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A LIST OF WORDS MISSPELLED BY CERTAIN SECRETARIAL PUPILS
IN THE ELEVENTH GRADE SHORTHAND CLASSES IN JOLIET
TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL, JOLIET, ILLINOIS

By

Grace Miranda Clow

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of Master
of Arts in Loyola University

June
1942

Vita

Grace Miranda Clow was born in Wheatland Township, Will County, Illinois, October 24, 1882.

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In addition to attending three summer normal terms at Gregg College, Chicago, Illinois, she has done graduate work in English and Education at the University of Chicago and graduate work in Education at Columbia University.

Since 1914 the writer has been engaged in teaching in the Joliet Township High School, Joliet, Illinois. During the past three years, in addition to her teaching, she has been studying at Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois.

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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

The problem attacked in this thesis is the formation of a spelling list composed of words misspelled by high school secretarial pupils in the Joliet Township High School, Joliet, Illinois, who are in their first semester's study of shorthand.

One of the chief reasons why many pupils fail to become good stenographers is that they are poor spellers. Many of them can learn both to read and to write shorthand fairly well, and yet they fail as stenographers because they cannot produce mailable transcripts. Their difficulties may involve inability to construct good sentences, ignorance as to correct punctuation and logical paragraphing, but of all the pitfalls they encounter, none is more conspicuous than misspelling. A misspelled word spoils a letter--in fact, renders it unmailable.

It is self-evident that the matter of correct spelling is important to the stenographer. If he is naturally a good speller, he is fortunate. If he is naturally a poor speller, he starts his work in shorthand under a handicap which must be overcome if he is to be a success in his vocation. To help him anticipate his spelling difficulties by determining the words misspelled by a group of high school pupils who are beginning the study of shorthand is the purpose of the testing program reported in this thesis.

To spend time studying words which present no spelling difficulties is to waste time. To spend time studying words which have been misspelled by groups of pupils who are comparable to those under shorthand instruction is to save time and to render a real service. Therefore, the words in this list were secured by employing widely used shorthand teaching material in testing groups of pupils of approximately the same age and grade as those for whose benefit the list should be used.

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter I states the problem under consideration, gives reasons why this problem is important, and tells how the rest of the thesis is organized. Chapter II concerns itself with a review of other studies in the field of spelling. In Chapter III the material used in the testing is located in detail and the procedure followed in making the study is set forth. Chapter IV contains the list of words secured through the testing described in the previous chapter. This list is given in two forms, one of which arranges the words alphabetically, the other according to frequency of misspelling. Chapter V, the final chapter, summarizes the findings of the study, gives conclusions drawn from these findings, and suggests uses to which the list may be put.

CHAPTER II

THE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To say that a stenographer is a success implies that he is the possessor of many desirable qualifications, not the least of which is the ability to spell with a high degree of accuracy. The student of shorthand who is deficient in this essential of a successful stenographer is faced with a problem too great for quick solution. No good business letter may carry a misspelled word; such an error should immediately send it to the wastebasket.

Because educators have long recognized that spelling efficiency is an asset for everyone, studies have been made ranging from the primary grades through the college level and on into adult life. To wait until an individual selects stenography as his vocation is too late a time to think of telling him to study spelling. Learning to spell is a long and continual process. Into the creating of a good stenographer goes his entire school career; therefore this thesis includes in its review of the literature reports of studies in the field of spelling made in successive stages of the educational program.

In a paper presented to the seventy-fifth annual meeting of the National Education Association at San Francisco in 1939, Mildred J. O'Leary of Swampscott, Massachusetts, emphasized the need of the secretarial student for an adequate vocabulary.

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"Background subjects" such as English, business law, and economic geography she mentions as important aids in vocabulary building. Teachers of these background subjects should cooperate with teachers of business English and shorthand in helping to decide upon a foundation vocabulary for the business student. Since there is a close connection between a large vocabulary and success in business and in life, the secretarial student should use every workable device to add both general and special words to his vocabulary.¹

First experimental work in spelling

The first experimental work in the field of spelling was done by Dr. J. M. Rice. In 1894, he made a list of words and had them dictated to school children all over the United States. Because he was not satisfied with the way these tests were administered, a second test was given in which he had teachers read sentences containing the words to be spelled. As a third experiment, he had pupils write compositions in which the misspelled words were counted. These tests were not very good, but they did call attention to and open the way for a scientific approach to the measuring of educational achievement.²

¹Mildred J. O'Leary. Vocabulary Building for Secretarial Students. National Education Association Proceedings. National Education Association of the United States, Washington, D. C., 1939, 415.

²H. C. Pryor and M. S. Pittman. A Guide to the Teaching of Spelling. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1922, 3.

Three outstanding and influential studies

Among the studies made of this important matter of spelling, three outstanding pieces of work appear to have had far-reaching influence upon other students of this problem. Because of their contributions to the advances made in dealing with this type of research and because many other studies refer to them and are checked against them, they are discussed early in this review of the literature.

The Ayres Scale. The measuring scale for ability in spelling prepared by L. P. Ayres was designed, as the title states, to measure spelling ability, but, since it identifies the 1,000 words used most often in four different studies, it is useful as a spelling list.³ The four sources of the scale are:

1. "The London Point System of Reading for the Blind," by Rev. J. Knowles.
2. "Six Thousand Commonest English Words," by R. C. Eldridge.
3. "The Spelling Vocabularies of Personal and Business Letters," by L. P. Ayres.
4. "The Child and His Spelling," by W. A. Cook and M. V. O'Shea.

