have; have not got for have not.

II. Pronouns

45. Subject not in nominative case. John and me are going to camp this summer.

46. Predicate nominative not in nominative case. It is him. It is me.

47. The use of wrong cases of pronouns after than and as and as well as. He is taller than me. This misfortune falls more heavily upon you than I.

48. Object of a preposition not in objective case. Mother gave the ball to John and I.

49. Object of a verb not in objective case. Mother sent John and I.

50. Whom for who; who for whom.

51. Wrong formation of compound pronouns. They hurt theirselves.

52. Use of objective for possessive with gerund. I'm tired of him complaining.

53. Disagreement of pronoun with its antecedent. Will everyone bring their paper?

54. Confusion of its and it's. Its hard to tell. The dog hurt it's paw.

55. Use of which for who and vice versa. He is the man which I meant. This is a dog who knows his tricks.

56. Lack of clear reference of pronoun to antecedent. Mary told her friend that she was mistaken.

III. Adjectives and Adverbs

57. Incorrect comparison of adjectives.

58. Use of adjective for adverb when modifying an adjective. Awful for very; real for very.
59. Use of adjective for adverb when modifying a verb. He is most done. Everyone will be treated fair. This error also involves many other specific cases including the misuse of good, easy, careless, fine, safe, different, neat, bad.
60. Use of adverb for adjective after a copulative verb. He feels badly.
61. Only misplaced in the sentence. He only helped the boys.
62. Use of those and these for that and this. I like those kind of grapes.
63. Use of expression that there and this here. That there man is my neighbor.
64. Use of them for these and those. Them things are ours.

IV. Prepositions and Conjunctions

Use of superfluous preposition.

65. in back of for back of or behind; off of for off; start in for start; add up for add; end up for end; 66. where are you at; return back.

Use of wrong preposition.

67. off me for from me; by my aunt for to my aunt; to home for at home; 68. different to for different from; in for into; between for among.

Use of wrong conjunction.

69. Use of like for as or as if.
70. Where and how wrongly used as a conjunction. Did you read where the boy was saved from drowning in the creek? Did you read how a man was killed?

V. Nouns

Wrong number in nouns.

71. Nouns ending in y preceded by a consonant.
72. Nouns ending in o preceded by a consonant.
73. Nouns ending in is (basis).
74. Plural of proper nouns.
75. Nouns which change their form in forming the plural (phenomenon).
76. Nouns which have no plural (athletics).
77. Nouns which have no singular (scissors).
78. Compound nouns (brother-in-law).

Wrong form of possessive case in nouns.

79. After plural nouns ending in s. Teachers' dining room.
80. Compound nouns (court-martial).

VI. Sentence Structure

81. Omission of subject. Received your letter.
82. Omission of predicate.

83. Dangling participle. The boy gazed at his father, trembling with anger.
84. Misplaced modifier. She claimed she had paid her admission several times. (meaning one admission).
85. Wrong handling of parallel structure. He taught piano, violin, and vocal (should be voice).
86. Double subject. John, he went. Why there was.

VII. Punctuation

87. No period at the end of a sentence.
88. No period after abbreviations.
89. No? at the end of a sentence.
90. Failure to set off a restrictive clause by a comma.
91. Failure to set off a series by commas.
92. Failure to set off a parenthetical element by commas.
93. Failure to set off an appositive by commas.
94. Failure to set off a quotation by a comma.
95. Failure to use quotation marks.
96. Failure to use a semicolon when there is no conjunction between clauses of a compound sentence.
97. Failure to use a semicolon to set off a series.
98. Failure to use parentheses.
99. Failure to use a colon.
100. Failure to use an exclamation point.
101. Apostrophe not properly used to show a contraction.

VIII. Capitalization

102. Failure to capitalize proper nouns.
103. Failure to capitalize title of a book; articles; newspapers; chapter headings.
104. Failure to capitalize the first word of a direct quotation.
105. Wrong use of capital for title of a person whe it is used as a common noun.
106. Wrong use of capitals for the names of school subjects other than languages.[18]

High school students in general make errors mainly in usage, spelling, pronunciation, and sentence construction. Chapter IV presents a comparison of the errors of Fairfield High School students and high school students in general.

