

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF METHODS
FOR SPEECH IMPROVEMENT IN
LOWER ELEMENTARY GRADES

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF METHODS FOR SPEECH
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to review the literature in the field of speech education in order to determine what methods and procedures are considered to be most effective in the teaching of speech improvement in the lower elementary grades and to use these devices in conducting an exploratory study to determine their effectiveness when used in an actual classroom situation.

The review of the literature revealed that there is a growing need for and interest in speech education for the lower elementary grades; that speech to be taught effectively should be made a part of the regular classroom work. Many and varied are the techniques and devices recommended for carrying on this work. Included in these recommendations are such commonly used teaching devices as story-telling, choral readings, dramatizations, creative dramatics, and games.

In an effort to determine the effectiveness of these techniques and devices, an exploratory study was carried on in a second grade classroom which was composed of an unselected group of thirty-five boys and girls. At the onset and again at the close of the study, a speech test was administered by three observers, a college supervisor

of teacher training in speech correction, a college student in advanced speech correction training, and a second grade classroom teacher to determine if possible whether or not any improvement had been made. Following the initial test the daily program was so organized that the classroom teacher devoted a 20-minute period each day for 12 weeks to directed speech activities which had been arbitrarily chosen from among those recommended by the various writers for the teaching of speech improvement in the lower elementary grades. During the time that the study was being conducted no effort was made to give any additional help with speech in any other class or activity.

An analysis of the test results revealed that at the time of the final test the observers were agreed that "voice quality" was the only area in which there was no noticeable improvement, but that no definite corrections had been made in any area. The numerical rating scale proved to be of no value in rating the speech of young children. The results of this test would seem to indicate that speech improvement can be brought about by making speech a part of the regular classroom activities and that many of the methods, devices, and procedures which are recommended by those working in the field of speech can be used if they are carefully

adapted to the age, maturity, and size of the group for which they are being used.

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CHAPTER I

PURPOSE OF STUDY, DEFINITION OF TERMS, AND GENERAL PROSPECTUS OF THESIS

Introduction

When our American forefathers adopted the democratic form of government they created for themselves and their fellow countrymen a new kind of life. No longer would they be told what they must do, but rather they must plan for themselves what they would do. This meant talking, discussing problems, arguing, agreeing, and disagreeing. This meant that everyone who would take his place in society and enjoy the rights and privileges offered him by this new way of life must learn to use oral communication effectively enough to adequately express himself. Thus, America became a "country of talkers."

This change in the way of life presented a challenge to the educational system. But schools have been slow in accepting this challenge; they have been slow "to recognize the need for giving training in speech to all students."¹ "Too often, the top and the

¹ Lorna Shogren Werner, Speech in the Elementary School (Evanston, Illinois: Row Peterson and Company, 1947), p. 5.

bottom of the scale in speech receive the great emphasis,"² but it must be remembered that

The great majority of the school population falls into the middle group, neither good enough to star in dramatics or forensics nor poor enough to warrant the highly specialized attention given the speech-handicapped. In any school system this middle group is the most neglected.³

Lassers would explain this apparent neglect on the part of the schools as the result of the failure of educators and school administrators to recognize "the number of children in the public schools with poor or defective speech" and their failure

. . . to recognize the role the public school might play in developing good speech habits and correcting minor speech problems and defects.

Traditional thinking about speech development in children has resulted in a laissez faire attitude towards speech training in the elementary grades.⁴

"Generally speaking, the American school has been much more interested in writing than in speaking."⁵ And not only the

² Charlotte G. Wells, "Speech in the Full School Program," Elementary English, XXVIII (April, 1951), p. 201.

³ Clarence T. Simon, "Speech Improvement for Every Child," National Education Association Journal, XXXVI (February, 1947), p. 96.

⁴ Leon Lassers, "Oregon's Speech Improvement and Rehabilitation Program," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXII (February, 1947), p. 62.

⁵ Carrie Rasmussen, "The Role of Speech in the Elementary School," Elementary English, XXIX (January, 1952), p. 6.

general public, but teachers as well, have felt that so long as a speaker succeeded in "expressing himself" or "communicating his ideas," his speech was satisfactory and the manner in which he did it was of little importance.⁶

However, in this twentieth century democracy "a normal person speaks more frequently than he writes,"⁷ and speech is considered by most authorities to be a very important tool.

Barnes,⁸ McConnell,⁹ Monroe,¹⁰ Puis,¹¹ and Rasmussen,¹² use different words to express their opinions, but seem to be quite in agreement that there is a vital need for speech education in the

⁶ Evelyn Konigsberg, "Making Drill Functional," The Speech Teacher, I (March, 1952), p. 128.

⁷ Charles E. Weniger, "Better Speech Patterns and the English Course," Elementary English, XV (January, 1938), p. 4.

⁸ Harry G. Barnes, "Basic Concepts of Speech Education," The Speech Teacher, I (January, 1952), pp. 14-19.

⁹ Robert E. McConnell, "Speech Education for the Teacher in Training," Elementary English Review, XII (December, 1935), p. 274.

¹⁰ Alan H. Monroe, "Today's Need for Effective Speech," National Education Association Journal, XXXVI (January, 1947), p. 31.

¹¹ John J. Puis, "Why Teach Speech in the Elementary School?" The Speech Teacher, I (January, 1952), p. 41.

¹² Rasmussen, op. cit.

elementary grades if oral communication skills are to be improved. Rasmussen also points out that "we do live in a talking age; the radio, television, moving picture, and telephone all require clear, understandable speech," and joins with Monroe in questioning whether or not the boys and girls who must live in this "talking age" are being given adequate preparation by the schools.

Since American children live in an age influenced largely by oral communication, every teacher becomes a teacher of speech whether or not she wishes to be or is able to do it well. Because of this

American education can no longer neglect the development of systematic instruction in the field of speech. Technological developments have multiplied the importance of speech as a tool of self expression and of communication, and yet the schools have been slow to recognize this change.¹³

Abney and Miniace state emphatically that "speech needs to be taught in our schools and it needs to be taught in the early grades."¹⁴

¹³ M. R. Traube, "Coordinating Professional Responsibilities in Speech Correction and Speech Education," Journal of Speech Disorders, VI (December, 1941), p. 145.

¹⁴ Louise Abney and Dorothy Miniace, This Way to Better Speech Teacher's Manual (Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Company, 1940), p. 3.

Although schools have been slow in adjusting to the speech needs of the child, "the future . . . looks more promising for the speech education of the elementary child"¹⁵ because

Few teachers or administrators today question the importance of giving speech training to all public school students. Despite this general agreement as to the need for an adequate program of speech education, there is little agreement in actual practice as to when and how and by whom this training is to be given.¹⁶

Rasmussen feels that ". . . experimentation and study in fitting speech into the daily program is highly desirable." She is also of the opinion that

Research with regard to the effectiveness of various approaches, applications, and ways of integrating speech across the daily school program . . . should do much to foster utilization and power of speech.¹⁷

Purpose of Study

It is the purpose of this study (1) to review the literature in the area of speech education and to bring together the ideas and

¹⁵ Werner, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁶ Bulletin, Basic Considerations in a Functional Speech Program, published by Curriculum Guiding Committee, Wisconsin State Department of Public Instruction, Madison, Wisconsin, 1948, p. 1.

¹⁷ Rasmussen, op. cit., p. 11.

opinions of those working in the field as to the most effective methods and procedures for the teaching of speech improvement in the lower elementary grades; (2) to conduct an exploratory study in a classroom composed of an unselected group of second grade boys and girls and applying to an actual classroom situation the recommended devices and procedures for the teaching of speech improvement.

These devices will be used to determine if possible (1) whether or not the suggestions of the speech specialists can be effectively utilized in the teaching of speech improvement in the lower elementary grades; (2) whether or not this teaching can be done effectively without the use of specific correction techniques; (3) whether or not the classroom teacher needs the help of a trained correctionist to provide specific techniques; (4) whether or not the speech inventory charts recommended by the writers can be used effectively to rate the speech of second graders.

Definition of Terms

"Exploratory Study" is used to mean an investigation of the literature dealing with the methods of teaching speech in the lower elementary grades for the purpose of determining what ideas have been advanced and what methods proposed to bring about an improvement in the speech habits of the students in these grades; to use

these methods and ideas in an actual classroom situation to determine their effectiveness.

"Speech Improvement" is here considered to mean the development of better speaking habits such as the proper use of volume, effective use of the voice, accurate articulation, and a rate suitable to the subject.

"Methods" is used to mean the practices, procedures, or means of instruction used by the classroom teacher to develop adequate speech for all students in the classroom.

"Lower Elementary Grades" refers to the kindergarten, first, second, and third grades of the public schools.