The total number of words analyzed was about 386,000..

Through his analysis the author discovered that a list of 1,000

³L. P. Ayres. A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling. The Russell Sage Foundation, New York City, 1915, 6.

words contains those that comprise most of our writing vocabulary.⁴ The words are arranged in three lists:

1. In descending order of frequency.
2. In alphabetic order.
3. In the order of their appearance in the final scale.

In commenting on this spelling scale, Dr. Ernest Horn⁵ says that interest in the measurement of spelling has been stimulated by this study more than by any other.

Dr. Horn's Basic Spelling Vocabulary. With the purpose of finding out what words are used most frequently in their writing by adults who have left the classroom, Dr. Ernest Horn's study led him into an examination of all fields in which data could be secured. After giving a summary of studies previously made, he reports the results of his investigations of the following vocabularies:⁶

1. Letters from 26 businesses of different types.
2. Personal letters of people living in different areas of the United States.

⁴Ibid., 11.

⁵Department of Superintendence. A Reprint of the Third Yearbook. The Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association of the United States, Washington, D. C., June, 1926, 118.

⁶Ernest Horn. A Basic Writing Vocabulary. University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 1926, 24-39.

3. Letters of 16 well-known writers, eight American and eight English. All the letters in "The Gentlest Art," by E. V. Lucas, were also analyzed.

4. Letters printed in magazines and metropolitan newspapers.

5. Letters of application and recommendation.

6. Adult writing vocabularies outside correspondence:

a. Minutes, resolutions, reports of committees.

b. Excuses written by parents to teachers.

c. The letters of one person, the superintendent of schools in a small city.

In all these investigations, about 5,137,000 running words were analyzed. After eliminating the consideration of proper names, 36,373 words were found. From these, through a system of weighted credits, "multiplying the total frequency of a word by the square root of the different sources in which the word was found"⁷ the 10,000 words most needed in adult writing were determined. Dr. Horn feels that the high frequency words in this list of 10,000 should be included in a course of study in spelling.⁸

A word book for teachers. The Thorndike word list is an alphabetic list of 10,000 words taken from these sources: literature for children, the Bible and English classics, elementary

⁷Horn, Ibid., 47.

⁸Department of Superintendence, op. cit., 134.

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school textbooks, books dealing with vocational subjects, daily newspapers, and correspondence. After each word is a number which tells how many sources used the word and what the frequency of the word is. Following the 10,000 word list is a list of 2,500 words of most frequent use, grouped in sets of 500 each. This list was planned as an aid in reading, not in spelling. The author says:

"It should be noted further that this is not a spelling list. If it is used as an aid in the construction of spelling lists, the derived forms in g, ies, ly, er, r, est, st, s, ed, d, ing, and n should be inserted. They may offer notable difficulty in spelling even when easily read and understood by derivation."⁹

Dr. Thorndike adds that this list should help the teacher to judge how important a word is, and that years of experience are required to give the teacher the judgment of word importance which this list makes immediately available to the beginning teacher.¹⁰

In the opinion of Dr. Ernest Horn, this list is not only the most important compilation of information dealing with the words used most frequently in reading, but it also provides valuable data which may be used in measuring the overlap between the vocabulary of reading and the vocabulary of spelling.¹¹

⁹Edward L. Thorndike. The Teacher's Word Book. Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, January, 1927, vi.

¹⁰Thorndike, Ibid., iv.

¹¹Department of Superintendence, op. cit., 144.

Studies based upon the situation in the elementary school

A list of 1,811 words. The close connection between reading and spelling in the primary grades is brought out by Arthur I. Gates in his study called "A Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades." Its list of 1,811 words constitutes a revision of his 1926 primary reading vocabulary.¹² This second list is longer than its predecessor, as word study had shown that the number of words in common use had increased. His principal sources are children's books of various kinds, primary readers, and various studies of words from children's literature. Experts gave their judgments of the words from the standpoint of their interest and usefulness to children. The words are arranged according to two plans. First is an alphabetical list of the 1,811 words, each word followed by a 1, 2, 3, or 4 to show into which group of 500 words its interest and usefulness allocate it. After this list come four lists, each alphabetically arranged. List one contains the first 500 words; list two, the second; list three, the third; and list four, the 311 words placed in the fourth 500. Mr. Gates believes that his list furnishes good material for reading and writing tests; he also believes that, since these words are the foundation of a minimum reading vocabulary, they should be easy to learn to spell.

¹²Arthur I. Gates. A Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, 1935, lff.

A list of 4,052 words. In connection with "A Compilation of the Commonest Words from Eight Investigations of Spelling Vocabulary," Dr. Ernest Horn contends that there is no short cut to teaching spelling.¹³ Teaching spelling incidentally is, he says, an ineffective method; words must be attacked definitely if good results are attained. His compilation is a composite list selected from correspondence vocabularies. It contains 4,052 words, each appearing four or more times in the material analyzed. Horn feels that, until more comprehensive studies are made, his list should be used as spelling material in the elementary school.