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[18]Wolfe, Donald M., Creative Ways to Teach English (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1958), pp. 410-414.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARISON OF COMMON ENGLISH ERRORS OF FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN GENERAL

The common English errors of both Fairfield High School students and the average high school student have been determined and classified. A comparison of the errors was made in both areas of English expression, written and oral, and the resulting data is presented in the same manner as in the preceding chapters. With the Fairfield High School students used as a basis for this comparison, a contrast of these errors, their similarities and differences--and the significance of these factors, is presented in the following sections.

Comparison of Common English Errors in Oral Expression

One-third of the pronunciation errors made by Fairfield High School students were the same or relatively similar to those made nationally. It is the belief of the investigator that some of the errors made by Fairfield High School students are due to the geographical region, such as Missouri, route, poor, not at all, and definite. Accordingly, many national errors, also, would be the result of geographical factors. Some examples are: almond, bowline, hearth, just, and window.

The fact that America is the "melting pot" of all nations led to the writer's assumption that foreign immigrants and their descendants greatly influence pronunciation of the specific areas in which they settle.

The rates of speech, mannerisms, and inflection errors are consistent among high school students, and there was no significant difference between the errors made by Fairfield High School students and the average high school

student. However, the average students make a wider variety of errors, but this is probably due to the fact that all areas of the United States were taken into consideration. The number of students in the sample observed may also be a controlling factor.

Common English Errors in Written Expression

Approximately seventeen per cent of the common words misspelled in Fairfield High School were listed on Jones' list of "spelling demons." The main causes of spelling errors among the Fairfield High School students were due to failure to observe rules concerning the addition of a suffix, neglecting to double consonants in word context, and inability to spell words if their pronunciations added or omitted sounds (for example: subtle and debris).

The average high school student seems to make errors because of failure to double consonants and vowels, the lack of proper knowledge of correct word usage, and the inability to remember spelling of words when sounds are omitted or added in their pronunciations.

It may be concluded, therefore, that the reason for spelling errors of Fairfield High School students and high school students in general are the same, although the words misspelled are not.

The students in Fairfield High School committed more errors in capitalization than students in general make. Those areas where common errors were made, school classes, family relations, and regions and directions, were not listed on any common capitalization error list examined by the investigator. All of these errors were committed because students capitalized when they were not supposed to.

The most predominant error in sentence construction is in word usage,

(such as when to use to and too); as previously stated, it causes one-fourth to one-third of the total errors in written expression, and is a significant factor in errors in oral expression. The errors made by Fairfield High School students were approximately seventy-five per cent of those listed in Table 14.

Fairfield High School students tended to make fewer errors in punctuation than did the average high school student. Fairfield's students had a tendency to put question marks at the end of indirect questions and requests; however, their errors were only about one-fifth of those commonly made by high school students.

Fairfield High School students often lacked paragraph and sentence unity and coherence. In a review of literature the writer failed to find a specific reference, which included exact numbers, to this error. Apparently other writers feel that it isn't necessary to discuss this phase by itself, but that it is simply taken care of in parts.

Approximately 7% of the errors made by the typical high school graduate are committed in run-together sentences, while sentence fragment errors constitute approximately thirteen per cent. About 25% of the student errors made in sentence construction are due to fragments and run-together sentences combined. In Fairfield High School, as stated above, the per cent of errors in this field is considerably higher.

The only significant grammatical errors made by Fairfield High School students and high school students in general were in subject and verb agreement and in the use of double negatives. This is only a small per cent of the common mistakes in grammar as listed in the preceding chapter.

The common English errors taken from an over-all survery are almost the

same or relatively similar to those made in Fairfield High School. The major difference was in the frequency of occurrence. The limitations again may be significant factors. There was a highly reduced representative sampling in Fairfield due to the smaller number of students with relatively similar backgrounds.

Chapter V presents some methods to improve the prevailing errors in written and oral expression made by the students.

