A STUDY OF THE TEACHING OF ORAL INTERPRETATION IN MICHIGAN, SELECTED TEXTBOOKS AND PRACTICES IN EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Thesis for the Degree of Ed. D.

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Otis J. Aggertt

1960

THESIS

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ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

A STUDY OF THE TEACHING OF ORAL INTERPRETATION IN MICHIGAN, SELECTED TEXTBOOKS AND PRACTICES IN EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

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The problem is to study the major elements of a philosophy for the teaching of oral interpretation as evolved in various textbooks in the nineteenth century and as revealed in five selected representative textbooks in the twentieth century, to analyze the oral interpretation activities conducted by the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League from 1933 through 1959, and to compare the findings from the textbooks with the practices analyzed.

The educational implications of pragmatism with special reference to the teaching of oral interpretation are explored in the light of contemporary developments in educational philosophy. With pragmatism as the fundamental philosophy, a survey is made of the two basic schools of instruction in oral interpretation in the nineteenth century: the mechanical and the natural.

The mechanical school, with a faculty psychology, employed many fixed rules and heavy emphasis upon the externals of the oral interpretation process. The first major exponent of this school was Dr. James Rush. His book, The Philosophy

of the Human Voice, attempted to achieve a scientific approach of complete authority by endeavoring to assure interpretative effectiveness by means of the mastery of specific, fixed, measurable skills. This school was also represented by Francois Delsarte, who sought to codify the characteristics of ideal oral interpretation, as is done in music. His extensive codification employed fixed quantities and rules arranged on a triune basis.

The second school, which was called the natural, existed throughout the nineteenth century but about fifty years ago received special impetus from the pressures of Gestalt psychology, the Darwinian theory of individual differences, and the corollary development of pragmatism. Silas Curry, at the turn of the century, was the chief exponent of this "think-the-thought" school, which eventually condemned all instruction in method and sought a completely "natural" approach to the teaching of oral interpretation.

The five twentieth century textbooks examined employ an eclectic approach involving the rejection of faculty psychology, acceptance of the Gestalt, and a consequent emphasis upon the concept that oral reading involves the whole person. Oral interpretation is regarded as a cooperative experience in communication rather than a demonstration of skills. Impersonation is not thought a suitable interpretative mode. Instruction should be given in both finding and expressing the

meaning. Since each student is a distinct individual and every literary selection is different, there should be neither one specific procedure for instruction nor a single model of interpretative effectiveness to be imitated. Rules for oral reading are few and flexible. Effectiveness can be determined only on the basis of communicative success and is not thought measurable in ratings or rankings.

In the light of the elements of teaching theory revealed in the texts, analyses are made of the contests and festivals conducted in the oral interpretation areas by the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League. The contests are found highly competitive in both theory and practice. Indeed, audiences are seen to have been largely hostile. The festivals, on the other hand, more nearly approximate the cooperative, communicative ideal. Contest conditions tend to emphasize rigid rules, faculty psychology, imitation, impersonation, memorization, and the concept of a demonstration of skills. Festival conditions are found to de-emphasize and often to eliminate these factors. Contest efforts to measure interpretative success and to rank participants are not found consistent with the principles of the modern textbooks. Conversely, the evaluation system of the festivals is seen to be in keeping with the findings in the study of the texts.

The analyses of both contests and festivals reveals that the latter more nearly conform to the pragmatic educational

philosophy, the Gestalt psychology of learning, and other concepts found to be generally characteristic of modern oral interpretation textbooks.

A STUDY OF THE TEACHING OF ORAL INTERPRETATION IN MICHIGAN, SELECTED TEXTBOOKS AND PRACTICES IN EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

By

Otis J. Aggertt

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Competitive speech contests have long been a part of extra-classroom activities in the speech program, but in recent years non-competitive festivals have developed. No extensive effort has been made at the college level to relate such competitive or non-competitive activities or both to a basic philosophy of education.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It has been the general objective of this study to trace the evolution of a philosophy for the teaching of oral interpretation in college as shown in selected representative textbooks, to define in the same way the current philosophy, to compare such a philosophy so discovered with extra-classroom practices employed, and to find the implications of that comparison.

In pursuit of this general objective, an effort has been made (1) to outline the philosophy of pragmatism, (2) to examine its implications for education, (3) to interpret briefly the role of speech instruction in the larger process of education, (4) to explore the role of oral interpretation instruction in speech instruction, (5) to trace the evolution of a philosophy for the teaching of oral interpretation in

college as shown in selected representative textbooks since 1800, (6) to determine a current philosophy for the teaching of oral interpretation in college as shown in selected modern textbooks since 1900, (7) to examine the history, the character, and the philosophy of extra-classroom activities in oral interpretation in Michigan institutions of higher education for approximately the last twenty-five years, (8) to compare the philosophy of the experts in the teaching of oral interpretation with the philosophy actually employed in extra-classroom activities, (9) to determine what techniques and practices in the extra-classroom teaching of oral interpretation seem to be most in agreement with expert opinion and most productive of sound educational accomplishments, and (10) to discover the implications of the study for the future effective extra-classroom implementation of the accepted philosophy of the teaching of oral interpretation in college.

Importance of the study. In speech education there are normally two concurrent programs for the assumed benefit of the students: the extra-classroom and the classroom. The former has a long history in the colleges and universities and in recent years seems to have remained essentially free of fundamental innovations until the advent of the festival system. That festival system is apparently based upon the assumption that the traditional competitive activities are

less sound educationally than is the festival. An examination of philosophies and practices is therefore indicated.

Limitations of the study. It must be recognized that relevant information is not of a character readily to be categorized. That information is extensive in scope, but it is often a subtle blend of descriptive detail and elusive inferences. Thoroughly objective measuring techniques apparently cannot be employed. However, it is assumed that if enough information is examined certain general trends and tendencies can be ascertained.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Philosophy. Generally speaking philosophy is the study of the facts and principles of reality and of human nature and conduct. A specific philosophy is a body of principles divisible into four phases: metaphysics, epistemology, logic, and axiology. An effort is made in the study to investigate these four phases of pragmatism.

Pragmatism. Pragmatism is an American philosophical movement whose most characteristic doctrines seem to be that the meanings of conceptions is to be sought in their practical bearings, that the function of thought is that of a guide to action, and that the truth is pre-eminently to be

tested by the practical consequences of belief.[1]

Speech. In this study "speech" is understood to mean that broad area of instruction in higher education which deals with the communicative employment of the spoken word. It is broadly interpreted to include all instruction and activity normally under the jurisdiction of the department of speech.

Oral interpretation. Oral interpretation is one subdivision of the broad area of speech. It is variously called oral reading, reading aloud, interpretative reading, and simply interpretation. In this study, oral interpretation refers to the process of communicating the reader's impression of the author's ideas and feelings to the eyes and ears of an audience in order that the audience may understand the ideas and experience the feelings necessary for an appreciation of the author's literary skill.

Extra-classroom. This adjective is employed variously to describe activities and practices, as well as other educational concerns, which normally lie outside the curriculum. That which is extra-classroom is outside classes.

Contests. By definition, contests are competitive.

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[1] J. Donald Butler, Four Philosophies (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1951), pp. 11-12.

The term is used in this study to indicate occasions when programs of individual oral reading experiences are presented, when those individual reading experiences are considered in comparison with each other, and when those experiences are ranked in a pattern of best, next best, and so on.

Festivals. In this study, festivals are understood to be non-competitive. They are those occasions when programs of individual reading experiences are presented with no effort to compare one with another and with no effort to achieve a ranking but with each reading experience evaluated individually.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

Chapter II begins with two assumptions: the need for a fundamental philosophy on the basis of which to proceed and the choice of that philosophy. A synopsis of the philosophy of pragmatism follows and is in turn succeeded by an examination of its implications for education. Then the place of speech in education is explored and the various approaches to the role of speech instruction are outlined. In this context, an effort is then made to determine the place of oral interpretation in the whole area of speech instruction.

Chapter III is devoted to some philosophic implications

identifiable in selected oral interpretation textbooks. The first group covers the period prior to 1900; the second and more intensive section deals with selected modern texts. Finally, there is an effort to synthesize and arrive at some modern philosophic implications for the teaching of oral interpretation.

Chapter IV analyzes some of the philosophic implications identifiable in the history of certain statewide extra-classroom activities in oral interpretation in Michigan colleges and universities from 1933 through 1950. In order to accomplish this task, an examination is first made of the provisions for the statewide contests. Participation records are studied in detail, and philosophic implications are recorded. Then the titles and authors of reading materials used are studied, and philosophic implications are derived from them. A similar study and search for implications are made in connection with the evaluation of contestants and the expenses of the contests. Contest rigidity and/or flexibility is explored. Finally a synthesis of the implications is attempted.

Chapter V is comparable to Chapter IV in method, but it treats statewide oral interpretation activities from 1951 through 1959. These activities were festivals rather than contests.

Chapter VI attempts to synthesize the findings of the

study. Information from philosophic writings and from text books is reviewed, and this information is compiled into a number of philosophic elements which seem tenable. Contests and festivals are examined in the light of these elements, and the implications of that examination are drawn.

CHAPTER II

INITIAL PREMISES OF THE STUDY

I. THREE ASSUMPTIONS

Need for basic philosophy. The first major concern of this chapter is the enunciation of a basic philosophy of higher education to serve as a vantage point from which specific problems in the teaching of oral interpretation may be considered. Since philosophy provides a comprehensive understanding of reality that can be implemented in educational methodology, education and philosophy are inescapably related.

There are four logical aspects of philosophy: metaphysics, epistemology, logic, and axiology. The relationship of philosophy to educational procedures may be determined with reference to each of these aspects.

Metaphysics is concerned with the kind of world in which we live. What is the character of the physical world? What is the nature of man? Is there a God and what is His nature? Is reality monistic, dual, or plural? What is existence?

Epistemology deals with the question of knowledge. Is it possible to know ultimate truths? What are the instruments whereby truths may be ascertained? Is direct knowledge

possible? What is man's sense-perceptual relation with the world? How important is man's theory of knowledge?

Logic, the third major phase of philosophy, involves the thought processes whereby knowledge is employed. Traditionally, logic has been largely deductive, but since the Renaissance man has increasingly used inductive processes.

The last great phase of philosophy is axiology, the study of theories of value. Philosophy is concerned with ethical, aesthetic, religious, and social values. In recent times the search for a common concept of value has been intensified.

The philosophical conclusions in each of these phases have profound relationships to educational practices. The relationship in each instance is essentially that of theory and speculation to practice. It is comparable to the relation of accepted moral principles to one's behavior. A comprehensive view of reality can lend direction and methodology to educational practice.

Butler believes that perhaps the most important connection between educational philosophy and practice lies in the area of the metaphysics of philosophy.[1] The nature of all reality, and of self in particular, determines the

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[1] J. Donald Butler, Four Philosophies (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1951), pp. 10-12.

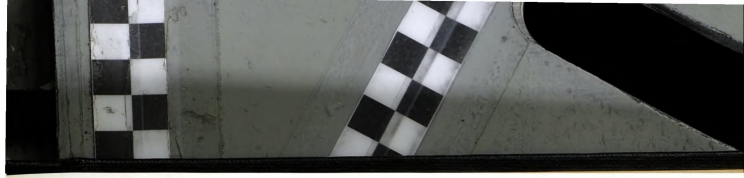
educational approach to the student. For example, the extent to which the self is considered a social reality determines to large degree both the choice of subject matter for the student and the emphasis. Are students primarily parts of the larger whole which is society? Is existence static or fluid?

Epistemologically speaking, the educational philosophy suggests whether knowledge is to be considered fixed or ever changing. In this phase a philosophy will also suggest the sound means of securing knowledge. What are the comparative values of authoritarian versus sense-perceptual sources of knowledge?

A teacher's philosophical conclusions in the realm of logic will help him determine the relative usefulness of deductive thought processes and those which are inductive.

Axiology will help to determine the objectives of the educational process. Should education be concerned with the improvement of the human organism? Should education be concerned with the betterment of society? Pragmatism is especially concerned with axiology, and the pragmatist is largely governed by this consideration.

It is therefore the first premise of this study that educational philosophy bears significant and inescapable relationships to educational practices. That philosophy is meaningful to the degree that it is actually functional.



Once tentative conclusions are reached in each of the four areas of a philosophy, the educator proceeds to explore what those conclusions imply for the actual process of teaching.

Philosophy chosen. A second assumption is necessarily made at this point: the basic philosophy of higher education chosen to underly this study is pragmatism. This choice is, of course, not the only one possible. Alternatives are naturalism, idealism, and realism--to name only the largest and perhaps most distinctive labels. It will serve no useful purpose here to attempt to justify the choice of pragmatism. It will suffice to say that the philosophy commonly indicated by this term is perhaps the least rigid, the most responsive to changing circumstances of all philosophic thought.

Philosophy relevant to extra-classroom situations. A final premise is assumed at this point: whatever implications an educational philosophy may have for education practices are equally valid for classroom and extra-classroom situations. Both classroom and extra-classroom activities are taken to be deliberately educational endeavors.

II. SYNOPSIS OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF PRAGMATISM

Epistemology. A synopsis of idealism properly begins with a study of its metaphysics, for that aspect of philosophy is basic to idealism. On the contrary, pragmatism is to a

generous degree an epistemological philosophy: in a sense it is concerned primarily with the method of knowledge. As a theory of knowledge, pragmatism does not begin with assumed universal truths nor with an empirically derived body of truths.[2] Durant says that pragmatism defines truth as the "cash-value of an idea."[3]

> The true . . . is only the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as 'the right' is only the expedient in the way of our behaving. Expedient is almost any fashion; and expedient in the long run and on the whole, of course; for what meets expediently all the experiences in sight won't necessarily meet all further experiences equally satisfactorily. . . . Truth is one species of good, and not, as is usually supposed, a category distinct from good, and coordinate with it. The true is the name of whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief.[4]

Pragmatism does not ask where an idea comes from or what its premises are. Instead, pragmatism examines the results of the idea: it "shifts the emphasis and looks forward"; it is "the attitude of looking away from first things, principles, 'categories,' supposed necessities, and of looking towards last things, fruits, consequences, facts."[5]

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[2] Ibid., p. 423.

[3] Will Durant, The Story of Philosophy (New York: Garden City Publishing Company, 1927), p. 557.

[4] William James, Pragmatism (New York: Garden City Publishing Company, 1927), pp. 222, 75, 53, 45.

[5] Ibid., p. 54.

Pragmatism begins not by asking what a thing may be or whence it derived, but rather, what are its consequences. Durant says that in this fashion pragmatism "turns the face of thought to action and the future."[6]

The steps in the pragmatic method of knowledge have been outlined as follows: First, human experience consists of a series of obstacles. Each obstacle demands that something new or different be done. Second, the response to an obstacle may determine a new direction for experience, affecting all subsequent experiences. Third, the proper response to such an obstacle is the intelligent and systematic consideration of all relevant data. Fourth, this data should be examined for the discovery of a possible direction or directions, sometimes called hypotheses, for subsequent experiences. Fifth, the testing of hypotheses is the final step. A "truth" has been discovered when the obstacle is overcome in a fashion which seems to hold out the greatest promise for succeeding experiences.[7] Perhaps pragmatism is merely the conscious formulation of what has gone on in human experience since the beginning.

Metaphysics. To formulate the metaphysics implied by

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[6]Durant, op. cit., p. 558.

[7]Butler, op. cit., pp. 428-429.

the methodology just outlined may not be necessary. John Dewey himself said that "the chief characteristic of the pragmatic notion of reality is precisely that no theory of Reality in general . . . is possible or needed."[8] Butler,[8a] however, outlines the metaphysics of pragmatism in the following ten statements:

1. The world is all foreground.
2. The world is characterized by change.
3. The world is precarious.
4. The world is incomplete and indeterminate.
5. The world is pluralistic.
6. The world has ends within its own process.
7. The world does not include a transempirical reality.
8. Man is continuous with the world.
9. Man is not an active cause in the world.
10. The world does not guarantee progress.

Obviously, these statements could bear enlargement, but it will not be attempted here.

Logic. An understanding of the logic of pragmatism may well begin by recognizing that Dewey has insisted that

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[8]John Dewey, Creative Intelligence (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1917), p. 55.

[8a]Butler, op. cit., p. 453.

Aristotelian logic is so completely unsuitable for the twentieth century that scarcely any effectiveness can be expected to result from its use. Being adequate to the ancient Greek world, it is inadequate to our world.[9] The Greek lived in a "bounded and closed" system of Nature.[10] Modern man conceives of physical reality as an open system with constant change and movement: modern natural science describes reality as "changes formulated in correspondence with one another."[11]

Dewey thinks that the logic of modern man ought to do for him what the logic of Aristotle did for the ancient Greek. Aristotle's logic "included in a single unified scheme the contents of both the common sense and the science of his day."[12] Dewey defines the new logic as "a unified theory of inquiry through which the authentic pattern of experimental and operational inquiry in science shall become available for regulation of the habitual methods by which inquiries in the field of common sense are carried on."[13]

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[9] John Dewey, Logic, the Theory of Inquiry (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1938), p. 65.

[10] Ibid., p. 93.

[11] Loc. cit.

[12] Ibid., pp. 95-96.

[13] Ibid., p. 98.

As has been seen, the epistemology of pragmatism is a five step method. The logic of pragmatism is a form of inquiry involving activity, problem, observation of data, formulation of hypotheses, and testing of hypotheses.[14] These outline the experimental method. A problematic situation arises in experience; it is a part of living, not at first an intellectual concept. Then this situation passes from the indeterminate stage and is formulated as a problem. The next stage is the development of possible solutions which are indigenous ideational-existent emergents. Solutions may often relate to kindred situations but must never be applied blindly. All ideas are considered from the standpoint of their operational character. The logical process is complete only when the proposed solutions are tested until a satisfactory one is found.

Axiology. No view of a philosophy approaches completeness without an examination of its systems of values. The axiology of pragmatism is not definable in terms of final or ultimate values. To the pragmatist, values exist only in relation to individual-social activities.[15] Those values may be judged in the perspective of the present problematic

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[14] Ibid., pp. 428-429.

[15] Butler, op. cit., p. 444.

situation in which a value selection is to be made and in the perspective of possible future situations to which the resolution of the present problem may eventually lead. The first perspective is roughly equivalent to a desire fulfillment, but the second asks whether the proposed solution may mortgage future situations. A solution must not only solve the present problem satisfactorily but must permit successive experiences to flow in satisfactory patterns.[16]

III. PRAGMATIC PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION

Point of view. It is from the point of view of this non-rigid, process-oriented, cash-value-of-an-idea philosophy that certain textbooks and practices in the teaching of oral interpretation are to be examined. Approached from a different vantage point, these texts and practices might be seen differently; however, some point of view is inescapable, and pragmatism is the one chosen here. The following are some generalized considerations of education from that point of view.

The pupil. The pragmatist has a distinctive concept of the pupil. First of all, the pupil exists in a context. The pragmatist seems to define that context as an all-embracing

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[16] Ibid., pp. 445-447.

river of experience, a world in process.[17] The pupil is an individuated aspect of the same life process that embraces all reality. As such, he is a part of the process transpiring in the classroom but also of the larger process of all reality.[18] However, that pupil is a unique, distinct individual. He is a physical reality first of all, a physical unit, an organism in process himself. Secondly, he is in the constant process of becoming more than a physical reality, for he is at once a value-giving reality. By means of language, this individual is a part of the larger stream of reality and is in communication with other aspects of that reality both past and present. In this process of communication he achieves an experience of self-hood. It is perhaps not too much to say that the pragmatist conceives communication to be the primary means whereby man becomes more than a physical reality.[19]

Objectives. Like any educator, the pragmatist must define educational objectives. He regards the formulation of a general all-inclusive objective as so difficult as to

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[17] Irving J. Lee, Language Habits in Human Affairs (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941), pp. 69-84.

[18] John Dewey, Creative Intelligence (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1917), p. 36.

[19] Butler, op. cit., pp. 462-464.

be virtually impossible. At best the pragmatist, viewing education as a continuing series of adjustments, may say that "the general objective of education is more education."[20] Another way of saying this is that the proper role of education is to give the pupil "experiences in effective experiencing."[21] The most that the pupil carries away from the educational experience is practice in coping effectively with problem situations. We may say that the closest we can come to enunciation of an overall objective of education as the pragmatist sees it is "social efficiency." This "social efficiency" is not to be defined in the narrow sense but rather broadly enough to include what often is called the cultural values of a liberal education.[22]

It should be recognized, however, that this emphasis upon "experience in experiencing" tends to reduce the status of purely academic content as it may be taught in the traditional classroom. The pragmatist tends to question the value of learning for its own sake, of content that must be mastered simply because it is part of the wisdom of the ages. Learning must be functional both in the immediate and succeeding

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[20] Ibid., p. 462.

[21] Ibid., pp. 462-463.

[22] John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), Chap. IX.

situations.[23]

This brief analysis of educational objectives as conceived by the pragmatist must include the concept of teaching the whole pupil. He is an individuated being, a whole. His intellectual nature, for example, cannot be isolated and taught alone. Education must be concerned with the development of the whole.[24]

The process. To the pragmatist, the educational process has two sides. The first and basic side is the psychological. The individual's powers provide the starting: any other point of departure tends to produce education which is pressure from without the individual. The second aspect of education is the sociological. Here the individual's powers must be translated in terms of his culture because he lives in a cultural milieu and looks toward a future cultural milleiu. The psychological and sociological sides of education must, however, exist together. In a democratic and unpredictable world it is not possible to prepare the individual for any precise social situation. It therefore follows that to prepare the pupil for the future is to give him a command of himself, to help him to achieve the powers of

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[23] Butler, op. cit., pp. 458-461.

[24] Loc. cit.

judgment and action which to some degree may be equal to the challenges of the future. In this way the two apparently conflicting aspects of education, the psychological and sociological, become one.[25]

The method to be employed in this psychological-sociological process of education is often called the experimental method. It is essentially the method of all informal learning. "The important thing is that thinking is the method of an educative experience. The essentials of method are therefore identical with the essentials of reflection."[26]

The educative process "always begins in the midst of movement and activity."[27] To be truly effective, the process must always have its origins in a stream of experiences which is already flowing. Such a process is therefore the essence of flexibility.

At the beginning of the process, interests are of primary importance. According to pragmatism, interests are not elements which are brought to learning either by teacher or pupil; they are not a froth or foam which is churned up by

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[25] William H. Kilpatrick, "Dewey's Influence on Education," Paul Arthur Schilpp, editor, The Philosophy of John Dewey (Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1939), pp. 445-473.

[26] John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), p. 192.

[27] Butler, op. cit., p. 464.

clever teaching devices. They are rooted in the relation of the student to the tensions of his experience, and are therefore more to be discovered by the teacher than made by him.

The logic of pragmatism already examined in the forepart of this chapter suggests the stages of the learning process as the pragmatist sees them: recognition of a problem, examination of its indeterminacies, the formulation of hypotheses for its solution, and the resolution of the problem in which the new hypothetical patterns are put to the test of action. Ultimately that hypothesis is accepted which is found to produce satisfactory results without endangering the favorable outcome of later experiences.[28]

Implications for method. The concept of the pupil, the objectives of the educative process, and the nature of the process itself as just outlined have certain philosophic implications for educational method. Kilpatrick[29] and Butler[30] agree that perhaps the most obvious implication for educational method is that it should be less formal than it was in the pre-Dewey period. Pragmatism, or experimentalism as it is also called, has thus tended to produce "a practical

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[28] Ibid., pp. 464-466.