General Prospectus of Thesis

In this paper the author will attempt (1) to present the recommendations and opinions of some of the workers in the fields of speech and education regarding the need for the teaching of speech improvement in the lower elementary grades, the procedures for carrying on the work, and the areas in which speech improvement can be brought about; (2) to present the procedures and classroom activities used in carrying on the exploratory study; (3) to analyze and interpret the test results to determine whether or not the techniques used brought about speech improvement in the subjects being

studied; and (4) to present the conclusions and recommendations that can be made as a result of the study.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE IN THE AREA OF SPEECH IMPROVEMENT

Literature reveals that in the past most administrators, parents, and classroom teachers have thought of speech in terms of preparing plays for presentation, oratory, and speaking pieces. Speech, however, has a much broader and more practical meaning for the modern educator whose task it is to educate the "whole" child. In this day of oral communication one must be able to express himself adequately, if he is to adjust socially and educationally.

It has come to be recognized that there is a growing need for speech improvement programs in the elementary schools if education is to meet the needs of the "whole" child and prepare him to take his place in the democracy in which he lives. With this in mind, many have written concerning the need for speech training to improve the general speech of elementary school children. A study of this literature reveals that there is not complete agreement as to the best ways of providing this training and bringing about the desired improvement. The one point of agreement is that the regular classroom teacher is the logical one to assume the responsibility of

carrying on this work, but the manner in which it should be done remains unclear. Thus the teacher who has had little or no training in the teaching of speech may become confused and uncertain.

It is the purpose of this chapter to present the recommendations and opinions of some of the authorities in the fields of education and speech regarding (1) need, (2) procedures, and (3) areas of speech improvement for the lower elementary grades.

Need

By the time a child whose speech has developed "normally" enters school, his speech habits are quite firmly fixed, and "speech habits once established cannot be easily or quickly supplanted."¹ This should present a real challenge to the teacher of the lower elementary grades since "a great many of our children do not learn how to speak at all well"² and "the speech of no child is perfect"; consequently, "all children need to work for speech improvement."³

¹ Harry G. Barnes, "Basic Concepts of Speech Education," The Speech Teacher, I (January, 1952), p. 18.

² Alan H. Monroe, "Today's Need for Effective Speech," National Education Association Journal, XXXVI (January, 1947), p. 30.

³ Robert Milisen, "Introducing Speech Correction Into a New School System," The Journal of Speech Disorders, IV (September, 1939), p. 241.

The school, then, must recognize the fact that all children will profit by speech training and if it assumes the responsibility of educating the "whole" child, it will also recognize the fact that the child needs speaking ability to aid him in learning, in adjusting to group life, and in giving him a greater belief in himself. The child whose speaking habits actually block his attempts to formulate ideas and to ask questions has one important channel of learning blocked, and his learning in the classroom must suffer. However, if a child can sound animated and sure of himself in addition to making himself clear, he may gain acceptance and status more easily than the child who cannot communicate his ideas well.⁴

"All children need the security provided by successful speech experiences that obtain favorable responses from others."⁵ Yet those who work with children know that many who have no definite speech problem fail to find the desired security and recognition; they also know that

The child who talks very quietly all the time is seldom popular with his peers, and is almost never chosen as a leader.

⁴ Elise Hahn, "A Speech Curriculum to Meet the Needs of the Elementary School Child," The Speech Teacher, I (March, 1952), p. 105.

⁵ Norma Lee Lucas, "Speech Improvement for the Elementary Child," The Speech Teacher, II (January, 1953), p. 66.

The youngster who has a very limited vocabulary suffers the same fate.⁶

Wells⁷ and many other educators agree that it is these children, the middle group whose speech is just adequate or below the maximum level that could be achieved, who are being neglected by the schools. Schools have failed to recognize that there is "no magic" which will give children "adequate communicative ability at a certain age or time."⁸ Schools have also failed to recognize that "speech effectiveness does not just happen" and that adults talk "as they talked throughout their school life."⁹

The inadequate communication skills that frequently result from uncontrolled speech training are pointed out by Barnes when he says that at all grade levels, including college,

Large numbers of pupils make sounds incorrectly. Larger numbers make many of the sounds inaccurately in connected discourse. Many voices are unpleasant; still more are monotonous; few are pleasant and flexible. Language is generalized, inaccurate, and inexpressive. Many pupils are

⁶ John J. Pruis, "Why Teach Speech in the Elementary School?" The Speech Teacher, I (January, 1952), p. 39.

⁷ Charlotte G. Wells, "Speech in the Full School Program," Elementary English, XXVIII (April, 1951), pp. 201-202.

⁸ Clarence T. Simon, "Speech Improvement for Every Child," National Education Association Journal, XXXVI (February, 1947), p. 96.

⁹ Loc. cit.

ill at ease, inhibited, uncertain; few are poised and purposive when facing the simplest of speaking situations.¹⁰

Current literature points out the need for speech training in the elementary school--not only systematic, planned practice in speech skills for children but also a well integrated program within the total curricular pattern, in order to make the best possible use of systematic teaching.¹¹

Not only are educators and writers concerned about speech programs for our elementary schools, but according to Mulgrave,¹² a nationwide interest has been aroused in speech improvement, "and boards of education throughout the land are insisting that the schools do something about our speech." If the schools are to meet these demands, and so develop the child that he can take his rightful place in this talking world, "what greater responsibility has the school than to teach the child to express his ideas clearly--to communicate his thoughts to his fellows?"¹³

¹⁰ Barnes, op. cit., p. 16.

¹¹ Carrie Rasmussen, "The Role of Speech in the Elementary School," Elementary English, XXIX (January, 1952), p. 11.

¹² Dorothy I. Mulgrave, Speech for the Classroom Teacher (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1946), p. vii.

¹³ Carrie Rasmussen, "Practical Ways of Developing Better Speech in the Elementary School," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXIV (October, 1938), p. 485.

Procedures

Today there are few in the educational world who question the importance of speech training in the public schools. While most schools do not at the present time have a speech program for the elementary grades, the literature reveals that more and more emphasis is being placed upon the need for training that will bring about an improvement in the over-all speech of our future citizens. Much thought is also being given to the ways in which this improvement can be brought about most effectively.

Though writers fail to agree as to the most effective way of meeting the need, they do agree that speech must be given a place in the school in one way or another, either directly or indirectly, and that the classroom teacher must provide the necessary activities to fulfill this need.

The average classroom teacher, untrained in the teaching of speech, may find the literature on the subject rather misleading and confusing when confronted with statements such as, "To be sure, good speech education must be integrated in the total learning and living activities, but this does not mean that instruction must be indirect,"¹⁴ and "the grade teacher must admit that speech is at

¹⁴ Rasmussen, "The Role of Speech in the Elementary School," p. 7.

least as important as arithmetic and geography and therefore deserves a place in the curriculum."¹⁵

It seems obvious, then, that teachers interested in launching a program designed to include speech improvement will need to consult more than one authority, if they are to receive assurance and guidance. A study of the literature reveals that regardless of the point of view taken by the writer--whether he believes that the teaching should be direct or indirect--the same techniques and devices are included in the recommendations. The point of difference, then, seems to be how best to incorporate these techniques, devices, and activities in the school program in order to bring about the desired results.

There is almost unanimous agreement among the writers that regardless of the method of instruction used, "every teacher is a teacher of speech, whether she wishes to be or not,"¹⁶ and since she is a teacher of speech, she should be a good model;¹⁷ in fact, her speech should be superior. Observations reveal that

¹⁵ Charles E. Weniger, "Better Speech Patterns and the English Course," Elementary English, XV (January, 1938), p. 4.

¹⁶ Rasmussen, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁷ Ruth Beckey Irwin, Speech and Hearing Therapy (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1953), p. 175.

it is not uncommon for children who have entered school with their speech habits quite well developed, to adopt the speech characteristics of the teacher without being aware of it. For this reason "we cannot expect much speech improvement in children if the teacher has poor diction, a harsh voice, or muffled speech."

"In addition to a good speaking voice, the teacher needs to know how to incorporate speech education into the work of the classroom."¹⁸ The teacher who has had no training in speech work is, however, much like the majority of workers in other fields, quite unaware of her speech or of the effect that it has upon others, and equally unaware of the opportunities the classroom offers for the development of good speech habits. Teacher-training institutions are, then, faced with the responsibility of preparing teachers for the role that they are to play in speech education. It has come to be generally accepted that the "improvement of oral language and speech education" in our schools "may be realized more fully" if teachers are made more aware of the problem and are more adequately trained.¹⁹ In some systems the administrators are attempting to

¹⁸ Loc. cit.

¹⁹ Robert E. McConnell, "Speech Education for the Teacher in Training," Elementary English Review, XII (December, 1935), p. 274.

compensate for the lack of training by providing in-service training work for their teachers.

