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The Effects of Self-Concept Instruction as Part of the Basic Speech Course

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THE EFFECTS OF SELF-CONCEPT INSTRUCTION

AS PART OF THE BASIC SPEECH COURSE

(TITLE)

BY

GAYLE LYNN DAVENPORT

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1976

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

One of the goals of many beginning speech and communication courses is either to improve the student's concept of himself or to decrease the discrepancy between his self-concept as a speaker and his ideal self-concept.¹ Generally, studies in this area have followed one of two basic procedures: (1) change in the self-concept of students who took a speech course was compared with change in self-concepts of comparable students who did not take a speech course,² or (2) self-concepts of students in a speech course were measured at the beginning and the end of the course to determine if there was significant improvement.³

¹Larry R. Judd and Carolyn B. Smith, "A Study of Variables Influencing Self-Concept and Ideal Self-Concept Among Students in the Basic Speech Course," The Speech Teacher, 22 (January 1973), 215.

²H. Bedford Furr, "Influences of a Course in Speech-Communication on Certain Aspects of the Self-Concept of College Freshmen," The Speech Teacher, 19 (January 1970), 26-31; S. Frank Miyamoto, Laura Crowell and Allan Katcher, "Self-Concepts of Communicative Skill Among Beginning Speech Students," Speech Monographs, 23 (March 1956), 66-74.

³William D. Brooks and Sarah M. Platz, "The Effects of Speech Training Upon Self-Concept as a Communicator," The Speech Teacher, 17 (January 1968), 44-49; James C. McCroskey, "The Effect of the Basic Speech Course on Students' Attitudes," The Speech Teacher, 16 (March 1967), 115-117.

As a more extensive review of the literature will reveal, studies using the first approach have produced conflicting results while those using the second approach have concluded that at least some of the students in the basic speech course do improve in self-concept. None of the studies, however, define those factors which could have a direct influence on the reported changes in self-concept or offer any instruction in the development and maintenance of a positive self-concept as part of the basic speech course.

The purpose of this study is to answer the question: What effect does actual instruction in self-concept as part of the basic high school speech course have on the students' self-concept? More specifically, the present study will also attempt to determine which of two methods of instruction results in greatest improvement in self-concept as measured by the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For purposes of definition, John W. Kinch states that general agreement could be reached on the following statement of an individual's conception of himself:

The self-concept is that organization of qualities that the individual attributes to himself. It should be understood that the word "qualities" is used in a broad sense to include both attributes that the individual might express in terms of adjectives (ambitious, intelligent) and also the roles

he sees himself in (father, doctor, etc).⁴

Kinch then formalizes a very general theory -- "The individual's conception of himself emerges from social interaction and in turn, guides or influences the behavior of that individual."⁵

Brooks and Platz define self-concept as

...the composite of the individual's thoughts and feelings about himself; an organized configuration of perceptions of the self which are admissible to awareness...composed of such elements as the perception of one's characteristics and abilities; the percepts and concepts of the self in relation to others and to the environment.⁶

The formulation of the self-concept according to Carl R.

Rogers is

...the organized picture, existing in awareness either as figure or ground, of the self and the self-in-relationship, together with the positive or negative values which are associated with those qualities and relationships, as they are perceived as existing in the past, present, or future.⁷

Kathleen M. Galvin and Cassandra L. Book simply state that self-concept is the way we see ourselves based on our own feelings and on what others tell us.⁸

⁴John W. Kinch, "A Formalized Theory of the Self-Concept," The American Journal of Sociology, 68 (January 1963), 481.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Brooks and Platz, "Effects of Speech Training," 45.

⁷Carl R. Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1951), 501-507.

⁸Kathleen M. Galvin and Cassandra L. Book, Person to Person: An Interpersonal Approach to Speech Communication (Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1973), 41.

For the purpose of this study, self-concept is defined as an individual's self-perceptions as determined by the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

SIGNIFICANCE AND JUSTIFICATION

The significance of the problem under investigation lies in two areas. First, feelings of inadequacy or a negative self-concept are most commonly experienced at the high school level and secondly, a primary purpose and philosophical foundation of many secondary schools is to aid in the development of positive self-concepts.