A list of 3,876 words. Twenty-five popular spelling texts and various large-city spelling lists were used by Arthur I. Gates in his search for a list of commonly taught words. From these sources he assembled a list of the 3,876 words most frequently selected by those who compile spelling textbooks and spelling lists. Gates does not claim that his list is the best list to use in teaching spelling, but he does say it is a list to which spelling experts give their endorsement.¹⁴ The major part of the book deals with an analysis of spelling difficulties, a subject apart from the problem at hand in this thesis.

¹³Ernest Horn. Principles of Method in Teaching Spelling as Derived from Scientific Investigation. The Eighteenth Year-book of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois, 1919, 53.

¹⁴Arthur I. Gates. A List of Spelling Difficulties in 3,876 Words. Teachers College, New York City, 1937, 1.

Because this list contains fewer words than the Horn list recommended in the previous paragraph for the elementary school, it seems wise to include it also in the elementary program.

"Spelling and plain writing contests." The six bulletins listed from the University of Texas are described as containing the words pronounced for the "Spelling and plain writing contests" of the University Inter-Scholastic League of Austin, Texas. In 1920, for the first time, the contests were written, not oral. The words are alphabetically arranged. Their source and the reasons for their selection are not given, although the compilers tried to select words commonly used and frequently misspelled by Texas school children. In 1921, for the first time, the words were divided into a sub-junior list for children not more than ten years of age, and a junior and a senior list for juniors and seniors respectively.¹⁵ The contest is written and ends with the county.

A grade placement list. George Spache feels that the remedial teacher is confronted by special problems. Children recommended for help in reading or spelling often need special aid in both. Since, in any one grade, reading vocabularies are larger than spelling vocabularies, the teacher must check every basic reading word against every basic spelling word, and every basic spelling word against every basic reading word. To

¹⁵University of Texas Bulletins. "Words for the Spelling Matches of the University Interscholastic League." The University of Texas, Austin, Texas, June 15, 1921, No. 2137.

simplify the task of the remedial teacher where a spelling difficulty is accompanied by one in reading and vice versa, Mr. Spache has developed a grade placement list by comparing three comprehensive reading and spelling lists:¹⁶

1. A. I. Gates. "A List of Spelling Difficulties in 3,876 Words."
2. Clarence R. Stone. "A Graded Vocabulary for Primary Reading."
3. George W. Hayward and Nancy M. Ordway. "Vocabularies of Recently Published Preprimers."

Mr. Spache checked Stone's entire list against the Gates list. He eliminated from the Stone list words not appearing in the Gates list. The Hayward-Ordway list he used as a check of Stone's grade placement. From his comparisons he evolved seven word lists for eight levels of reading-spelling vocabulary.¹⁷ The words range from those important for beginners through easy third-reader material.

A speller for the elementary school. The words in Lippincott's "New Horn-Ashbaugh Speller" are taken from Dr. Horn's compilation of the 10,000 words essential to a basic writing vocabulary.¹⁸ The minimum list of 4,108 words, plus an

¹⁶George Spache. "A Minimum Reading-Spelling Vocabulary for Remedial Work." Journal of Educational Research, November, 1939, 162 ff.

¹⁷Spache, Ibid., 166-173.

¹⁸Ernest Horn and Ernest J. Ashbaugh, Lippincott's New Horn-Ashbaugh Speller. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1926, vii.

additional list of 310, is arranged by grades, for use in Grades I through VIII. Horn and Ashbaugh state that this speller includes only words that will be used in life outside the classroom.¹⁹ It is their belief, substantiated by all available data with reference to writing needs, that this list is 100 per cent efficient in its offering to meet spelling needs.²⁰

Studies based upon the situation in the high school

Spelling errors in a small Missouri high school. Most of the spelling studies made on the high school level are general in their nature. The purpose of A. G. Capps was to find out the spelling errors made in a small high school of about 120 pupils in a town of 1,000 inhabitants in northern Missouri.²¹ The source employed was the written work of the pupils, including their notebooks. Mr. Capps analyzed 956,730 words, found 3,388 errors, or 34 errors per ten thousand words, and located 1,925 different words misspelled. His word list contains only words misspelled three or more times. There are 1,426 such words, 42 per cent of the entire number of errors. Fourteen proper names and seventeen technical words furnished 285 errors. So Capps concluded that in high school much attention should be given to the spelling of such words. Sixty-two of Capps' words are found

¹⁹Horn and Ashbaugh, Ibid., vii.

²⁰Horn and Ashbaugh, Ibid., viii.

²¹A. G. Capps. "Curriculum Content of a High School Spelling Course." Journal of Educational Research, 2:626-635, October, 1920.

in the Ayres list, and these words constitute 44 per cent of the errors. Therefore Capps believes that 44 per cent of spelling study should be on words similar to those in the Ayres list, and 56 per cent on words pertaining to the high school curriculum. Since the pupils in this school ranged from 98 per cent to 99.94 in their spelling efficiency,²² the author feels that society has set up too high a standard in the matter of spelling.²²

Errors made in college entrance examinations. To support his conviction that much time might be saved if the amount of misspellings and their character were determined for people of a given age, John A. Lester began his investigation with these purposes in mind:²³

1. To find out what words high school and preparatory pupils misspell most often.
2. To find out how these words are misspelled.
3. To find out the least fatiguing way by which these words may be taught by the teacher and learned by the pupil.