CHAPTER V

SUGGESTED METHODS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF ORAL AND WRITTEN EXPRESSION

It has been determined through investigation and a review of literature, what the common English errors in written and oral expression are. This chapter is concerned with suggested methods of error elimination. The majority of the methods suggested are taken from the opinions of authorities in English and education, and from experienced teachers. Fairfield student errors have been used as the basis for correction. Oral expression correction is considered first, followed by suggested methods for improving written expression.

Suggested Methods for Improvement of Oral Expression

Correct pronunciation is essential to the student, and must be improved. "In spoken language, pronunciation is the most striking element, and thus it is more than any one thing, the most obvious test of general culture."[19]

One of the best ways to improve pronunciation is by the teacher, herself, to set a good example. The students have a tendency to copy the teacher's speech habits. This will help to encourage good pronunciation in the classroom.

A tape recorder is an effective method to help eliminate speech errors. Informal conversation at the beginning of the year should be recorded. Usually the faults with student speech are that their answers are not in keeping with the topic, speaking in muffled tones, and giving one or two-word an-

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[19] Phyfe, W. H., 2000 Words Often Mispronounced (New York, Chicago: C. L. Burt Company, 1926), p. 6.

swers, along with errors in word pronunciation.

When the students can detect their own errors, a learning situation exists. With the use of the tape recorder at periodic intervals throughout the year, the students will have concrete evidence of their improvement program.

Use of charts, posters, bulletin boards, felt boards, cut-outs, and pictures can be made to encourage good speech habits also.

Every person should be able to accent the correct syllable in a word, and should practice this until the skill is developed. Many words are mispronounced simply because the accents are misplaced.

Students should be able to interpret signs and diacritical marks used as correct pronunciation when they refer to the dictionary. Symbols and sounds, not spelling, govern pronunciation. Vowel sounds are the principal ones to be learned since consonant sounds are generally familiar.

The student's attention should be called to the fact that he is making an error in pronunciation. The time to correct is disputed by the authorities, but, through investigation and experimentation, the writer feels that any correction should be made when the pupil has concluded what he was saying.

Frequent, short drills of words which boys and girls mispronounce, and lists of words from good text books will help to solve this problem. A pride for correct pronunciation should be developed within the student.

The basic difficulty of students in <u>delivery</u> is overconcern for themselves. The real purpose of the speech, the effect upon the audience, is almost forgotten because the speaker is more concerned with his own part. Many of the good speakers act confident before the audience, while in reality, they

are not. Students must realize that they do not look as they feel. "Confidence is not essential in becoming a good speaker."[20] Without adequate preparation and practice, all of the confidence in the world won't help him.

Most students are more afraid that they don't know anything than they are about not being able to say anything. Careful preparation is the only solution to this problem.

One-third of all beginning speakers have a lack-of-confidence problem. Students must be forced to face their problems. Experience has shown that the items most frequently noted by listeners are all easy to eliminate. These include awkward posture, quick, jerky, bodily movements, and poor eye contact. "Any good speech instructor can eliminate these in little more than a half-hour."[21] After this has been done, the rest is up to the student.

The rate of speech will vary according to the difficulty of the material, type of speech, and experience of the student in speech delivery. Most speeches given by students should be from 160 to 175 words per minute.

Phrases, clauses, and sentence punctuation in speaking is indicated by pauses. They help the student in his breathing, as well as give the student time to think. They should never be so frequent as to destroy the idea of the speech, and this should be pointed out to students.

They should be given every opportunity possible to express themselves orally. The teacher should seek possibilities for reports, informal discussions, question and answer periods, and debates.

Attention should be called to the errors made in oral expression. Hav-

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[20] Smith, Raymond G., Principles of Public Speaking (New York: The Ronald Press, 1958), p. 302.

[21] Ibid., p. 310.

ing the students give constructive criticism to each other after a criterion has been decided upon by the teacher and the students is a satisfactory way to help eliminate errors. Tables 17 and 18 illustrate good places to record comments on oral expression.

Suggested Methods for Improvement of Written Expression

According to Witherspoon,[24] "It is more important and less difficult to remember how a word is written than to remember a rule about its spelling." The only way to learn spelling is to be able to read carefully, taking note of the words and studying the order of their letters, and to impress the correct image of the word on the mind.