Simon is among those who feel that speech training is largely the responsibility of the classroom teacher. He says that

A program of speech improvement should be conceived as a part of the general educational experience of the child; it should not be separated as an added entity. Good speech is learned and formed in the regular classroom. No matter how many speech specialists may be available, oral communication cannot be divorced from the total learning situation in the classroom. This is not asking the classroom teacher to take on another subject; it is stressing the fact that interest in the speech of children is a necessary and convenient educational tool.²⁰

The teacher who is attempting to make speech a part of her regular classroom work frequently fails to recognize one of the most important approaches--the ear. | Rasmussen refers to the ear as "the gateway to voice improvement," but perhaps it would be well to substitute the more inclusive term, "the gateway to speech," since she goes on to say that "the first essential is to think about hearing the right sound. The ear, like the voice, must be retrained, for each individual imitates the voices and the speech patterns he has heard since infancy."²¹

²⁰ Simon, op. cit., p. 96.

²¹ Carrie Rasmussen, Speech Methods in the Elementary School (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1949), p. 73.

Listening, according to Crink and Buntley, has become "the first and maybe the most important of the four areas of communication, since the child listens for some time before he matures enough to speak, read or write."²² In other words, "we talk because we hear and we talk as we hear."²³ This being the case, it would seem clear that if the school is to be successful in improving the speech of its pupils, listening should be emphasized and taught in the classroom just as any other needed skill.

Anderson,²⁴ Van Riper,²⁵ and Werner²⁶ also contend that "ear training" is an important tool for use in speech improvement, and that articulatory problems as well as indistinct or careless speech can be improved through the use of it.

²² Cedric L. Crink and Arline Buntley, "Learn to Listen," The Grade Teacher, LXXII (March, 1955), p. 51.

²³ Ruth M. Clark, "Talking Takes Teaching," The Speech Teacher, I (September, 1952), p. 195.

²⁴ Virgil Anderson, Improving the Child's Speech (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 141.

²⁵ C. Van Riper, "Ear Training in the Treatment of Articulation Disorders," The Journal of Speech Disorders, IV (June, 1939), p. 141.

²⁶ Lorna Shogren Werner, Speech in the Elementary School (Evanston: Row Peterson and Co., 1947), p. 21.

Writers frequently advise teachers to encourage children to talk--to express themselves. Raubicheck warns, however, that "un-directed practice in the use of speech may overcome shyness, may produce fluency (even verbosity) but will result in merely ingraining careless, vulgar, or unpleasant speech patterns."²⁷

This theory tends to be substantiated by Konigsberg,²⁸ who says that it is yet to be explained exactly how a person is to learn to communicate most effectively if he is unskilled or inefficient in his use of voice and articulation and is given no training to bring about improvement. It is her contention that just letting the child practice speaking in functional situations is no answer to the question. All normal people speak in functional situations, but repeated experience in those situations does not necessarily result in improved skills. Often it results in the fixation of undesirable habits. Chase, however, feels that

. . . special times set aside for improvement of speech communication can enhance the pleasure and learning gained from a unit of work, children can be led to see the immediate values

²⁷ Letitia Raubicheck, How to Teach Good Speech in the Elementary Schools (New York: Noble and Noble, Inc., 1937), p. 6.

²⁸ Evelyn Konigsberg, "Making Drill Functional," The Speech Teacher, I (March, 1952), p. 128.

of audibility, quality of voice, and other characteristics that lead to understanding and enjoyment.²⁹

In order that a speech improvement program may be successful, not only the classroom teacher, but administrators and supervisors as well, must be convinced that good speech is necessary, inasmuch as "an effective speech program is not restricted to any definite grade or period of the day, but is an integral part of all the activities of the school."³⁰ Furthermore, it must be realized

. . . that training for good speech, like training for character and citizenship, cannot be accomplished merely through formal drill, but must indirectly be a part of every activity of the day. Speech exercises should not be limited to drill on isolated sounds or syllables, but should involve situations in which the child uses speech naturally. No amount of drill on a given sound is of value unless the child learns to use that sound correctly when speaking.³¹

Much the same thought is expressed by Roe and Milisen when they state that "speech improvement is taught as a regular school project, and is as much as possible integrated with reading, language and spelling into the regular curriculum of a speech system."³²

²⁹ Naomi C. Chase, "Speech in the Elementary School," Elementary English, XXX (March, 1953), p. 139.

³⁰ Madeline Marie Sevenans, "An Effective Speech Program," The Journal of Speech Disorders, IV (December, 1939), p. 358.

³¹ Loc. cit.

³² Vivian Roe and Robert Milisen, "The Effect of Maturation Upon the Defective Articulation in Elementary Grades," The Journal of Speech Disorders, VII (March, 1942), p. 42.

A study of the literature makes it apparent that those vitally interested in speech improvement generally agree that the approach should be "made through vital activities that are natural to boys and girls."³³ These writers also point out many ways of providing these natural situations. The most frequently mentioned ways are telephone conversations, dramatizations, story-telling, games, group discussions, and oral reading.

Regardless of the activity chosen, it must, however, be suited to the group needs, and some purposeful planning must be employed by the teacher since

It cannot be assumed that by merely providing opportunities for the pupil to speak that proper habits will develop when bad ones exist. As in other functions, bad habits are eliminated and new ones acquired through specific and systematic instruction.³⁴

The trends of the modern school with its activity programs help the elementary teachers to provide natural speaking situations for their pupils and to emphasize good speech habits. If a classroom is to invite communication, it must be pleasant and free from tension; the child must be made to feel that he is a part of the group.

³³ Fredrick H. Bair and George W. Norvell, "Speech Improvement in New York State," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXV (February, 1949), p. 56.

³⁴ Barnes, op. cit., p. 16.

It has come to be an accepted fact that a child's speech improves only in proportion to his emotional and social adjustment. Tidyman and Butterfield point out that

Generally speaking the conditions favorable to the development of good speech are equally appropriate for the handicapped child and the capable child; and the conditions favorable to speech are those favorable to other phases of the language program.³⁵

The classroom work can be so organized "that all children have many opportunities for purposeful speaking, not idle chatter."³⁶ Konigsberg believes that many opportunities for drill work present themselves to the alert teacher and states that "the teacher who does not seize upon a sudden snowfall on the day for drill on the previously taught sibilant sounds is working against human nature."³⁷ This is substantiated by Rasmussen, who says

Vital situations that really affect the school, such as a safety problem, a playground situation, courtesy, plans for a club, a party or a trip are subjects that stimulate general free discussion.³⁸

³⁵ Willard F. Tidyman and Marguerite Butterfield, Teaching the Language Arts (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1951), p. 313.

³⁶ Dorothy Fry, "Experiences in Speaking," Elementary English, XXVIII (March, 1951), p. 128.

³⁷ Konigsberg, op. cit., p. 129.

³⁸ Rasmussen, "Practical Ways of Developing Better Speech in the Elementary School," p. 488.

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In fact, Monroe states that

. . . there is evidence to show that pupils learn even arithmetic better when they talk about it. An ingenious teacher can find many opportunities for increasing the amount of useful talking by pupils and can encourage the distinctness and intelligibility of their speech. Blackboard explanations, oral reports on history assignments, and dramatizing of stories may teach subject-matter and speech in the same lesson and at the same time.³⁹

Rasmussen criticizes the negative approach taken by many teachers by saying "if teachers would give constructive help instead of emphasizing the "don't," pupils would probably develop more confidence and speak more easily."⁴⁰

Since it is the responsibility of each teacher to adjust the program, the method of instruction and the materials to fit the needs of the children with whom she works, nursery rhymes, jingles, stories, poems, games, and finger plays are frequently used not only to arouse the interest of the child, but as a device for bringing about speech improvement.

In the first three grades the speech work should be presented chiefly as a play activity so that the child's attention is focused, not upon the drill he is receiving, but upon the pleasure he is deriving from the games.⁴¹

³⁹ Monroe, op. cit., p. 31.

⁴⁰ Rasmussen, op. cit., p. 488.

⁴¹ Sevenans, op. cit., p. 358.

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Choral speaking, which is also referred to as choral reading, choir speaking, and verse speaking, is another frequently mentioned device for use in speech improvement. Educators are not entirely in agreement as to its value. Rasmussen says, "more improvement in speech has taken place through the teaching of choral speaking than through any other device used so far in the elementary school."⁴² Irwin,⁴³ Ogilvie,⁴⁴ Pidge,⁴⁵ and Wells⁴⁶ list it among the recommended devices for speech improvement, while Fessenden⁴⁷ and Raubicheck⁴⁸ feel that its value lies in developing definite areas of speech. On the other hand, Tidyman and Butterfield point out the "claims" made for choral speaking and proceed to question its value by saying, "The debatable question, of course, is whether the

⁴² Rasmussen, "The Role of Speech in the Elementary School, p. 10.

⁴³ Irwin, op. cit., p. 181.

⁴⁴ Mardel Ogilvie, Speech in the Elementary School (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1954), p. 278.