As a part of their college entrance examinations in English during 1913-1919 inclusive, compositions were written by 2,414 students living in 46 different states. These compositions

²²Capps, Ibid., 635.

²³John A. Lester. "A Study of High School Spelling Material." Journal of Educational Psychology, February, 1922, 65-66.

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furnished the material for Lester's study. In 1,378,000 words of "free composition" he found 14,002 misspellings, providing a list of 2,602 words. Ten words were responsible for 6 per cent of the total misspellings, 50 words furnished nearly 20 per cent, and 775 words caused almost 75 per cent of all words incorrectly spelled.

The author includes a list made of the 50 most frequently misspelled words, arranged in the order of their frequency of misspelling. Too heads the list and sense closes it. The list includes not only the words misspelled, but also the ways in which they are misspelled.²⁴

The remainder of the study, using as its focus the 775 words most frequently misspelled, devotes itself to a study of the causes of these errors in spelling and to suggestions for improvement in both teaching and learning how to spell.

This study is significant because it is one of the first studies made to find out what words high school pupils misspell. It should be noted that the individuals writing the compositions form a selected group and that their compositions would of necessity be written with more than usual care.

North Carolina high school "Spelling Demons." With the help of a number of public school teachers in North Carolina, Karl C. Garrison has compiled a list of North Carolina high

²⁴Lester, Ibid., 69-70

school "Spelling Demons."²⁵ His list of 155 words is, he says, similar to lists based on the findings of other investigations. So he claims for his list a rather high validity for use in estimating the spelling vocabulary of high school pupils. He has checked a number of other high school spelling lists against his and has found that the percentage of his "demons" appearing in those lists ranges from seven to ninety. Therefore he concludes that lists containing less than forty or fifty per cent of his demons would not satisfy the spelling needs in North Carolina high schools.

A Virginia high school's spelling plan. Because Lane High School, at Charlottesville, Virginia, was criticized by business and professional people for its failure to teach spelling effectively, the teachers in this school decided to meet this criticism. Spelling had been taught in English classes and incidentally in all classes, but too often graduates were poor spellers. So a plan was formulated whereby each pupil is required to take a definite course in spelling, and no pupil is graduated who fails to make at least 75 per cent on the final examination in spelling.²⁶ Both teachers and pupils submitted lists of words missed in their classrooms, and from these lists a master list was made. This list, which in 1939 was still

²⁵Karl C. Garrison. "The High School Spelling Vocabulary." The High School Journal, May, 1936, 147-150†.

²⁶Hugh L. Sulfridge. "An Experiment in Spelling." The American School Board Journal, December, 1939, 54.

growing, then contained about one thousand words. One 30-minute home room period each week is devoted to spelling. Each month a test is given, made up of one hundred words, fifty from the master list and fifty from a dictation exercise. The final examination is made up in this same way. Mr. Sulfridge states in his article, "An Experiment in Spelling," that without doubt their plan is working successfully. Lane High School is "spelling conscious," and both parents and pupils realize how important the subject of spelling is.

A spelling list for industrial arts pupils. That his spelling list of 250 words or terms is suitable for use in all drawing classes is the opinion of M. R. Klein, its compiler.²⁷ He suggests that the list be mimeographed or printed in the school print shop and distributed to industrial arts pupils. Its use as a reference in connection with drawing and note-taking may help to increase the vocabulary of such pupils. As related material, it should also be useful in their English work.

A list for children and adults. The purpose of W. E. Chancellor's study, "Spelling," was to find the 1,000 words that children and adults need in common. His sources were lists of words given him by 500 grammar school pupils and letters he had received bearing upon school, social, business, and political affairs. For five years he had studied the matter of spelling in the schools of America, and he concluded that spelling

²⁷M. R. Klein. "Spelling List for the Drafting Room." Industrial Arts and Vocational Education, February, 1940, 59.

efficiency is still a thing of the future. He does not tell how he went about selecting the words in his list; he merely states that "Every word in the following list every American needs." In conclusion he says:

"These are the 1,000 words that the grammar school graduate should be examined and pass at ninety per cent. upon. These are not only the words he will use most frequently; but they are also, according to my finding, in the fashion indicated in this series of articles, the written words that when needed are most needed, that when needed appear indispensable."²⁸

Studies based upon the spelling needs of adults

A study based upon letters. Cook and O'Shea studied the words used in family correspondence by five men and eight women, whose education ranged from three years in the elementary school to one year of graduate work in a state university. Because letters written to relatives are probably natural and free from restraint, Cook and O'Shea felt that their source material would employ words that individuals really use in their daily lives.²⁹

From a total number of approximately 2,000,000 running words, 5,200 different words were obtained. These they arranged in four lists. List I contains the 186 words used by all the correspondents; List II, the 577 words used by a majority; List III, the 2,207 words used by more than one but less than a

²⁸W. E. Chancellor. "Spelling." The Journal of Education, May 5, 1910, May 12, 1910, 522.

²⁹W. A. Cook and M. V. O'Shea. The Child and His Spelling. The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis, 1914, 137-139.

majority; and List IV, not printed because of lack of space, contains the 2,230 words used by only one writer.