[29] Kilpatrick, loc. cit.

[30] Butler, op. cit., p. 466.

and experimental revolt against coldly formalized teaching procedures."[31] Perhaps the most lasting of all the insights pragmatism has provided is that the cycle of learning is not as mechanical as once thought and that many of the learning schedules education has employed are unjustified.

Additional and more specific implications of pragmatism for educational method are also apparent.[32] The ideal unit of study is unlikely to be a given course or period but an area determined by the nature of the experiences involved. Stimulating, creative, and constructive projects are likely to be heavily employed in the pragmatic practice of education. Orderly and purposeful group discussion will be emphasized not only as a means to the achievement of a solution to the present problem situation but also as a skill useful in subsequent situations. In the method implied by pragmatic philosophy, facts and the other normal ingredients of subject matter will not be of primary importance but will nevertheless be quite essential as requisites of experience. Facts will not stand alone but will be employed for their in-situation-value. "Knowledge of the past is the key to understanding

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[31] Loc. cit.

[32] Butler, op. cit., pp. 464-467.

the present."[33] Instruction will be based upon individual needs and capacities and will be ordered to pupil development, not according to some system of knowledge. That instruction will be directed to the social competence as well as the personal adequacy of the pupil: it therefore follows that classroom situations must be life-like.

The pragmatic philosophy suggests that pupil activities will play a major role. Those activities should involve a maximum number of pupils for a maximum amount of time. Indeed, the curriculum would appear to be activity-centered rather than subject-centered. These activities, however, must not be pointless. "Every experience should do something to prepare a person for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality. . . ."[34] Every experience is a moving force. Its value can be judged only on the ground of what it moves toward and into."[35] This suggests, of course, that activity is properly accompanied by evaluation and criticism.

It should also be noted that the pragmatist seems to bear constantly in mind that he must reach all pupils and

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[33]John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), p. 31.

[34]John Dewey, Experience and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), p. 31.

[35]Ibid., p. 47.

that he is building toward a cooperative, integrated society where concerted attention to problems rather than to competition among individuals or groups is the rule.[36] This society toward which he builds is not so much an end in itself as a method. He thinks "we cannot cure our social ills with wholesale ideas, magnificent generalizations like individualism or order, democracy or monarchy or aristocracy, or what not."[37] He concludes that each problem must be met with specific hypotheses and no universal theory, except perhaps the theory that problems can be solved and that society need not be in conflict.

IV. THE PLACE OF SPEECH IN EDUCATION

Misconceptions of the role of speech instruction. Having enunciated a philosophy of education, it seems wise next to ask what is the place of speech instruction in education generally and in higher education in particular. Two prominent spokesmen of the School of Speech of Northwestern University[38] undertake to define the role of speech instruction

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[36] George Raymond Geiger, "Dewey's Social and Political Philosophy," Paul Arthur Schilpp, editor, The Philosophy of John Dewey (Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1939), pp. 335-368.

[37] Durant, op. cit., p. 573.

[38] James H. McBurney and Ernest J. Wrage, The Art of Good Speech (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1953), pp. 14-15.

by first explaining what it is not. They say that certain misconceptions must be dispelled before any clear understanding of the speech role can be achieved.

Speech is not "mere rhetoric." It is not pretty phrases and hollow platitudes without meaning or substance. McBurney and Wrage reject thirteenth century Alain de Lille's concept that the arts, including speech, are attractive vehicles to carry knowledge in its service of mankind. The modern role of speech cannot be one of mere decorative finery existent merely to enhance the rest of a man's education.

Neither can we accept the more modern idea that speech is a study of spoken sounds and visible employment of the body. It is not merely a matter of laryngeal exercise and body contortion.

A third false conception of speech which we must reject is that it is exhibitionism. This means that speech is not primarily a performance, not an exhibit of measurable skills to be carefully cultivated and exactly used.

Finally, it is imperative that we reject the very modern idea that speech is a means of exploiting one's fellow men. Unfortunately this misconception is rather widespread: Improve your speech and you will thus enable yourself to take advantage of others, to sell yourself.

In short, McBurney and Wrage refuse to regard the speech arts as sophistry nor instruction in those arts as

fancy fringes, mere exercises, the means to exhibitionism, or a kind of crude salesmanship.

Sound conceptions of the role of speech instruction. Then what is the role of the speech curriculum? Karl Wallace, modern rhetorician, says that the proper focus of "the field of speech" should be the "act of communication."[39] Andrew Weaver calls speech "social adaptation through reciprocal stimulation," which is to say that the central role is communication.[40] Lillywhite thinks that the role of speech is to provide a conception of the process of communication while avoiding the impression that techniques are things of value in themselves.[41] Dr. Wallace concurs in this point of view when he says that the teaching of speech involves more than the principles, methods, techniques, and history of communication, for in speech we deal with human beings in their most human aspects.[42] We may thus combine these contributions to conclude that the proper role of the speech

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[39]Karl Wallace, "The Field of Speech, 1953, An Overview," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 40:117-129, April, 1954.

[40]Andrew T. Weaver, "The Case for Speech," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 25:185, April, 1939.

[41]Herold Lillywhite, "A Re-evaluation of Speech Objectives," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 33:505-508, December, 1947.

[42]Karl Wallace, "Education and Speech Education Tomorrow," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 36:177-183, April, 1950.

curriculum is the cultivation of effective communication, taking care to avoid overemphasis upon any of the several lesser aspects of speech training.

The role may, perhaps, be more adequately conceived if we consult Craig Baird.[43] He writes that the functions of the speech curriculum may be most completely expressed in terms of four guiding principles. First, speech instruction must give constant attention to the fulfillment of individual communication needs of students to the degree that their capacities seem to indicate. Second, such instruction must promote social integration in terms of the whole society. Third, speech classes must be concerned with providing the students with a means for the reconstruction of experience. Fourth, the role of the speech curriculum dictates that there must be provision for constant experimentation in and evaluation of the teaching process. It is notable that these guiding principles are consistent with the pragmatic philosophy outlined earlier.

V. APPROACHES TO THE ROLE OF SPEECH INSTRUCTION

Approaches prior to this century. Alan Monroe[44] outlines

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[43]Craig Baird, "The Educational Philosophy of the Teacher of Speech," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 24:545-553, December, 1938.

[44]Alan H. Monroe, Principles and Types of Speech (New York: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1955), pp. 43-51.

the various approaches to the study of speech as they have been undertaken by teachers through the centuries. He lists three approaches in the period prior to 1900; the rhetorical, the mechanistic, and the dynamic self-expression.

The rhetorical approach is derived from the influence of classical rhetoric. The great scholars of ancient Greece and Rome gave particular attention to the study of speaking and in this area produced some of the world's greatest writings. Corax, a Greek of the fifth century B.C., produced treatises on speech organization and on the uses of evidence to establish probability. Plato (427-347 B.C.) studied the oratory of Athens and wrote the Dialogues disparaging rhetorical trickery, calling for ethical rhetoric, recognizing the importance of the speaker's knowing human behavior, and further developing the principles of speech composition. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) studied under Plato and wrote the Rhetoric, the first systematic and comprehensive presentation of the subject in all history. The book remains today a thoroughly usable treatise and is basic to most of what has been written since. Cicero (106-43 B.C.) was a distinguished Roman orator and student of his art. This Roman educator wrote twelve books which present an entire course of study for the education of the speaker and called the course Institutes of Oratory. From the writings of these five men have come most of the principles of the rhetorical art and the basis for the

rhetorical approach to the teaching of speech.

That approach is characterized by an emphasis upon the speech itself rather than upon delivery: it focuses upon form, content, logic, structure, and style. Sometimes in this approach to the study of speech both the speaker and the audience are forgotten. Of course, mastery of speech form is inevitably an important part of speech instruction.

The late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries saw the clear development of a mechanistic approach to the teaching of speech. Among those most responsible for this approach were John Walker, who set up rules for the employment of the vocal and visible elements of speaking; Austin, who devised a system of notation for any variation in expression; James Rush, physician, whose Philosophy of the Human Voice attempted to codify all aspects of the speaking voice; and Francois Delsarte, who assumed that the training of the voice and body was the most important aspect of teaching speech. As these brief characterizations of the various contributors indicate, this approach employs the mechanics of speaking as the core of the curriculum.

The last of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth brought a natural reaction to the mechanical emphasis of Walker, Austin, Rush, and Delsarte: this reaction was the "think-the-thought-school" of Samuel Curry, who founded a "School of Expression" in Boston. Dr. Curry's

students were encouraged to fill themselves so full of the facts, ideas, and feelings to be communicated that expression would be spontaneous and individual. Some followers have gone further than Curry and indicated that no instruction in method is necessary.

Both the mechanistic and the "think-the-thought" approach will be explained further in the next chapter because they are a part of the development of a philosophy of teaching oral interpretation specifically.

Approaches in this century. The physiological approach has sprung from our growing knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the speaking mechanism. It is characterized by an early study of the parts of the human body which are involved in the making of speech sounds. Speech correction is a derivative of this approach.

The phonetic approach is distinguished by its emphasis upon speech sounds as phenomena of physics. Phoneticians emphasize pronunciation, dialects, and the factors that influence both.

The acoustic approach is also an outgrowth of modern technical study, particularly that of the physics of sound. Concern with the employment of electronic reproductive and amplifying devices is typical of the acoustic approach to the teaching of speech.

The growing influence of psychology in twentieth century education has made its impact upon the teaching of speech. Text authors Winans, Phillips, and Woolbert especially show the effects of an increasing awareness of psychological principles. In general this approach has brought greater emphasis upon audience-speaker relationships and upon a study of attitudes. If there is a central thesis of the psychological approach, it seems to be that speech is not an exhibition, but is rather an act of communication.

An eclectic approach. Dr. Monroe provides the basis for much of the preceding survey of the various approaches to the teaching of speech and in addition is largely responsible for the following statement of an eclectic approach.[45] He says, "No one of these viewpoints stands alone in the United States today. The modern study of speech comprises a judicious blending of the useful aspects of each of them. We are less concerned today with subscribing to a 'school of thought,' or to a limiting study in one area of the field than we are in learning what is true and useful, and in developing a breadth of knowledge and a high level of skill." This eclectic approach is not complete without recognition of the social significance of speech. Murray, Barnard, and Garland say, ". . . we may use speech in varying degrees either to build

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[45] Loc. cit.

human achievements or to destroy them. In other words, speech represents an instrument of tremendous power and potential utility for human benefit, if we use it properly."[46] "It is through speech . . . that men can, if they will, keep on transforming their lives from brute, teeth-and-claw existence into peaceful concerted action which produces benefits for all."[47]

Briefly, then, we may characterize a modern eclectic approach to the teaching of speech as a concern for the basic process of communication achievable through a sound psychological approach and measurable in terms of both the individual's skills and the responses of the society of which he is a part. This approach employs the contributions of the rhetoricians, the exponents of the mechanistic approach, the followers of the "think-the-thought-school," the physiologist, the phonetician, the acoustician, and the psychologist. It is essentially a functional approach.

VI. THE PLACE OF ORAL INTERPRETATION IN THE WHOLE AREA OF SPEECH INSTRUCTION

The central purpose of this study is confined to one

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[46] Elwood Murray, Raymond H. Barnard, and J. V. Garland, Integrative Speech (New York: The Dryden Press, 1953), p. 33.

[47] Ibid., p. 45.

of the divisions of the total speech area, namely oral interpretation. It is therefore appropriate to ask at this stage, "What is the place of oral interpretation in the whole area of speech instruction?" This is fundamentally a question about the objectives of the study of oral interpretation and as such will be extensively explored in the next chapter when textbooks in this area are examined.

Dr. Charlotte Lee[48] has recognized that, while every phase of speech instruction is concerned primarily with communication by voice and body, not exhibitionism, oral interpretation is distinguished from the rest by the type of material which may be handled and by the manner of presentation. Normally the interpreter employs material which someone else has written. He is not to be confused with the actor, who employs the material with the theatre as a medium, and acts his part. The interpreter is a middleman, an instrument, who presents the whole rather than one of the parts, and who uses suggestion so that his hearers can re-create the situations and characters in their minds and feelings. In addition Dr. Lee emphasizes that oral interpretation is a service agency to other specialties. It shares common communicative principles. It also is often employed as a part of public address. The place of interpretation in the

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[48]Charlotte I. Lee, Oral Interpretation (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952), pp. 4-5.

larger speech curriculum is secure.

VII. SUMMARY

Inasmuch as education and philosophy are inescapably related, a philosophy has been chosen as a point of approach to the basic problem of this study. That philosophy, which is pragmatism, has been summarized and its implications for education in general explored. Sound instruction in speech and a modern eclectic approach to that instruction have been found consistent with those implications. Finally, it has been noted that the study of oral interpretation is an integral part of the program of speech education.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF SOME PHILOSOPHIC IMPLICATIONS IDENTIFIABLE IN SELECTED ORAL INTERPRETATION TEXTBOOKS

I. PHILOSOPHIES IN THE TEACHING OF ORAL INTERPRETATION PRIOR TO 1900

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the teaching of oral interpretation or elocution, as it was then called, seems to have been dominated by two quite different educational philosophies, both of which derived apparently from European influences.

Mechanical school about 1800. John Locke had articulated a concept of human reason as the ultimate source of wisdom as opposed to theology and its revelation of truth. The mind was thought to be composed of a number of faculties, such as imagination, memory, and will, each capable of indefinite improvement. It was therefore incumbent upon the teacher to provide the student the proper intellectual fare so that his faculties would develop to their fullest capacity. Education required the cultivation of mental discipline. The followers of Locke tended to create rather mechanical methods of teaching.[1]

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[1] J. Donald Butler, Four Philosophies and Their Practice in Education and Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), pp. 275-394.

In elocution the influence of the realism of John Locke and others seems to have produced the Mechanical School. Among its leaders were John Walker, James Burgh, William Scott, and Gilbert Austin. Walker's Elements of Elocution, published in 1781, is filled with rules for pause, inflection, modulation, and gestures. He published at least seven other books all dominated by a strictly mechanical-skills approach to the study of oral language. Burgh's one book bears a title which is eloquent testimony to his emphasis upon mechanics: The Art of Speaking, containing an Essay in which are given Rules for Expressing properly the Principal Passions and Humours, which occur in Reading, or Public Speaking, taken from the Ancients and Moderns; exhibiting a variety of matter for Practice; the Emphatical Words printed in Italics; with notes of Direction referring to the Essay. 1762. Scott drew on both Walker and Burgh but went beyond them in working out mechanical methods. He went so far as to advocate that the right arm be raised at the beginning of a sentence and lowered at the end, the left arm be raised for the next sentence, and this method of alternating action from one side to the other continued throughout the speech.[2] Rev. Gilbert Austin was interested primarily in gesture and followed the methods of the Mechanical School in devising

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[2]William Scott, Lessons in Elocution (Leicester: Honri Brown, 1817), p. 10.

notations for any variation in expression.[3] He illuminated his book, which was called Chironomia; or a Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery: Comprehending Many precepts both Ancient and Modern for the proper regulation of the Voice, the Countenance, and Gesture, with one hundred twenty-two steel engravings illustrating all the body movements and positions indicated by the symbols.

Natural school about 1800. The second body of educational philosophy which seems to have influenced the teaching of elocution at the turn of the century is the naturalism of Jean Jacques Rousseau and others. It deplored standardization of rules for education and depended heavily upon nature to direct its own development. Rousseau developed his philosophy in the Emile. He sought to shift the emphasis from the subject matter to the individual being taught. He thought that the impulse for mental growth must come from within and that a teacher's function was to promote such growth.[4] Locke expressed similar ideas to the effect that "education can only be effective when adapted to the learner,"[5]

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[3]Gilbert Austin, Chironamia (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1806), Chap. 4.

[4]Jean Jacques Rousseau, Emile (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1943), pp. 1-10.

[5]William Boyd, From Locke to Montessori (London: George H. Harrap, 1914), p. 45.

but it would seem that in Locke the reference to the internal factors in education was casual while in Rousseau it was fundamental.

Educators who followed Rousseau were eager to liberalize the curriculum: they sought to add more science, modern languages, and literature. They thought the sanctity of the old curriculum not inviolate. In method too they were different: they desired to follow natural laws rather than a mental discipline which emphasized rules and mechanics.

Under the impetus of the teachings of Rousseau arose the Natural School of elocution. Sheridan, Cockin, and Porter were among its leaders. Thomas Sheridan, an English school teacher, is known to the theatre as the father of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who wrote The School for Scandal and The Rivals. He taught for ten years in English and Scottish universities, acted, gave programs of readings for London audiences, and wrote five significant books having to do with elocution.[6] He warned against artificialities in speaking and reading and set forth the thesis that good delivery is based upon natural conversational style:

> There cannot be a better clue to guide us to the source of the malady complained of, (poor delivery) than a due attention to an observation before made: 'That there are few persons, who, in private company, do not deliver their sentiments with propriety and

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[6]Sidney Lee (ed.), Dictionary of National Biography (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1899), vol. 18, pp. 887-88.

> force in their manner, whenever they speak in earnest.' Consequently here is a sure standard fixed for propriety and force in public speaking; which is, only to make use of the same manner in the one, as in the other.[7]

William Cockin in The Art of Delivering Written Language, published in 1775, shows himself even more apprehensive than Sheridan regarding mechanical methods in elocution. He called for an end to all gesture, facial expression, and even appreciably expressive tone. He seems to have feared the artificiality which might come with too much attention to the outward expression of meaning.[8] Rev. Ebenezer Porter was a somewhat less enthusiastic member of the Natural School: he believed in rules but wanted to simplify as much as possible.[9] In the preface to his book, Analysis of the Principles of Rhetorical Delivery as Applied in Reading and Speaking, he makes the following statement of his position:

> The worst faults in elocution, originate in want of feeling. But when these faults become confirmed, no degree of feeling will fully counteract their influence, without the aid of analysis and patient effort to understand and correct them. Still, in the

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[7]Thomas Sheridan, Course of Lectures on Elocution (London: J. Dodsley, 1796), p. 19.

[8]William Cockin, The Art of Delivering Written Language (London: J. Dodsley, 1775), p. 12.

[9]Ebenezer Porter, Analysis of Vocal Inflections as Used in Reading and Speaking (Andover: Flagg and Gould, 1824), p. 9.

> process of correction there is danger of running into formality, of manner, by withdrawing the attention from that in which the soul of eloquence consists--emotion.[10]

In general the teaching of oral interpretation of literature at the opening of the last century responded to the two dominant educational trends of the period. The Mechanical School made little allowance for any personal elements but taught that strict adherence to rules would guarantee uniformly good results. By contrast the Natural School stressed the importance of the individual's natural capacity and imagination.

Development of philosophies, 1800-1900. One of the two most influential figures in the teaching of elocution in American colleges and universities in the course of the nineteenth century was James Rush, M.D. He wrote just one volume on elocution: The Philosophy of the Human Voice Embracing Its Physiological History; together with a System of Principles, by which Criticism in the Art of Elocution May Be Rendered Inteligible, and Instruction, Definite and Comprehensive, to Which Is Added A Brief Analysis of Song and Recitative. This book was first published in 1827, but its eventually great influence was slow to develop, as indicated in the author's preface to the second edition published

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[10] Ibid., p. 1.

in 1833, in which he said that his system had been adopted by only Yale and Cambridge. Successive editions were forthcoming in 1844, 1855, 1866, and 1879; this fact is only one of the evidences of the wide acceptance of The Philosophy of the Human Voice.[11] There appears to have been a small circulation after the fourth edition and a much larger one after the sixth edition.[12]

In general the book is an attempt to discuss in scientific terms the use of voice in speaking and reading and to devise appropriate methods for the teaching of such use of the voice. Dr. Rush sought to create a systematic treatment of the speaking voice similar to the system currently used in the study of music.[13] He attempted to observe, to categorize, and to devise new and more descriptive terminology for every aspect of the speaking voice. Actually he often used old terms and might be said by modern standards to have approached the pseudoscientific. Everywhere in The Philosophy he sought to provide a final absolute authority in his subject.

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[11]James Rush, The Philosophy of the Human Voice (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company, 1879), pp. xiii-xiiii.

[12]Garrett H. Leverton, "The Philosophy of the Human Voice by James Rush: An Analysis and Evaluation" (unpublished Master's thesis, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, 1925), p. 9.

[13]Rush, op. cit., p. 502.

In Section XLIX entitled "Of the Means of Instruction in Elocution," he says that he "would frame a didactic system of elementary exercises" for the absolute achievement of effective elocution.[14] He sets up thirty-six categories of exercises with such detailed inclusions as tremor, semitone, mimicry, mouthing, concrete movement, and seven distinct faults in melody.[15] He conceives his objective to be the creation of "an observative and universal school of Elocution."[16] This objective can be achieved, he believes, because he has provided the "Universal Rules of Speech."[17] In these rules he says he has reduced "the seeming infinity to computable numbers."[18]

There seems in the book a pervading tendency to deplore the teachings of the "Natural Manner." The author attributes any defense that others make of the Natural School to an ignorance of the scientific realities of the speaking voice.[19] Characterizing his system as "this elementary, and

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[14] Ibid., p. 483.

[15] Loc. cit., p. 483 ff.

[16] Ibid., p. 475.

[17] Ibid., p. 479.

[18] Ibid., p. 500

[19] Ibid., p. 517.

only successful method of teaching the otherwise unteachable esthetic art of speech,"[20] Rush instructs the student to begin actual oral reading only when he has completely familiarized himself with the whole system of rules and principles.

The critical reader may also sense in The Philosophy of the Human Voice a certain defensiveness: for example, there is the admission in the seventh edition that critics have called the Rush system "stilted and ostentatious," and "Theatric and formal."[21] Subsequently, the author does concede that "No one can read correctly or with elegance, if he does not both perceve and 'feel,' as it is called, what he utters; but these are not exclusively the means of success."[22] It would seem that he differed with his critics primarily in the relative degree of emphasis.

One other gleaning might be derived from a study of The Philosophy in relation to a philosophic approach to the teaching of elocution or oral interpretation. Dr. Rush believed that the accomplished actor should be the best and "all-sufficient Master" of elocutionary skills.[23] This

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[20] Ibid., p. 501.

[21] Ibid., p. 516.

[22] Ibid., p. 518.

[23] Ibid., p. 559.

suggests the concept that oral interpretation is a performance, an exhibition.

An influential force in this nineteenth century period was the public school textbooks in reading. According to Robb, they were generally the product of the mechanical school and of the influence of Rush and Walker.[24] Among these texts were McGuffey's Eclectic Readers, published in 1836, 1844, 1851, and 1901. There were at least six series, which were revised as many as five times each. Tousey records that the American Book Company claims to have sold 122,000,000 copies of various McGuffeys between 1836 and 1921.[25] It is notable that McGuffey embodied some rebellion against the mechanical school and its imitative method of teaching. He constantly stressed that meaning must be conveyed to the audience. He defined the purpose of oral reading as the communication of "either the reader's or the author's thought, utilizing only those properties of voice and gesture as required for common speech."[26]

A number of teachers of elocution wrote textbooks in the period of the influence of Dr. James Rush. Some were

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[24]Mary Margaret Robb, Oral Interpretation of Literature in American Colleges and Universities (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1941), p. 104.