One can learn to spell by keeping a list of new words (vocabulary) and a list of the words misspelled. He should try to form a type of association with similar words. Sometimes a simple jingle may help the student to more effectively develop the habit of association.

"I" before "E"
Except after "C,"
Or when sounded as "A"
As in neighbor or weigh

Spelling is a major problem in schools today. "There are several reasons for the existence of spelling problems in our schools."[25] The main reason is the character of the English language. By this is meant that there is relatively little relationship between the sound of the language and its written form.

(discussion continued on page 50 because of intervening tables)

[24]Witherspoon, Alexander M., Common Errors in English and How to Avoid Them (Barnes and Nobel, Inc: New York, 1955), p. 270.

[25]Staiger, Ralph C., "The Spelling Problem in High School" Education, 76:280-285, January, 1956.

TABLE 17.[22] RATING FORM

Composition	Speech Number							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Knowledge of central idea.....								
2. Introduction.....								
3. Partitioning and organization....								
4. Support.....								
5. Interest.....								
6. Conclusion.....								
7. Language.....								
8. Grammar.....								
Attitude								
9. Objectivity.....								
10. Sincerity.....								
11. Spontaneity.....								
12. Tact.....								
13. Enthusiasm.....								
Vocal Action								
14. Articulation.....								
15. Loudness.....								
16. Pitch, range, inflection.....								
17. Quality.....								
18. Time: rate, pause.....								
Bodily Action								
19. Poise, posture, movement.....								
20. Facial expression.....								
21. Eye contact.....								
22. Gestures.....								
GRADE								

Notes:

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[22] Ibid., p. 359.

TABLE 18.[23] LISTENER'S ANALYSIS

Speaker's Name: _____

Date: _____

1. In one complete sentence write the speaker's central idea.

_____

_____

_____

2. In complete sentences give his main supporting points.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

3. What items of content or delivery were especially good?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. What factors, if improved, would most improve this speaker?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. What grade would you assign to this speech? _____

_____

[23] Ibid., p. 360.

However, poor readers are usually poor spellers because of a low verbal aptitude, lack of experience with the language, underdeveloped habits of accurate perception of words or word parts, and a lack of efficiency in pronunciation of words subvocally and in use of phonetic generalization. There is a definite relationship between reading and spelling in that they are both part of the language arts program, and both are concerned with words.

Very few studies have been made concerning spelling at the high school level, although Harris[26] did point out that "the achievement level in spelling is very low," and Ayers[27] presented a list of 720 words most often misspelled by high school students.

In most high schools, spelling errors are called to the attention of the students, but little or no instruction is given on how to eliminate spelling errors. A unit in English dealing with spelling rules and errors can be taught to improve this situation.

Each teacher should stress correct spelling by calling attention to frequently misspelled words, and should do this in such a way that they are finally learned.

Some suggestions which Hildreth[28] has offered are helpful in teaching high school students to spell: give help in word pronunciation; work on "word demons;" have students proof readtheir writing; use dictionaries; keep

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[26]Harris, Oliver E., "An Investigation of Spelling Achievement of Secondary School Pupils" Educational Administration and Supervision, 34:208-219, April, 1947.

[27]Ayer, Fred C., A Study of High School Spelling Vocabulary (Austin, Texas: Steck Company, 1945), p. 359.

[28]Hildreth, Gertrude, Teaching Spelling (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1955), p. 143.

individual records and progress charts; hold spelling contests between groups of similar ability; and study word derivation.

Teachers cannot help every student to spell all of the words he will need throughout life, but one can help those students who wish to become better spellers.

To teach grammar correctly is one of the most important parts of English. "One of the greatest difficulties in teaching English is the problem of presenting and simplifying basic grammar, and yet allowing enough time for composition so the relationship between the two may be made clear to the student."[29]

The first step in reducing grammar to simplest terms is to teach recognition of a prepositional phrase. Even poor grammar students have the ability to learn this. A list of common prepositions should be duplicated and used in class for reference until the student becomes familiar with these words. An explanation of structure of the phrases should be made, followed by drills in blocking out phrases. Students should then be ready to pick out the verbs. A composition assignment and use of the results will afford material for drill work.