In an attempt to find out how words in spellers are chosen and how valid these methods of selection are, Cook and O'Shea checked their list against the vocabularies of three spelling textbooks.³⁰ They found that 65 per cent of the words in the spellers were not used by their correspondents. They also found that the spellers did not list one proper name.

Letters to a newspaper. To find out whether or not the spelling vocabularies offered for study in the public schools really contain the words pupils will use in adult life, W. F. Clarke investigated the Ayres list and the lists given in the every-day speller. As a means of finding what words adults actually do use, he studied 200 letters written to and appearing in a large Chicago newspaper.³¹ He listed 28,292 words and 3,360 different words. He found that 117 words in the Ayres list did not occur in his list and that 108 words in his list did not appear in the spellers. His conclusion, therefore, is that present spelling lists are not adequate, probably because in preparing them too little attention was given to "geographical and social factors."³² He believes that present

³⁰Cook and O'Shea, Ibid., 147-149.

³¹W. F. Clarke. "Writing Vocabularies." Elementary School Journal, January, 1921, 349.

³²Clarke, Ibid., 351.

attempts to construct writing vocabularies should be added to by studying the situation in "widely scattered and representative localities and of diverse but representative social groups."³³

The Horn list of 3,009 words. Chapter VI of the Fourth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence continues the report on spelling presented in the Third Yearbook. Section III of the report, by Dr. Ernest Horn,³⁴ gives a list of 3,009 words used most often in written correspondence. Dr. Horn followed each word with a letter and number combination to show in which thousand and in which half of that thousand the word belongs. Since this is the plan followed by Dr. Thorndike, a comparison between the Horn and the Thorndike lists is easily made.³⁵

Dr. Breed's list. The list of 3,481 words appearing at the end of Chapter VIII in "How to Teach Spelling," by Frederick S. Breed, was compiled through a study of eleven investigations of adult letters and five investigations of children's themes.³⁶

³³Clarke, Ibid., 351.

³⁴Department of Superintendence. Fourth Yearbook. The Nation at Work on the School Curriculum. The Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association of the United States, Washington, D. C., February, 1926, 146-171.

³⁵Department of Superintendence, Ibid., 147.

³⁶Frederick S. Breed. How to Teach Spelling. F. A. Owen Publishing Company, Dansville, New York, 1930, 100.

Dr. Breed believes that a minimum spelling vocabulary should run very little above 3,500 words. His plan of selection is so worked out as to result in a list suitable for both children and adults. Dr. Breed includes 211 words found only in the writing vocabulary of children, 240 found only with high frequency in adult vocabularies, and 3,030 words used in writing by children and adults.³⁷ He recommends that the entire list be taught thoroughly in the eighth grade.

A list drawn from a variety of vocations. Grace A. Kramer's³⁸ list entitled "What Words Do Adults Misspell?" has been checked with Dr. Horn's 10,000 words frequently used in adult writing. Her list is arranged in two sections to aid in locating the words in Dr. Breed's list of 3,481 words for eighth grade mastery. Section I contains words found in Dr. Breed's vocabulary; Section II, words not found in his vocabulary. On the line with each word are given its misspelled form, its source, and the vocation of the writer of the material containing the word. Among these vocations she lists housewife, educator, nurse, typist, editor, clergyman, and salesman. The area covered by her sampling seems to be a liberal one.

An up-to-date list. Miss Anne Heaton Perry's list³⁹ of

³⁷Breed, Ibid., 104.

³⁸Grace A. Kramer. "What Words Do Adults Misspell?" Baltimore Bulletin of Education, May, 1932, 190-191.

³⁹A. H. Perry. "Words Everyone Should Be Able to Spell." The Grade Teacher, April, 1938, 56-59.

about 520 words offers as its contribution a vocabulary in everyday use in 1938 by both children and adults. The editor of The Grade Teacher comments that these words are constantly misspelled and that, irrespective of the grade in which they are placed, they furnish excellent test material for any grade from the third through the eighth. The words are arranged in no apparent order, and they present a fair degree of difficulty. That the list is up-to-date and practical is illustrated by a few samples: stratosphere, commentator, insulin, coupe, typewriter. It should serve as good material for testing a secretarial group. As the title indicates, the author considers it as usable with adults as with individuals still in school.

A list of words used by farmers. With the idea that similar investigations might bring to light the basic writing needs of adults, J. David Houser⁴⁰ studied 750 letters written by farmers to the Department of Agriculture of the University of California.⁴¹ The content of the letters covered a wide range of subjects of interest to farmers. Of about 65,500 running words read, Houser tabulated the first and the last word in each line of the body. In all he tabulated 18,701 words, the number of different words being 1,869. The word "I" occurred 841 times; 816 words occurred only once. His main list offers only those words occurring five or more times. Words in his

⁴⁰J. David Houser. "An Investigation of the Writing Vocabularies of an Economic Class." Elementary School Journal, June, 1917, 708-718.