[25]Gail Jordan Tousey, "McGuffey's Elocutionary Teachings," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 34:80-87, February, 1948.

[26]Ibid.

based entirely upon him; some acknowledged earlier writers also; and a few others made their own unique contributions. Among the more prominent are Dr. Jonathan Barber, Andrew Comstock, Dr. C. P. Bronson, Merritt Caldwell, William Russell, Henry N. Day, James E. Murdock, J. H. McIlvaine, and Dr. Robert McLain Cumnock.[27]

Dr. Barber, like Rush, was a physician. His book, A Grammar of Elocution,[28] is a compilation of the ideas he found useful in teaching at Yale College. Class techniques apparently included extended practice in the correct production of each vocal element. Evidently his methods excited some ridicule, and he was forced to resign from the Yale staff.[29] He was not a popular teacher, but at least one student found his classes valuable: Wendell Phillips attributed his skills to Barber.[30]

Another significant text writer of the period was Andrew Comstock, who published A System of Elocution in 1841. It seems to have been designed for the special elocution schools which were to become so common a little later. For

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[27] Robb, op. cit., pp. 105-121.

[28] Jonathan Barber, A Grammar of Elocution (New Haven: A. Maltby, 1830), p. 1.

[29] Robb, op. cit., p. 107.

[30] James Murdock, A Plea for Spoken Language (New York: Van Antwerp, Bragg and Company, 1833), pp. 101-102.

Comstock, elocution must have been a kind of panacea for all ills. He was said to develop good readers in thirty-six lessons, which consisted of vocal gymnastics and gesture. His system, stemming largely from Rush, involved extensive exercises carefully divided into patterned measures.[31] He thought speech a curative for sundry bodily ills.

Dr. C. P. Bronson, in Elocution, also regarded speech training as a therapy for poor health and stressed the nature and role of deep breathing habits. While he exercised the same penchant for a so-called scientific approach that characterized Rush, Bronson is notable not so much as a follower of Rush as an exponent of the new emphasis upon physiology.[32] His major contribution to the developing area of elocutionary training seems to have been his emphasis upon breathing.

Merritt Caldwell and William Russell produced textbooks in the elocution area in the 1840's, and both seem to have been rather faithful followers of James Rush. However, Russell goes beyond both Rush and Caldwell in that he stresses the importance of mental attitude to a much greater degree. His suggestion for the use of conversation and illustrative

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[31] Andrew Comstock, A System of Elocution (Philadelphia: E. H. Butler, 1851), p. 13.

[32] Robb, op. cit., p. 110.

anecdotes as an introduction to oral reading sounds much like the advice of a modern text.[33]

Henry Day and James Murdock were both enthusiastic followers of the Rush tradition. Day attempted to simplify Rush for the student.[34] His text was The Art of Elocution, 1859, 1867. Murdock's text was Analytic Elocution, 1884.

Apparently the first text in elocution to develop a definitely psychological approach was J. H. McIlvaine's Elocution, published in 1870. McIlvanine tried to go beyond the "elements" laid down by Rush and to explore the deeper sources within the reader from which the life and spirit of delivery must be derived. He warns against an over-awareness of the rules of good speaking. This psychological emphasis is seen in the much greater attention he gives to the audience and to the reader's means of commanding their attention.[35]

Francois Delsarte, 1811-1871, was at once a product and an exponent of the florid extravagance of the nineteenth century. In his youth he sought to enter upon a musical

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[33] Ibid., pp. 115-116.

[34] Ibid., p. 116.

[35] Joshua H. McIlvaine, Elocution, the Sources and Elements of Its Power (New York: Scribner, 1870), p. 24.

career, but, according to Shaw,[36] faulty instructional method and direction impaired his voice. As a result of this misfortune, he became a vocal instructor and subsequently arrived at what he thought to be basic laws of all art. Shaw says, "He discovered and formulated the essential laws of all art; and, thanks to him, aesthetic science in our day has the same precision as mathematical science."[37]

Because Delsarte wrote no books, we must depend upon the writings of his many followers to tell us of his system. That system seems to have been unique in the history of elocution, although Delsarte has much in common with Rush. Apparently he taught that theology holds the key to knowledge: all nature, like the holy trinity, can be resolved into three fundamental parts. He divided every aspect of expression into a pattern of either three or nine. For example, he taught that there are three zones of the body: the torso or vital zone, the head or intellectual zone, and the face or moral zone. Movement is also divisible into three parts; the normal or movement about a center, eccentric or movement away from a center, and concentric or movement

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[36] M. L'Abbe Delaumosne, The Art of Oratory, System of Delsarte, trans. Frances Shaw (Albany: Edgar S. Werner, 1882), p. iii.

[37] Ibid., p. iv.

toward a center.[38]

Apparently, Delsarte believed overwhelmingly in the employment of rules and the assignment of terminology. With regard to the type of voice, his disciple, Delaumosne,[39] said "Its name must be known with absolute certainty. It would be shameful in a musician not to know the name of the instrument he uses." With regard to the public speaker Delaumosne said, "Whatever he does, he must be guided by fixed rules."[40]

Proceeding from the premise that "there is reason in everything, even when unknown to man,"[41] Delsarte attempted the prodigious task of codifying all the elements of public address. In pursuit of this task, he produced such truisms as the following. "The deep voice, with the eyes open, expresses worthy things. The deep voice, with the eyes closed, expresses odious things."[42] "The interjection and conjunction. . . . must always be followed by a silence."[43] If one wishes to prove his emotion, "he inspires after every

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[38] Ibid., passim.

[39] Ibid., p. 12.

[40] Ibid., p. 64.

[41] Ibid., p. 16.

[42] Ibid., p. 13.

[43] Ibid., p. 28.

word."[44] "A demonstration of affection is not made with a forward movement. If so, there is no love."[45] "Men of small brain habitually carry their heads high. The head is lowered in proportion to the quantity of intelligence."[46] "If a friend promises me a service with the thumb drawn inward, he deceives."[47]

This penchant for codification, as pursued by Delaumosne, produced a catalogue of eighty-one expressions of the eye,[48] an extensive index of head movements,[49] a computation of eight to nine hundred eye movements,[50] illustrated tables of the employment of the lips,[51] the nose,[52] the face,[53] the hand,[54]

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[44] Loc. cit.

[45] Delaumosne, op. cit., p. 54.

[46] Ibid., p. 71.

[47] Ibid., p. 110.

[48] Ibid., pp. 73-77.

[49] Ibid., pp. 66-67.

[50] Ibid., p. 76.

[51] Ibid., p. 81.

[52] Ibid., p. 82.

[53] Ibid., p. 83.

[54] Ibid., p. 94.

illustrations of nine basic positions of the legs with the meaning of each,[55] an "Inflective Medallion",[56] and a system of markings for use on manuscripts by which all visible actions of speech may be indicated.[57] In this vein, Delaumosne says, "We finally determine and class precisely five million movements of the different agents of the arm."[58]

Apparently the Delsartian system places no faith in the intelligence of an audience. Delaumosne said, "An audience is never intelligent; it is a multiple being, composed of sense and sentiment. . . . To seek to act upon an individual by gesture would be absurd. The reverse is true with an audience; it is persuaded not by reasoning, but by gesture."[59] Again speaking of the audience, he said, "we are moved in reading, not so much by what is said, as by the manner of reading."[60]

Although it is impossible to know with certainty which of the ideas of Delaumosne stemmed directly from Delsarte,

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[55] Ibid., pp. 100-106.

[56] Ibid., p. 119.

[57] Ibid., p. 118.

[58] Ibid., p. 90.

[59] Ibid., p. 49.

[60] Ibid., p. 128.

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we may conclude that the following characteristics of the Delsartian school are relevant to the purposes of this present study. The system is neat and mechanical, though speculative rather than scientific by modern standards. It attempts upon a triune basis to organize all thought with regard to elocution. It assumes the absolute validity of its codification of the means of expression: many of its truisms appear to the semantically oriented to be quite ridiculous. It holds that effective communication may be achieved through the imposition by the teacher of a fixed code of laws.

According to Robb, the Delsartian system caused the mechanical and natural schools to be less clearly defined than earlier.[61] It would appear that the system greatly affected the teaching of elocution well into the twentieth century. Though largely discredited on self evident grounds, the Delsartian influence has perhaps not disappeared.

End-of-the-century changes. In the period of roughly 1870 to 1915 higher education underwent some radical changes. The most profound of these changes derived from the absorption of the new theories of evolution, pragmatism, and the new psychology. The architects of the new philosophy were a

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[61] Robb, op. cit., p. 144.

brilliant group of philosophers who came to maturity in the last third of the nineteenth century: Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. They seemed to say that truth must work and truth must pay.[62]

Out of the psychology of William James seems to have come the concept of man as an integrated unit of the physical, the mental, and the emotional.[63] This concept denies the dualism of an earlier day. Robb says, "The doctrines of modern speech teachers concerning the necessary integration of mind and body for effective speaking evolve from this theory. Dualism is no longer accepted."[64]

"From Darwin's principles of evolution--one of which was human variation--developed the study of individual differences. The results of these studies dealt severe blows to pedagogical ideas of mental discipline and human perfectibility. . . ."[65] Consequently, the teachers of speech of this and of the subsequent period were increasingly to reject the idea that there is a one and perfect way to render a

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[62]Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager, The Growth of the American Republic (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), vol. II, p. 270.

[63]Edna Heidbreder, Seven Psychologies (New York: Century, 1933), pp. 198 ff.

[64]Robb, op. cit., p. 135.

[65]Ibid., p. 137.

piece of reading. If people are characterized by endless differences, then effective communicative patterns are also different.

The rejection of dualism meant in effect an increasing emphasis upon the mental processes rather than the physiology of speech. This new concern for the mind and its outward manifestations diverted the attention of many teachers of speech from the emphasis of the preceding period upon physiology and the mechanism of voice. As a result, the period of 1870-1915 seemed to present a less clear distinction between the mechanical and the natural schools of the teaching of oral interpretation: there was more variety so that eclecticism seemed to become a more common guiding principle.[66]

Simultaneously, the Walker-Rush tradition seems to have continued. Alexander Melville Bell was one of the great leaders in its perpetuation. He was best known for his physiological alphabet, which was a system of symbols to show the position of the organs for the creation of each of a long series of sounds. His was a physiological approach to elocution. Unlike the earlier members of the mechanical school, Bell seemed to add a concern for the psychological aspects of oral interpretation. He believed in elocutionary rules, but they were to be only a means to the development

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[66] Ibid., p. 142.

of mechanical facility not uniformity of performance. He seems to have attempted a compromise between the natural and the mechanical methods. Among his admirers were Robert Fulton, Thomas Trueblood, and S. H. Clark.[67]

Robert McLain Cumnock, who founded the School of Speech at Northwestern University in 1878 and remained its head until 1913, was one of the more influential teachers of speech at the turn of the century. He wrote no text but did publish in 1882 a popular anthology with suggestions called Choice Readings. From this book we are able to gain much insight into his eclectic approach to the teaching of speech.

This eclecticism seems to have resulted in the retention of some significant aspects of the mechanical school and some adoption of apparently contrary practices and principles stemming from the influence of the new psychology. Asking for his students to discover principles and then to apply them, he called it a great wrong for those students to be led "to imitate an interpretation given to them by some person whom they admire."[68] Somewhat in contrast, he also wrote: "It is, however, of great importance to the student of Elocution to remember that there is a certain best way to

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[67] Ibid., pp. 155-164.

[68] Robert McLain Cumnock, Choice Readings (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg and Company, 1878), p. iii.

render every emotion, and having mastered one selection of a great class, the power has been acquired to render all selections of that type."[69]

The emphasis upon laws inherited from the mechanical school is expressed in the statement that the reader seeks "a classified knowledge of the laws that develop every sentiment and passion of the human soul."[70] Almost in the same breath, however, he said, "Nature must ever be the great Teacher."[71]

Choice Readings[72] is divided into ten parts each with selections of a different type: pathos, solemnity, serenity, beauty, love, common reading, narrative, descriptive and didactic styles, gayety, humor, grand, sublime and reverential styles, oratorical styles, abrupt and startling styles, and miscellaneous selections. Each part includes suggestions for the rendition of the particular kind of reading matter. For example, the reader is told that in order to reach "the level of solemn expression" he should strike "the pitch of ordinary conversation, which is about the middle line of the

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[69] Ibid., p. 12.

[70] Loc. cit.

[71] Loc. cit.

[72] Ibid., passim.

voice, and 'descend' on the musical scale four notes."[73] This same tendency to axiom, reminiscent of Rush, is seen in the following quotations: "An essay can be written out in musical form. . . ."[74] "The upper tones of voice are peculiarly those of Humor."[75] "All impassioned sublimity requires an orotund voice."[76] "The key to an effective and easy expression of all oratorical styles requires a separate expulsion of air for each tone or word that is uttered."[77]

Robb found that Choice Readings had been a very popular anthology.[78] It was first published in 1878, again in 1882, and in 1905. These publications might in themselves indicate considerable influence of the author in modern speech circles, but that influence seems to be underlined by the fact that a "new and definitive" edition was published in 1938, which edition may therefore extend the influence of the 1870's to this very day.

The next and probably the most important figure of the

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[73] Ibid., p. 47.

[74] Ibid., p. 81.

[75] Ibid., p. 137.

[76] Ibid., p. 225.

[77] Ibid., p. 227.

[78] Robb, op. cit., p. 184.

period from 1870 to 1915 is Samuel Silas Curry. He personifies better than any other writer in the teaching of oral interpretation the reaction against the Rush-Walker tradition. His is a "think-the-thought school." Of the Rush school, he said:

> The Rush system has come to be known as elocution and has made the name synonymous with the substitution of artificial tricks for nature. Such a system makes the whole art of expression a mere matter of mechanical stresses, waves, semitones and tremors, and a reading by this system is little more than an exhibition of mechanical actions miscalled 'signs of emotions.'
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> The greatest evil, however, of the whole system, is that it introduces mere rules, founded upon a mechanical mode of procedure. The whole action of the mind is focused upon the modes of execution by the voice, and not upon the successive ideas. There is thus a violation of the great law of nature which was formulated by Comenius, 'from within, out.'[79]

This departure from the mechanical tradition is even more forcefully expressed later in the following quotation:

> Public reading has in fact in many cases become an art of caricature rather than of characterization. . . . Public reading has tended to confine itself to the lower and farcical class of literature.[80]

The overwhelming emphasis in Curry seems to have been revolt.

> Public reading, recitation, and speaking in our schools is taught in violation of the most fundamental laws of true education. All education reformers

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[79] Samuel Silas Curry, The Province of Expression (Boston: School of Expression, 1891), p. 317.

[80] Ibid., p. 444.

> have taught that the student's powers must be unfolded; he must be stimulated from within, rather than merely be crammed full of facts and skills from without.[81]

He attributes all faults of delivery to a neglect of this principle. "All faults of voice, all faults of delivery, can be traced directly or indirectly to wrong action of the mind."[82]

This influence of Curry has been enormous. Robb found in 1941 that his books were still popular.[83] Foundations of Expression, although published in 1908, was the second best selling speech text in 1928.[84] Certainly he wrote prolifically.

In the period since 1915 appreciation has been an increasingly important aim of the course of oral interpretation. In 1914 in the English Journal Gertrude Johnson voiced a desire that the appreciation of literature be the primary aim of courses in oral interpretation.[85] She deplored the fact that too often teachers of expression had been exclusively

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[81] Ibid., p. 47.

[82] Ibid., p. xiii.

[83] Robb, op. cit., p. 166.

[84] M. Ocle Miller, The Psychology of Dr. S. S. Curry (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1929), p. 1.

[85] Gertrude Johnson, "Literature and Vocal Expression," English Journal, vol. 3, no. 9, p. 534, November, 1914.

concerned with the preparation of students for recitals and contests and that the process of learning had become a matter of imitating the teacher. Such a process was often largely devoid of original thought or feeling. Miss Johnson held that the teaching of oral interpretation should be a matter of helping the student to appreciate literature so that when he did read he could exemplify the principles of the "think-the-thought school."

II. EXAMINATION OF REPRESENTATIVE MODERN TEXTBOOKS

At this point it seems wise to examine some representative modern textbooks in an effort to ascertain some of the philosophy which seems to underlie them. The first book belongs to the first quarter of the present century; the rest have been produced in the second quarter of the century.

Johnson, Modern Literature for Oral Interpretation.[86]

The first text, Gertrude Johnson's Modern Literature for Oral Interpretation, was designed primarily as an anthology but is being employed here because of its influence and the influence of its author as a teacher of oral interpretation. Being an anthology, the book is only about 8 per cent, or fifty pages, text.

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[86] Gertrude Johnson, Modern Literature for Oral Interpretation (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1920 and 1930).

These few pages do, however, reveal something about the philosophy of the author. Despite Miss Johnson's opinion that literary appreciation is the second most important objective of interpretation instruction, the textual part of this book provides nothing on the problems and techniques of finding the meaning of literature. There are 10 pages of bibliography. The textual portion is made up of fourteen pages on the objectives of oral interpretation and 36 pages on expressing the meaning of literature. This emphasis is quite in line with the practices of the mechanical school of Walker and Rush.

On the matter of objectives the author recognized that the aims of instruction in oral interpretation were then quite confused. She made no mention of the development of oral reading skills as a specific objective of the use of the book. Neither did she say anything about the possible development of general speaking skills. The heaviest single emphasis in terms of objectives was placed upon personality development: this is reminiscent to a degree of the Delsartian philosophy. The goal of appreciation of literature is implied in the process of personality development, but although the author wrote in the English Journal[87] that appreciation should

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[87]Gertrude Johnson, "Literature and Vocal Expression," English Journal, op. cit.

be the goal, she did not actually attempt to implement that goal in the book.

It is helpful to determine the varying emphases upon types of literature suggested for oral interpretation. Miss Johnson seems to have preferred drama more than any other form for interpretation purposes. Almost 28 per cent of the book is devoted to bits of plays. About 19 per cent of the book is made up of prose selections. Almost 17 per cent is poetry. Over 12 per cent is monologues. One must observe in passing that this use of monologues was also typical of an earlier day and that it has almost entirely disappeared in subsequent texts. No speeches are provided for oral interpretation except a few which are a part of classic drama. In terms of the anthology portion of the book, it might be observed that 40 per cent of the collection of material for reading aloud is drama and monologues combined: this fact appears to indicate that the nature of oral interpretation was considered a matter of dramatic impersonation to a very large degree.

A further analysis of the book requires an examination of the varying emphases on the aspects of the interpretation process. As has been seen, the comments on objectives are confined almost exclusively to matters of personality development. There is nothing on the emotional content of literature, the logical content, or the literary quality. In the matter

of delivery, the author says nothing about rate, pitch, loudness, or vocal quality. She does include a nine page chapter of general comment on the visible action of delivery. In this chapter she notes a study of twenty-four then current speech texts: 6.37 per cent of the content was on visible action, which was one-third as much as that given to voice. In this regard Miss Johnson turns the tables: she so emphasizes visible action as to neglect completely all other aspects of delivery.

Miss Johnson includes a chapter on "Oral Reading and the Problem of Declamatory Contests."[88] Herein she rebels against many of the practices often characteristic of those contests. She thinks it highly unfortunate that all of the work done under the name of speech in many schools is done entirely for the contests. It seems to her that such work is confined to too few students, those who generally have the least need. Suggesting that the contest situation is the real offender, she says, "Possibly some of the faults of declamation might be obviated if it could be separated from the contest."[89]

Drawing her backing, perhaps, from the newer psychologists of the day, she thinks that the values ascribed to the

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[88] Gertrude Johnson, Modern Literature for Oral Interpretation, op. cit.

[89] Ibid., p. 38.

memory training obtained in the declamation contest experience probably do not exist. Reflecting that the defenders of the contest place great stress on the assertion that the memory is trained, she adds,

> To forget is a crime, punishable with loss of place or points. Few do forget a word, a gesture, an inflection, a position, a pause, a turn of the head or even eyes, or any other minute detail which they have been crammed to remember. One cannot but be impressed, upon the appearance of declaimers, with the fact that they are full of remembrances. The skill with which they deliver themselves of these memories, endeavoring faithfully to act as if the rendition were not memorized, viewed as an educational activity, is one of the most astounding things about the whole performance. Perhaps the spirit of 'win at any cost' too often allowed, sometimes even encouraged, giving rise to certain methods of training or coaching, is largely to blame for results seen.[90]

Miss Johnson seems to have assumed that the contest was here to stay but that certain reforms in its nature might possibly be made. The teacher should be specifically trained for the teaching of oral interpretation. "Material impossible in content, mental and spiritual as well as physical," should be avoided.[91] Some authority should pass upon a list of suitable material. There should be less "coaching" and more constructive suggestion by the teacher. Selection and arrangement of the material should be made in

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[90] Loc. cit.

[91] Ibid., p. 46.

part at least by the pupil. More attention should be given to "the spirit of the selection and less to the manner of the delivery, to the end that more naturalness and less artificiality may result."[92] Broad comedy material should be avoided. Impersonative demands should not go beyond student capacities. The student should not be asked to communicate that which he has not experienced. Extreme pathos should be avoided. Material should involve sound psychology.

Her condemnation of the contests is climaxed in the sentence, "To me, it seems impossible that any truly educational claims can be advanced for a very large proportion of the declaiming which is done every year in our contests."[93]

In summary, Miss Johnson's text seems to express the conviction that the oral interpretation process should be a communicative one, an experience in understanding both logical and emotional meanings and communicating those meanings to an audience. She does show the influence of earlier writers who stressed the visible aspect of communication. She deplores mere show and strongly condemns the "win or else" philosophy of contests.

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[92] Ibid., p. 47.

[93] Ibid., p. 49.

Parrish, Reading Aloud.[94] Reading Aloud by Wayland Maxfield Parrish, unlike Miss Johnson's book, is designed to be both a text and an anthology. It is being analyzed here because it is one of the more influential of modern oral interpretation texts although it was first copyrighted in 1932. For purposes of this study the 1932 edition is being used.

The book of 371 pages is slightly more than 53 per cent text; the rest is anthology. There is no bibliographical listing. Only 47 pages, or a little over 12 per cent of the total book, are devoted to the process of finding the meaning. Expressing the meaning has been given 110 pages, or almost 30 per cent of the whole book. The discussion of objectives of the study of oral interpretation fills 17 pages, or almost 5 per cent of the entire book.

In his exposition of objectives the author defines the fundamental aim of oral interpretation instruction as "the development of adequate mental and emotional responsiveness to the meaning of literature."[95] The secondary objectives are thought to be accuracy of observation (clear-headedness), skill in literary criticism, facility with

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[94]Wayland Maxfield Parrish, Reading Aloud (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1932).

[95]Ibid., p. 18.

English composition, general speaking ability, voice improvement, appreciation of poetry reading skills to be the "immediate aim."[96] He writes, "The chief value of oral reading is that it is the best, if not the only, method of teaching appreciation of poetry."[97] He deplores public school instruction in and employment of rapid, silent reading and calls for new experiences in "close, searching, pains-taking study of particular poems."[98]

The examination of possible objectives for the interpretation course gives no attention to personality per se. This is a pronounced departure from Miss Johnson and from the tradition of the nineteenth century.