Finding the simple subject is the next step. The same procedure should be used as was followed for verbs and prepositional phrases. The fact should be stressed that the subject is most often a noun or a pronoun. A list of nouns and pronouns may be handed out.

The last major unit in grammar should be recognition of adverb and adjective modifiers. One does this by elimination. The difference between an

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[29] Mosley, L. A., "Integrated Grammar and Composition" English Journal, 45:274-275, May, 1957.

adjective and an adverb should be taught after the class is able to determine the modifiers.

The advantage of teaching grammar by this method is the fact that teachers are able to spend the amount of time necessary on each individual, and can omit any parts that they feel are superfluous. The unit may be expanded or shortened to cover the elementary parts. Each item is studied singularly, then reviewed and integrated with composition. This makes several levels of learning possible, and each student can progress according to his own ability.

Grammar is a junior high school problem, and the place where study should begin is the sentence. Instructors should teach fewer points more thoroughly. "Grammar is the weak spot in our English courses."[30] That is where the critics usually find fault.

Word usage errors are usually the result of confusion in meaning. Students know how to spell these words, but they do not know the correct usage. The following suggestions offered are mainly those of the writer, who, through the trial and error method, found them effective.

The better way to correct usage errors is for the teacher to set a good example, and try to encourage the students to follow it. This method does not work in many cases, so drill is recommended. There are many good drill exercises available to the teacher. Some grammar text books have accompanying work books with drills in addition to those suggested in the text. Individual companies also put out work books, covering all or specific areas. Duplicated material in all phases of grammar and usage can be purchased for

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[30]Simons, Sarah F., English Problems in the Solving (New York and Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1920), p. 42.

a small cost.

Integration in word usage in other subjects is also effective. It may be difficult, however, to secure the cooperation of all teachers.

The teacher, along with the students, should try to discover associations in usage, and these should be stressed. Some examples would be there and here (places), their and heir (ownership), hear and ear (to listen).

Some forms of word usage must be memorized. Examples of these are its and it's, may and can, shall and will.

If these errors can be eliminated, the ability of students to express themselves will be greatly improved.

Three reasons for deficiency in punctuation are failure to recognize its importance, ignorance of grammar and sentence construction, and insufficient drill.

Very little oral drill should be used in presenting punctuation because it is used mainly in writing. Oral drill should be concerned with rules and correct pausing. Much drill and practice will be necessary for the student to develop an ability to punctuate correctly. The drill material should include original writing, practice sheets, and many dictation exercises that allow the student to use all forms of punctuation.

The minimum essentials that the students already know should be determined so that the teacher is able to give practice in correction of individual errors. Teachers should keep a close check on written work that students do freely; those words used correctly should be considered as well as those used incorrectly. They should master only a few things at a time.

There are also many punctuation tests available. The teacher must supplement these with her own tests so that she will be well aware of what

she is teaching. All areas and phases are then covered. These tests and exercises should be printed or mimeographed since the blackboard is used mainly for demonstration.

Some of the best text books have exercises and tests that are as good as the teacher can make up. A good book also gives the teacher and the student an opportunity to see the whole field of punctuation.

Teachers must motivate the student so that he will develop a pride in correct punctuation, as well as a realization of its importance. Pupils should be held to a high standard of achievement.

High school students are just as careless about capitalization as they are about spelling. They have a decided tendency to over-capitalize, which is just as bad a habit as using lower-case letters where they should be capitalized. But both can be broken after the student has been motivated successfully, and has developed a pride in correction.

Students will learn capitalization much better if they are taught to defend everything they capitalize with a rule. This stimulates interest in rules, and stresses the necessity for them. Rules should not be learned all at one time, however; they should be learned as the need arises. The teacher should see that no point is neglected, and written work is an excellent medium in which to bring up those areas in capitalization that do not appear elsewhere.

Repeated drills will be necessary on certain troublesome spots after they have been determined. Text books are a desirable reference and a time saver. The course of study should be used as a guide in teaching capitalization.

All rules should be stressed through example as the students may not

understand the terminology. After the rules have been illustrated and explained, they should be placed by students in notebooks for future study and reference. Pupils should work out their own rules and illustrations. Teachers should use the blackboard freely in the explanation of these rules so that all students will be able to see the capital letters, and learn them.