⁴⁵ Florence E. Pidge, "Choral Readings by Verse Speaking Chorus," Elementary English Review, XIII (January, 1936), p. 44.

⁴⁶ Wells, op. cit., p. 202.

⁴⁷ Seth A. Fessenden, Speech and the Teacher (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., Inc., 1946), p. 173.

⁴⁸ Raubicheck, op. cit., p. 100.

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training received in choral speaking carries over into ordinary speaking."⁴⁹

These comments would leave one with the impression that choral reading, like most devices, has real value only when it is employed by skillful teachers who have definite goals in mind.

A study made by Peins⁵⁰ to determine which devices were most used in the classroom for the teaching of speech revealed that the bulletin board and pictures were considered by elementary teachers to be the most valuable. Other devices listed by teachers as being useful were the radio, phonograph, motion pictures, and the least used device of all, the recording machine. Peins⁵¹ and Ogilvie⁵² agree that the recording machine is a valuable device in speech improvement work, and feel that it is unfortunate that so many teachers fail to make use of it.

Each individual teacher finds aids to teaching speech improvement in the activities which are normally carried on in the room among which are "show and tell" of sharing time, rhythm games, pantomimes,

⁴⁹ Tidyman and Butterfield, op. cit., p. 315.

⁵⁰ Maryann Peins, "Mechanical Devices in the Classroom," Elementary English, XXVIII (March, 1951), pp. 138-139.

⁵¹ Loc. cit.

⁵² Ogilvie, op. cit., p. 278.

relaxation exercises, music time, creative dramatics, accepting and giving invitations, making and acknowledging introductions, puppets and marionettes, all of which, in addition to those previously mentioned, are generally recommended by the various writers.

Areas of Speech Improvement

Various writers express the opinion that many of the previously mentioned teaching aids and techniques can be used to bring about improvement in definite areas of speech.

General speech may be improved through the use of the recording machine which makes it possible for the child to hear and to understand his speech problems, to compare his speech with that of his classmates, and to note any improvement that he may make.⁵³ Dramatizations, group discussions, informal talks, choral readings, and creative dramatics are all credited with aiding in the improvement of general speech.

Voice qualities are said by Rasmussen⁵⁴ to be improved by the means mentioned above, and, in addition to these, the use of

⁵³ Peins, op. cit., p. 140.

⁵⁴ Rasmussen, op. cit., p. 7.

puppets, relaxation exercises, and "imaginative stimulus"⁵⁵ are felt to be valuable.

Articulatory defects may be improved through the selection of certain poems, jingles, and specially selected stories that stress the particular sound or sounds under consideration.⁵⁶

Through the application of mental hygiene principles, the child may be freed from tension, become poised and relaxed. Speech reflects the personality and improves in proportion to the social and emotional adjustment of the person. Therefore, it is the general opinion of the writers that by developing an awareness of what constitutes good speech and instilling in the child a feeling of confidence, a teacher will do much to help the child improve his speech.

Summary

As can be seen from the literature referred to in this chapter, much has been written regarding the need for the teaching of speech and for speech improvement training in the lower elementary grades. This literature reveals what appear to be two schools of thought as to the way in which this training should be given; one

⁵⁵ Raubicheck, op. cit., p. 92.

⁵⁶ Anderson, op. cit., p. 299.

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that speech should be an integral part of every subject taught and of every activity carried on in the schoolroom, and the other that speech should "be placed on an even basis with other subjects such as reading, arithmetic, spelling, and so forth,"⁵⁷ and "deserves a place in the curriculum."⁵⁸

To the classroom teacher who is untrained in the teaching of speech, these points of view do not seem as contradictory as their advocates would lead one to believe. It is the opinion of those who would teach speech as an integrated subject that the instruction should not be indirect, but should be given whenever the need arises while carrying on the normal activities of a classroom.

It is generally agreed that, even if there were enough trained speech teachers available to give the specialized help necessary, good speech could not be brought about without the cooperation of the classroom teacher, since it is in the classroom that the new patterns of speech must be put into practice if they are to become permanent and carry over into natural speaking situations.

⁵⁷ Milisen, op. cit., p. 241.

⁵⁸ Weniger, op. cit., p. 4.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE, SUBJECTS, AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES USED IN THE EXPLORATORY STUDY

In an effort to determine whether or not the techniques and devices recommended by the various writers can be utilized in the classroom with a degree of success and practicality, the author conducted an exploratory study working with a group of unselected second graders in what was considered to be an average classroom.

Procedure

At the onset of the study an attempt was made to rate the speech of the children in the group by administering a speech inventory test (see Appendix A, pages 60 to 62) which was adapted from those recommended by the various writers. This adaptation was made by selecting from those tests the items felt to be most applicable to the age group that was being tested and adding a numerical scale for rating each of the over-all speech qualities. It was hoped this scale, which rated each quality from 1, excellent, to 5, (very) unsatisfactory, would be a means of more definitely evaluating the speech of each subject. An endeavor was made to

check the speech in two ways: (1) by conversing with the child; and (2) by giving each child an articulation test.

On the average, about 4-1/2 minutes were spent in administering the test to each child. The amount of time varied slightly with the rate of the child's reaction; the slower reacting child obviously needed to be given more time. During the period of conversation, leading questions were asked the child about himself, his family, his playmates, and his activities. In this way rapport was established, background information gained, and the observers were given an opportunity to hear the child use connected speech.

The articulation test was administered by placing before the child a case containing such familiar objects as a pig, an airplane, and a pipe, arranged in groups of three, and representing the various sounds in each of the three positions--initial, medial, and final, respectively. The test was carefully explained to each child in order that he might fully understand what was expected of him and not become confused or frightened. Cooperating in administering the test were a college supervisor of teacher training in speech correction, a college student in advanced speech correction training, and a second grade classroom teacher.

Following the initial test, the daily program was so organized that the classroom teacher devoted a 20-minute period each

day for 12 weeks to directed speech activities which were arbitrarily chosen from among those activities recommended by various writers for speech improvement work in the lower elementary grades.

During the time that the study was being conducted, no effort was put forth in any of the other classes or class activities to correct or to improve the speech of any child with the exception of an occasional reminder that the child was not making himself heard or correctly repeating a word after a child had said it incorrectly.

At the conclusion of the study, those who administered the first test repeated it in an effort to determine what, if any, improvement had taken place in the speech of the children during the time in which the study was being conducted.

Subjects. An unselected group of thirty-five second grade boys and girls, all of whom were in the same classroom, and all of whom were eight years of age, or were nearing their eighth birthday, were chosen for this study. The intelligence quotients of these children ranged from 73 to 148 with an average of 107.8. Of the original number, seven were absent from either the initial or the final test, and therefore were not included in the analysis of the test results.

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Classroom activities. Since it was the purpose of this study to determine, as far as possible, the effectiveness and the practicality of the techniques and activities recommended for the teaching of speech improvement in the lower elementary grades, as many of those activities referred to in the previous chapter as seemed practical were employed. The following activities were used with varying degrees of success: auditory discrimination and ear training, choral reading, creative dramatics, dramatization, group discussion, explanations and talks, reports, oral reading, pantomimes, sharing time, story-telling, relaxation exercises, and telephone conversation. Many of these general activities were developed still further in an effort to put into use the more specific suggestions found in the literature.

Auditory discrimination and ear training were developed through the use of rhyming words, poetry, paired words as, "wing" and "ring," "then" and "den," recording the voices, imitating the voices of the various characters in a story, listening to the voices of radio and television personalities, and games devised to aid in the identifying of children's voices. In addition to these techniques, the children were led to formulate rules which set forth the principles of good speech after they had listened to talks that were given by various members of the class. Stories were read by the teacher while the children listened and responded by raising the

hand whenever they were able to detect a speech error. Stories were also used to call attention to definite sounds such as rabbit stories for the sound of "r," train stories for the sounds of "ch" and "tr," and bunny or bear stories for the sound of "b."

The field of choral reading contained such a wealth of material that it was necessary to select those poems and nursery rhymes that would best correlate with the other room activities. The choral readings were used to encourage the shy child to speak and to become a part of the group without having attention focused upon him, to develop a feeling for the rhythm of speech, to promote a feeling of courtesy and sharing, and to encourage distinct speech.

Creative dramatics and dramatizations offered opportunities for applying the speech skills. These activities served as another means of encouraging the shy child to participate. They also served as a means of emphasizing clear expression, the need for adequate volume and voice control, and as "an incentive for correcting faulty or careless habits of speech."¹ The specific activities used included the children's interpretation of shopping trips, introductions, extending and accepting invitations, playing host and hostess, playing

¹ Willard F. Tidyman and Marguerite Butterfield, Teaching The Language Arts, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. 1951), p. 314.

store, acting out stories, nursery rhymes, and poems. Following each dramatization the children were encouraged to discuss the performance and to give constructive criticism.