Following the pattern of the earlier analysis of Miss Johnson's book, it is appropriate to determine the varying emphases upon types of literature suggested for oral interpretation. Unlike Miss Johnson, Parrish includes no drama except as involved in selections of poetry. Reference to monologues is also minimal. These two types provided 40 per cent of the Johnson anthology, but they are hardly represented at all in Parrish. This would seem to indicate some departure

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[96] Ibid., p. 23.

[97] Ibid., p. 25.

[98] Ibid., p. 5.

from the older concept of oral interpretation as a process of dramatic impersonation. The emphasis moves to poetry, selections of which make up 165 pages or almost 45 per cent of the total book. Prose selections occupy 22 pages or only 6 per cent of the book. Speeches are quoted only occasionally except as secondary inclusions: these inclusions are very short and could hardly be said to indicate any emphasis upon the reading of speeches as a proper province of interpretation.

Now comes an analysis of the varying emphases upon the aspects of the interpretation process. In the matter of objectives, as has been seen, the author stresses reading skills and the appreciation of poetry. While Johnson has nothing on understanding the content of material to be read, Parrish has 10 pages on the emotional content, 19 on the logical content, and also a very considerable emphasis on appreciation of literary quality: this last is a part of the chapters on poetry and prose interpretation.

In the discussion of finding the meaning, Parrish significantly takes occasion to remark that he feels oral interpreters have less to learn from "psychological theories than from aesthetics and literary criticism."[99] In this

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[99] Ibid., p. 6.

instance it would appear that Parrish was representative of the nineteenth century heritage more than of the influence of the new psychology.

An effort to analyze this book in terms of the varying emphases on the aspects of the interpretation process is not very productive. The terms rate, pitch, loudness, and quality do not even appear in the index. Any specific effort to teach delivery is absent. Instruction in delivery is attempted by indirection, except in the instance of visible action, which is allowed two pages under the heading of "bodily responsiveness."[100] These facts seem to reveal the influence of Curry and the "think-the-thought school." It will be seen that later texts to be examined employ more instruction in specific vocal skills.

Like Miss Johnson, Parrish gives attention to method in the study of oral interpretation. He has a 12 page chapter which covers an historical review, an emphasis upon the conversational mode, and two pages of treatment on how we think. He employs a Gestalt psychology. In this chapter he introduces a plan of study which runs through the whole text and provides 71 steps for the cultivation of effective oral interpretation.

Parrish has a final chapter of 18 pages on impersonation

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[100] Ibid., p. 109.

vs. interpretation. This includes much on the nature of art and has a great deal of authoritative quotation, much of which serves to underline the author's conviction that aesthetics and not psychology is the proper source for interpretation standards. The thesis of about the first nine pages in the chapter is that acting is an art. Then there are three pages on reading vs. acting with the conclusion that there is no basic distinction; only convention separates them. He thinks there are no significant differences between material for interpretation and material for impersonation. This point of view suggests that Parrish remains in close proximity to the teachers of the nineteenth century who thought primarily in terms of impersonation.

In general it may be concluded that this is a very scholarly book well rooted in a classical background. The author prefers to speak of principles of aesthetics and in terms of an analysis of literature, especially poetry, rather than in terms of effective communication and the psychological principles involved in such communication. The chapters on literary analysis ("The Emotional Quality in Poetry," "The Imaginative Quality in Poetry," and "Prose Rhythm") mark the author an expert in this very respectable and academic pursuit. His neglect of psychology may indicate somewhat less expertness in this area.

It must in justice be added that Parrish's emphasis

upon the validity of the conversational norm assures him a place among exponents of the newer concepts of the teaching of speech. He represents at once the older classical emphasis and at least a limited indebtedness to the newer psychology which he professes to ignore.

Woolbert and Nelson, The Art of Interpretative Speech.[101] The Art of Interpretative Speech by Charles H. Woolbert and Severina E. Nelson is another combination of both anthology and text. The edition being analyzed here was published in 1945.

Quantitative analysis reveals that the book has 561 pages. Of this amount only a little less than 30 per cent is text. Slightly more than 70 per cent is anthology. In this regard the Woolbert and Nelson book is exceptional among modern texts in the interpretation area. Finding the meaning and expressing the meaning are given about equal treatment. There is no bibliographical listing in the book.

The matter of objectives in the teaching of oral interpretation is not dealt with specifically. There is some indirect concern with objectives, but it is exclusively in the area of reading skills. In this way, the book is in general agreement with the two other more modern interpretation

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[101] Charles H. Woolbert and Severina E. Nelson, The Art of Interpretative Speech (New York: F. S. Crofts and Company, 1945).

texts being examined, one by Lee and the other Aggertt and Bowen.

The authors have not provided separate treatments for the different types of literature, but it is possible to determine the varying emphases upon types of literature by examining the materials provided in the exercises. There are no monologues. More pages are devoted to poetry than to any other type of literature: 208 pages, or over 37 per cent of the total book. Prose selection take up 67 pages, or about 12 per cent of the book. Drama has 108 pages, or about 19 per cent, and speeches have 13 pages, or about two and one-half per cent. These figures seem to indicate that Woolbert and Nelson, like most other modern authors, have abandoned the older concept of oral interpretation as primarily a matter of dramatic impersonation.

An analysis of the varying emphases on the aspects of the interpretation process is the next concern. Nothing is done with objectives. Emotional content receives 9 pages, logical content gets 13, and literary quality per se has no treatment. These areas of finding the meaning are thus given less coverage in this book than in the other modern texts.

The various aspects of the process of expressing the meaning are all treated in this book: rate 8 pages, pitch 18, loudness 6, quality 8, and visible action 13. Although the total number of these pages is not great, the relative

emphases are about comparable to those of other modern texts.

Here as in other texts considerable attention is given to method in the study of oral interpretation. Without treating the subject in isolation, the authors set up a general plan of impression and then expression. They emphasize the necessity for control in the interpretative process: effective oral reading is a planned and carefully executed process--an employment of carefully developed skills according to sound psychological principles, primarily Gestalt.

About three pages of the first chapter are devoted to the matter of distinguishing interpretation, impersonation, and acting. "These three sister arts are easily differentiated on the basis of the amount of activity and projection employed in each of them."[102] The authors say these arts exist along a continuum of "directness." The most direct and personal contact with an audience occurs in interpretation.

Using such terms as "mimicry," "display," "heroic histrionics," "gymnastics," and "slapstick," Woolbert and Nelson deplore the "typical 'contest reader'",[103] and call for interpretation rather than impersonation on the oral reading platform in education.

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[102] Ibid., p. 4.

[103] Ibid., p. 6.

In summary it may be concluded that The Art of Interpretative Speech is based on the concept of oral interpretation as a communicative medium, rather than a performance medium. It teaches an enlarged conversational norm, deplores broad techniques, employs Gestalt psychology, and tries to keep specific rules at a minimum.

Lee, Oral Interpretation.[104] One of the very best selling oral interpretation texts today is Oral Interpretation by Charlotte I. Lee. More than 57 per cent of this book, or 333 pages, is text. This is more text than that of any other book in wide usage today. About 42 per cent of the book is anthology. There is a five page bibliography. About two thirds of the textual portion is devoted to finding the meaning; the remaining one third of the text part is given over to expressing the meaning. An eight page history of interpretation theories is a unique feature of the book.

The author regards the appreciation of literature as the major objective of training in oral interpretation. She dwells at length upon the personal satisfaction to be derived from a thorough going analysis of literature. She also emphasizes reading skills as an important objective of interpretation training. No attention is given to the development

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[104] Charlotte I. Lee, Oral Interpretation (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952).

of general speaking skills per se as an objective of such training. Neither is any great importance attached to personality development as an objective.

What types of literature does the author seem to prefer for oral interpretation? Definitely not monologues. About 18 per cent of the total book is made up of selections of poetry. Almost the same amount of space is given to prose selections. About 7 per cent of the book is used for cuttings from plays. No speeches are provided. This study of proportions seems to indicate that Miss Lee concurs with the other modern authors of interpretation texts that monologues are not suitable for interpretation purposes. She does feel that poetry, prose, and drama are the proper material for oral reading. The omission of speeches is notable and not explained.

Now for an analysis of how the various aspects of the oral interpretation process are treated. Only a very little attention, perhaps two pages, is given to an exposition of objectives. Perhaps 200 pages deal directly with understanding the meaning of literature to be interpreted, about 50 pages go to emotional content, 75 to logical, and 75 to literary quality. About 42 pages are devoted to specific treatment of the various oral aspects of delivery, and about 14 pages go to a study of the visible action of delivery.

This book does not provide any routinized instructions

for the study of oral interpretation. In this regard it is a far cry from the mechanical treatments of the 1800's. The first 180 pages of the book are given over to basic principles; the remaining 390 pages deal with the problems of special types of literature: prose, poetry, and drama.

About four pages are devoted to the distinctions between acting, impersonation, and interpretation. Each is considered a distinct art and equally as respectable as any other. However, the text is concerned with interpretation, and the author would have the student avoid any mixing of the arts. Any material which involves more than one character role and is being employed by a single person must be interpreted. There is apparently no room for impersonation in the typical "reading."

In summary, we may conclude that Miss Lee is generally in accord with Woolbert and Nelson, although minor differences of emphasis do exist. Parrish and Miss Lee share a conviction that a most important objective of interpretation training is literary appreciation. The Lee book is a difficult one and may be based on the assumption that much of the content of Woolbert and Nelson or perhaps Aggertt and Bowen has already been mastered or will concurrently be mastered.

Aggertt and Bowen, Communicative Reading.[105] The fifth

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[105]Otis J. Aggertt and Elbert R. Bowen, Communicative Reading (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956).

text for analysis is Communicative Reading by Otis J. Aggertt and Elbert R. Bowen. It too is at once a text and an anthology. Although it is the newest of the texts thus far analyzed, it has achieved some stature and may be regarded as representative of modern trends. It was published in 1956.

The book has 460 pages; of which 245, or more than 53 per cent, are text and 200, or more than 43 per cent, are anthology. These proportions are approximately the same as those of Parrish's book. Unlike that book, however, this one devotes about 15 pages, or over 3 per cent, to bibliography.

The relative emphases upon finding and expressing the meaning are somewhat different from those of Parrish. Aggertt and Bowen devote 67 pages, or almost 15 per cent, to finding the meaning. They give 122 pages, or about 27 per cent, to expressing the meaning.

Four pages are given to the objectives of training in oral interpretation. The primary emphasis is upon the development of communicative reading skills. A strong second spot is given to the cultivation of general speaking skills. A strong third spot goes to the development of literary appreciation. These objectives differ radically in emphasis from those of Parrish. This stress upon communication may derive from the prevalence of modern psychological theory, pragmatism, and the study of semantics.

What types of literature do the authors seem to prefer

for oral interpretation? There are no monologues. Speeches are given limited recognition. Most of the selections provided are in poetry, prose, and drama with a predominance of poetry. Prose runs a close second, with drama being a poor third. A chapter on the interpretation of each type is provided. These relative emphases would seem to indicate a complete departure from the earlier concept of interpretation as a process of dramatic impersonation.

As has been noted, four pages of the text go to communicative skills as the primary objective of oral interpretation work. The authors employ about the same amount of space on finding the meaning as Parrish uses, 33 pages as against 29. The authors consider recognition of literary quality a part of finding the meaning.

The book devotes 35 pages to rate, 13 to pitch, 13 to loudness, 10 to quality, and 12 to visible action. This amounts to the heaviest treatment of delivery per se of any of the modern books examined. It serves to illustrate that the authors believe there are actual communicative skills to be learned.

In the matter of method in the study of oral interpretation, this book is at once more specific and somewhat less routinized than the Parrish or the Woolbert and Nelson book. It includes a detailed method for finding the meaning, a series of thirteen steps. Furthermore, this book has more

specific exercises suggested for use with the selections provided than has any of the other texts examined. In the text also there is much direct and detailed use of selections.

In eight pages of treatment of interpretation as opposed to impersonation the distinction between the two is definitely drawn. The thesis is set forth that there may be a place for both; that place is determined primarily by the nature of the material being used and the purpose of the reader. There is, however, no return to the concept of impersonation as the proper mode for general employment in reading aloud.

In summary we may conclude that Aggertt and Bowen have attempted to exemplify the concept of oral interpretation as a communicative mode. Fullest possible comprehension of meaning must always precede and accompany the process of reading aloud. Techniques are presented by which one may find the meaning and by which he may communicate that meaning to others. Those techniques are not necessarily the only ones which have validity, and they are not reducible to flat rules. The authors try to walk the narrow line between freedom and regimentation in the matter of teaching the would-be interpreter: if they waver, it is toward the side of freedom. They do attempt a greater adherence to modern psychological principles than any other modern authors studied.

III. SYNTHESIS

Nineteenth century. At the beginning of the nineteenth century two quite distinct schools of instruction in oral interpretation existed in the United States. The first, a so-called mechanical school, employing primarily a faculty psychology, set up many fixed rules and emphasized the physical behavior involved in oral reading. Rush and Delsarte were the chief exponents. The second or natural school, deploring rules, emphasized the importance of the student's thoughts rather than actions: some of the members of this school even called for the end of all visible expression in oral interpretation. Curry stood as the chief exponent of this group. The Philosophy of the Human Voice by Rush is perhaps the single most influential speech education book of the century. It had seven editions. It attempted to discuss every aspect of the use of voice in speaking and reading, to codify the whole, and to set up positive rules for achievement. The author sensed his conflict with the afore-mentioned natural school and sought to do a final and definitive book. He tried to create a perfect set of scientific terminology and to blue print a perfect performance. He conceived the role of the interpreter to be not unlike that of the actor. The goal was to achieve absolute authority in elecutionary delivery which could guarantee, upon mastery, student perfection in a performance.

Out of the extravagances of a romantic land and time came Francois Delsarte who apparently set out to formulate the essential laws of all art and to make oral interpretation in particular an aesthetic science as precise as mathematics. His concepts were like those of Rush in that he sought rigidly to codify, but the elecutionary system of Delsarte seems to have had a mystical basis which the scientific approach of Rush would never have permitted. Delsarte emphasized the absolute necessity of fixed rules and set them up on a basis of threes. He thought that it was possible to attribute a specific unchanging meaning to every slightest variation of visible and vocal expression. His system produced an almost infinite catalog of expressive behavior: he spoke in terms of millions of carefully differentiated voice and body actions.

It is interesting to note that Delsarte attributed overwhelming importance to the manner of reading. It is said that he thought an audience was moved not at all by reasoning but only by the delivery of the content. He seems to have regarded gesture as the single most persuasive element in the elecutionary performance.

The emphasis of Delsarte was in modern terminology a distinctly physical one as opposed to mental: he thought it possible to achieve human perfectability in the physical sense: there was a one and perfect way to do an elecutionary

performance.

New forces. At about the end of the century new forces began to act upon education generally and upon oral interpretation in particular. The psychology of William James rejected the dualism inherent in Rush and Delsarte and conceived man as an integrated unit. The faculty psychology of the mechanical school was no longer tenable. Darwinism also came of age at about this time and injected into oral interpretation the concept of individual differences. As a result the pedagogical ideas of mental discipline and human perfectability were slowly replaced by a recognition of endless personal differences and the resultant conclusion that there could never be one perfect pattern for an elocutionary effort. The new psychology and the principles of evolution opened the pathway to the pragmatism of John Dewey, which brought the revolutionary idea that only that which works is true. The penchant of the pragmatist to re-examine every heritage of the past led eventually to an embarassing re-evaluation of the Rush-Delsarte dogmatisms. The new forces destined to modify education have been discussed in both this chapter and the previous one.

Revolution. The revolution against nineteenth century elocutionary philosophies and practices was inevitable. The "think-the-thought school" of Silas Curry began with a partial

and qualified condemnation of Rush, Walker, and Delsarte, but soon gained momentum and eventually achieved a wide following, which attributed all failures in elocution to wrong actions of the mind and all elocutionary successes to the mere process of thinking the thought. The followers of Curry became as extreme in their way as their predecessors had been.

Twentieth century. The nineteenth century schools of thought in the teaching of oral interpretation have not died, for their influences live to this day. The philosophy of the teaching of oral interpretation in the present century has continued to evolve. An examination has been made of five significant oral interpretation textbooks of this century. It seems appropriate now to attempt to paint a composite picture of the practices and philosophies revealed in those books. This synthesis is difficult in the extreme.

General approach. Perhaps it may be observed first of all that the general approach to oral interpretation in these books is in no case clearly and exclusively a "mechanical" one nor a "natural" one. Neither can the approach be termed "phonetic" nor "physiological." The eclecticism of our time is at once all of these and more too; the modern approach includes elements which might be called psychological, pragmatic, communicative, and even Darwinian.

It seems that Johnson, revolting with Curry against the mechanistic and physiological school of Rush, almost returned to the natural approach of 150 years ago. At the same time her liking for impersonation and her insistence that the major purpose of elecutionary training was the development of personality seemed to indicate a considerable Delsartian influence. There has been seen, however, little, if any, specific evidence of the influence of the new psychology, Darwinism, or pragmatism.

The Parrish text seems to reveal some rebirth of the "mechanical" tradition, while at the same time insisting upon the naturalism of conversation. Furthermore, the chapters on the physiology and phonetics of oral interpretation indicate some return to approaches that both Curry and Johnson had rejected. As if to underline this tendency to a reactionary position, Parrish specifically rejected the rising influences of psychology and said that the chief source of interpretative principles lay in aesthetics. It must be observed, however, that the Parrish book introduced the communicative approach which was later to be increasingly important.

Woolbert and Nelson assumed an approach quite different from Johnson or Parrish. They demonstrated less acceptance of the "mechanical" school and more enthusiam for the "natural." The physiological and the phonetic remained about as important as in Parrish, but while Parrish rejected the influences

of psychology, Woolbert and Nelson generally accepted them. They also demonstrated more enthusiasm for the communicative emphasis than had Parrish. For the first time in any of the oral interpretation textbooks studied here, the Woolbert and Nelson text largely accepted a pragmatic approach to the teaching process. Johnson had not even recognized pragmatic influences, and Parrish had strongly rejected them.

The text by Lee is not greatly different from Woolbert and Nelson with regard to the influences of "mechanical" and "natural" schools, although it represented perhaps slightly less acceptance of the natural approach than did the former book. It also seems to have involved somewhat less of the phonetic and physiological approaches as well. The influence of the new psychology was as much in evidence in Lee as in Woolbert and Nelson, as indeed was the influence of pragmatism. The same communicative emphasis is also to be seen in Lee. However, the Lee book employs even more than did Parrish an asthetic and literary approach to the teaching or oral interpretation.

In the Aggertt and Bowen text there was perhaps the nearest approach to a balance of "mechanical" and "naturalistic" influences thus far seen. In this book the phonetic approach was more evident than in Lee but was modified by a heavy sense-of-meaning orientation. The psysiological approach was not different from that of Lee. The psychological approach

was basic in this book: not a faculty psychology but a Gestalt. Pragmatism, which was completely unrecognized by Johnson, rejected by Parrish, and increasingly accepted by Woolbert and Nelson and Lee, was flatly assumed to be a sound basis of instruction by Aggertt and Bowen. This book treated the egocentricity of meaning more fully and emphatically than any of the others and so demonstrated a greater acceptance of human differences and imperfectability. Finally Aggertt and Bowen insisted that they were making a communicative approach. In this insistence at least they were more emphatic than any of the others.

It may, perhaps, thus be concluded that the general approach to the teaching of oral interpretation in this century has been an eclectic one. It has retained those elements of the "mechanical" and the "natural" schools which have been thought compatible with modern thought. The influence of a Gestalt psychology has been increasingly evident. Darwinism has brought recognition of individual differences and destroyed the idea of a fixed and measurable model of perfection. Oral reading is no longer a performance but a communicative act. Pragmatism has added the conclusion that the measure of value is whether a practice works: in oral interpretation, effective communication, not pre-set rules, must be the measure of success.

Role of imitation. The writers in the oral interpretation area since Curry, with the possible exception of Parrish, have apparently held no brief for the idea of the "mechanical" school that students should seek to imitate model performances. The role of imitation, an obvious heritage of the idealist concept of education, is no longer held valid. A student's interpretative efforts spring from his own understanding rather than being imposed from without.

Finding vs. expressing the meaning. Johnson devoted her textual content entirely to expressing the meaning. The other four books achieved a rough balance between finding and expressing. It seems fair to conclude that in general these authors have regarded the two matters of approximately equal importance.

Reading from memory or page. Johnson deplored the memorization required for contests and denied that it had value. She did, however, regard memorization as necessary in impersonation. Parrish too thought some memorizing desirable but called for memorization of ideas first, not just sounds. Lee thought some memorizing necessary in reading drama. However, both Lee and Aggertt and Bowen rejected complete memorization in reading. It may be said that generally speaking the last four authors have called for the use of a manuscript in reading aloud.

Contests. Johnson viewed the evils of interpretation contests, asked reforms, and gave no indication she would end contests. Parrish deplored the "excesses" of public performance, and Woolbert and Nelson also disparaged contests. Lee and Aggertt and Bowen said nothing of contests per se.

Objectives. A notable change in oral interpretation books in this century seems to have occurred in the treatment of objectives. The apparent concern with objectives has greatly diminished from Johnson and Parrish to later texts. Johnson spent fourteen pages on objectives, and Parrish seventeen. Woolbert and Nelson gave them no space at all, Lee two pages, and Aggertt and Bowen four. It appears that in the earliest book the philosophy was so much in flux that the emphasis was thought necessary. In the later books there seemed to be a confident assumption that the communicative purpose was understood.

The objective of personality development was foremost in the Johnson book but was not treated in the others. The objective of promoting appreciation of literary quality was important in Parrish and less so, but significant, in Woolbert and Nelson and Aggertt and Bowen. Lee gave more attention again to the literary. The cultivation of reading skills was a dominant objective in the last four of the five books. Aggertt and Bowen gave more emphasis to the cultivation of

general speaking skills than did any of the others.

Generally speaking, the modern text seems to give only a little treatment to objectives per se but gives primary emphasis to the objective of cultivating oral reading skills. Literary appreciation is important. So too is general speaking ability, as the authors have increasingly sensed that oral interpretation is one of the communicative arts.

Interpretation--a communicative act. As has been seen, the concept of interpretation has undergone much change in this century. Johnson's concept of impersonation is now rejected. While she thought in terms of a performance, later authors have called for a communicative act. No text of major importance in the twentieth century has included the Rush or Delsarte codification of principles and practices as an integral part of the teaching of oral interpretation.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF SOME PHILOSOPHIC IMPLICATIONS IDENTIFIABLE IN THE HISTORY OF SOME OF THE STATEWIDE EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES IN ORAL INTERPRETATION IN MICHIGAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FROM 1933 THROUGH 1950

I. CONTESTS IN GENERAL PRIOR TO AND DURING THIS PERIOD

It is common knowledge that the contest is and for many years has been a standard instrument for the teaching of oral interpretation in grade schools, high schools, and colleges. It is also popularly recognized that the contest is a competitive event in which participants perform before a judge or judges who select a winner or winners. The contest per se normally requires the employment of standards both of a precedural nature on the part of participants and of an evaluative nature on the part of those persons who adjudicate the performances.