The importance of a positive self-concept is a key to life's behaviors as stated by Mixer and Milson:

A child can only act in terms of what he thinks about himself. The way he views himself is the way he will behave. The source of one's self-image is learned. The concept of self is always in terms of degrees of adequacy.⁹

In addition, the major difficulties with the formulation of a positive self-concept come during secondary school training. Morris Rosenberg in Society and the Adolescent Self-Image cites three major reasons for this:

1) Late adolescence is a time for major decision. It is during this time that the individual is faced with a variety of choices which may affect the rest of his life. Many of these

⁹Anthony S. Mixer and James L. Milson, "Teaching and the Self," The Clearing House, 47 (February 1973), 347.

decisions are directly connected with self-image. For example, the individual must consider his intellectual capabilities. Is he intelligent enough to pursue a career as a doctor or lawyer? "When an individual is faced with a serious and urgent decision, and when a major basis for this decision is his view of what he is like, then the self-image is likely to move to the forefront of attention."¹⁰

2) Adolescence is a period of unusual change. Rapid physiological and psychological changes abound.

Whether it is now a concern with automobiles or dates, an awakened interest in philosophy or religion, a new concern for aesthetic experience or world affairs, the effect is to shake up the adolescent's picture of what he is like and to intensify his interest in this picture.¹¹

3) Adolescence is a period of unusual status ambiguity. Society does not establish a clear set of expectations for the adolescent. He is treated sometimes as a child and other times as an adult. "He is thus unclear about his social duties and responsibilities just as he is unclear about his social rights and privileges."¹²

¹⁰ Morris Rosenberg, Society and the Adolescent Self-Image (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 4.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

Along with the importance of self-concept during the adolescent period, many secondary schools emphasize the necessity of positive self-concept development as a basis of their objectives and philosophy.

George M. Bledsoe, Jr., a high school principal, states that education should develop within each student the following attributes and abilities:

- 1) a respect for the dignity and worth of every individual
- 2) a respect for excellence
- 3) a receptive attitude
- 4) efficiency in learning
- 5) organized and critical thinking
- 6) the ability to make careful and accurate observations
- 7) the ability to produce -- creativity
- 8) the self-actualization of each individual to the fullest extent based upon his needs, abilities, and capacity.¹³

These ideas on self-actualization and the worth of the individual are carried through in the North Central Association's Evaluative Criteria, fourth edition, which emphasizes the importance of the development of a positive self-concept as an integral part of a secondary school's philosophy and objectives. The Association gives a hypothetical example of a statement of objectives for schools to use as a guideline:

¹³George M. Bledsoe, Jr., "Self-Actualization: The Purpose of Education," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 59 (September 1975), 88.

3. Students develop the attitude that the individual's own efforts are highly important in realizing his personalities. We attempt to achieve this objective through:
 - a) Individual instruction
 - b) An honors program
 - c) Guidance
 - d) Cooperative work programs
 - e) Evaluation of scholastic achievement
 - f) Athletics and other extracurricular activities¹⁴

This emphasis is carried into many of the statements written by schools participating in the North Central evaluations. For example, Buffalo Grove High School, Arlington Heights, Illinois, North Central Evaluation, 1976, explicitly recognizes the role of self-concept development in its philosophy:

The school's curriculum will also offer each student the opportunity to develop an understanding of the American heritage, the ability to utilize basic skills and reasoning, the ability to think critically and analytically, an appreciation for mental and physical health, excellence in scholarship, self-awareness, and skills in interpersonal relationships.

The evaluation goes on to state the following objectives related to this philosophy:

1. To provide a positive environment in which the student would be allowed to develop feelings of self worth in relations with his peers, family and others.

¹⁴North Central Association, Evaluative Criteria, fourth edition, 1969 by the National Study of Secondary School Evaluation, 31.

2. To define and develop personal goals for self/career identity through a continuing process of decision making based on knowledge of self and career opportunities.