Group discussions explanations and talks, reports, sharing time, and story-telling were among the activities that were recommended for the improvement of over-all speech. These activities were used to encourage purposeful talking and to emphasize courtesy. An attempt was made to lead the children to recognize speech as a "two-way" process--speaking and listening. It was emphasized that the speaker, who had something to say, had the responsibility of saying it in such a way as to be easily understood by all of his listeners and, in turn, deserved their courteous attention.

Oral reading served much the same purpose as those activities which have been mentioned earlier, namely, to attempt to develop good expression, voice flexibility, and proper volume. Stories, poems, and character reading were used in developing these areas.

Pantomimes were used in an effort to encourage the shy child to participate, to develop poise, and to serve as a basis for group discussions. The discussions provided another means of applying the speech skills that had been developed in the other areas; that is, speaking distinctly and audibly, practicing courtesy, and giving constructive criticism.

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Relaxation exercises were used to teach the "s" sound, to bring about better voice quality and smoother flowing speech.

Telephone conversations were introduced by discussing the rules for good conversation and were used as a part of such activities as playing store, extending invitations, and making appointments in addition to carrying on friendly conversations. Following the telephone conversations, time was allotted for the evaluation and constructive criticism of them.

Games were used as a practical form of drill and as a means of transferring the newly acquired skills into normal speaking situations. Singing games like "London Bridge" and "Mary Had a Little Lamb" were used for drill on the "l" sound. "The Grocery Store Game" was used to teach the various sounds. Games were also used to teach auditory discrimination.

A sampling of the more detailed plans of the activities used in the study may be found in Appendix B, pages 63 to 93. These daily plans are not necessarily in the order in which they were used, nor are all of them included; but they are typical of the activities carried on. Similar activities were employed in an attempt to bring about improvement in each sound found through the test to be defective. Many of the activities such as those used in connection with the unit on bird study, playing store, and the dramatization of

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certain stories required more time than that allotted to a single class period and, therefore, of necessity several class periods were frequently devoted to one activity. In such cases, however, time was devoted each day to the discussion and the evaluation of the activity in order that the problems might be recognized as they occurred and the following performances be improved.

As was stated previously, not all of the activities were received with the same degree of enthusiasm and interest; for this reason, several of those originally planned were not repeated and others were substituted in their place. Those received most enthusiastically were creative dramatics, especially when nursery rhymes were used, playing store, telephone conversations, and choral readings. It was found that many of the games suggested did not prove practical for use with the large group because they did not provide for sufficient activity, and those who were not actively participating soon lost interest and became restless. Activities such as "show and tell," reports, explanations, and oral readings were well received by the children. However, these activities required careful planning and skillful direction by the teacher if all of the members of the group were to profit by the experiences. These were activities in which a few were prone to monopolize the time, while those really needing the experience of communicating sat quietly by. Those

speech activities that were based on the larger units of work brought about more conversation, discussion, and desire to communicate than those designed specifically to bring about improvement; thus it would seem that the larger units provide a more profitable device for teaching speech.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

It was the original plan of the author to use a speech inventory test adapted from tests recommended by speech authorities (see Appendix A). However, in administering the test, it was found that many of the items could not be applied to the speech of second grade children with any degree of accuracy. Their age and developmental stage made it exceptionally difficult to determine whether or not the qualities were defective or were merely child-like characteristics. Therefore, it became necessary to disregard the numerical ratings and check for the more objective characteristics.

In interpreting the test results to determine whether or not the speech of the subjects was improved as a result of the speech teaching that was done, the defect was considered corrected if it was consistently made correctly at the time of the final test; improved if made correctly when the child was conscious of his speech; and unimproved if the defect was still very much in evidence even though the child was conscious of his speech. The author was aware of the fact that it was difficult to state definitely that no improvement was made as a result of the speech experiences.

However, for the purpose of this study, the defects still consistently in evidence were considered to be unimproved.

Key to Tables 1 to 5

Column 1 - Sound or speech quality being rated.

Column 2 - Person rating qualities of speech

A - College supervisor of teacher training in speech correction.

B - College student in advanced speech correction training.

C - Second grade classroom teacher.

Column 3 - Number of subjects found to have the defect at the time of the initial test.

Column 4 - Number of subjects considered by the observers to have made little or no improvement between the initial and final tests--defect still very much in evidence.

Column 5 - Number of subjects considered by the observers to have made some improvement between the time of the initial and final tests.

Table 1 shows that there was complete agreement among the observers as to the number of subjects having defective voice qualities; each observer noted one subject with the nasal quality; four

TABLE 1
VOICE QUALITY

Quality	Observer	Initial Test	Final Test	
		No. Defects	Unimproved	Improved
Nasal	A	1	1	0
	B	1	1	0
	C	1	1	0
De-nasal	A	4	4	0
	B	4	4	0
	C	4	4	0
Hoarse or Husky	A	2	2	0
	B	2	2	0
	C	2	2	0
Breathy	A	3	3	0
	B	3	3	0
	C	3	3	0

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with the de-nasal quality; two with the hoarse or husky quality; and three with the breathy quality. All other subjects were considered to have satisfactory voice quality.

The final test results show that in the opinion of all three observers the defective qualities were still very much in evidence at the time of the test, and that apparently there had been little improvement or correction during the time that the study was being carried on.

The results of this test show that the recommended classroom procedures, when directed by a classroom teacher, did not bring about an improvement in the voice qualities of the subjects, and indicate that specific training should have been given.

Table 2 is based upon the subjective opinions of the observers. A subject who consistently used volume that was unsuited to the "room and occasion" during the test was considered to have volume that was unsatisfactory and rated accordingly. Those who failed to make themselves heard easily were considered as having volume that was "too weak"; those speaking too loudly were considered to have volume that was "too loud." All others were considered to have volume that was satisfactory for their age group.

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TABLE 2

VOLUME

Quality	Observer	Initial Test	Final Test	
		No. Defects	Unimproved	Improved
Too Weak	A	3	0	3
	B	3	0	3
	C	3	0	3
Too Loud	A	2	0	2
	B	1	0	1
	C	2	0	2
Spas- modic	A	0	0	0
	B	0	0	0
	C	0	0	0

The table shows that the observers were in agreement as to the number of subjects having inadequate volume; all observers noted three as having volume that was 'too weak.'

Observers A and C each noted two subjects as having volume that was 'too loud'; Observer B noted only one subject as having volume that was 'too loud.' None were noted by any of the observers as having 'spasmodic or uncontrolled' volume.

On the final test, as on the initial test, the results were based entirely upon the opinion of the observers. Those subjects exhibiting volume that was noticeably weak or loud at the time of the initial test but were able to control volume with ease at the time of the final test were considered improved. On this basis, all three observers agreed that there was improvement.

The results of this test tend to indicate that the recommended classroom procedures can be used effectively by the classroom teacher to develop the ability of the child to use volume that is suitable to the occasion.

Pitch

Item two (Pitch) of the Speech Analysis Test was omitted from the summary of the test results because the numerical rating scale proved difficult to use. Since the voices of most young

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children are normally high-pitched, none of the subjects were found to have voices that were considered by any of the observers to be unsatisfactory or abnormal. All were considered to have pitch satisfactory for their age group.

Table 3 shows that on the initial test all observers were in agreement, each rating two subjects as having speech that was "too fast." No observer noted a subject as having a rate of speech that was either "too slow" or "unvaried."

On the final test, those subjects who were considered to have a rate of speech that was "too fast" at the time of the initial test, but who were able to control the rate during at least a part of the final test, were considered to be improved. On this basis, the final test shows that all observers rated all of those considered initially to have speech that was "too fast" as improved. Since none of the subjects consistently spoke at the "normal" rate, there were considered to be no corrections.

Psychologists and speech specialists point out that the rate with which a person speaks is controlled largely by the emotions. A nervous child usually has speech that is too rapid. This being true, the classroom teacher can make use of the recommendations and provide the child with an atmosphere of calm and relaxation to bring about improvement in the rate. However, if this fault is to

TABLE 3

RATE

Quality	Observer	Initial Test	Final Test	
		No. Defects	Unimproved	Improved
Too Fast	A	2	0	2
	B	2	0	2
	C	2	0	2
Too Slow	A	0	0	0
	B	0	0	0
	C	0	0	0
Un- varied	A	0	0	0
	B	0	0	0
	C	0	0	0

be corrected, many factors other than those controlled by the classroom teacher may need to be improved and frequently need the cooperation of others.

Expression

Item five, "Is the expression suited to the subject matter?" was not included in the summary because it was found to be impossible to rate the subjects with any degree of accuracy; young children have not learned to use the voice effectively. All subjects were considered to have satisfactory expression for their age and experience.