Records of a series of eighteen such contests for the selection of statewide winners in Michigan in the period of 1933 through 1950 furnish a fruitful laboratory for the study of philosophic implications.

II. AN EXAMINATION OF THE STATEWIDE CONTESTS IN ORAL INTERPRETATION IN MICHIGAN BETWEEN 1933 AND 1950

Records. The records of the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League oral interpretation events through 1950 include the official printed programs for state contests in the years 1933 through 1950, the M.I.S.L. Constitution operative during that period, annual announcements of the league directors of interpretation, and annual reports of those directors which list winners and give statements of expenses. In addition, occasional accounts of individual college contests are available.

League setup. The Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League is an organization of four year colleges and universities in the state of Michigan formed to provide oral communication experiences for the students of those institutions. It sponsors activities in extemporaneous speaking, oratory, debate, discussion, and interpretative reading. This chapter of the current study is concerned primarily with the interpretative reading activities of the organization beginning with 1933 and extending through 1950.

League constitutional provisions. During this period the Constitution of the organization provided for the existence of the Interpretative Reading Division of the

league.[1] The purpose of the Division was "to maintain for the students in four year colleges and universities of this league activities which will promote a fuller appreciation of good literature and which will develop the ability to relive and communicate to others the meanings suggested by the printed page."[2] The Constitution also provided for an M.I.S.L. Director of Interpretation and for a system of scheduling and locating the annual interpretation program. That event was to consist of four contests and a festival of winners. There were to be separate competitive events for men and for women in the reading of poetry previously chosen and prepared. These contests were to be simultaneous. Not more than two people were to be allowed to read the same poem. If more selected a certain poem, those registering first were to be accepted. Each contestant was to be limited to six minutes and fifty-nine seconds of reading time. He was to be stopped if and when he reached the seven minute time. He was to be required to read parts or all of two poems. Anyone using only one poem was to be disqualified. Each contestant was to be permitted to read his poems either from the page or from memory. The order of appearance was

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[1] Constitution of the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League (mimeographed by the M.I.S.L., 1936-1953), Specific Provisions, Division D.

[2] Ibid., Article II, Sec. 1.

to be determined by lot.

The Constitution further provided for the conduct of annual prose reading events, popularly known as "spot prose contests."[3] The director of the Division was to choose a book of prose and two weeks before the contest notify the participating schools of its title. The director was also to prepare cuttings from that book; each cutting was to include both conversation and essay and was to amount to about one and one-half pages of double spaced typewritten content. These cuttings were not to be known to participating students until one hour before the contests. Then the participants were to choose their materials by lot and spend one hour in preparation. Order of appearances of readers was to be indicated in the materials chosen.

In every contest in which a school was to participate that school was to provide a faculty judge, who was to grade all contestants except the one from his school. The grades were to be 5, exceptional; 4, very good; 3, good; 2, above average; and 1, average. In this connection the Constitution said, "Each judge shall give the same grade to as many contestants as he considers their abilities to justify. It is desirable, however, that the judge use the whole range."[4]

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[3] Ibid., Article VI.

[4] Ibid., Article IV.

The Constitution further provided that all participants should be ranked in the order of the total grades of all judges. In each division the three highest ranking competitors were to be named the winners and given suitable awards.

The Constitution also provided "that the two readers of highest rank in the men's and women's poetry contests and the men and women of highest rank in the prose contests"[5] should be invited to appear in the Interpretative Reading Festival. Each poetry reader in the contests was to be prepared to present a third poem about ten minutes in length. All poems chosen for festival use were to be different from all others. Only the poems of the two winners in each poetry contest were to be actually used. Each participant in the prose contests was previously to have chosen a selection from the assigned contest book, but this time only the two first place winners, one man and one woman, were to be allowed to participate in the festival. Order of the readers' appearances in the festival was to be determined by the director of the Interpretative Division.

Constitution generally followed. The contests and festivals as described in the Constitution were presented annually beginning in May of 1933 and continuing through May

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[5] Ibid., Article VII, Sec. 1.

of 1950. Occasional minor modifications were made in the provisions for procedure and are reflected in the annual announcements of forthcoming programs. For example, Professor Nickle wrote in his First Announcement of the Interpretative Reading Contests to be held on May 5, 1944, that the poetry reading time was to be five minutes and that anyone who had not stopped after five minutes and fifty-nine seconds would be asked to leave the platform.[6] A year later in announcing the next contests he wrote that the poetry reading limit should be seven minutes and that if a reader had not finished in that time he would be asked to stop.[7]

The annual printed programs, all of which are available except those for 1933, 1934, and 1936, and the annual reports of the M.I.S.L. directors of interpretation reveal no major changes in philosophy or procedure between 1933 and 1950. It is, therefore, thought that this study should not be concerned with such changes as were made in that period.

Total college participation. A study of the contests

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[6]Cecil H. Nickle, First Announcement of the Interpretative Reading Contests of the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League, May 5, 1944 (duplicated at Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan, 1944).

[7]Cecil H. Nickle, First Announcement of the Interpretative Reading Contests of the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League, May 4, 1945 (duplicated at Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan, 1945).

and an effort to discover the philosophy they exemplified necessarily begins with an analysis of the participation of the various colleges in those contests. In the course of the fifteen years of contests for which records are available (1935, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950), the following schools participated: Albion College, Alma College, Calvin College, Central Michigan College of Education, Hillsdale College, Hope College, Kalamazoo College, Michigan State College, Michigan State Normal College, Northern Michigan College of Education, Wayne University, Western Michigan College of Education, University of Detroit, Detroit Institute of Technology, Adrian College, and Olivet College.[8] On one occassion Battle Creek Junior College participated as a guest.

The average number of schools participating in the fifteen years of poetry contests for which records are available was 9.06, while the average number of schools eligible to participate by virtue of membership in the M.I.S.L. was actually 12. The year by year records indicate fluctuation from a high of 13 schools in 1935 to a low of 5 schools in

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[8] Detroit Institute of Technology was not a member until 1948. The University of Detroit participated in 1935, was not again a member until 1947, and then participated no more during the contests. Northern Michigan College participated only in 1938, 1939, 1941, and during other years was not a member. Adrian College and Olivet College apparently ended their memberships in 1935.

1942. The year 1945 saw the participation of only six schools and 1946 seven schools. Inasmuch as 1942, 1945, and 1946 were exceptional years in terms of school attendance at the contests, it seems appropriate to note that the median for the fifteen year period was approximately nine schools and the norm was ten schools. Apparently it may be concluded that an annual attendance of slightly more than nine schools was typical of the contests. In terms of percentages, the proportion of schools actually in attendance in relation to the number whose League membership qualified them to attend varied from a high of 100 per cent to a low of 45 per cent. During only ten out of the fifteen years were there contests attended by 75 per cent or more of the schools which were members of the League.

The average number of schools in attendance during the first three years of contests for which records are available was 13.33. The average number of schools for the last three years was only ten. The popularity of the contests seems to have diminished by about one-fourth.

The above computations apply only to the annual statewide poetry contests. There were, of course, contests in the sight reading of prose, as provided by the constitution of the M.I.S.L. These were not as well attended. Furthermore, any analysis of attendance in these prose contests proves to have but very limited significance in this study, for the

students engaged in sight reading of material given them only shortly before the contests. However, the number in attendance in these prose contests varied from five to ten with that maximum being reached in only one year. There were four years when only about 50 per cent of the eligible schools participated in these contests. Inasmuch as the spot prose contests will not prove comparable to either the poetry contests or the festivals, in both of which students had the opportunity to make extensive preparation, any further analysis of the prose contests records does not seem pertinent at this time.

Participation of individual colleges. Another approach to the records of the poetry contests may be made from the standpoint of each of the individual schools which held membership in the M.I.S.L. in the period under discussion. Eleven schools were members of the League during all of the fifteen years. Of those, three were represented in the contests every one of those years, two during 71 to 80 per cent, three during 61 to 70 per cent, and three during 51 to 60 per cent. In summary, of the eleven schools, five were represented 70 per cent or more of the time.

Total student participation. The next consideration in an analysis of participation requires a study of the number of students taking part in both the poetry and prose contests.

The highest number of participants was reached in 1949 when 38 students took part. The lowest participation occured in 1942 when 19 people took part. Numbers of participants varied between these two extremes. The average number of participants in the joint contests was 28.53. The median of the fifteen year attendance records was approximately 27. The norm was lower, being approximately 25.

The average number of participants in an annual joint contest in the first three years for which records are available was 32. The average number during the last three years was 37.

Perhaps participation figures are most meaningful if expressed in terms of percentages. In 1938 and 1947, for example, 72.91 per cent of the students for whom participation was possible because their schools were members of the League, were actually in attendance. The lowest such percentage of actual student participation was 50, which occured in 1945. A high of 73.08 per cent occured in 1949. The average annual percentage was 52.19 per cent. The average number of participants which the membership of the League was eligible to send to any annual session during this fifteen year period was 54.66; however, the average number of students actually participating in an annual session was 28.53.

For purposes of ultimate comparison with the festivals, this study of participation during the fifteen years of contests

must be divided into two parts. As previously seen, the prose contests consisted of largely unprepared reading and are not therefore readily to be compared with the festivals. On the other hand, both the poetry contests and the festivals consisted of prepared readings. Such prepared participation in oral reading during the contest period must therefore be analyzed in isolation. The number of students in this prepared participation during the fifteen years ranged from a low of 9 to a high of 23. The average was 16.47.

Again, however, the actual participation is less meaningful than the percentage figure which expresses the relationship between those the colleges could have sent and those they actually did. In 1938, the year of greatest attendance, the colleges sent 95.83 per cent of the number they could have sent. During the lowest year that percentage fell to 40.90. The average student participation during those years in terms of percentage was 68.63 per cent.

The median annual number of participants in the prepared poetry reading, comparable to prepared reading in the festivals, was 17. The norm was 18. The average number of participants in these poetry contests in the first three years for which records are available was 22. The average for the last three years was 19.33.

Student participation by individual colleges. The

amount of student participation should also be considered in terms of each of the colleges. During the fifteen years Albion College and Michigan State College each sent 30 participants, the maximum number possible, to the poetry contests. These were prepared participants and comparable in this regard to those later sent to festivals. Among the eleven colleges who were League members during all of the fifteen years Michigan State Normal College and Hope College sent the lowest numbers, 16 in each case.

Here also, percentages are more meaningful than numbers of participants. Each of the eleven colleges could have entered 30 people in the contests during this period. Two sent 100 per cent of that number. One sent between 91 and 99 per cent, four sent 71 to 80 per cent, and four sent 51 to 60 per cent. A total of seven schools sent 68 per cent or more of the students possible in the fifteen years. In an overall sense the eleven colleges which maintained constant League membership in this period entered only 59.09 per cent of the number of students they could have entered in the fifteen years of contests.

Apparent philosophy in terms of participation. Some inferences regarding the educational philosophy apparently inherent in the contests may be made on the basis of the study of participation just concluded. In general it may be

observed that the colleges as a whole and as individuals apparently did not consider the contest experience desirable for large numbers of people. Or perhaps it simply did not seem wise to enter students unless they appeared to be capable of receiving high ratings and providing their schools with winning records. This inference may be drawn from both the study of overall student participation and the study of the participation of each of the colleges. Inasmuch as no year saw more than 72.9 per cent of the possible number of participants actually taking part, the conclusion that some factor inherent in the contest situation must account for the limited appeal.

From another point of view, the attendance record has shown that, while on the average an annual prose and poetry contest could have included 54.66 people, the actual average number of participants was only 28.53. This means that the colleges sent approximately one person out of every possible two, and underlines the significant philosophical conclusion that the contests in practice and perhaps even in theory must have been conducted for the few rather than the many.

The same conclusion emerges from an analysis of the numbers of people in prepared reading; actually the low of 40.9 per cent of the possible number of participants is even more impressive in this regard than the earlier figures.

A look at the records of how many students each college

enrolled in the contests during the whole fifteen year period again underlines this concept of education for the few. In the prose and poetry contests together the eleven colleges which were League members during the full period sent only 65.46 per cent of the number of students they could have entered. In the fifteen years no college sent 100 per cent of those students. Only four schools sent 68 per cent or more of the number they were entitled to send. In the poetry contests alone the eleven colleges which were members during the full period sent only about 59 per cent of the number of students they could have entered. The records show that only two colleges in the fifteen years sent as many participants to poetry contests as they were allowed to send. Four sent only slightly more than half the allowed number. Only seven schools sent over 68 per cent of the number possible. Of course, the relevance of factors other than the contest situation must be admitted, but when several approaches to the attendance records indicate the same conclusion it seems valid to say that the causal factor for limited participation may have been inherent in the contest philosophy and set up.

It might also be asked whether the attendance records indicate any especial devotion to the institution of the contests. This would be attested to not by overall figures of attendance of either colleges or students but by the dependability of attendance of a particular college. Albion,

Hillsdale, and Michigan State participated in the poetry contests during every one of the fifteen years; however, only Albion and Hillsdale sent full contingents every time. Considering both prose and poetry contests, it is found that only Michigan State, the institution with the largest enrollment in speech, participated in every contest every year. Six out of the eleven schools sent participants less than 70 per cent of the time; Alma, Calvin, Hope, Kalamazoo, Michigan State Normal College, and Wayne. In each of these instances the attendance was irregular in either or both college representation and numbers of students. Seven out of the eleven schools sent between 30 and 70 per cent of the joint-contest participants possible: 63.13 per cent of the schools were "lukewarm" toward the contests. Although it must be recognized that they had sufficient support from participating colleges and universities to continue to operate throughout the period, it is evident that the institution and philosophy of contests were generally accepted without enthusiasm: most of the schools were not "loyal" to the contests.

Reading materials used and philosophical implications derived therefrom. During fifteen years of poetry contests 916 individual poetry readings were made. Titles of all selections together with the names of those who read them and the schools which the people represented are available in the

printed programs. A study has been made of the incidence of each of the selections. It could be demonstrated that while certain selections were used only once, others were employed as much as eight, nine, or ten times each. Although an effort has been made to discover any implications of this selection-by-selection examination of materials, it has proven fruitful only to the degree that it demonstrates that certain poems were apparently considered successful vehicles and thus were employed again and again. Samples of such selections are "Moonlight" by Weaver, "Chicago" by Sandburg, "Patterns" by Amy Lowell, "Renascence" by Millay, and "The Man With the Hoe" by Markham.

However, the choice of poetry for reading aloud in the fifteen years of contests has been examined from another point of view. Each of the printed programs was studied to determine the percentage of its poems which were written before 1900 and the percentage written since 1900. In 1943 and in 1949, 100 per cent of the selections used were written during the twentieth century. In 1935, only 79.6 per cent were twentieth century products. After the percentage of twentieth century composition employed in each year was computed, these percentages were averaged to reveal that 86.67 per cent of the poems used in the fifteen years were twentieth century products. The remainder or 13.33 per cent, was pre-twentieth century poetry. The significance of these facts will be made in

conjunction with a study of the festivals.

In line with the study of textbooks on oral interpretation it is pertinent to inquire whether the contests demonstrate any effort, in the interest of communication, to adjust the choices of reading material to the audiences or to arrange those choices in relation to each other? The answer to the first half of the question has been sought in each of the printed programs and the conclusion has been reached that there seems to have been little or no basis for choosing a selection other than the personal desires of the reader or his teacher. The only other conclusion seems to be that possibly the overwhelming modernity of the selections chosen may be indicative of a concern for a modern audience. The question of whether selections in a contest were arranged in relation to the content, style or mood may be answered with a flat no. The contest setup provided that all programs be arranged by lot. There are, for example, occasions when one selection was read by two people in succession. These facts with regard to choice and arrangement of materials seem to indicate that the contest situation left no room for such communicative and aesthetic considerations as selection choice and arrangement. Inasmuch as that arrangement might add to or detract from the effectiveness of any one participant, the matter was in equal fairness or unfairness to all participants left to chance. There is virtually no evidence that a

philosophy of communication was employed in the choice or the arrangement of material.

Evaluation of contestants and philosophical implications derived therefrom. The efforts of individual participants in the contest were evaluated by the teachers who had trained students or by other persons supplied by the colleges from whom the students came. This practice was called the coach-judge system. Since each evaluator ranked every student but the one from his school, the way was of course left open for an evaluator, seeing that a certain student from another school was the one most likely to prove superior to the student from his own school, to rate that student lower than he otherwise would. It cannot be demonstrated that such actually ever happened, but a study of the contests must take cognizance of this possibility, which seems inherent in the coach-judge system.

The contests divided competition according to the sexes of the participants. It was therefore, inherent in the system as employed that while one, or more, in one sex might be superior to winners in the division of the opposite sex and actually be entitled to top ranking in the total program, he would not get that honor and perhaps would receive no mention at all. Actually, his work might have been more readily comparable, on the basis of the selection read, to the work

of those people with whom he was not compared at all. Thus there was a falsity in the sex division. Presumably that division was employed to permit more nominal winners.

The contest procedure required the employment of numerical rating devices in order that a ranking might ultimately be achieved. Those rating devices, even if employing only the precribed system of attributing so many points to exceptional work, so many to very good, and so forth, were necessarily made on the assumption that terms and figures had the same value to different evaluators. In other words, it was assumed that uniform standards of excellence in oral interpretation were not only feasible but were known to and employed by the evaluators. Just as we recognize that 90 is more than 80 it was assumed that different people could draw the same line between "exceptional" and "very good." Being assumed a matter of measurable skills, oral reading was therefore subject to the ranking process which resulted in the naming of winners and the consequent naming of losers. Furthermore, winning and losing were therefore relative processes. Just as a contest in broad jumping could result in a ranking which expressed the fact that one jumped eight feet, another seven, and another six, so oral reading experiences could be ranked. Of course, the provision that each participant be ranked by as many evaluators as there were contestants minus one was an effort to increase the validity of the

evaluations by massing them and basing the contest results on what amounted to an average ranking. However, it is difficult if not impossible to understand how the massing of potentially erroneous figures can result in a valid conclusion. It would seem that the best it is possible to claim for the contest rankings is that they expressed a mathematical average of highly divergent preferences. It was quite possible for a reader not given first by any judge to receive a first in the final rankings.

The method of evaluation employed in the contests was clearly derived from the philosophical concept that oral interpretation is a matter of known and recognizable quantities and skills capable of being measured and accurately ascribed numerical values.

Another aspect of the ranking process is worthy of mention. With a provision that the three highest ranking readers be named the winners in each contest division there is revealed the apparent assumption that this opportunity provided the motivation for a worthwhile educational experience. Such motivational value in terms of winning--not necessarily communicating--is, perhaps inescapably valid. However, cognizance must also be taken of the fact that in a contest division involving ten people there would necessarily be seven losers. Furthermore, if the overall rankings were in such a case known to the participants, as they often were, some of these losers

would not only realize that they had nominally failed but that they had been worse failures than others. Thus the measure of success in the interpretative effort was actually not whether the individual communicated but whether he won. Those seven out of ten who did not win were thus denied the gratification toward which the pragmatist would direct an educative experience.

When a contestant arose to participate in the contest situation, he might expect to face an audience all but three or less of whom were likely to be to some degree hostile. The normal procedure was to hold two of the contest divisions simultaneously. The individual reader might expect the evaluator from his school and perhaps one or two other contestants from his school to be present. The other evaluator from his school and one other contestant would be busy with another contest at that time. There might, of course, be some visitors present, but the contestant could count on no more than three people in the audience who hoped that he might win. The individual reader thus faced a very difficult communication situation: with ten participants in a contest, the contestant was likely to face an audience from 85 to 90 per cent hostile.

Expenses of contests and philosophical implications derived therefrom. A detailed financial report on the conduct

of the contests was prepared by the director of the division each year. The reports for 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1946, and 1947 are available and have been studied. Each year every college or university taking part in the contests paid a two dollar fee. The reports also show the complete annual costs of conducting the contests. The least expensive contest occurred in 1936 and cost $18.00.[9] The most expensive was conducted at a cost of $39.42 in 1946.[10] The overall yearly average of contest expenses for those years for which complete financial records are available was $32.70. For purposes of ultimate comparison with the expense figures for the festivals it seems wise to note that in the latter part of the period the years of 1944, 1946, and 1947 had an average annual expense of $34.07 while at the beginning of the period the figures for 1936, 1937, and 1938 averaged $29.00. It seems fair to assume that each of the last three years of the life of the contests, for no one of which figures are available, must have cost as much as $35.00 or perhaps even $45.00.

The major item of expense in each year's budget was the purchase of books given as prizes to the highest ranking three

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[9] E. Ray Skinner, Report to Members of the M.I.S.L., October 1, 1939.

[10] Laura V. Shaw, Report of Interpretative Reading Division, October 1, 1947.

people in each of the four contests: men's poetry, women's poetry, men's prose, and women's prose. Normally there were twelve of these books. The lowest cost per book was $1.33. The highest cost was $3.07.[11] When book expenditures for all the years for which records have been found are averaged, it is found that the value of the typical award given a contest winner was $2.37. It seems safe to assume that in the final three years of the contests, for which no figures are available, each award cost at least $3.00 or perhaps as much as $4.00.

In effect, these figures on the finances of the contests show that on the average in the eleven year period the colleges spent $32.70 in order to provide each of twelve contest participants a book costing $2.37.

In the average prose and poetry contests of one year 28.53 persons received oral interpretation experiences. However, about 12 of those were engaged in the "spot prose" contests wherein there was no detailed preparation of a specific selection. On the average the participants in the poetry contests in prepared reading numbered 16.47. These 16.47 people from 9.06 colleges and universities participated in the typical contest, but approximately half of the $32.70 contributed by those schools was spent on material awards for

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[11] Skinner, op. cit.

only six, or 36.43 per cent of the 16.47 people. Other participants received no material compensation.

From this information it may be inferred that the major concern of those conducting the contests was the recognition of those students thought to excel. Those ten out of sixteen participants, or approximately 63 per cent, who were not winners, received no benefit from the expenditure made for awards.

Philosophically, this practice seems to indicate no concern for the communicative process as such but rather an overwhelming concern for winning. Furthermore, it might be added that the M.I.S.L. Interpretation Division spent an average of $1.99 per person receiving contest experience.

Contest flexibility and rigidity. From the pragmatic point of view, which this study attempts to assume, the question may be raised as to the relative flexibility and rigidity of the contests. One notable instance of flexibility lay in the practice of allowing the participants to read either from memory or the printed page. Another was the fact that the program which followed the contests and was called a festival was to involve a selections arrangement provided by the director of the Interpretive Division. Readings in the spot prose contest were normally arranged in the order of their occurrence in the book from which they had been taken. Some flexibility

also existed in the judging process: each evaluator was to use the same grade as many times as he saw fit although he was told by the constitution that it was desirable that he use the whole range of 1 through 5. The judging was also flexible in that there was no breaking of ties when final grades of all evaluators were added.

Some instances of rigidity or inflexibility also existed in the contests. Each reader in the poetry contests was specifically directed to use two poems; the use of more or less would disqualify the reader. No more than two people were allowed to read the same poem; when more than two wanted to use the same poem, those who registered first were included and the others omitted. There is apparent rigidity and unwillingness to adjust to individual differences among students in the practice of requiring that prose readings include both conversation and essay, although the practice may have promoted flexibility in the students. The process of arranging the poetry contestants by lot is, of course, the essence of rigidity. Also, when reading, the poetry contestants were timed to the second. As has been seen, the evaluator's grades were compiled after each contest. This compilation would generally result in a person by person, flat ranking. It seems rigid to assume that people reading different or even the same selection can be accurately so ranked.