Tuscola High School, Tuscola, Illinois in its 1974 North

Central Evaluation echoes a similar philosophy:

...believing in the intrinsic worth of the individual, (the school) should provide an environment for the student 1) to develop a positive concept of himself and sound relationships with other individuals; and 2) to develop his ability to question maturely and think critically.

If educators, and particularly speech educators, are to help the schools to meet these objectives, it is necessary to develop some direction for instruction in self-concept. Two basic factors must be considered in the implementation of such a program of self-concept education:

- 1) Self-concept can be taught and measured.
- 2) The basic speech course may provide one of the best frameworks for such instruction.

The speech-communication classroom usually offers four basic experiences on which self-concept instruction can be based.

- 1) The basic speech course creates an environment for various types of interpersonal interactions. The role of dyadic and small group communication and their importance in everyday life are essential ideas in developing an understanding of how "self" communicates. An awareness of the communication process both inside and outside the classroom

enables the student to better evaluate and understand the unique role which he plays in various interpersonal encounters.

2) The basic speech course provides an investigation of basic needs, the development of attitudes and beliefs, and barriers and breakdowns as they relate to communication. In order to understand what happens between the sender and receiver in both successful and unsuccessful communication attempts, it is necessary to examine the needs, attitudes and beliefs that are operating in the situation. Giffin and Patton state that the study of communication involves the investigation of

...the personal and interpersonal facets of communication: how we perceive each other, our orientation toward other people in general, our interpersonal response sets, and those behavior patterns which become serious barriers to developing meaningful relationships with others. In addition, new emphasis is placed on understanding those human needs which a person tries to satisfy¹⁵ through interaction with others...

Through some self-analysis on the part of the student, he can locate and identify his own attitudes and beliefs that may create barriers to successful communication.

3) The basic speech course has the potential to create greater self-confidence. James McCroskey states,

The alleged values of the basic speech course are numerous and varied. Not the least of the values frequently attributed to the basic course is that it improves students' confidence in

¹⁵Kim Giffin and Bobby R. Patton (eds.), Basic Readings in Interpersonal Communication (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), ix-x.

themselves as speakers. Since students presumably learn what constitutes good speaking and engage in speechmaking in most basic courses, they are presumed to become more confident in their speaking ability by the end of a basic course than they were at its beginning.¹⁶

4) The basic speech course can create a realization that communication and self-concept are closely related, if not dependent on one another. Every communication includes both content or information messages and also messages that define the relationship between the persons communicating.

This relationship between communication and personality has been investigated by many authors who see the importance of the development of self-concept as an integral part of communication behaviors.

Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson describe it as

On the relationship level people do not communicate about facts outside their relationship, but offer each other definitions of that relationship and, by implication, of themselves.¹⁷

John Keltner adds

No one really talks or communicates with the total other or even with the real other person. What we actually do as we speak with and to each other is talk to ourselves.¹⁸

¹⁶ McCroskey, "Effect of the Basic Speech Course," 115.

¹⁷ Paul Watzlawick, Janet H. Beavin and Don D. Jackson, The Pragmatics of Human Communication (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1967), 84.

¹⁸ John W. Keltner, Interpersonal Speech-Communication (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1970), 52.

Albert T. Murphy adds to the existence of this relationship by stating

...speech behavior is affected by emotional factors, by the dynamics of personality constellation, by attitudinal shifts which accompany situational changes, by unique patterns and by rigid, distorted, or realistic levels of aspiration or self-perception...¹⁹

In summary, three areas of justification lead to a review of the relevant literature on self-concept.

- 1) The adolescent is at a critical period in the development of self-concept.
- 2) It is a primary goal of many secondary institutions to aid in the development of a positive self-concept.
- 3) There exists an important relationship between communication and the development of a positive self-concept.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Various studies have been conducted in the areas of speech-communication, psychology, sociology and education dealing with self-concept. Numerous tests of self-concept have also been developed in these areas and will be included in this review. Those studies dealing with the speech-communication area will be reviewed first and can be divided into those which examine the effects of the basic speech course on self-concept and those which compare the self-concept of students enrolled in a speech course with non-speech students.