Dictation of sentences, along with memeographed materials, work books, and text books, are of great value because they contain organized sentences.

Teacher-made tests are valuable because they can better measure ability of the pupils on the material covered in class. Here, as well as in other areas, an important check of the pupils' own work in English should be made to help eliminate the chance of the pupils' writing correctly in one class and incorrectly in another.

High school students make many errors in sentence construction. "Almost all sentence difficulties are thought difficulties."[31] Pupils must have instilled in them a "sentence sense."[32] Instruction should be based upon needs and uses, and should be a continuous process. "The revision by the student of a dozen of his own sentences to increase their clarity, pointedness, vigor, or precision will do more for his sentence skill than will the investigation of a text book chapter and the mechanical rearrangement of fifty exercise sentences."[33]

The three main sentence faults are the substitution of sentence fragments for complete sentences, run-together sentences, and incoherent sen-

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[31] Ibid., p. 116.

[32] "Sentence sense," as defined by the investigator, is the ability to know instinctively whether or not a sentence is correct.

[33] Simons, Sarah F., op. cit., p. 118.

tences which are the result of improper relation of sentence elements. All of these reflect incompleteness or confusion. The sentence fragment shows "sky-step" thinking; run-together sentences are the result of disorganized thinking; and incoherence has three main causes. First, the individual goes on a thought tangent; secondly, he attempts to express a complex idea and loses himself in his effort; and lastly, the sentence fails to express what the speaker is trying to say. "A good sentence must be incapable of being misunderstood, even on a first reading."[34]

Students learn to write only by writing and being criticized. They should write for the purpose of communication of thought, with a definite aim, and all themes should usually be written in class for a more careful analysis on the part of the student.

The use of standardized sentence structure tests, as a drill, serves much the same purposes here as in other phases of written work.

Students should learn to reocognize a sentence by checking to see if it has a subject and a verb, and expresses a complete thought.

The individual's sentence consciousness must be developed along with his intellectual growth. His own careful writing and revision will do more in a shorter period of time than participation in activities that do not involve his own work. Better sentences will result in better paragraphing.

A number of ways have been pointed out for the improvement of oral and written expression, and certain methods have been suggested in all areas which bring about reduction of errors in expression.

A summary of the important findings of this paper and the resulting conclusions are presented in Chapter VI.

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[34]Hunt, Kellogg W., "Improving Sentence Structure" English Journal, 47:206-211, April, 1958.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this study has been to determine the common English errors of Fairfield High School students in written and oral expression, to compare these to the errors of high school students in general, and to suggest methods of elimination.

Summary

The first step in this study was the selection of ways of determining the common English errors in both written and oral expression made by Fairfield High School students. Finding and classifying these errors was accomplished by the observing and recording of errors in three English classes by the instructor, by having the teachers in four academic subjects note the predominant English errors for a period of three weeks, and by having the students determine and record their own errors by exchanging papers and listening to reports for a period of three weeks.

Relative to the first procedure, the finding and classifying of the errors by the English instructor, the prevailing errors in oral expression were found to be pronunciation, rate of speech, and mannerisms. Some of the words most commonly mispronounced were creek (krik), escape (ex'cape), and athletic (ath'e-let-ik). The principal difficulties in rates of speech were found to be speaking too rapidly, speaking too slowly, or mumbling. The main error in inflection was a tendency to raise pitch when giving a speech or in recitation, due to nervousness. In connection with mannerisms, fidgeting was found to be the most common mistake. Other errors in mannerisms were lack of accompanying gestures and facial expressions and poor audience contact. The