In general it may be concluded in the matter of

flexibility vs. rigidity that while the contests were highly rigid in principle, they were conducted with about as much flexibility as was permissible within the bounds of their essential nature. The contest situation requires the provision and practice of rules, which in fairness must not be violated. Such rules must take precedence over any other concern, or the contest is not "fair."

III. A SYNTHESIS OF THE PHILOSOPHIC IMPLICATIONS

Participation in the contests was so limited both in theory, as provided in the constitution of the organization, and in practice, as followed in the fifteen year history, that the philosophy of the contests was one of education for the few.

In general the schools demonstrated no particular devotion to the institution of the contest but apparently employed that vehicle in the absence of anything to take its place. From this fact it may be assumed that the apparent philosophy of the contests was not one to which the schools would necessarily have specifically subscribed.

The contest format seems to have required some adherence in fact and in theory to the philosophy of participate--to win. Selections seem to have been chosen with this philosophy in mind. Certainly the process of arranging by lot the selections in a program was motivated by competitive considerations.

The contest situation of course required judges: the coach-judge system became a practical expedient, but it was necessarily open to error and abuse. The element of formalized competition apparently also suggested the separation of the contest into sex divisions. This broadened the scope of recognition of good work but did so at the expense of some inconsistency in the process of naming winners, who might not be the most effective in terms of the entire group of contestants.

The rating process itself was based upon the assumed existence of uniform standards of excellence among the evaluators. Such standards would necessarily derive from the existence of specific ingredients in the successful oral reading experience. Those ingredients would necessarily exist in measurable quantities and when present to the proper degree would assure the success of the reader.

The rating process was ostensibly a motivational device. As such it was inherent not in the communication situation but in the competitive situation. Ratings must have proven gratifying to the winners, but not to the losers. An educational situation capped with failure hardly compares favorably with the pragmatic philosophy of solving a problem, for the failing participant is assured no further opportunity to solve his problem inasmuch as the immediate situation is ended. The philosophy of learning from a degree of success

is less important than the questionable philosophy of learning from losing because the typical contest employed more losers than winners.

Furthermore, the possibilities for successful communication were limited for any one contestant because of the hostility of about 85 per cent of his audience. That hostility was of course consistent with the contest situation but hardly compatible with the philosophy of sharing the meanings of a piece of literature with an audience.

The financial arrangements involved in the contests reveal that the bulk of money spent was used for awards which were on the average given to six out of every 16 participants. The monetary emphasis was essentially competitive rather than communicative.

Finally arises the question of whether the contest philosophy was essentially rigid or flexible. It seems evident that, while a maximum of possible flexibility was attempted, the contest philosophy was generally a rigid one.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF SOME PHILOSOPHIC IMPLICATIONS IDENTIFIABLE IN THE HISTORY OF SOME OF THE STATEWIDE EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES IN ORAL INTERPRETATION IN MICHIGAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FROM 1951 THROUGH 1959

Records comparable to those described in the previous chapter are also available for the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League oral interpretation events from 1951 through 1959. They are supplemented, however, by the observations of the writer made in anticipation of this study.

I. THE INCEPTION OF THE FESTIVALS

A felt need. At the Annual Meeting of the League Personnel of the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League[1] held at Michigan State College on October 6, 1950, the directors of interpretation from the various member colleges met in session separate from that of the other directors of speech activities to assess the effectiveness of the annual statewide interpretation events.

Notes made by the writer at that time indicate that the following major criticisms of the contests described in

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[1] Minutes of the Annual Fall Meeting of the M.I.S.L., October 6, 1950, James W. Brock, secretary.

the previous chapter were set forth:[2] (The following listing does not indicate either the order of mention or the relative importance attached to individual remarks.)

1. Some participants had been using material of poor literary quality.

2. The emphasis upon winning, on the part of both teachers and students, had become excessive.

3. The contest vehicle had proven unfit for an educational endeavor in oral interpretation.

4. Judges had frequently shown widely different concepts of the nature of good oral reading.

5. In the contest circumstances, oral interpretation had often been found to amount to acting.

6. Judges' decisions had been found to result from the conscious employment on the part of readers of essentially non-artistic and unfair means of persuasion: for example, a crippled person on crutches had elicited the sympathies of her audience by reading sentimental poetry about the joys of the physical pleasures which her condition permanently prevented her from enjoying.

7. Contest practices had been found too rigid.

8. Contests had produced too many unhappy, disappointed people.

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[2]This refers to interpretation contests conducted by the M.I.S.I. from 1933 through 1950.

9. The "contest atmosphere" had proven so tense and so nearly incompatible with either simple enjoyment of the literature or the process of effective communication that the contest could not often be called educational experience.

10. The contest program had not normally been an aesthetically acceptable experience.

It must not be supposed that the criticisms listed here were all of those voiced, nor indeed that every director of interpretation concurred in supporting the validity of every statement. It was the concensus of the group, however, that there was a need for some radical changes in the oral interpretation events sponsored by the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League.

Mechanism chosen. Proceeding from this agreement, the directors, still in separate session, determined to ask the Annual Meeting of the League Personnel to permit the waiver of the constitutional provisions regarding oral interpretation contests for a period of one year in order that the League might sponsor an oral interpretation festival.

After the return of the interpretation directors to the general meeting of League Personnel, it was moved, according to the minutes of the meeting,

> . . . to put aside the order of business to discuss the conduct of the Interpretative Reading contest. Motion supported and passed. Mr. Aggertt moved to set aside the constitutional procedure for one year so

as to have an Interpretative Reading Festival instead of a contest, with written comments but no competitive ratings of the contestants. Motion supported and passed.[3]

Trial period. With this authorization, the Director of the Interpretation Division of the League proceeded to plan and execute the "festival experiment." He reported that experiment to the 1951 Annual Meeting of League Personnel:

> Last year at the annual fall meeting of League Personnel the interpretation directors from the individual colleges asked the new director of this division to propose a non-competitive interpretation festival to replace for 1951 the old contest-festival. It was felt that the proposed festival would have far greater aesthetic and educational value. The League agreed without dissent to waive the constitutional provisions for one year and to sponsor only a non-competitive festival. The state director was to solicit suggestions from the various directors, combine them, and then submit tentative plans for the approval of each college. That plan was carried out and every interpretation director had two opportunities to help plan the festival.
>
> With the help of Professor Laura Shaw, we held the Poetry Festival of the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League on the campus of Western Michigan College of Education on May 4 as a part of Western's Annual Festival of the Arts. Miss Gladys Borchers of the University of Wisconsin presented an oral critique after each of the two sessions. Each school entered two readers and provided one faculty critic. All speakers heard all others and each received a written critique from every faculty critic except his own.[4]

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[3] Minutes, loc. cit.

[4] Otis J. Aggertt, Report and Recommendations of the Interpretation Division of the M.I.S.L. for the Year of 1950-1951, p. 1.

Inasmuch as the League had authorized the festival for only one year, it was necessary immediately to secure evaluations from the participants and the directors of interpretation involved. Those evaluations were generally commendatory and expressed the desire to see the festival conducted another year. One director wrote,

> We . . . all felt that the Poetry Festival was a very worthwhile project. Not only the participants but the others who went along 'for the ride' were loud in their praise of the whole affair and are already sowing the seeds for next year. . . .
>
> Perhaps one of the things that we . . . appreciated the most was that it was not a contest. . . .
>
> We shall be looking forward to next year's event.[5]

Another professor whose students had participated said,

> Without reservation, _____'s student representatives, Miss Elsie Rawson and Mr. Harold Madden, and I wish to congratulate you for your careful planning of the programs and for the congenial efficiency of the event. . . .
>
> We sincerely feel that the Festival was a great success. We liked the non-competitive aspect of the meeting. We enjoyed the variety in the readings and their arrangement in the programs. We profited from the criticisms. . . . And, the critiques by Dr. Borchers were indispensable.
>
> In regard to the future: I hope the various Interpretation directors of the League will see fit to retain the Festival next year rather than revert to contests, which I strongly feel are wholly incompatible

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[5] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Antoinnette Witt, May 28, 1951.

with the appreciative reading of literature.[6]

Another director anticipated the following year's festival and added:

> I did enjoy the Festival tremendously and think it extremely worthwhile.[7]

Giving a generally favorable response another professor wrote:

> All in all we found the festival to be much more of an educational experience than the former competitive contests. My readers appreciated both the written criticisms from the coaches and the oral critique presented by Dr. Borchers.
>
> Personally I found the festival enjoyable. Thus at least for me the readers accomplished one of the basic goals in interpretation. I would like to see something of this nature tried for another year.[8]

The interpretation director from another college made this response:

> . . . I should like to say that our two students . . ., as well as myself, feel that the Poetry Festival as it was conducted this year was a very enjoyable and valuable experience--and, we feel that perhaps the greatest advantage of the Festival as it was conducted lay in the fact that it was primarily an educational experience, which it seems to me we sometimes lose sight of, in the various contests of the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League.
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> Dr. Borchers' critique of each of our participants,

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[6] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Elbert R. Bowen, May 23, 1951.

[7] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Mariam Alexanian, May 23, 1951.

[8] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Melvin E. Berghuis, May 22, 1951.

> as well as the written comments presented by the coaches from the various schools represented, were very valuable, we felt, and I hope that this method may be continued in future years.
>
> . . . interpretation of literature can best be taught and enjoyed by this method which you have initiated, I feel.[9]

Another of the professors who were present for the first festival had been involved in virtually the whole history of the contests. According to the official program of the contests in 1935, she was the director of the Interpretative Division of the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League for that year and had apparently held that office since the beginning of the contests in 1933. Programs for 1933 and 1934 are not available. She wrote as follows:

> Personally I should not have entered a contest--as I told you I'd had enuf of those. . . . I have always disliked trying to rank this Art.[10]

The guest critic for the 1951 festival added her praise to that of the participants:

> Both the afternoon and evening programs were in my estimation outstanding. They exemplified what we hope to accomplish in our reading programs. I was glad to see administrators there and to get their comments which were in every instance favorable and enthusiastic. I wish to congratulate you

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[9] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from George H. Hale, May 29, 1951.

[10] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Marion F. Stowe, May 24, 1951.

on the part you played in this event.[11]

The director of the interpretation division included in his October, 1951, report recommendations that the festival experiment be continued in 1952 in approximately the manner of 1951, that the League anticipate the revision of its constitution in the fall of 1952 in order to incorporate the festival practices, that the League encourage wide participation in the Festival, and that participating interpretation directors be encouraged to educate their entrants to the opportunities and demands of the festival concept.[12]

This report of the director was accepted at the October 5, 1951, Fall Meeting of League Personnel.[13] Later in the course of the meeting the League personnel reviewed the conduct of the 1951 festival and voted its continuance in 1952. The directors determined that drama instead of poetry be used in the next festival, that selections be approximately ten minutes long, and that in every other regard the director should conduct the festival just as he had the previous year. The festival was to be held at Calvin College.

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[11] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Gladys L. Borchers, May 9, 1951.

[12] Aggertt, op. cit., p. 2.

[13] Minutes of the Annual Fall Meeting of the M.I.S.L., October 5, 1951, Deldee M. Herman, secretary.

After the second festival was held at Calvin College in Grand Rapids on May 2, 1952, it was reported to the Annual Meeting of League Personnel on October 3, 1952.[14] Dr. Charlotte I. Lee had been the guest critic. Subsequent to the festival the director of the interpretation division had polled the nine interpretation directors of the individual colleges which had taken part. One disapproved of the festival and announced the intention of withdrawing from further participation.[15] She said, "I feel that it is uninspired. The critic, must of necessity be general and evasive before an audience."[16] One of the directors polled did not reply.

The remaining seven directors polled were enthusiastic about the festival and asked that it be continued. One wrote, "All of us . . . enjoyed the Festival greatly, and we feel it was a valuable experience."[17] Another said, "My reaction to the Festival was a very favorable one. I'm certain we are

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[14] Otis J. Aggertt, Annual Report of the Interpretation Division of the M.I.S.L. for the Year of 1951-1952.

[15] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Ethel Kaump, May 27, 1952.

[16] Official programs of festivals indicate that this college did not participate during the following two years but did take part in every festival of the remaining five.

[17] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from George Hale, May 12, 1952.

proceeding in the right direction. The idea of a festival makes for a more wholesome and appropriate atmosphere for interpretation than does the contest situation."[18] From the director of interpretation in a non-liberal arts school came this response, "I have nothing but praise to offer. Our whole group felt that the festival was a very profitable experience to us all. The fact that _____ _____ is not a liberal arts college puts us at a disadvantage by way of comparison with the other colleges: but it also makes the day just that much more inspiring."[19]

Another director replied, "You ask for evaluations, criticism and suggestions regarding the Festival. As I implied, I'm one of those rare individuals who was completely satisfied and thrilled. . . . A big bouquet to you. Evie, Dale (students) and I had a tremendous experience."[20] A veteran director of interpretation wrote, ". . . I believe in Festival rather than Contest. . . ."[21]

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[18] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Melvin E. Berghuis, May 14, 1952.

[19] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Antoinette Witt, May 14, 1952.

[20] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Helen L. Harton, May 15, 1952.

[21] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Laura V. Shaw, May 16, 1952.

In his report on October 3, 1952, the director of the division of interpretation of M.I.S.L. included the following paragraph by Charlotte I. Lee, the 1952 critic:

> It is my opinion that the festival fulfills a long-felt need in the field of interpretation. It is impractical, impossible, and completely ridiculous to attempt to evaluate performances of material as varied as that encountered in the usual contest. Any attempt to limit the choice of material negates part of the value of bringing students together to share their experiences in literature. It seems to me that a critic judge who is operating under no compulsion to give and defend ratings can be of far more value to the students participating than an official win-or-lose rating. I heartily recommend the continuance of the festival. It is sound artistically and educationally.[22]

Also included in the director's report of October 3, 1952, were the following paragraphs:

> In December, 1951, The Quarterly Journal of Speech recognized our interpretation festival which was inaugurated that year and held again May 2, 1952. The following article appeared on page 527.
>
> MICHIGAN SPEECH LEAGUE ORAL INTERPRETATION FESTIVAL. Last May, the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League tested the effectiveness of an interpretative reading festival in place of its traditional competitive meet. For eighteen years, the participating college teachers and readers had come together for a contest-festival; by elimination, the ranking men and women in prose and poetry reading were chosen to read in a culminating program. Last year, the element of award or rank was altogether eliminated. At a recent fall meeting of the League Personnel in Charge of Activities, the vote was unanimous to continue the festival procedure indefinitely. The Michigan League is established and active; its decision should influence widely an activity which in many areas is still employing outdated

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[22] Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Charlotte I. Lee, May 21, 1952.

> means to the end of encouraging interpretative reading. The purposes of oral reading have been redefined for a generation of teachers and readers, yet extant competitive procedures would seem to invalidate those purposes.
>
> Instead of an arbitrary separation of men and women, and the superficial categories of 'humorous' and 'serious' readings, Otis J. Aggertt of Albion College, the director of the May meeting, was advised of selections in advance and arranged programs in the order which seemed most likely to provide pleasure for the audience. Instead of awards and eliminations, evaluations were made; these, however, were not tabulated and did not designate rank. An oral critique by Gladys Borchers of the University of Wisconsin at the close of each reading session was judged an invaluable addition to such a meeting. . . . The most significant aspect of the change is that it substitutes an educational experience in the appreciation of literature for a highbrow amateur night, and emphasizes the conveying of ideas and emotions in place of the attempt to shock, startle, and impress, at risk of distorting the literature.[23]

The report of the director also recommended that the constitution of M.I.S.L. "be amended embodying provisions for an annual interpretation festival as the event has been evolved in the last two years of trial."[24] The minutes of the October 3 meeting indicate that the League Personnel determined to undertake a complete revision of the M.I.S.L. constitution to be finished in the spring of 1953.[25] Those

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[23] The Quarterly Journal of Speech, December, 1951, p. 527.

[24] Annual Report of the Interpretation Division of the M.I.S.L. for the Year of 1951-1952, op. cit.

[25] Minutes of the Annual Fall Meeting of the M.I.S.L., October 3, 1952, Elbert R. Bowen, secretary.

minutes also record that the next festival was to be held at Hope College in Holland, May 1, 1953, and might at the discretion of the director of the division of interpretation be enlarged to permit the participation of four students from each college rather than the previous two students.

On May 1, 1953, the third festival was held at Hope College. It did embody a League Series and a Junior Series, thus permitting four participants from each college. Charlotte Lee was again the guest critic.[26]

League constitutional provisions. On May 16, 1953, the League adopted a new constitution.[27] It incorporated the current festival practices. Division D Section 1 employed a statement of purpose identical to that used in the 1936-1953 constitution. Section 2 described the festival procedure. The constitution is still employed by the League.

Festival provisions are as follows.[28] The League shall hold an annual Interpretative Reading Festival on the first Friday in May. It shall be held at the college designated by the Calendar Committee. Each college may enter two

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[26] Program, Annual Interpretation Festival, The Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League, May 1, 1953.

[27] Constitution of the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League (mimeographed by the M.I.S.L.), Adopted May 16, 1953.

[28] Ibid., Division D.

readers in the festival. The festival is to consist of two parts with the participants assigned to them at the discretion of the director of the division. Three years of festivals shall constitute a cycle: one year of poetry reading, one of drama, and one of prose fiction. Each selection read will last approximately six to ten minutes. There is no provision for rigid timing. Each year the director of the division shall set a time approximately three weeks before the festival date by which names of participants shall have been sent to him. With the name of each entrant shall be sent a copy of the selection he expects to read. The festival is to be non-competitive. There shall be no ranking of participants. Each participating member school shall be represented by one critic approved by the director of the division. Each critic will provide an individual written critique for each reader except those from his own school. At the discretion of the division director any annual festival may include a second series of readers so as to provide opportunity for four rather than two readers from each college.[29] The division director shall secure a qualified guest critic to make an oral evaluation after each session of the festival.

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[29]This second, or junior series, has been held every year since the inception of the practice in 1953.

Constitution generally followed. The festivals as described in the Constitution have been presented annually since 1953. Of course, the total festival history covers a period of nine years: three prior to the adoption of the Constitution and six since. No significant modifications have been made. With the pressure of inflation, the League has slightly increased its expenditure for the annual critic.

II. PARTICIPATION IN THE FESTIVALS

Total college participation. A study of the festivals in operation necessarily begins with an analysis of the participation of the various colleges. In the course of the nine years since the festivals began (1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959), the following schools have participated: Albion College, Alma College, Calvin College, Central Michigan College of Education, Hillsdale College, Hope College, Kalamazoo College, Michigan State College, Michigan State Normal College, Olivet College, Wayne University, University of Detroit, Detroit Institute of Technology, Western Michigan College of Education, and Ferris Institute.[30]

The average number of institutions participating in

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[30] Central, Michigan State, Michigan State Normal, Wayne, and Western have experienced changes in name during this period of time; however, for the purposes of this study they will be referred to with the names given above.

the nine years of festivals was 9.78, while the average number of schools eligible to participate by virtue of membership in the M.I.S.L. was 14.11. The year by year records of attendance indicate fluctuation from a high of 13 schools in 1958 to a low of 7 schools in 1953. Because the figure 7 is much lower than most of the attendance figures, it might be helpful to add that both the median and the norm for a year's attendance are slightly higher than the average, amounting to approximately 10 in each case. An attendance of 10 schools was typical of the festivals. In terms of percentages, the proportion of schools actually in attendance in relation to the number whose League membership qualified them to attend varied from a high of 92.9 per cent to a low of 50 per cent. During 5 of the 9 years there were festivals attended by 75 per cent or more of the schools which were then members of the League.

Inasmuch as the festivals have been in operation for a relatively short period of time, it would be revealing to ask how does the number of schools in attendance in the last three years compare with the number in attendance during the first three years. In 1957 ten schools were present, in 1958 thirteen, in 1959 ten: the average for these final three years is eleven. In 1951 eleven schools attended, in 1952 nine, and in 1953 seven: the average for these first three years is nine.

Participation of individual colleges. Another approach to the records of the oral interpretation festivals may be made from the standpoint of each of the individual schools which held membership in the M.I.S.L. during the nine year period. Fourteen schools were members of the League during all of the nine years. Of these, 4 schools were represented in the festivals in every one of those years, 2 during 89 per cent of the years, 1 during 78 per cent of the years, 2 during 61 to 70 per cent, and 5 less than 61 per cent. In summary, of the 14 schools, 7 were represented 70 per cent or more of the time.

Total student participation. The next consideration in an analysis of participation involves a study of the number of students taking part in the festivals. The highest number of participants was reached in 1955, when 40 students took part. The lowest number of participants occurred in 1952, when 18 took part. Numbers of participants varied between these two extremes. The average number of participants was 30.88. The median of the nine year attendance records was 31. It might be added that the norm is much higher, being approximately 39.

Again it is useful to ask how the average number of students in the festival during the last three years compares with the average number during the first three years. Annual

figures of 39, 39, and 34 result in an average attendance of 37.33 during the last three years. Annual figures of 24, 31, and 40 provide an average of 31.66 for the first three years of the festivals.

Perhaps participation figures are most meaningful when expressed in terms of percentages. In 1958 and 1959, for example, 69.64 per cent of the students for whom participation was possible because their schools were members of the League, were actually in attendance: 39 students out of a possible 56 in each case. The lowest such percentage of actually student participation was 42.86, which occurred in 1953. A high of 78.57 per cent occurred in 1951. The average annual percentage was 62.52. The average number of participants which the membership of the League was eligible to send to any annual session during this nine year period was 50.22; however, the average number of students actually participating in annual festivals was 30.88.

Student participation by individual colleges. The amount of student participation should also be considered in terms of each of the member colleges. During the nine years of festivals two colleges sent the full quota of participants every year: Calvin College and Central Michigan College each supplied 32 participants. Among the fourteen colleges who were League members during all of the nine years, two,

Michigan State Normal College and the University of Detroit, sent a total of only 4 students each. Alma College sent only 7. Each of the remaining eleven institutions sent 11 or more participants. Again percentages are more meaningful than numbers of participants. Each of the fourteen colleges could have entered 32 participants each during this period. Two sent 100 per cent of that number. One sent 93.75 per cent, two sent between 81 and 90 per cent, three sent between 71 and 80 per cent, one sent 53.13 per cent. A total of eight schools sent 68 per cent or more of the students it was possible to send. In an overall sense the fourteen colleges which maintained constant League membership in this period entered 62.5 per cent of the number of students they could have entered in the nine festivals.

The two institutions that sent the lowest number of participants to the poetry contests made different records in the festivals: one sent only 4 festival participants, the other 17.

Apparent philosophy in terms of participation. Inferences to be drawn regarding some of the elements of an educational philosophy apparently inherent in the festivals are limited in number and validity by the short period of time in which festivals have been held. More meaningful inferences will be attempted in the next chapter of this study, when both contests and festivals will be considered.