⁴¹Houser, Ibid., 709.

list that do not appear in the Ayres list are printed in italics; Mr. Houser says that this does not mean that the unitalized words are peculiar to the farmer vocabulary, for the Ayres list includes only words with a frequency of six or more, and hence Ayres' complete list may include many of the words in the farmer vocabulary.⁴²

Words that bankers use. In a study of 1,125 letters written by bankers to bankers about banking, Dr. Horn's purpose was to answer two questions: is there a special spelling list used in banking letters; do the vocabulary needs of bankers differ in various sections of the country.⁴³

Dr. Horn used in this study letters from the files of the National City Bank. The letters were chosen by selecting from the correspondence of 15 different localities. The 67,581 running words read contain 2,623 different words. All words were tabulated except I and a.⁴⁴

The 2,623 different words were compared with word lists more general in their source; also the words of each section were compared with those from the other sections represented. In answer to his original queries, Dr. Horn found that, although words used in bankers' letters are highly inflected, no special vocabulary is necessary for this line of business. He

⁴²Houser, Ibid., 718.

⁴³Ernest Horn. "The Vocabulary of Bankers' Letters." The English Journal, June, 1923, 387-388.

⁴⁴Horn, Ibid., 388.

also found little evidence to support the theory that the needs in bankers' letters vary from one section of the country to another.⁴⁵

Four guides to correct spelling

A three-purpose speller. "Five Thousand Words Often Misspelled," by William Henry P. Phyfe, attempts to satisfy three needs which, according to the author, have never been completely met.⁴⁶ It gives a set of spelling rules which omits those common ones which Mr. Phyfe says are unnecessary and hard to use; it presents suggestions for spelling words that are often found difficult; and it gives an alphabetic list of words likely to be misspelled..

In addition to **rules for** spelling and syllabication, and a list of abbreviations, the book contains a list of almost 6,000 words likely to be spelled incorrectly. The appendix contains the ten rules for revised spelling recommended by the American Philological Association. Following these rules is a list of about 3,600 recommended amended spellings.

A modern business speller. D. D. Mayne, who in 1901 was superintendent of schools in Ishpeming, Michigan, states on the title page of "The Modern Business Speller" that his book is "For Use in Business Colleges, Academies, and High Schools." In

⁴⁵Horn, Ibid., 397.

⁴⁶William Henry P. Phyfe. Five Thousand Words Often Misspelled. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1908, 247.

his foreword "To Teachers," he says that in compiling his book three principles have governed his choices of material:

1. The educated may be distinguished from the uneducated by their distinct and accurate pronunciation. Consequently his words are divided into syllables and marked diacritically.

2. Since most people are "eye minded," the words in the first column are given exactly as they would appear in print.

3. Every day the pupil should look up in the dictionary the spelling, pronunciation, meaning, and use of several words.⁴⁷

The 114 lessons are arranged in three columns: as they appear in print; divided into syllables and marked diacritically; defined briefly. At the end of each lesson are five words, to be looked up in the dictionary and defined. At the back of the book are 20 lessons presenting abbreviations, geographical terms, and specialized business and professional vocabularies.⁴⁸

The author gives no information as to the source of his lists or the reasons for his selection of words.

A speller with unusual features. Because he believes that, whether he uses pen, type, or typewriter, each person who writes has need of information beyond mere spelling, Carl C. Marshall

⁴⁷D. D. Mayne. The Modern Business Speller. Powers & Lyons, Chicago & New York, 1901, Foreword "To Teachers."

⁴⁸Mayne, Ibid., 124-140.

includes in his "Business Speller and Technical Word Book" features not found with the usual word list.⁴⁹ Parts I and II contain a study of about 3,000 words used frequently in ordinary life.⁵⁰ Words easy to spell and unusual words are not included, for Mr. Marshall feels that their inclusion would be of little value. Test lessons for the study of spelling appear in Part II. The make-up of these lessons is unusual. The author posits that, since at least nine-tenths of our writing today is done on the typewriter and since we spell by sight rather than by sound, the eye should see the word in its customary form. Hence, in the general test lessons of Part II, the lists for spelling study are printed in characters similar to those typed by the average typewriter. Mr. Marshall believes that this device will help all who use the typewriter.⁵¹

Part III is made up of lists of technical words, alphabetically arranged in groups, for the special convenience of stenographers and typists who find themselves confronted with the need for a special vocabulary.⁵² These lists offer a real service, for the average shorthand teacher lacks time to teach the special vocabulary which may be needed later by the individual stenographer.

⁴⁹Carl C. Marshall. Marshall's Business Speller and Technical Word Book. Marshall Publishing Company, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 1907, 3.

⁵⁰Marshall, Ibid., Parts I & II, 5-160.

⁵¹Marshall, Ibid., 3-4.

⁵²Marshall, Ibid., Part II, 1-46.

A speller for business people. "Words We Misspell in Business," by Frank H. Vizetelly, is not intended to serve as a spelling textbook, but rather to furnish to business people a guide to the correct spelling of words needed in the world of commerce. The vocabulary was assembled by the author over a thirty-year period during which he was⁵³ actively engaged in the business of producing books. Many of the words were taken from lists put out by state universities and by the Civil Service Commission.⁵³ The words are syllabicated and arranged alphabetically. Occasionally common misspellings are given, each followed by the correct form; also a correct spelling is sometimes followed by a common misspelling. Besides giving a vocabulary of 10,000 words, the book includes rules for spelling, for forming plurals of nouns, and for dividing words into syllables.⁵⁴

The Joliet spelling program

The Joliet spelling lists. Most of the pupils tested in the research for this thesis received their elementary education in the public schools of Joliet, Illinois. Miss Marcita Halkyard, Primary Supervisor in that school system, gave the information recorded here as to their early training in spelling, and she has approved the following account of the writer's interview with her.