major areas in written expression where errors occurred were spelling, capitalization, and sentence construction, which was in turn subdivided into punctuation, subject and verb agreement, run-together sentences, sentence fragments, double negatives, and word usage. Some of the most com only misspelled words of Fairfield High School students were occurred, cemetery, and separate. Capitalization errors fell into eight major categories: school subjects, school classes, schools and colleges, seasons, family relations, regions and directions, titles of people and officials, and titles of books. Students in most cases overcapitalized, usually capitalizing the names of all school subjects (Algebra, Geometry), all school classes (the Junior picnic), and titles of people and officials when they appeared after the name (Mr. Olson, Principal). One of the major errors in sentence construction was in subject and verb agreement, especially in the use of the indefinite pronoun (everyone were). Others were two sentences written incorrectly as one, classified as run-together sentences, and sentence fragments consisting of a word group which resembled a dependent clause, written as a sentence when it was only a fragment, and double negatives such as not with hardly and no one. The common errors in word usage were confusion in meanings of such words as to and too, and their, there, and they're. More prevalent errors in punctuation were in such areas as commas (used after dates), quotations and appositives, and the use of question marks incorrectly by placing them at the end of indirect questions and requests.

The second procedure of which was having the teachers in other academic classes determine and record the common English errors, showed that some pertinent errors in pronunciation were found to be in words such as probable (pro'ble), and legislator (leg'is-la"ter). The principal difficulties in

rates of speech were speaking too rapidly and speaking too slowly. The same inflection error (raising of pitch) was evident in other classes as well as in English class. Fidgeting was the most common mannerisim error, and lack of accompanying gestures and poor audience contact were also present. Errors in written expression were in three major areas: spelling, capitalization, and sentence construction, which consisted of paragraphing, subject and verb agreement, run-together sentences, sentence fragments, and word usage. Words misspelled in all academic classes were separate, describe, and experience. The places where errors in capitalization occurred were in all school subjects (Biology, Mathematics), regions and directions, due to confusion in meaning (to the North), and articles and prepositions when they were not the first word in the title (War And Peace). In sentence construction, some major mistakes were failure to organize sentences and paragraphs correctly, and subject and verb agreement due mainly to the use of a singular subject with a plural verb, and using the wrong participle form in the verb. Word usage errors were caused by incorrect use of don't and doesn't, and your and you're, for example.

The last procedure was having the students of three English classes determine and record their own errors by exchanging papers and listening to reports for a period of three weeks. Some commonly mispronounced words were escape (ex'cape), and coupon (cue'pon). Mannerisms were the only other errors that students could detect in oral expression. They classified them as fidgeting (shifting of weight from one foot to another), and little or no audience contact. The two main areas in which students were able to determine errors in written expression were spelling and sentence construction. Examples of the words they were able to find are preferred and recommend.

The categories where students were able to detect errors in capitalization were found to be in titles of people and officials when they appeared after the name (John Smith, President), all school classes (the Senior class), and words that showed family relationships when they followed possessives (my Dad). Sentence construction errors that they could locate were recognizing fragments of sentences, incorrect word usage, such as too and to and its and it's. Incorrect use of punctuation was the last factor in sentence construction and the students located such mistakes as exclamation marks omitted after exclamatory words or sentences (help. for help!), and commas omitted after introductory words (yes who knows...for yes, who knows...).

The second step in this study was to find out what specific errors high school students in general make, through an investigation of literature. The errors in oral expression made by high school students in general were pronunciation, delivery, and physical factors. A list of 210 words most often mispronounced combined by Ginn and Company (publishers of the Better English series for high schools) listed some of the words as government (gov'er-ment) and film (fil'lum). Among the most typical speech faults as listed by Fields and Bender in their book Voice and Diction, were intrusions, which are extraneous sounds that mar pronunciation (ath-a-lete) and pitch difficulties which were defined as habitual abnormal raising and lowering of the voice while speaking, particularly among the boys. Common English errors in written expression committed by the average high school student fell into three main sections: spelling, capitalization, and sentence structure, which included punctuation, word usage, and grammatical usage. A list of 100 Spelling Demons compiled by Jones included such commonly misspelled words as doctor, Wednesday, and business. Mistakes in capitalization occurred in such instances as

wrong use of a capital in proper nouns (my Mother and I), and in names of school subjects (Speech). Errors in sentence structure were derived from various sources. A few of the punctuation errors brought out in this study were no period at the end of a sentence, failure to place a period after an abbreviation, and failure to set off a series by commas. A list of the words missed by one-third of all of the students in high school classes included such examples as teach and learn, may and can, and to and too. Examples of poor grammatical usage are pronouns used as the object of the preposition not in the objective case (to John and me) and vulgarisms (ain't).