It may be said in general that perhaps the colleges have not considered the festival experiences desirable for large numbers of people: no year saw more than 78.57 per cent of the possible number of participants actually taking part. With an average number of participants of 30.88 out of a possible average number of 50.22, it must be concluded that the colleges sent 62.52 per cent of those possible or approximately 6 persons out of every possible 10. On the other hand, attendance at the festivals has increased, and so it is important to ask the inferences which may be drawn from the attendance records of the last three years. In the period of 1957, 1958, and 1959 the 14 colleges sent approximately 7 representatives out of every possible 10. Although the general attendance records of the nine years indicate that the colleges may not generally have considered the festivals desirable for large numbers of people, they did send more and more people as the years went by: the philosophy of education for the many, in fact as well as theory, has increasingly characterized the festivals.

The analysis of how many times each college appeared and how many students it enrolled during the whole nine year period again provides an opportunity to explore the question of enthusiasm for the festivals. There were eight schools who sent over 68 per cent of the number they were entitled to send: this means that 57.14 per cent of the eligible schools

entered 7 out of 10 of the students they were permitted. A majority of the schools showed rather consistent devotion to the festivals. Six out of 14 schools attended 8 out of 9 festivals, but at least three showed very little devotion.

It may tentatively be concluded that those schools which have liked the philosophy of the festivals have liked it very much, while those who have not supported the festivals have been comparably positive in their attitude. The attendance records of only two schools out of 14 fall in the range of 30 to 70 per cent of the attendance possible: 14.28 per cent of the schools have been "lukewarm" toward the festivals. By contrast it has been seen that eight schools out of the fourteen or 57.14 per cent have strongly supported the festivals.

Reading materials used and philosophical implications derived therefrom. During nine years of festivals 333 individual pieces of poetry, prose, and drama have been read. Titles of all selections together with the names of those who read them and the schools which the people represented are available in the printed programs. The study of the incidence of each of the selections has not been very fruitful. As in the study of the contest materials, it could be demonstrated that while certain selections were used only once, others were employed more frequently: however, there is obviously less tendency to use the selection repeatedly than

there was in the contests. It may be tentatively concluded that this fact has resulted from the absence of the urge to win. As students have chosen selections to read, they have apparently been more concerned with personal preferences than with finding those that have been successfully read in the past. The philosophy has been a communicative one.

The choice of materials for reading aloud in the festivals has been examined from another point of view. As in the contests, each printed program was studied to determine the percentage of its poems which were written before 1900 and the percentage written since 1900. In 1958 only 71.43 per cent of the selections used were twentieth century products. In 1952 the percentage of twentieth century writing was 94.11, and in 1959 it was 94.36. There was no festival program devoted exclusively to twentieth century literature. When all 333 selections are considered, it is found that 276 or 82.88 per cent were twentieth century literature. The emphasis is still overwhelmingly modern, as it was in the contests, but an attempt will be made in the following chapter to determine whether the approximately 4 per cent decrease in the use of twentieth century material has any philosophic significance.

Another aspect of this study of materials is the matter of whether the festivals involved any effort to adjust the choices of selections to the audiences or to arrange those

choices in relation to each other. The answer to the question has been sought in the programs and found partially affirmative. Inasmuch as the festival procedure allowed a participant to use as many selections as he wished within the confines of his approximate time limit, many employed from two to five selections in reading poetry. When this occurred, the effort to secure selections related to each other is quite obvious. They were frequently chosen on a theme, which had previously been selected with the audience in mind. The question of whether the bulk of selections in a festival were arranged in relation to the content, style, or mood may be answered with a positive yes. Festival procedure required that full copies of all selections to be read should be sent the director of the Interpretation Division of M.I.S.L. well before the festival. These copies were studied by the director and then arranged in either two or four programs depending upon whether the festival involved only a "League division" or also a "Junior division." This procedure allowed maximum employment of aesthetic and communicative considerations in program arrangement. Not only was there flexibility in setting up a single program, but the director was able to assign a particular reader to either of two programs during the first two years or to any one of four programs during the last seven years of the period. The philosophic goal became the creation of an artistic and communicative unit of programing:

examination indicates that this goal was generally achieved.

Evaluation of participants and philosophical implications derived therefrom. Each of the individual participants in the festivals was provided a written critique by the interpretation director or a designated person from every school except his own. Since the critiques were individual, were made without reference to other readers, and were not compiled for comparative purposes, no ulterior motives could possibly enter into the evaluations participants received.

No number system was employed in the critiques. The fact of non-uniform standards of excellence in oral interpretation was thus tacitly admitted. It was not assumed that interpretation is made up of measurable ingredients. The system of evaluation reveals a dominantly communicative philosophy.

The festival procedure assured each reader an audience in which no one would be hoping he would lose. The audience was not hostile because no person was competing with any other. In practice, this proved a very valuable attribute of the festivals.

Expenses of festivals and philosophical implications derived therefrom. In and immediately prior to the period of transition from contests to festivals several changes in the financial provisions for the conduct of the oral interpretation

events occurred. The Interpretation Division was no longer dependent upon the collection of the two dollar fees: the division at this time received an annual allotment from the treasurer of the M.I.S.L. Furthermore, the schools began the practice of depending upon the host school for an annual festival to be responsible not only for housing the festival but for the minor expense involved in providing the printed program as well.

In practice, therefore, the Director of the Division of Interpretation was able to spend the entire allotment on the expense of providing the guest critic. In each of the years 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, and 1957 the critic was secured for the nominal fee of $50.00.[31] In 1958 and again in 1959 $75.00 was spent for this purpose. The average annual cost of the festivals has therefore been $55.56.

In the average annual festival 30.88 students from 9.78 schools participated. Except in 1959, when an experiment in simultaneous sessions was conducted, the guest critic, for whom the average amount of $55.56 was spent, spoke about and for all participants. The expenditure to provide the critic served to benefit all participants. This might be construed to amount to an award of approximately $1.80 for each

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[31] Otis J. Aggertt, Annual Reports of Interpretation Division of M.I.S.L.; October 1, 1951; October 1, 1952; October 1, 1953; October 1, 1954; October 1, 1955; October 1, 1956; and October 1, 1957.

participant, but of course the experience of two to four hours spent in well motivated listening to a communication expert could hardly be measured in monetary terms.

Philosophically speaking, this study of festival expenses seems to indicate a concern for supplying an educational experience for all participants, not just a few better ones, without a diverting emphasis upon personal awards and a process of winning. Furthermore, it must be observed that this seems to have been accomplished at an average cost of $1.80 per person.

Festival flexibility and rigidity. For purposes of ultimate comparison with the contests, it is appropriate to raise the question of the relative flexibility and rigidity of the festivals. Students in the festivals were required to read from a manuscript; this requirement appears to be an instance of rigidity but actually it provided only that a manuscript should be employed and left up to the reader the degree to which lines should be memorized. Such an arrangement was highly flexible.

The rules provided no standards for the arrangement of participants and/or their selections. There was complete flexibility in this regard. If a participant used more than one selection or more than one part of the same selection, he could arrange his pieces as he saw fit and employ whatever transitions he wished. Participants were assigned to sessions

and arranged in those sessions by the director of the division. Having the copies of all materials to be read, the director studied and compared those selections and was completely free to construct programs which were varied, aesthetically sound, communicative units.

The process of evaluating the quality of interpretation was completely flexible: individual college faculty representative were restricted in their critiques by no scoring cards or system. The oral critiques by visiting critics were also completely free of externally imposed restrictive criteria or systems of ranking.

In the choice of material for use in the festival the participant was limited to the type of literature being employed and to the time allotted him. Within a literary type, the participant had maximum freedom of choice. The time limit was never a hard and fast one but was always approximate. The participant was not required to make a communicative act fit into exact prescribed limits of time. Circumstances of choice and timing were highly flexible.

In general it may be asserted that the festival procedure was highly flexible both in theory and in practice. A minimum of importance was attached to external limiting factors such as reading manner, arrangement of participants, arrangement of selections, choosing selections, timing selections, and the employment of evaluative devices.

III. A SYNTHESIS OF THE PHILOSOPHIC IMPLICATIONS

Analysis of the participation in the festivals reveals that the answer to the question of whether those festivals exemplified the philosophy of education for the few should be both yes and no. The fact of an average participation of only 30.88 or 62.52 per cent of the 50.22 persons eligible seems to indicate that generally speaking the colleges did not feel it desirable that as many persons as possible should have the festival experience. However, it has been noted that 8 of the 14 schools in constant membership sent 68 per cent or more of the participants they were eligible to send. Three colleges, on the other hand, sent 4 out of 56, and 7 out of 56. There were only 3 schools whose attendance records lay in between these extremes. It may be concluded that the festivals did elicit a response from each of the schools: a majority were consistently devoted, a small percentage were almost consistently unimpressed, and the neutrals numbered as few in number, only 3. It was apparently difficult to be neutral about the festivals.

Material employed for interpretation was overwhelmingly modern. Significant conclusions regarding the philosophic implications to be derived therefrom must be made in conjunction with the efforts in the final chapter.

A study of the factors involved in choosing and arranging materials for use in the festivals reveals a

strongly communicative philosophy. In pursuit of effective communication, participants chose and arranged selections around themes, the divisional director was free to assign participants to such programs as he thought most suitable, and he was able to arrange the speakers on those programs in whatever order he thought most artistic and communicative. The philosophic goal was the communication of the literature being read.

The evaluation procedures employed in the festivals underlined again the desire for effective communication. The absence of awards, scoring, or ranking removed the urge to win. People read to communicate.

Furthermore, the evaluation system, that is written criticisms from the individual college directors and oral critiques by the expert guest, notably lacked any employment of systematized standards. The effectiveness of oral interpretation was not thought to be measurable in terms of specific numerical quantities nor specific aspects of voice and body.

The financial arrangements under which the festivals operated called for expenditures from which all participants could profit. Money was spent, not for physical awards, but to purchase at an average cost of $1.80 per participant the learning situation wherein each student could be instructed by a communication expert.

The festivals demonstrated a rather large degree of flexibility. Rigidity of standards and procedures was minimal. Consequently, circumstances of reading and of learning from the reading experience were largely determined by and/or for the individual.

The least tangible aspect of the festivals and yet the most obvious, as demonstrated by the letters from participating directors of interpretation, was their atmosphere. It was variously described as enjoyable, wholesome, congenial, and inspiring. At any rate, it would seem that the festivals exemplified a philosophy of pleasure in the oral interpretation experience. In another sense, the atmosphere of the festivals was called non-competitive and suitable for interpretation. Others added that the festivals were learning experiences, and one said they were sound artistically and educationally. In general, the response of the directors seems to indicate that they regarded the festivals as desirable because they were pleasant, artistic, educational experiences in communication, not competitive performances.

CHAPTER VI

SYNTHESIS: A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND AN EXAMINATION OF INFERENCES

I. THE OBJECTIVE

As stated in Chapter I, the objective of this study has been to outline the evolution of some of the elements of a philosophy for the teaching of oral interpretation in college as shown in selected representative textbooks, to define some of the elements of current philosophy as indicated in selected representative modern textbooks, to compare these elements with some extra classroom practices employed in the teaching of oral interpretation, and to state the implications of that comparison. It is the function of this last chapter to summarize the findings and to examine the inferences which may be derived from these data.

II. ON PRAGMATISM

Statement of a philosophy. The basic philosophy of higher education in the light of which this study has been made has been a pragmatic one. Pragmatism, epistemologically speaking, defines the true and desirable as that which succeeds. Any idea or practice is to be measured in terms of its results. Pragmatism considers reality to be a system

of constant movement and change characterized by infinite variety and process at any one and all times. The logic of pragmatism is essentially the experimental method. The axiology of pragmatism is not to be defined in terms of the ultimate value of things per se but rather in terms of the values which exist in relation to the needs of individuals and society.

Educational applications. To the pragmatically oriented teacher the pupil exists in and is a part of constant process. Furthermore, he is a distinct individual, himself in process. By means of communication he attains a sense of selfhood. The pragmatist in the classroom is also concerned with educational objectives. He seems to feel that if there is an all-inclusive objective of education it is simply social efficiency. The goal is not to transmit information but rather to provide guided experiences which may lead to more effective experiencing. In pursuit of his objectives the pragmatist must deal with the whole pupil, not merely his potential or superficial skills. The pragmatist believes that the education process must always begin in the life experiences of the pupils and must be highly flexible. Ultimately that educative process is best which produces the best results.

A teacher who accepts the pragmatic philosophy is

likely to be less formal in his method than those who do not. The method is less mechanical, less rigid, and more individuated in relation to the pupils. The pragmatic method is normally characterized by concern with larger units of study rather than the piece by piece approach. The method normally involves maximum use of problem situations and group discussions. Facts or standards have only in-situation value. Instruction is based upon individual needs and is not necessarily presented according to some system of knowledge. The pragmatic curriculum is "activity-centered." In determining his methods, the pragmatist seems always to remember that he is building toward a cooperative, integrated society.

III. ON SPEECH INSTRUCTION

The role of speech. From a variety of sources, it has been concluded that the proper role of any instruction in speech is to focus upon effectiveness in the act of communication while avoiding an emphasis on techniques as things of value in themselves.

Approaches to the role. Historically, instruction in speech has been approached in a multitude of ways. Modern pragmatically oriented study in speech is an eclectic one, placing its primary emphasis upon the basic process of communication, which is effected through a sound psychological

approach and is measurable primarily in terms of the responses of the society of which he is a part. It is a functional approach.

Oral interpretation. An eclectic approach to the teaching of oral interpretation is not fundamentally different from an eclectic approach to teaching any of the other speech arts.

IV. ON ORAL INTERPRETATION PRIOR TO 1900

In the beginning. About 1800 there were two distinct schools of instruction in oral interpretation: the mechanical rooted in a faculty psychology, with many fixed rules and an emphasis upon externals; and the natural with its abhorrence of rules and its emphasis upon thoughts rather than actions.

Three major influences. Dr. James Rush with The Philosophy of the Human Voice attempted to achieve a scientific approach of complete authority for the mechanical school. Upon the mastery of specific, fixed, measurable skills, interpretative effectiveness was guaranteed.

The second major influence in the teaching of oral interpretation in the nineteenth century seems to have been Francois Delsarte. Like Rush, he sought rigidly to codify. His mysticism was based on absolute fixed quantities and rules. From him came the overwhelming emphasis upon physical

behavior: he taught a single perfect way for each of numerous aspects of oral interpretation.

As the new Gestalt psychology, Darwinism, and pragmatism brought their influences to bear upon education, a revolt against Rush, Delsarte, and others became inevitable. The "think-the-thought" school of Curry eventually condemned all instruction in method and sought at the beginning of the twentieth century to establish a completely natural approach in the teaching of oral interpretation. However, that hope was vain, for the influences of the mechanical school were long lived.

V. ON MODERN INTERPRETATION TEXTBOOKS

Johnson. In the earliest of the twentieth century textbooks studied, Modern Literature for Oral Interpretation by Johnson, oral interpretation seems to have been considered a performance art. In the tradition of Delsarte, the interpretation process in terms of this book was apparently an impersonative one, the immediate goal of which was to create an exhibition of skills, but the long term goal of which was the development of the personality of the impersonator. The concept of interpretation outlined in Miss Johnson's book seems to have involved no mentionable concern for the communicative content of literature to be read. The textual emphasis indicates that delivery was the all-important feature and that

visible action was the all-important aspect of delivery.

It is notable that Johnson's philosophy included rejection of the contest element in oral reading. The contest was promoted too strongly by a philosophy of education for the few. The memorization normally employed in contests was not thought to be educational. The urge to win was thought to be productive of undesirable training procedures. It was thought that no reader should ever be asked to communicate that which he has not experienced.

The Johnson book seems to embody the elements of mechanical influence from Delsarte while at once revolting with Curry against that influence. While the author wanted to teach communicative skills, she seems to have been bound to many of the philosophies and practices of the nineteenth century.

Parrish. The next text, Reading Aloud by Parrish, belongs much more nearly to the current scene than does the Johnson book. The philosophy of this book seems to make responsiveness to the meaning of literature the primary goal of the oral interpretation process. In this regard and in his insistence upon the conversational norm, it appears that the communicative approach, later to be so important, was being born. In so many words, the influence of the new psychology was rejected in favor of aesthetics, but the

influence of that psychology is nevertheless readily detectable.

No longer was interpretation regarded as a nicety whereby personality might be developed. It was instead a process of communication, but was on occasion, in keeping with nineteenth century influences, an impersonative performance.

The Parrish text seems in some respects a bridge between the mechanical tradition and the pragmatic, communicative approaches of later books.

Woolbert and Nelson. This next text, together with the remaining two, seems to reveal a modern philosophy for the teaching of oral interpretation essentially consistent with pragmatism. The Art of Interpretative Speech by Woolbert and Nelson indirectly reveals a philosophy of teaching oral interpretation for the achievement of communicative reading skills. There is no longer any concern for an impersonative performance. In the process of interpretation the student is taught to be concerned with both an appreciation of meaning and the techniques of presentation. In each of these aspects the interpreter must employ sound Gestalt psychology. It is also notable that the evils of contest reading are deplored.

Lee. While not differing in basic principle from the

previous text, Oral Interpretation by Lee emphasizes appreciation of the literature read, both on the part of the reader and the audience, as the primary objective of interpretation training. This is done without neglecting communicative reading skills as an important objective. The concern is still for a process of communication rather than a performance, although occasion is taken to recognize that acting and impersonation are respectable speech modes but are outside the realm of interpretation: the arts should not be mixed. As in Woolbert and Nelson and Aggertt and Bowen, monologues are not considered suitable for interpretation. In philosophy of interpretation the Lee book is generally in accord with the previous one studied and the following one as well.

Aggertt and Bowen. The achievement of communicative reading skills is again regarded as the primary objective of oral interpretation training in Communicative Reading by Aggertt and Bowen. Considerable emphasis is also given to the objectives of cultivating general communicative skills and appreciating literature. In this text the distinction between impersonation and interpretation is definitely drawn, and it is taught that while there may be a place for both, impersonation should not be apart of instruction in reading aloud. Oral interpretation is properly a communicative

process and not dramatic impersonation. Training in interpretation is two fold: finding meaning and expressing meaning. Perhaps more than any of the others this text embraces principles of Gestalt psychology and the influences of pragmatism.

VI. A SUMMARY OF SOME OF THE ELEMENTS OF A CURRENT PHILOSOPHY FOR THE TEACHING OF ORAL INTERPRETATION IN COLLEGE AS DERIVED FROM THE TEXTBOOKS

Philosophic approach. The approach to a philosophy for the teaching of oral interpretation today seems to be an eclectic one. In general, the principles of modern psychology, primarily Gestalt, are accepted: this acceptance tends to involve the rejection of the older faculty psychology such as that employed by Delsarte. In an effort to generalize it may be said that the modern approach is at once mechanical, natural, psychological, pragmatic, communicative, and Darwinian. This eclectic approach means that modern training in oral interpretation cannot properly be confined to the external aspects of the process of oral reading: voice and body alone do not make oral interpretation.

Application of Gestalt psychology. The concept of Gestalt psychology referred to in the previous paragraph teaches that the pupil should be regarded as a whole person,

that no single aspect of his being can have reality alone and of itself. It therefore suggests that both literary appreciation and the interpreter's communication of that appreciation must genuinely involve the whole person. No single aspect of interpretative skill can be isolated and taught or measured as a distinct feature: each exists in context.

Cooperation versus competition. Without exception, the twentieth century authors who have been consulted agree that oral interpretation is an inherently cooperative rather than a competitive endeavor. It is a cooperative experience in which the reader and audience share: this widely emphasized concept automatically rejects any situation in which the audience is overwhelmingly opposed to the basic purpose of the reader.

Both the concept of pragmatism chosen to underlie this study and the concensus of modern oral interpretation authors seem to be in agreement that educational experiences should be relevant to the world of the pupil. In practice this suggests that educational techniques should provide circumstances and experiences as much like those in the same area of the work-a-day world as possible. Educational procedures in teaching oral interpretation should derive from factors inherent in the communication situation, not from factors

foreign to that situation.

Communication versus exhibitionism. As just observed, oral reading is properly regarded as an act of communication. The distinction between such an act of communication and an exhibition has been drawn with emphatic clarity in the modern textbooks studied. Indeed, the revolution initiated by Curry sprang primarily from a sense of satiation with exhibitionism. It may be concluded without fear of exception that modern writers in the field agree that oral interpretation should never be an exhibition of skills: the focus is properly upon the communication of the literature.

Mode. Perhaps as a result of the thinking outlined in the previous paragraph, impersonation is not now normally regarded as a proper mode for oral interpretation. This conclusion has been slowly derived, but in the three most recent textbooks studied there is unanimity of opinion.

Finding the meaning versus expressing the meaning. Both an understanding of the literature and a mastery of communicative skills are necessary requisites of effective oral interpretation. Contrary to the historical extremes, even in the early part of the twentieth century, these two aspects are probably of comparable importance: neither can be neglected.

Personal satisfaction in the oral interpretation experience. Without exception the writers studied have either assumed or stated that effective oral interpretation should be a gratifying experience: however, twentieth century writers have been increasingly emphatic in this regard. Especially have the textbooks which show the influence of pragmatism asserted that successful communication is satisfying because it is creativity; as the pragmatists say, it is a kind of achievement of selfhood. If this is true, we may therefore infer that educative procedures and techniques should in themselves either permit or be conducive to a maximum degree of satisfaction in the participants. To the pragmatically oriented this is of extreme importance.

Acceptance. Because of the importance of the sense of satisfaction which participants derive from the interpretation experience, a technique employed in the teaching of oral interpretation (in this instance, the contest or festival) should in itself be popular with the participants.

Education for the many or the few. The pragmatic teacher of oral interpretation feels that generally speaking as many students as possible should receive oral interpretation experiences. Here as in other areas of education the pragmatist frowns upon education for the few.

Application of Darwinism: adjustment to individual differences. Oral readers differ, and therefore no specific set of procedures, characteristics, skills, or standards can be applicable to all individuals. The same fact of illimitable differences is true of pieces of literature.

Application of pragmatism: rejection of imitation. Out of the concept of learning to do by doing and out of the concept of problem solving, the modern philosophy of teaching oral interpretation tends to reject the role of imitation. There can be no model of perfection which a student copies nor against which his stature can be measured.

Manuscript use. Oral interpretation should normally be done with the aid of a manuscript: complete memorization and resultant reading without copy is not generally essential. Great familiarity with the literature is, of course, desirable, but the presence of a manuscript can be a positive aid in oral interpretation.

Material. The last four modern textbooks employed in this study agree that material for oral interpretation should be judiciously chosen in relation to the interpreter, the audience, and the occasion. With the emphasis upon the meaning of the literature interpreted, it follows that arrangement and introductory comments are highly important.

The preference for modern material seems general, but the authors stress the importance of literary quality comparable to that of the classics. The texts have liberal portions of both twentieth century and older material. Monologues are not regarded as suitable material for oral interpretation.

A great variety of literary types and content is found in the books, and it is recognized that literary selections, like people, are infinitely varied and never rigidly comparable to others.

Flexibility and rules. While in the days of Delsarte and Rush rules were numerous, rigid, and very important, they are today very few and quite flexible. It is now thought that the codification of rigid and static standards is completely untenable: on the other hand, a complete absence of rules may not be expected. They should have a pragmatic basis. Flexibility is preferable to rigidity. Fixed concepts for either the training of an oral interpreter or for the interpretation process itself are impossible. This is a part of the general pragmatic idea that systems of knowledge are far less important than the fulfillment of individuated needs. To summarize in this regard, it has been found that while some effort may be made to routinize both information and procedure, essential flexibility must be maintained.