Table 4 shows the articulatory deviations other than the inaccurately made consonants. In the initial rating of consonant deviations, the observers were almost in agreement. No observer noted a subject "omitting beginning consonants." Observers A and B each noted three subjects "omitting final consonants"; Observer C noted two subjects. All observers noted two subjects as having "indistinct speech," and four as "lispering."

Since the numerical rating scale was not being used, it was necessary to judge the amount of improvement and correction that had been made purely on a subjective basis. Subjects rated on the initial test as having definite deviations were led into speaking situations in an effort to determine whether or not the subject consistently

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TABLE 4
CONSONANT DEVIATIONS

Quality	Observer	Initial Test	Final Test	
		No. Defects	Unimproved	Improved
Omits beginning consonant	A	0	0	0
	B	0	0	0
	C	0	0	0
Omits final consonant	A	3	0	3
	B	3	0	3
	C	2	0	2
Indistinct speech	A	2	0	2
	B	2	0	2
	C	2	0	2
Lisping	A	4	3	1
	B	4	3	1
	C	4	3	1

used the better speech pattern or only when conscious of speech. Those subjects found to be consistent in the use of good speech were considered to be corrected; those using good speech only when conscious of their speech were considered as improved; and those consistently using the deviation were considered as unimproved.

On this basis, the final test results show that the observers felt that there was some improvement in all areas. All subjects rated on the initial test by the observers as "omitting final consonants" were considered to be "improved" at the time of the final test. The observers considered all subjects rated as having "indistinct speech" on the initial test as improved. All observers agreed that of the subjects rated as "lispering," only one was considered as "improved"; all others were considered to be "unimproved."

Sounds which no subject was noted as making inaccurately were omitted from the articulation summary (Table 5).

Table 5 shows that on the initial test the observers were almost in agreement as to the number of subjects making the sounds inaccurately; two observers agreeing as to the number of subjects making twelve of the sounds inaccurately, and all three agreeing as to the number of subjects making six of the sounds inaccurately.

The final test shows that all observers agreed that there was improvement in thirteen sounds, and that there was no apparent

TABLE 5
ARTICULATION

Sound	Observer	Inaccurately Made Sounds		
		Initial Test	Final Test	
		No. Defects	Unimproved	Improved
x	A	10	3	6
	B	9	2	7
	C	9	2	7
ts	A	10	8	2
	B	10	7	3
	C	8	6	2
l	A	8	5	2
	B	8	5	3
	C	8	5	3
s	A	19	11	8
	B	19	10	9
	C	20	11	9
d3	A	3	3	0
	B	2	2	0
	C	3	3	0
r	A	4	1	3
	B	4	1	3
	C	4	1	3

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TABLE 5--Continued

Sound	Observer	Inaccurately Made Sounds		
		Initial Test	Final Test	
		No. Defects	Unimproved	Improved
I	A	2	2	0
	B	0	0	0
	C	0	0	0
t	A	3	1	2
	B	3	1	2
	C	3	1	2
f	A	2	1	1
	B	2	1	1
	C	1	0	1
z	A	19	16	1
	B	18	16	2
	C	19	16	3
d	A	1	0	1
	B	1	0	1
	C	1	0	1
v	A	5	0	5
	B	4	1	3
	C	4	1	3
s	A	11	7	4
	B	11	6	5
	C	11	7	4

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TABLE 5--Continued

Sound	Observer	Inaccurately Made Sounds		
		Initial Test	Final Test	
		No. Defects	Unimproved	Improved
n	A	1	1	0
	B	0	0	0
	C	0	0	0
ε	A	1	1	0
	B	0	0	0
	C	0	0	0
θ	A	11	4	7
	B	12	4	8
	C	12	4	7
3	A	6	6	0
	B	7	5	2
	C	6	6	0
η	A	9	4	5
	B	9	4	5
	C	9	4	3

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improvement in one sound. Three sounds rated as inaccurate in the initial test by Observer A were considered unimproved on the final test. Observer B reported that two subjects were making the sound "3" more nearly accurate; Observers A and C failed to note this improvement. One observer stated that one subject had corrected each of the sounds "8" and "l" and that two subjects had corrected "z"; another observer was of the opinion that one subject had corrected the "θ" sound and two the "o." Since only one observer noted each of the corrections, it was questionable as to whether or not the correction had actually been made, and therefore, was not included in the summary.

Over-all

Since the observers found that it was impossible to rate the speech of young children with any degree of accuracy through the use of the numerical rating scale, the numerical ratings were omitted and the speech of the subjects considered to be "adequate for communication" or "inadequate for communication." This, obviously, was definitely a subjective rating. However, the subjects who were able to communicate in such a way as to make themselves easily understood were considered to have speech "adequate for communication"; those subjects whose speech was such that it

was difficult for them to make themselves understood were considered to have speech "inadequate for communication." On this basis the initial test shows that the observers are agreed that all subjects had speech "adequate for communication," but needing to be improved to eliminate minor defects and to develop good speech rather than speech that was just adequate.

The final test shows that all observers agree that the overall speech of each of the subjects had been improved. In reaching this decision, the observers considered the manner in which the subjects met a speaking situation, whether or not the articulatory defects were still very much in evidence, and whether or not he was able to express himself fluently. All subjects appeared to speak with confidence at the time of the final test.

Summary of Results

Although this was a very subjective test, all of the observers agreed that some improvement had been made in all areas except that of "voice quality"; that the subjects approached speaking situations with more confidence and expressed themselves more freely. However, the results show that in the judgment of the observers, there was some improvement in the articulation of nearly all sounds but almost no correction, the greater improvement being made in the

sounds that are visibly produced. The sounds 't', 'l', 's', and 'z' were the least improved.

The results of this test would tend to substantiate the theory of many authorities in the field of speech that speech should be taught directly, that the classroom teacher needs the assistance of a trained correctionist who is able to provide her with definite correction techniques, and that speech training of a general nature does not bring about the desired correction.

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The conclusions which have been drawn from the information obtained through this study will be treated in two parts: (1) conclusions drawn from the literature; and (2) conclusions drawn from the experiment, and are as follows:

Conclusions drawn from the study of the literature.

(1) Because there is a greater awareness of the value of oral communication in our society, there is an increasing need for speech education programs in the lower elementary grades ~~to read~~ which will emphasize oral communication.

(2) There is a need for teacher-training in the teaching of speech in the lower elementary grades to

(a) develop an awareness of the need for speech improvement;

(b) give a working knowledge of practical methods for classroom use.

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(3) Though much has been written on the teaching of speech, the theories advanced are much the same regardless of the field of education for which they are written.

(4) Much of the responsibility for bringing about speech improvement must necessarily rest with the classroom teacher.

(5) School administrators need to be made more conscious of the value of speech training in the lower elementary grades in order to insure cooperation in the planning of speech improvement programs.

Conclusions drawn from the experiment.

(1) There is a need for teacher-training in the teaching of speech in the lower elementary grades to give a working knowledge of practical methods for classroom use.

(2) Numerical scales proved to have no value in rating the speech of young children.

(3) Some items included in the "Speech Analysis Test" could not be used in rating the speech of young children.

✓(4) Care must be taken in adapting the suggested activities to the age level and to the size of the group for which they are being used.

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(5) Although some improvement in the over-all speech of children can be brought about through classroom teaching, this teaching could be more effective if a trained correctionist provided the teacher with specific techniques and devices and assumed the responsibility for the correction of the more severe defects.

(6) Much of the material presented in the literature is of too general a nature to be of value to the classroom teacher who is unskilled in the teaching of speech.

(7) That speech improvement can be brought about as an integral part of classroom activities and is probably better motivated when it is handled in conjunction with other normal class activities.

Recommendations

As a result of the information gained through the study, the following recommendations seem appropriate:

(1) That more experiments and studies be carried on by classroom teachers in actual classroom situations in order that more effective and practical speech improvement methods be devised for regular classroom use.

(2) That tests be devised specifically to provide for the diagnosis of speech problems (other than articulatory) of pupils in the lower elementary grades.

(3) That writers provide materials and information designed specifically for use in the lower elementary grades.

(4) That teacher-training institutions make it possible for teachers who are interested in a speech program for the lower elementary classroom to receive help through courses designed for this purpose.

(5) That in-service training be provided for those teachers who find it impossible to take regular courses in the teaching of speech.

(6) That a trained correctionist be made available for consultation to supply the classroom teacher with correction techniques.

(7) That administrators encourage teachers of the lower elementary grades to provide opportunities for the teaching of speech in the classroom as a part of the room activities.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

SPEECH ANALYSIS TEST

1. Is the quality of the voice

Excellent _____ Satisfactory _____ Unsatisfactory _____ ?
 1 2 3 4 5

If it is unsatisfactory, can the fault be identified as

Nasal _____ De-nasal _____
 Hoarse or husky _____ Breathy _____ ?