⁵³Frank H. Vizetelly. Words We Misspell in Business. Funk & Wagnalls Company, New York, 1921, xiv.

⁵⁴Vizetelly, Ibid., 1-22.

The Joliet Public Schools have their own spelling lists for grades 2-6 inclusive. In grades 7 and 8 the teachers concerned provide their own spelling material. Using as a background a former spelling list of their own, plus various studies which they especially liked, each teacher from grades 2B through 6A sent in to the supervisor a copy of the old list with corrections and additions. Then committees from each grade worked over the separate lists, eliminating, adding, and grouping words that seem to belong together.

The old Joliet list started with grade 1A. The present list begins with grade 2B. In grades 2B and 2A the list offers 10 words a week; in 3B and 3A the offering is 15 words a week; but beginning with 4B the list contains 20 words for each week. The entire spelling list is considered as a minimum requirement in the spelling field.

The separate lists are printed lengthwise on heavy sheets of paper 6 x 12 inches in size, creased for folding into 4 sections. With 2 lists printed on each section, space is provided for 16 separate groups of words. This division of material allows for two weeks' review at the end of the semester. Because of the make-up of the lists, they are inexpensive and also convenient to handle.

Summary

After reviewing representative spelling studies dealing with different levels of our American school system, it appears that not many approach the problem from the standpoint

of the teacher of shorthand and of the student of shorthand. Studies have been made of correspondence originating in various lines of vocational activity, and there are spellers and wordbooks for the business man. But not a study was found to help the English teacher specifically to anticipate the spelling difficulties of pupils planning to enter the stenographic field, and no word list was located to tell the shorthand teacher where the major spelling difficulties may be expected.

CHAPTER III

MATERIAL USED AND METHOD OF PROCEDURE

To secure the word list presented in Chapter IV of this thesis, a standard text for beginning shorthand was used as a starting point. This text, Gregg Shorthand, Functional Method, Books 1 and 2, is published by the Gregg Publishing Company, copyright 1936. With the exception of a brief explanatory section at the beginning of each lesson, introducing new material, the books are written in Gregg shorthand.

From these two books, which are covered in the first semester of shorthand study, seventeen excerpts were assigned to be transcribed into longhand by the pupils in five beginning shorthand classes. The material translated had been assigned as a part of the day's lesson, and each transcript was checked for all transcription errors. The pupils were always ignorant of the fact that any special importance was attached to spelling errors. The tests were purposely limited to a word range of approximately 100 to 150 words, as the time allowed for testing had to be limited to not more than fifteen minutes. The average number of words in each test was 126 $\frac{1}{2}$, and the average number of pupils taking each test was 124. The following tabulation, Table I, gives definite information as to the location of the test material, the number of words in each test, and the number of pupils writing each translation.

TABLE I

NUMBER OF TEST, OF ASSIGNMENT AND PAGE IN GREGG SHORT-
HAND, FUNCTIONAL METHOD, NUMBER OF WORDS IN
EACH TEST, AND NUMBER OF PUPILS
TAKING EACH TEST

Test	Assignment	Page	Number of words	Number taking test
1	3	16	154	151
2	7	36	103	131
3	9	44&45	119	136
4	13	68	147	136
5	17	89	116	133
6	19	99	105	132
7	25	129†	127	112
8	29	149†	127	121
9	33	170	129	118
10	39	202	149	125
11	44	337†	146	125
12	48	357†	125	127
13	54	388†	138	124
14	73	501	129	114
15	76	518	109	107
16	62	437	116	112
17	67	464	<u>110</u>	<u>112</u>
			<u>2149</u>	<u>2116</u>
Average			126†	124†

CHAPTER IV

THE WORD LISTS

The 216 words secured through the testing program are given in two lists. List I displays the words alphabetically. In List II the words are arranged according to frequency of misspelling. Proper nouns and words misspelled only once are omitted.

LIST I

addressed	campaign
adhere	campaigns
ads	catalogue
advertising	catalogues
advice	clients
again	coming
agency	commissioner's
agent	concerned
almost	concerning
although	condition
always	considerable
among	convenience
analysis	cordially
anticipated	corporation
appreciate	courteous
arises	
arrangement	debtor
arrangements	debts
articles	delivered
aside	delivery
assist	democrat
assume	deposit
attention	depositors
attitude	designated
available	disappoint
	disappointed
barring	discrepancy
bear	discuss
beginning	distinct
benefit	disturbed
business	does

dozen
drying

effect
efficient
eliminate
engagement
enough
entitled
envelope
error
essential
excessive
experience

facilities
factory
factories
fiction
finance
forbear
foundation
frames
freezing
freight
further

gentlemen
grammar
grapefruit

handicap
heartly
hence
here
hinges
hospital

immedicat
immediately
immense
impressed
individual
investigate
invoice
item

jewels

know

lemons
listen
luncheon

manager
manner
market
meant
meeting
mention
mentioned
merchandise
mesh
metal
minimum
minute