Evaluation of the interpretation process. The modern writers examined, contrary to those of the pre-Curry period, seem in accord that oral interpretation does not involve measurable skills. Values exist, but they do so in a flexible and fluid sense primarily in terms of individuals and society rather than in the ultimate sense. It follows, therefore, as has been previously noted, that there is no fixed and measurable model of interpretative perfection. The process of interpretation is to be measured not in terms of pre-set rules and models but in terms of communicative success. Such measurement cannot be exact. Communicative techniques which work are desirable regardless of pre-conceived ideas: this means that within the limits of present knowledge there can not be a valid scoring procedure for distinguishing the quality of one instance of oral interpretation from that of another.

The truly valid measure of the interpretative process is the achievement of the desired response to a communicative effort. Individual differences among both participants and their selections make valid comparisons impossible.

Awards. Although the writers do not discuss awards per se, they would apparently agree that the proper reward for effective oral interpretation is a sense of successful communication, not a rating or a gift. Pragmatism applied to oral interpretation suggests the desirablilty for a sense

of the problem in communication being solved--a sense of success and a sense of learning.

On contests. None of the modern authors studied lends any support to either contests or festivals. There is considerable expression of dissatisfaction with contests because of such alleged features as mimicry, rigidity and confinement because of rules, tension, over-emphasis upon winning, a sense of failure in the majority of participants--those who do not win, and the general tendency to create a situation which does not deserve to be called educational. An essential question in this study seems to be whether the festival alternative to the contest more nearly approximates the desirable communication experience.

VII. A COMPARISON OF PRACTICES WITH PHILOSOPHY

The earlier chapters in this study suggest that the valid measures of any technique used in teaching oral interpretation are audience response in the specific instance, any improvement in communicative skills which the technique may foster, the degree of reader satisfaction in his experiences with the technique, his acceptance of the technique, and the extent of conformity of the technique with an accepted philosophy of education. It is the last of these measures with which this study is primarily concerned at this time.

An effort will be made to determine whether and to what degree the contests and the festivals have been consistent with the elements of a current philosophy for the teaching of oral interpretation in college derived from the textbooks and just summarized in this chapter.

Application of Gestalt psychology. The grading system provided for the statewide contests involved some application of Gestalt psychology, for each judge was instructed to give each interpreter a single, overall grade. There was no specific provision for grading each of a series of aspects of the interpretation process, such as gesture, inflection, facial expression, etc.: such a provision would have implied possible acceptance of faculty psychology. However, it is readily discernible that when a judge is required to rank a series of readers he may upon finding two or more who seem to be of comparable quality turn to a consideration of the specific aspects of the process and either consciously or unconsciously attach weights to those aspects. Knowing that this may happen, the teacher who prepares a pupil for a contest in interpretation may be much inclined to think in the same way and to concentrate upon the development of specific, isolated skills. When this happens, faculty and not Gestalt psychology tends to be employed.

On the other hand, the festival procedure makes no provision for grading or ranking. Thus it does not provide

a situation conducive to the employment of faculty psychology. The opportunity for the pupil, his teacher, or the evaluator to think in terms of faculties as such seems still to exist; however, any occasion for doing so does not.

It may be concluded that although the particular contests studied do show the influence of Gestalt psychology, the festivals have somewhat more nearly approximated the ideal circumstances for the exercise of that psychology.

Cooperation versus competition. It has been observed that in a single contest in the activities as conducted from 1933 through 1950 the individual reader met a largely hostile audience wherein he could expect to find not more than three persons who hoped that he might win. With ten participants in a contest, the contestant was likely to face thirty-six hostile listeners.

This 90 per cent hostile audience created a situation in direct opposition to the position taken by authors of the modern oral interpretation texts studied. Apparently it was this of which directors spoke when deploring contest atmosphere.

The process of ranking the competence with which different persons read aloud divers literary creations seems without counterpart in the practical world of oral reading as a form of communication.

It has been further seen that while the dominant urge of the oral reader ought to be the desire to communicate, the contests created a situation wherein the urge to win was likely to be uppermost.

In the festivals the participant was competing with no one. The festival situation did not pit one person against another. Each individual participant merely sought to communicate as effectively as he was capable of communicating. The situation was designed to provide a cooperative societal experience. In theory at least, the festival encouraged a process of sharing: the reader had no goal but to communicate and the listener none but to understand, appreciate, and enjoy.

Inasmuch as such understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment are the normal goals of any audience listening to a speaker or reader, the festival situation provided the pupil with an experience relevant to his normal world of communication.

The desire to communicate this understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment was the dominant urge of the reader, rather than a desire to win.

In conclusion, the contests exemplified the rejected competition, and the festivals illustrated the ideal of cooperation. This is not to deny that competition existed in the festivals but merely to assert that the techniques

employed and the situations created in the festivals did not impose competition upon the participants but encouraged instead cooperation.

Communication versus exhibitionism. The contests provided for the rating and consequent ranking of the performances of all participants. In effect, the pupil presented an act which received a specific numerical evaluation. He executed in due form a feat which he hoped would live up to whatever concepts of that feat the judges might hold. He demonstrated his skills within rigidly prescribed procedures of selection choice and length of participation.

In the festivals, participants may sometimes have done the same thing; however, the festival situation was not so conducive to the performance concept. It provided a comparatively free opportunity to communicate.

Mode. The problem of mode in both contests and festivals has been very important but one which it is quite difficult to document. Some teachers of oral interpretation with varying degrees of training and acquaintance with modern authors in the field still cling to the nineteenth century concept of oral interpretation as impersonation. Others, of course, following the lead of such authorities as Parrish, Woolbert and Nelson, Lee, and Aggertt and Bowen, authors of the textbooks reviewed in this treatise, reject that concept.

This difference of opinion has in practice been a contributing factor to the discontent with contests.

Impersonation, inasmuch as it more nearly amounts to a performance, probably lends itself more to a contest than to a festival situation. There is nothing about either the contest or the festival which specifies or rejects impersonation as a mode. However, the difference of opinion about which is preferable proves less troublesome in a festival, where no ratings are given, than in a contest, where a uniform concept of mode is assumed but does not exist.

Finding the meaning versus expressing the meaning. Theoretically, finding the meaning and expressing the meaning may be of approximately equal importance in either a contest or a festival. Again, however, the necessity for numerical evaluation in the former makes a practical difference. Although neither finding nor expressing is strictly measurable, the latter is more likely to be thought measurable, and this fact seems to result in an over emphasis upon techniques of expressing the meaning in the contest. The existence of this tendency in practice cannot be demonstrated from historical records of the contests, but the contest procedure as outlined in the M.I.S.L. Constitution did provide the opportunity for this to happen.

Personal satisfaction in the oral interpretation experience. In regard to personal satisfaction in the oral interpretation experience the facts seem clear. They are to be found both in the reasons for discontinuing the contests and in the expressions of satisfaction with the festivals. Additional inferences can be drawn from the records of state-wide participation and those of individual college participation in both contests and festivals, but these inferences will be reserved for examination under the heading of Acceptance, which follows.

Three of the reasons expressed for discontinuing the contests were that they had produced too many unhappy, disappointed people; that their atmosphere had proved to be so tense and so nearly incompatible with either simple enjoyment or the process of effective communication that the contest could not often be called an educational experience; and that the competitive program had not normally been an aesthetically acceptable experience. These seem definitely to indicate a lack of personal satisfaction in the contests.

This study has employed seventeen letters expressing points of view of participants in the festivals. Two letters from guest critics expressed great satisfaction; one letter from a participating director of interpretation indicated that she and her students regarded the festivals as uninspired; and fourteen letters from participating directors expressed

satisfaction with the festival experiences both for themselves and their students.

The conclusion seems to be that participants found more satisfying personal experiences in oral interpretation as it was practiced in the festivals than in the contests.

Acceptance. Apparently the chief measures of the degrees of acceptance accorded the contest and the festival techniques are the extent of statewide participation and the extent of individual college participation. The findings in these areas have been extensive.

A summary study of all the statewide prepared oral interpretation events from 1933 through 1959 shows an average attendance of 9.06 schools annually during the fifteen years of contests and an average attendance of 9.78 schools annually during the nine years of festivals. The median of 9 in contests and 10 in festivals is perhaps more meaningful. The norm was 10 in each case. It must be recognized that the average league membership during the period of the contests was 12 and that during the festivals it was 14.11. In terms of that membership, 75.50 per cent of the member schools attended an average contest and 69.31 per cent attended an average festival. More colleges and universities but a slightly lower percentage of those eligible attended the average festival than the contest.

In the face of the indecisiveness of the above figures, an examination has been made of attendance during the first three and the last three years of the contests and then of the festivals. In the beginning the average contest employed 13.33 schools; in the final three years of contests the average was 10: the average number of schools attending had fallen off by 24.98 per cent. During the first three years of festivals an average of 9 schools attended; during the last three years 11 attended: the average number of schools attending had increased by 22.22 per cent.

In terms of averages, the number of schools involved in the contests and the number involved in festivals differ very little. However, the figures seem to indicate that school representation tended appreciably to fall off during the fifteen year period of the contests and then to grow again by about the same percentage during the nine year life of the festivals to date.

The study of the attendance of individual colleges and universities at the statewide interpretation events has been confined in the one instance to the eleven schools which were league members during the whole fifteen year period of the contests and in the other to the fourteen schools which were league members during the whole nine years of the festivals. While three schools were represented 100 per cent of the time during the contests, four were represented 100 per

cent of the time during the festivals. The records show no schools with records of attending 91 to 99 per cent of the years in either activity. None attended between 81 and 90 per cent of the years of the contests, but 2 attended between 81 and 90 per cent of the years of the festivals. There were 2 schools in attendance at 71 to 80 per cent of the contests, and 1 in that range at the festivals. Three attended contests between 61 and 70 per cent of the time; two attended festivals between 61 and 70 per cent of the time. Three attended contests less than 61 per cent of the time, and five attended festivals less than 61 per cent of the time.

A comparative summary reveals that five out of eleven member schools during a fifteen year period were involved in the statewide prepared contests 70 per cent or more of the years, while seven out of the fourteen member schools during a nine year period were involved in the festivals during 70 per cent or more of the years. Only three schools were participants in contests 60 per cent or fewer of the years, but five schools were participants in festivals 60 per cent or fewer of the years. As has been noted earlier, the acceptance accorded the festivals seems to have run to extremes: in comparison with the contests, the festivals seem to have elicited considerably more loyalty, and to an appreciable degree more apparent disloyalty as well.

Studies have also been made of total student participation

in the prepared contests and the festivals. The lowest number of participants ever in attendance at an annual statewide poetry contest was nine, but the smallest number ever to attend a festival was 18. The highest number to attend a contest was 23, while the highest number at a festival was 40. The contest average was 16.47. The festival average was 30.88. The medians were 17 and 31 respectively, while the norms were 17 and 39.

These figures have also been expressed in percentages. The average student attendance at the contests was 68.63 per cent of those eligible to attend by virtue of their schools' membership in the league. For the festivals this figure fell to 62.52 per cent. That decrease in percentage seems negligible when it is remembered that the festival as employed for seven of the nine years permitted each college to send twice as many participants in prepared reading as had the contest.

Finally this examination of total student participation is concerned with the three year average student attendance at the beginning and at the end of both the contests and the festivals. During the first three years of prepared contests for which records are available the average attendance was 22; during the last three years of the contests it fell to 19.33. By contrast, the average attendance during the first three years of festivals was 31.66, while the average during the final three years was 37.33. In terms of average

attendance measured in this way, the contests saw a falling off of 12.14 per cent in fifteen years, while the festivals saw a growth of 17.90 per cent in nine years. These figures would seem to indicate growing rejection in the first instance and growing acceptance in the second.

Student participation has also been considered in terms of each of the member colleges. During the fifteen years of contests each of the eleven schools which were members during the whole of the time could have sent 30 people to prepared reading contests. Actually, two schools sent 100 per cent of that number, one fell in the 91 to 99 per cent category, none in the 81 to 90 per cent, four in the 71 to 80 per cent, none in the 61 to 70 per cent, four in the 51 to 60 per cent, and none in the category of less than 51 per cent. During the nine years of festivals each of the fourteen schools which were league members all the years could have sent 32 people. Actually, however, two sent 100 per cent of that number, one fell in the 91 to 99 per cent group, two in the 81 to 90 per cent, three in the 71 to 80 per cent, none in the 61 to 70 per cent, one in the 51 to 60 per cent, and five in the category of less than 51 per cent.

Again a comparative summary may be employed. During fifteen years of contests seven of the eleven schools sent 70 per cent or more of the students it was possible for them to send, while during the nine years of festivals eight of

the fourteen schools sent 70 per cent or more of those possible. No schools sent to contests less than 51 per cent of those they were entitled to send, but five schools sent to festivals less than 51 per cent of those they were eligible to send. Again it may be seen that the popularity of the festivals as compared to the contests seems to have run to extremes. It seems useful to divide the range of acceptance as indicated by attendance into three arbitrary divisions: "consistently enthusiastic"--71 to 100 per cent of that possible, "lukewarm"--31 to 70 per cent of that possible, and "largely negative"--0 to 30 per cent of that possible. On this basis it may be concluded that 63.63 per cent of the institutions (seven out of eleven) exhibited an enthusiastic acceptance of the contests, while 57.14 per cent (eight out of fourteen) were enthusiastic about the festivals. In turn, 36.36 per cent (four out of eleven) were lukewarm toward the contests, while only 21.43 per cent were lukewarm toward the festivals. On this basis, no per cent was largely negative toward the contests, but 21.43 per cent (three out of fourteen) were largely negative toward the festivals. Obviously these figures fail to reflect the significance of numerous intangibles and immeasurables. However, they do show that there was a considerable tendency for the festivals to elicit more definite reactions than did the contests. As the number of member schools increased by three, the number of those in

the "lukewarm" category decreased from four to three, and the "enthusiastic" and "largely negative" categories grew by one and three respectively.

These figures with regard to the acceptance accorded the contests and the festivals do not seem wholly consistent with the testimony employed in the study of personal satisfaction derived from participation in the contests and festivals. The testimony seems to disagree with the conclusion that there may have been 21.43 per cent of the schools largely negative toward the festivals. We may therefore tentatively infer that some factors other than approval of the technique may have accounted for the low attendance of this group: perhaps lack of funds, lack of faculty time, or scheduling difficulties may have been responsible.

Education for the many or the few. It has been observed that both the contests and the festivals have in practice exemplified education for the few; however, the observation must be applied relatively. In the contests the eleven schools which were league members during all of the fifteen year period actually provided 50 per cent of the number of contest participants they were eligible to provide, while in the festivals the fourteen schools which were members during all of the nine years actually provided 62.5 per cent of those they were eligible to send. The actual numbers

participating are probably more significant than percentages in this instance: the average annual contest in prepared reading had 16.47 participants, but the average festival had 30.82 participants. It becomes evident that while neither the contests nor the festivals have illustrated education for the many rather than the few, the festivals have certainly more nearly done so. There has been much progress toward involving large numbers in the oral interpretation activity, and it must be remembered that practical limits will prevent the statewide activity from ever involving really large percentages of the students in the state.

Application of Darwinism: adjustment to individual differences. The prepared contests studied in this project have shown considerable influence of the modern recognition that education should adjust to individual differences: there were no prescribed selections nor lists from which selections had to be taken; two people in a contest might read the same selection; and the contestant might read either from memory or a manuscript. However, there is also much failure to adjust to individual differences: the participant had to read from two selections; no more than two might use the same selection; any contestant who reached seven minutes had to be stopped immediately; every judge must grade every student except the one from his school, but there were

only five possible grades he could use; and finally contest rules assumed the existence of a set of standards for excellence which would apply to all contestants.

The festivals made more adjustment to individual differences. There was no limitation upon the choices of selections except that imposed by the designation of prose, poetry, or drama as the accepted material for the year. A reader was allowed to use as many selections as he could include in the approximate amount of time placed at his disposal. No stop watches were used. No students were ever interrupted and asked to stop reading. No judges were used. Each critic merely wrote comments for each participant except the one from his school. No grades were employed. Nothing about the procedure pre-supposed the existence of standards of excellence applicable to all persons or to all literary selections.

In one respect, the festivals may have shown less adjustment to individual differences than did the contests: students were required to read from manuscript. This rule was apparently thought justified on the basis of a desire to discourage impersonation as a mode of interpretation and on the larger basis that the use of a manuscript is generally a proper interpretative technique.

Application of pragmatism: rejection of imitation. Neither the contests nor the festivals involved any specific

provision whereby the pupil was instructed to employ imitation in learning to interpret orally. The question of which of the two procedures has encouraged imitation the more or the less is probably to be answered only by means of inference. The process of ranking each contestant implies the existence of a uniform model of perfection against which his achievement is to be measured. To be ranked high each reader is prompted to find out just how a selection should be read and then to imitate the process. The contests seemed somewhat conducive to imitation.

With no grading procedure, the festivals were less likely to prompt pupils to engage in imitation in the process of learning oral interpretation.

Manuscript use. The degrees to which contests and festivals have lived up to the principle that oral interpretation should always be done with the aid of a manuscript are readily discernible. The contests provided for reading either from manuscript or from memory. The festivals required the use of a manuscript, and in this regard were entirely consistent with the philosophic implications derived from the textbooks.

Material. Of course, only poetry was used in the poetry contests. No more than two people could use the same poem in any one contest. Each participant was required to

read from two poems. No choices of poetry were prescribed, but the records indicate a strong tendency for pupils to use selections which had previously excelled: "successful vehicles" were employed many times. Selections had to be rigidly confined to a prescribed length of reading time.

As has been seen previously, the only one of the above features which was also existent in the festivals was the prescription of literary type: drama one year, poetry another, and prose another. Choices of material were comparatively free.

While the festivals were also characterized by repeated use of the same selections year after year, this practice was less pronounced than in the contests. There was apparently no longer as much apparent need to find "successful vehicles."

In the contests 86.67 per cent of the material used in the fifteen year period was twentieth century compositions. In the festivals this figure fell to 82.88 per cent. The remainder of the selections were in each case pre-twentieth century compositions. The decrease of 3.79 per cent seems so small as to lack decisive significance. It may simply be a result of less demand for winning selections, which were often new or relatively new ones. On the other hand, it may reflect a response to such writers as Lee, who have called for literary quality in oral interpretation: to use assured

quality is generally to use older material.

The study of the contests provides no evidence that readers chose or arranged their individual presentations with an audience or even with a theme in mind. Indeed, arrangement of programs was done by lot. By contrast, the festivals provide much such evidence. The typical reader in the festivals used from two to five selections when reading poetry. He chose related ones, often gathered about a theme, and he seems to have selected them with his audience in mind. In turn, the state director of the festivals always arranged the materials and the readers into programs he thought would be aesthetically satisfying: he considered content, style, and mood. The object was a pragmatic whole rather than a conglomerate of pieces.

In summary, the choosing of material for the festivals was less rigidly prescribed than for the contests. Both used largely modern material, but the contests used slightly more than did the festivals. Both involved the repeated use of favorite selections, but this was less true of the festivals than of the contests. Much more judicious care was employed in choosing and arranging festival programs than contest programs.

Flexibility and rules. The relative flexibility of the contests and the festivals has been explored in this

study. It has been seen that the contests were conducted with about as much flexibility as permissible within the bounds of the essential nature of the contest situation. The competitive situation required rigid adherence to rules in order that every contestant might have a fair chance to win.

It has also been seen that the festivals were conducted with a very high degree of flexibility. Unlike the contests, the festivals had no rigid provisions regarding the number of selections to be read, the amount of time to be consumed, the arrangement of selections, and the rating of selections with one of five designated figures. They did have some rigidity in such matters as the use of a manuscript and the designation of a literary type. Generally speaking, however, the festivals exemplified a much greater amount of flexibility than did the contests.

Evaluation of the interpretation process. The question with regard to evaluation as the contests and festivals are compared seems quite simply to be whether the essential immeasurability of interpretation was recognized. The contest setup provided that each instance of oral interpretation should be given a value of 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1. This was measurement and evidences a failure to recognize the immeasurability of the interpretative process.

The festivals did not involve such efforts at measurement. The critic provided by each participating school was instructed to write, for each participant except those from his own school, an individual critique. The guest critic conducted an oral evlauation and discussion publicly after each session of the festival. No ratings or rankings, no measurements, were given by any critic. One of the most distinguishing features of the festivals was the concept that interpretation is not to be measured and that valid comparisons for purposes of selecting winners are impossible.

Awards. It has been seen that the contests provided material awards for six winners each year: the average cost of each award was $2.37 although the expense increased materially in the last years of the contests. In a typical contest in prepared reading the award money was actually spent on only 36.43 per cent of the participants; the remaining 63.57 per cent received no awards and thus no benefit from the money spent on awards.

In the typical festival no material awards were presented. Instead, regardless of the quality of his work, each pupil participated in two to four hours of discussion with a communication expert.

The average contest required an expenditure of $32.70, although the cost ran from $35.00 to $45.00 during the later

contest years. In terms of participants in prepared reading the average per capita expenditure for the contests was $1.99. The average festival cost the league $55.56 or $1.80 per capita per participant. The per capita cost of the festivals was 9.55 per cent less than that of the contests.

In short, the festivals, unlike the contests, provided no material awards for the select few, but potential learning experiences for all participants. This was accomplished at a lower per capita cost.

On contests. It is evident that some of the faults of the contest system did not exist in the festivals or have been minimized. Those have been discussed in detail.

VIII. IMPLICATIONS OF THE COMPARISON

The comparison just completed, wherein an effort was made to determine whether and to what degree the contests and the festivals were consistent with the elements of a current philosophy for the teaching of oral interpretation in college derived from the textbooks, seems to set forth four implications.

Although the festivals by no means lived up to their possibilities in terms of attendance and popularity, they were better accepted than the contests. Furthermore, the festivals seem generally much more consistent with modern

educational concepts. The first implication is, therefore, that the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League should confidently continue to sponsor the annual interpretation festival and that an effort should be made to secure more support from the directors of interpretation whose schools have not consistently attended the festivals.

This study has indicated that in some instances undesirable attitudes and practices reminiscent of contests persisted in the festivals: students and their teachers may sometimes have carried a sense of competition into a noncompetitive situation and they may sometimes have thought in terms of performance and even impersonation rather than communication. The second implication of this study is, therefore, that attention should be directed to the removal of these negative features.

Built into the festivals was a participation limitation of no more than four students in annual attendance from a single member college or university. Unless such a requirement were an absolute practical necessity, it would in terms of modern thought seem difficult to justify. The third implication of this study seems to be that the Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League Constitution should be modified to permit, in so far as possible, member schools to send unlimited numbers of participants to each annual festival. However, factors such as availability of faculty direction

and sufficient financial support might quite possibly impose a practical limitation of numbers. The statewide director might be empowered to draw a line at his own discretion. The festival should not be characterized by the label of education for the few.

The fourth implication of the findings of this study is that the festival be generally recommended as a desirable alternative to contests in oral interpretation. There is, furthermore, no apparent reason for the festivals to be confined to interpretation experiences in prose, poetry, and drama. Other oral communication forms, from drama to impromptu speaking, might conceivably prove compatible with festival procedures. Certainly play acting and the oral interpretation of non-original speeches might successfully be done in festivals.

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