

The Ilaro Journal Of **Management Art Science & Technology (TIJMAST)**

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- The paper should also be sent on-line to tijmast@yahoo.com.
- Author(s) should pay a non-refundable assessment fee of ₦2,500.00 to the Tijmast Union Bank Account Number 1442000056061; Ilaro Ogun State, or send a bank draft of the same amount, addressed to the Editor-in-Chief, *The Ilaro Journal of Management, Arts, Science and Technology* (TIJMAST).
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Editorial Comment

All over the world today, technology has shown itself a strong vessel for moving values and cultures from one place to another with very little or no resistance. The appellation 'GLOBAL VILLAGE' is an acceptance that the values of the world are invariably welcome in another (it is indeed surprising that noodles and spaghetti are part of the Nigerian regular menu). And so, when Social Science defines culture as a way of life, it could therefore be assumed that anything that facilitates a people's way of life is culture-bound and worthy of detailed examination and study.

The *Ilaro Journal* therefore has its focus on aggregations of views and opinions of academics in their diverse studies in technological education in Nigeria and beyond. Apart from its mundane value as evidence of productivity, the journal has added value of throwing into relief the yawning needs of technological education, especially as it pertains to the Polytechnic Sector.

In this maiden edition, the Journal has thrown its hands open to all comers, but as it matures, its technological character would strive to assert itself. It is our strong conviction that technological education is the springboard upon which the Nigerian enterprise would realise its long-expected

technological, and consequently, economic breakthrough.

May we, at this point, thank our various contributions for their patronage. It is our hope that our next edition will follow suit. To facilitate that, we would be grateful if our entire future contributors send their documents through on-line address (tijmast@yahoo.com) to support the hard copy that would be sent to us, using our publication guidelines.

Once again, we thank you for your support.

A.E. Daniel
Editor-in-Chief

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An Analysis of Common Errors Committed By Secretarial Studies Students during Typewriting Examinations in Some Selected Polytechnics in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study tried to analyse the errors commonly committed by students in the Secretarial Studies Department of some selected Polytechnics during examinations. Despite the fact that the selected Polytechnics were based in three different states from the South-Western part of the country, the errors committed by the students during typewriting examinations were virtually similar in nature. The causes of the errors are lack of dexterity on the part of the examinees as well as inadequate supply of typewriters and other instructional materials by the authorities of the institutions concerned. The paper therefore recommended, among others, that students should be well grounded on typewriting principles while the authorities of the institutions should make funds available for the procurement and regular servicing of typewriters used for learning purposes.

INTRODUCTION

Typewriting is one of the skilled subjects that a secretarial student must learn. In fact, typewriting (keyboarding) is so important to secretarial students that the 1989 National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) curriculum requires it to be taught to students throughout the four semesters of National Diploma (ND) programme and for three out of the four semesters of Higher National Diploma (HND) programme. The curriculum states, on semester basis, topics to be treated and stipulates that at least 98% level of accuracy/dexterity must be achieved by every learner. The

NBTE curriculum also has a portion where common typewriting errors and the penalties for their commission are listed. Some of these penalties are very stringent and every examiner is supposed to adhere strictly to them. This accounts for the reason for some students' poor performance in typewriting examinations, a problem that has even led to the withdrawal of some of them from school.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The purpose of this study is to analyse common errors committed by secretarial students in some selected Polytechnics during examinations, to find out why students commit the errors, to highlight the penalties for the errors, and to suggest how the frequency of the commission of the errors can be drastically reduced. For the purpose of the study therefore, the following research questions will serve as the framework.

1. What standard does the 1989 NBTE curriculum, still in use, expect the students to meet in typewriting?
2. What typewriting errors are commonly committed by students at the levels focused on by this study in examinations?
3. What are the penalties for the commonly occurring errors?
4. How can the commission of these errors be minimised?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Typewriting is a skilled subject. It is an art that involves the production of documents such as letters, memos, statement of accounts, circulars etc. with the aid of a machine known as the typewriter (Orija 2005), as also noted by Durowaiye and Kolawole (2007). Because it is an art involving the acquisition of skill, all the necessary principles must be known. Mensah (2004) quoting Canning (1976) therefore suggests two ways of acquiring the skill as "learning to use keyboard and manipulative devices of the typewriter with increasing speed and accuracy", and "learning to produce the various kinds of documents and records that are demanded in business according to the prescription of

conventions, custom and common sense". If a student applies all the necessary principles, he is not likely to commit so many errors during an examination.

When an examinee makes a mistake in typewriting, she is said to have committed an error. Some linguistic authorities have differentiated between a mistake and an error. For instance, while Olorunleke (2000) sees a mistake as a slip of the pen or tongue, he describes an error as an outcome of carelessness or forgetfulness. To Richards (1974) as quoted by Ogungbemi (2004), an error is characterised by a systematic deviancy.

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sample

The entire students of Secretarial Studies Department of three Polytechnics drawn from three South-western states of Nigeria formed the population for this study. However, forty randomly selected student typewriting scripts (Twenty National Diploma 2 and Twenty Higher National Diploma 2) for two semester examinations covering two different sessions were sampled. In essence 240 students' scripts were sampled altogether. National Diploma 2 and Higher National Diploma 2 students' scripts were sampled because it was felt that at those levels, the students concerned would have acquired reasonable degrees of skill and accuracy in typewriting that should normally enable them to type with very minimal errors. Samples were drawn from three different Institutions covering a period of two sessions for the purpose of comparison and reasonable generalisation.

Method of Data Collection

The data used for this study were collected through the methods of questionnaire administration, direct observation, interview and literature review.

Two sets of questionnaire were used. The first set, seeking to know the types of errors commonly committed by students during the typewriting examinations, was administered to fifteen lecturers while the second set, seeking to know reasons for the commission of errors during typewriting examinations, was administered to

one hundred and fifty (150) National Diploma 2 and Higher National Diploma 2 secretarial students in the Institutions concerned. Out of this figure, 120 were used as samples.

Method of Data Analysis

Data obtained for the study were analysed with the use of simple percentages.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: What standard does the 1989 NBTE curriculum, still in use, expect students to meet in Typewriting at National Diploma Two and Higher National Diploma Two levels?

Fifteen (15) lecturers' responses were used in finding answer to this question. The whole 15 (representing 100%) stated that by the end of the National Diploma programme (4th semester) students are supposed to have acquired the typewriting speed of 50 w.p.m. on passages not below 1.45 syllabic intensity with 98% accuracy. Such passages, as outlined in the NBTE curriculum, include documents connected with the organisation of meetings, circulars, reports, literary works, technical/statistical works, legal terms and expressions etc. At the Higher National Diploma level, on the other hand, students are expected to acquire the typewriting speed of 60 w.p.m. on passages not below 1.5 syllabic intensity at 98% accuracy. It was surprising however, to note that although all the students concerned knew their expected terminal typewriting speeds, out of the 120 students whose questionnaire responses were sampled only 36 of them (representing 33.3%) claimed to be aware of the details of their course outlines per semester. The remaining 84 respondents (representing 66.7%) did not know the details of the standards they were expected to meet.

Research Question 2: What typewriting errors are commonly committed by students at National Diploma 2 and Higher National Diploma 2 levels during examinations?

Research Question 3: What are the penalties for the commonly occurring errors?

typewriting is geared towards meeting the NBTE standards, the ultimate objective of which is to produce graduate secretaries who will be able to produce error-proof typed jobs.

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