A third step involved in this paper was a comparison of the errors made by Fairfield High School students to those made by high school students in general. It was found that in oral expression, one-third of the pronunciation errors made by Fairfield High School students were the same or relatively similar to those made by high school students in general. Some of these errors, according to the investigator, are due to geographical locations such as Missouri and poor. Rate of speech, mannerisms, and inflection are consistent among high school students and there was no significant difference between the errors made by Fairfield High School students and the average high school student; however, the average high school student makes a wider variety of errors. Seventeen per cent of the words misspelled by Fairfield High School students were on Jones' list. The reason for spelling errors of Fairfield High School students and high school students in general are the same, although the words misspelled are not. The most predominant error in sentence construction was in word usage, such as when to use effect and affect. These errors caused from one-fourth to one-third of the total errors in written expression on a national basis. The errors of Fairfield

High School students constituted approximately 75% of the common usage errors. The students of Fairfield High School committed more errors in capitalization than students in general, but they made fewer errors in punctuation. Approximately 7% of the errors made by the average high school graduate are committed in run-together sentences, while sentence fragment errors constituted approximately 13%. About 25% of the student errors made in sentence construction are due to fragments and run-together sentences combined. Fairfield High School students made a higher per cent of errors in this field. The only significant parallel of grammatical errors made by Fairfield High School students and high school students in general was agreement of subject and verb and use of double negatives. The common English errors taken from an over-all survey are almost the same, or relatively similar to those made in Fairfield High School. The only difference was in frequency of occurrence.

The fourth step in this study was concerned with suggested methods of error elimination. The majority of the methods suggested were taken from opinions of authorities in the field of English and education, and from experienced teachers. In regard to oral expression, the best way to improve pronunciation is for the teacher to set a good example. Other suggested methods are use of a tape recorder, charts and other visual aids, along with teaching the students to stress syllables correctly and to be able to interpret signs and diacritical marks used as guides for correct pronunciation, frequent word drills, and calling of the student's attention to his particular errors. Students should learn to pause correctly to improve their rates of speech, and should be given every opportunity to express themselves orally. Spelling must be corrected in order to improve written expression. In order to spell correctly, a student must be able to read the words carefully, note

them, and study the order of the letters to impress the image of the word on his mind. Vocabulary lists and simple jingles, along with improved reading, and calling of the student's attention to his misspelled words can help in error elimination. Grammar should be simplified and integrated with composition. Word usage errors can be reduced by the teacher setting a good example, integration in other subjects, memorization, work books, and drills in good text books. Some oral drill should be used in teaching punctuation, however; original writings, practice sheets, and many dictation exercises will allow the students to use all forms of punctuation. High school students should be taught to defend everything that they capitalize with a rule. Repeated drills will be necessary for some troublesome spots. Dictation of sentences, along with mimeographed materials, work books, and text books are of great value in teaching of capitalization because they contain organized sentences. Teacher-made tests are valuable also. Instruction in sentences should be based on pupil needs and uses, and should be a continuous process. Students learn to write only by writing and being criticized. They should write with the purpose of communication of thought, with a definite aim, and all themes should be written in class for more careful analysis on the part of the student. Better sentences will result in better paragraphing.

Conclusions

From the findings of this study the following conclusions seemed justified:

1. Fairfield High School students make the same or relatively similar English errors in written and oral expression in English as well as in other academic subjects.

2. The common English errors taken from an over-all survey are almost

the same as those made in Fairfield High School. The only difference was in frequency of occurrence.

3. Some of the errors are due to geographical locations, but most of the errors are caused by lack of instructional emphasis in the essentials of English grammar.

4. Some suggested methods of error elimination are:

a. The teacher should set a good example.

b. A wider utilization of audio-visual aids should be made.

c. There should be a more comprehensive use of the English tools such as texts, work books, dictionaries, tests, lists, and jingles.

d. There should be a wider range of student participation.

e. Memorization, along with repeated drills in weak spots should be practiced in class.

f. English should be integrated into other academic subjects.

5. Instruction in the fundamentals of English should be a continuous process and should be based on needs and uses.

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