neat
necessary

obligations
occasion
oftener
opinion

pardon
particularly
partner
permission
placing
plain
planned
pleasant
pneumonia
present
probably
promised
prompt
promptly
publication

quantities
quantity
quiet
quote

raising
rally
receive
received

recent
recommend
reference
referred
regret
released
remember
remittance
remitting
respective
resume

safety
say
screens
senate
sense
service
shipment
shipments
shipped
sincerely
situation
skates
skating
skiing
sneered
spur
stamped
staunch
steel
storage
sufficiently
suggesting
suggestions
suits
suspend

swimming
sympathize

tax
their
there
therefore
thread
through
too
touch
train
truly
two

unavoidable
unforeseen
unfortunate
until
urged
utmost
unable

vacant
valuable
valuables
vaults
visitor

warrant
waste
wears
week
which
would
write
writing

LIST II

<u>Word</u>	<u>Number times misspelled</u>
unforeseen	72
immediately	69
received	67
eliminate	63
quantity	59
too	57
forbear	56
quantities	52
immense	46
discrepancy	45
advice	42
grammar	42
analysis	41
sincerely	41
there	41
receive	40
referred	39
convenience	37
pneumonia	37
barring	36
bear	36
ads	34
immediate	34
their	30
benefit	29
catalogue	29
vaults	28

depositors	25
minimum	25
know	24
courteous	23
skiing	23
quiet	22
arrangements	21
necessary	21
occasion	21
recommend	21
campaigns	20
catalogues	20
sufficiently	20
beginning	19
assume	18
concerning	18
disappoint	18
disappointed	18
efficient	18
hearty	18
truly	17
metal	16
swimming	16
sense	15
staunch	15
sympathize	15
luncheon	14
particularly	14
situation	14
anticipated	12
two	12
thread	12
valuable	12
valuables	12
warrant	12
further	11
manager	11

opinion	11
promptly	11
appreciate	10
corporation	10
designated	10
effect	10
freight	10
rally	10
until	10
cordially	9
engagement	9
excessive	9
facilities	9
minute	9
remittance	9
therefore	9
business	8
debtor	8
democrat	8
foundation	8
oftener	8
planned	8
pleasant	8
prompt	8
remitting	8
shipments	8
shipped	8
urged	8
addressed	7
among	7
assist	7
commissioner's	7
essential	7
finance	7
frames	7
here	7
manner	7
meeting	7
safety	7
screens	7
utmost	7
visitor	7
agent	6
articles	6

available	6
concerned	6
freezing	6
hence	6
individual	6
reference	6
regret	6
skating	6
suggesting	6
writing	6
agency	5
debt	5
deposit	5
disturbed	5
envelope	5
handicap	5
investigate	5
jewels	5
market	5
permission	5
shipment	5
sneered	5
tax	5
train	5
adhere	4
arises	4
attention	4
delivery	4
distinct	4
drying	4
grapefruit	4
hospital	4
meant	4
mentioned	4
pardon	4
probably	4
recent	4
service	4
suggestions	4
unfortunate	4
wears	4
advertising	3
always	3
arrangement	3
attitude	3
campaign	3
clients	3

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Of first importance in this study was the securing of the word list itself. The writer believes that the words occurring in the tests are representative of the words the pupils tested will use when they enter upon their work as stenographers, and that these words are therefore important to the student of shorthand.

Through the series of tests conducted by the writer in five beginning shorthand classes, the following conclusions have been reached:

First: The list of 216 words given in Chapter IV offers the words misspelled by beginning shorthand pupils in the Joliet Township High School, Joliet, Illinois, during the spring and fall terms of 1941.

Second: As stated in Chapter II, most of the pupils tested in the research for this thesis received their elementary education in the Joliet public schools. From grades 2B through 6A they were taught the words listed in the Joliet spelling lists. The writer has checked the words in the Joliet list against her spelling list and finds that 98 of the words in the Joliet list appear among her 216. In other words, 45+ percent of her words have been previously taught to most of the pupils who took her tests. It seems apparent, therefore, that while almost half her list has been previously taught, that half has not been pre-

viously learned. Evidently these words need to be subjected to remedial teaching.

Third: The percentage of transcribed words misspelled twice or more is 10+, too high a percentage to merit the approval of the business world. Therefore, it appears that more attention should be given to the study of spelling in the first ten grades. Words need to be not only taught, but learned, so that a group of eleventh grade pupils who begin the study of shorthand need not be handicapped by so serious an obstacle as a vocabulary 10 percent deficient in spelling accomplishment.

While teaching shorthand classes in which the tests were administered, in addition to the three conclusions just stated, the writer of this thesis formed three opinions based upon observation. These opinions are concerned with some of the reasons why pupils misspell. The three most outstanding reasons that seem to underlie their lack of ability to spell correctly are:

1. Ignorance of vowel and consonant sounds
2. Failure to pronounce words correctly
3. Unfamiliarity with the meaning and use of words.

The author hopes that the 216 words secured through the study described in this thesis may be of assistance to teachers and pupils engaged in the study of English, to teachers and pupils working in the field of shorthand, and to any others whose interests may touch these fields.

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Dr. John W. Scanlan	February 9, 1942
Dr. William P. Laughlin	February 12, 1942
Dr. Harold Wren	February 24, 1942