2. Is the pitch

Excellent _____ Satisfactory _____ Unsatisfactory _____ ?
 1 2 3 4 5

If it is unsatisfactory, can the fault be identified as

Too high _____ Too low _____
 Monopitch _____ Spasmodic, uncontrolled _____ ?

3. Is the volume for the room and occasion

Excellent _____ Satisfactory _____ Unsatisfactory _____ ?
 1 2 3 4 5

If it is unsatisfactory, can the fault be identified as

Too weak _____ Too loud _____
 Spasmodic, uncontrolled _____ ?

4. Is the rate

Excellent _____ Satisfactory _____ Unsatisfactory _____ ?
 1 2 3 4 5

If it is unsatisfactory, can the fault be identified as

Too fast _____ Too slow _____ Unvaried _____ ?

5. Is the expression suited to the subject matter

Excellent _____ Satisfactory _____ Unsatisfactory _____ ?
 1 2 3 4 5

If it is unsatisfactory, can the fault be identified as

Monotonous voice _____ Lack of understanding _____

Lack of feeling _____ ?

6. Is the articulation

Excellent _____ Satisfactory _____ Unsatisfactory _____ ?
 1 2 3 4 5

If it is unsatisfactory, can the chief fault (faults) be identified as

Omission of beginning consonants _____

Omission of final consonants _____

Mumbling _____

Lisping _____ ?

Sounds inaccurately made

p — b — t — d — k — g —
 h — f — v — θ — ð — s —
 z — ʃ — ʒ — tʃ — dʒ — m —
 n — ŋ — l — r — j — w —
 hw — i — I — e — ɛ — æ —
 a — ɔ — o — U — u — ʌ —
 ʒ, ʒ — ə, θ — aɪ — aʊ — ɔɪ — ju —

7. Does the child's over-all speech seem to be

Excellent _____ Satisfactory _____ Unsatisfactory _____?

1

2

3

4

5

8. What comments can you make regarding the over-all speech of the child?

APPENDIX B

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. Appreciation for and understanding of good speech.
2. Ability to use volume that is suitable to the occasion and place.
3. Ability to use pleasant and adequate speaking voices.
4. Skill in articulating sounds accurately.
5. Ability to use clear-cut and distinct speech.
6. Skill in speaking at a rate suitable to the occasion.

1

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

An understanding of good conversational speech.

II. Procedure:

A. Introduction

A period of the day is given over to 'Show and Tell Time.' During this time the children talk about things that are of interest to them. At the end of the period, the children will be asked to evaluate the contribution of each child, pointing out first the strong points, then suggesting ways of improving. The voices will be recorded as the talks are being given.

Through discussion, the children will be led to set up standards for evaluating their speech. These will be listed on a chart and posted in the room for reference.

B. A discussion of speech in general--why good speech is desirable.

C. To help them become more speech conscious, ask that they listen to a favorite television or radio star and report what they liked about his speech. It is hoped that some defects will be noted.

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Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Develop an appreciation for using volume suitable to the occasion.

II. Procedure:

- A. Review the factors contributing to good speech.
- B. Discuss the speech of the television and radio stars that were observed.
- C. Conduct the usual "Show and Tell Time" with the teacher sitting in the far corner of the room. Ask if each one can make the teacher hear.
- D. Ask for constructive criticism. For the shy child or one who seldom volunteers, a comment such as, "I liked the way Tom told us about his ---. He made us all hear, didn't he?" will be considered sufficient criticism.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Ability to recognize and understand own speech habits.

II. Procedure:

- A. Allow time for comments on the speech of any of the radio or television stars that may have been observed.
- B. Children listen to the recordings of their own voices.
- C. Allow time for comments about the voices they hear.
 - 1. Call attention to any that have good expression.
 - 2. Discuss why some do not recognize voice.
 - 3. Discuss why classmates recognized the voices of others.

(It is hoped that the defects will be noted, thus making a lesson on sound substitution the next natural step.)

100

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Ability to hear the sound of r correctly when it is used in the initial position.

II. Procedure:

- A. Introduce the subject of the Easter Rabbit, discuss the rabbit and the part it plays in the Easter customs.
- B. Read the story of "The White Easter Rabbit," which was written by Dorothy Baruch. Read in such a way as to use as many words beginning with the r sound as possible without materially changing the story.
- C. Have children recall the story by using sentences to tell what the little rabbit did.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Skill in using the r sound in a natural speaking situation.
- B. Ability to speak so as to be heard by all those in the room.

II. Procedure:

- A. Show the Raggedy Ann doll and talk about her limpness.
- B. Play at being "Raggedy Rabbits" until all children become relaxed.
- C. Review the principles of good speech.
- D. Have the story of "The White Easter Rabbit" told.
- E. Encourage the class to comment favorably on the telling; then to courteously point out ways in which it could have been improved.
- F. Plan for the dramatization of the story.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Understanding and ability to use speech to communicate to an audience.
- B. Ability to use the principles of good speech in a natural speaking situation.
- C. Skill in using the r sound in natural speech.

II. Procedure:

- A. After a short discussion of the story, "The White Easter Rabbit," have several children "try on" each of the various characters.
- B. From among those trying out, choose enough players to do the play.
- C. Dramatize the story.
- D. Encourage comments on the presentation, first favorable comments, then suggestions for improving.
- E. Time permitting, play the story a second time using a different cast.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Ability to discriminate between the sounds of w and r when used in the initial position.

II. Procedure:

- A. Pronounce a list of words in which both initial sounds are used. Ask child to tell which sound he hears.
- B. List a group of words on the board which have the initial sounds of w and r. Using these words, play "Going Out Into the Hall," a game in which one child leaves the room while a second child chooses a word. The first child then returns to the room and tries to guess the word that was chosen by pointing to a word and asking, "Is it _____?" If he guesses correctly, he chooses the next word and the game continues.
- C. Pronounce words in groups of two's. Some may sound the same, others may not. The child listens with closed eyes, if the sound is the same, he raises his hand; if not, he keeps his hand down.
- D. Place combinations of words on the board to be read as:

wing - ring

wag - rag

wed - red

wake - rake

way - ray

woof - roof

won - run

wide - ride

west - rest

- E. Ask each child to collect pictures of objects representing the initial w and the initial r sound for his picture dictionary.

1
1

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Skill in using the sound r in the initial position.

II. Procedure:

- A. Have each child show the pictures he collected for the picture dictionary and tell something about each one.
- B. Have children suggest things that may be found in the country that have names beginning with the r sound (raccoon, rabbit, robin, rocks, etc.).
- C. Play "I Went for a Walk in the Country." In this game the leader begins by saying, "I went for a walk in the country and saw a ---" (use a word beginning with an r sound). The second child repeats what the first child has said and adds a word of his own. Thus the game continues, until it becomes difficult to find new words.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Skill in making the various speech sounds.
- B. Understanding how to overcome shyness and reluctance to participate through effective communication.
- C. Ability to apply the principles of good speech to speaking situations.

II. Procedure:

- A. Review the principles of good speech.
- B. Discuss the Mother Goose Rhymes that were illustrated in art class. Call on various individuals who are volunteering to say the rhymes.
- C. Pantomime the rhymes:
 - "Little Boy Blue"
 - "Little Jack Horner"
 - "Little Bo Peep"
 - "Little Miss Muffett"
- D. Have those who illustrated the rhyme repeat it aloud as it is pantomimed.
- E. Encourage favorable comments on the pantomimes.
- F. Suggest planning to use these rhymes for creative dramatics.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Apply the principles of good speech and the newly acquired articulation skills to natural speaking situations.

II. Procedure:

- A. Remind the children of the need for using good speech.
- B. Select nursery rhyme to be used for creative dramatics.
- C. Choose characters from volunteers.
- D. Encourage the use of the imagination and free expression.
- E. Ask for constructive criticism and suggestions.
- F. Repeat performance with a different cast. Do as many repeat performances as time and interest permit.
- G. Encourage suggestions for improvement following each performance.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective: .

Appreciation of the importance of speaking distinctly and with the proper volume in telephone conversation.

II. Procedure:

A. Discuss the movie "Telephone Courtesy" which they have recently seen. Encourage the children to point out what was good and what was bad about the conversation. Give reasons.

B. Discuss the importance of using good speaking voices in telephone conversations.

C. Have various children carry on telephone conversations using toy telephones.

D. Have the group evaluate the conversations.

(The following day repeat the same procedures used about except that the discussion of the movie will be omitted.)

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Skill in using the s sound.
- B. Appreciation for organizing ideas and presenting them in such a way as to make them interesting and easy to understand.
- C. Ability in developing self-confidence and poise when speaking before a group.

II. Procedure:

- A. Discuss rules for safety.
- B. List words on board that the children suggest might be used in talking about safety.
- C. Call attention to the fact that many of the words begin with the "snake" sound.
- D. Ask various ones to pronounce the words having the "snake" sound.
- E. Ask each one in the group to think carefully what he might say to a little brother or sister that would make him more careful and less liable to be hurt or to hurt others.
- F. Present talks.

5
11

G. Allow time for constructive criticism.

(NOTE: This will no doubt take more than the allotted time; if so, continue the second day after reminding them of the principles of good speech. Choose the best talks and arrange for them to be given in the kindergarten and first grade rooms.)

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Skill in using the r and s sounds correctly in general speech.
- B. Appreciation of good speech in showing courtesy and consideration for others while working and planning together.
- C. Ability to speak distinctly and with proper volume.

II. Procedure:

- A. Relaxation exercise, the pumping up of a tire that continues to lose its air, s-s-s-s-s, until the air is gone and the children are relaxed.
- B. Name birds that have been studied that might be seen on a drive in the country. List on board.
- C. Play drill games for about 5 minutes using the names of the birds. Begin by saying, "I am thinking of a bird that ---." The child called upon asks, "Are you thinking of the ---?"
- D. After the drill, ask each child to choose the bird he would like to talk about. Then separate into groups, ask each group to plan a report on the bird and to choose a reporter.

Figure 1 shows a schematic diagram of a single neuron. The diagram is divided into two parts, (a) and (b). Part (a) shows a cross-section of the neuron, with the cell body (soma) containing a nucleus. A dendrite is shown extending from the cell body, and an axon is shown extending from the cell body. The axon is covered by a myelin sheath. Part (b) shows a longitudinal section of the neuron, with the cell body (soma) containing a nucleus. A dendrite is shown extending from the cell body, and an axon is shown extending from the cell body. The axon is covered by a myelin sheath.

If possible, include in each group a child who makes the sounds well, and one who needs a drill.

- E. Move from group to group and give help when it is needed and requested.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Ability to speak freely before a group, using distinct speech, correct articulation, and adequate volume.

II. Procedure:

- A. Discuss the things that make interesting reports, bringing out the importance of speaking so as to be heard in all parts of the room, not talking too rapidly, planning in advance what is to be said, and speaking distinctly.
- B. Reports from each group that was organized yesterday.
- C. Students select the reports best liked, giving reasons for choice.
- D. Reports chosen will be given for the other rooms.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Skill in the use of distinct, clear-cut speech.
- B. Ability to organize thoughts in an interesting and understandable manner.
- C. Ability to recognize good speech when used by others.

II. Procedure:

- A. Review the principles of good speech.
- B. Groups work in committees to revise the talks given yesterday to improve them according to suggestions of the group.
- C. Discuss plans for inviting the other second grade room to hear the talks.
- D. Compose an invitation, copy it, and send to the other room.
- E. Arrange for host, hostess, and announcer to take charge of the seating of guests, announcing the program, and anything else that may be necessary for its presentation.

(NOTE: These talks were also presented in the first grade rooms at the request of the first grade teachers.)

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Ability to hear the speech sounds correctly.
- B. Using the sounds correctly in connected speech.

II. Procedure:

- A. Use the singing games, "Skip to My Lou" and "London Bridge," for drill on the l sound.
 - 1. Vary the game by having a group of those making the sound well sing the words while the others listen.
 - 2. Having a group of those needing practice on the sound sing the words while the others do the actions.
- B. Adapt "Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush" to suit the actions used in getting ready for school as brushing the teeth, washing the face, and combing the hair. Individuals may suggest suitable words and actions.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Understanding of the speech sounds.
- B. Ability to carry these sounds over into general speech in everyday activities.

II. Procedure:

- A. In preparation for playing "The Grocery Store Game," have the various articles found in a store named and list them according to the "snake sound," the "gray goose sound," and the various other name sounds.
- B. Play the game. The leader begins the game by saying, "My father owns a store and sells something that begins with the --- sound. What does he sell?" The child who guesses what is sold becomes the next leader, and the game continues.

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Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Ability to apply speech skills to natural speaking situations.
- B. Appreciation of good speech habits to help overcome shyness and to develop self-confidence.

II. Procedure:

- A. Discuss the "Store Project" that was planned yesterday.
- B. Allow time for each child to show and tell what he has brought to contribute to the store before he places it in the store.
- C. Dramatize several buying situations.
- D. Group discussions of dramatizations.

(NOTE: Since this activity will necessarily take several class periods, the objectives and procedures will remain much the same as those stated above. As the activity continues, introduce telephone conversations for placing orders and for making inquiries.)

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Skill in use of good speech in natural speaking situations.
- B. Improvement of voice quality.

II. Procedure:

A. Plan for a "Pretend Birthday Party."

- 1. Group discussion to make plans.

B. Pantomime.

- 1. Extending invitations by telephone.
- 2. Activities of host and hostess.
 - a. Receiving guests.
 - b. Making introductions.

C. Use speech and "try on" the character parts.

D. Select characters.

E. Dramatize the party from its planning stage to the departure of the guests.

F. Allow time for constructive criticism at all points.

(Use two periods for this if necessary.)

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Daily Plans

I. Specific Objectives:

- A. Skill and practice in making the sounds of l and r.
- B. Appreciation for courtesy in social situations.

II. Procedure:

- A. Discuss the way in which birds rest.
- B. Relaxation exercise--play at being birds that are asleep.
Wake up as the teacher calls the names of the various
birds; take a deep breath and stretch the wings.
- C. Introduce the Mother Goose Rhyme, "Little Robin Redbreast."
Read it with children listening.
- D. Have children discuss the poem, then read it a second time
while children listen or join in as they wish.
- E. Reread poem pausing occasionally for children to supply
words. Continue until children have the "feeling" of the
poem and have worked out their own interpretation.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Awareness of the speech sounds.

II. Procedure:

- A. Play the guessing game, "What Am I?" The teacher says, "I am big and black. I say 'ch, ch, ch,' What am I?" If the child answers, "You are a train," it is his turn to ask a riddle. Sounds such as the bear's voice (gr), the sound of the teakettle (s-s-s), the warning of gray goose (f-f-f), etc., may be used. Continue the game until several sounds have been used.
- B. Use a variation of the game, "Musical Chairs," in which the leader says words that have the initial r sound. If an incorrect word is given, as "wed" for "red," each child tries to find a seat.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Skill in using the voice to portray the feeling behind the thought.

II. Procedure:

A. Through discussion, lead the children to see that the voice makes others know our true feelings; if happy we sound happy, if friendly we sound friendly.

B. "Telling Time" in which the child shares his experiences with the others, trying to make them know how he feels.

C. Evaluate the talks.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Skill in using the voice to help portray the feeling behind the thought.

II. Procedure:

- A. Ask someone to tell the story of the "Three Billy Goats Gruff."
- B. Discuss how each of the characters probably felt.
- C. Various students show how they think the characters sounded.
- D. Choose characters for the dramatization.
- E. Dramatize story.
- F. Evaluate performance.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Recognize the value of pitch change and inflection.

II. Procedure:

- A. Discuss the dramatization of "Three Billy Goats Gruff."
- B. How would the Troll have sounded if he were asking a question?
- C. Have different ones demonstrate the difference in the sound of the voice when asking a question and when making a statement.
- D. Pantomime spring activities. The child then asks, "What am I doing, Dick?" Dick answers, "Are you jumping the rope?" The first child answers, "Yes, I am jumping the rope," or, "No, I am not jumping the rope." If the child called upon guesses correctly, he takes a turn and the game goes on.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Ability to recognize a person by his voice as an aid to auditory discrimination.

II. Procedure:

- A. One child sits at the front of the room with his eyes closed. Another child says something to him, disguising the voice. The first child must guess who it was that spoke. If he is able to guess, the child who spoke is "It" and the game continues.
- B. Play a variation of Blind Man's Buff, in which the child pointed to answers with nonsense syllables as ree, rah, roo. The one who is "It" attempts to guess who he has caught.

5

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Ability to move the lips for better enunciation.

II. Procedure:

- A. Teacher demonstrates the sounds for b, m, and p. The children give words from the reading lesson that begin with those sounds.
- B. List words on the board.
- C. Choose those who need drill on the sounds to pronounce the words.
- D. Choose a leader from those who need drill on the sounds. Play a variation of "Follow the Leader." The leader makes the sounds as m-m-m-m-m-m-m, b-b-b-b-b-b-b, p-p-p-p-p-p-p, and the others follow. The sheep can follow; those who cannot are goats.

Daily Plans

I. Specific Objective:

Skill in the use of expressive speech.

II. Procedure:

- A. Divide students into groups.
- B. Each group selects a short story to be read to the group.
- C. Each group prepares the story for presentation in the way it desires.
 - 1. Read parts of characters.
 - 2. Choose the funniest part.
 - 3. Members assign parts, etc.

(During the preparation the teacher moves from group to group to advise and assist. Emphasize the need for using soft voices when working in smaller groups.)

D. Present story.

E. Evaluate.

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