¹⁹Albert T. Murphy, Stuttering and Personality Dynamics (New York: Ronald Press, 1960), 15.

McCroskey²⁰ concluded that one of the benefits derived by a student in a basic course in speech is increased confidence in his speaking ability. The major hypothesis tested and rejected was: There is no difference between students' attitudes toward themselves as speakers at the beginning of a basic speech course and their attitudes toward themselves as speakers at the end of the course. No factors which had a direct effect on this change, however, were isolated.

Brooks and Platz²¹ at the University of Kansas attempted to determine the effect of the basic speech course on self-concept. A Q-sort instrument was used to measure self-concept as a communicator and ideal communicator concept at the beginning and the end of the semester. One-fourth of the students made dramatic shifts toward a lower self-concept which cancelled the positive changes of the rest of the group. Brooks and Platz concluded that it appeared that concept of self as a communicator deteriorates as a result of the general college experience as evidenced by the control group, and that perhaps the speech course acts as a buffer to this. This conclusion supported previous evidence that during college, students become more aware of their own shortcomings.²²

²⁰McCroskey, "Effect of the Basic Speech Course," 115-117.

²¹Brooks and Platz, "Effects of Speech Training," 44-49.

²²Robert C. Nichols, "Personality Change and the College," American Educational Research Journal, 4 (May 1967), 178.

Ober and Jandt²³ investigated the relationships between aspects of students' self-concepts and their evaluation of college-level discussion instruction. It appeared in this study that a factor contributing to variance of evaluative responses could be accounted for by the evaluator's self-concept even when self-concept is defined and measured by rather global terms. The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale was used along with the Berger Scale and the Leary Interpersonal Check List as measuring instruments.

The effect of repeated self-viewings on self-concept and personality needs of student speakers was investigated by Dieker, Crane and Brown.²⁴ Contrary to predictions, four individual experiences with self-confrontation resulted in significantly less improvement in actual-ideal self congruence than four similar experiences without self-confrontations. However, the self-viewing students developed a more realistic self-concept as evidenced by the use of a semantic differential scale.

²³Nelson Ober and Fred E. Jandt, "Students' Self Concepts and Evaluations of Discussion Instruction," The Speech Teacher, 22 (January 1973), 64-66.

²⁴Richard J. Dieker, Loren Crane and Charles T. Brown, "Repeated Self-Viewing on Closed-Circuit Television As It Affects Changes in the Self-Concept and Personality Needs of Student Speakers," The Speech Teacher, 20 (September 1971), 131-142.

Brooks and Jandt²⁵ conducted a study in self-concept among students involved in an Upward Bound program and discovered a significant gain in self-concept as communicators. Although the change in self-concept could not be attributed to the speech training alone, it was concluded that speech training should be made available to more Upward Bound students. This study re-emphasizes the possible influence of speech training on self-concept. Again, however, no specific factors which had a direct influence on self-concept were isolated.

Judd and Smith²⁶ attempted to explain the confusion in previous studies by hypothesizing that differences in sex and in level of total discrepancy between self-concept and ideal self-concept affected the outcome of the results. It was discovered that (1) at moderate discrepancy levels, males and females had different initial ideal self-concepts, (2) low total discrepancy students had lower ideal images than did high total discrepancy students, and (3) while most students maintained a fairly stable ideal self-concept during the semester, the low total discrepancy students exhibited a marked tendency to increase their ideal selves as communicators. This study seemed to clarify some of the problems that had existed in previous studies.

²⁵Cliff Brooks and Fred E. Jandt, "Self-Concepts as Communicators Among Upward Bound Students," The Speech Teacher, 22 (January 1973), 221-224.

²⁶Judd and Smith, "Variables Influencing Self-Concept and Ideal Self-Concept," 215-221.

Furr²⁷ discovered that students enrolled in a college-level business speaking course made significantly greater changes in overall self-concept and self-confidence than did non-speech students. Although the speech students scored significantly better, there was a positive but not significant shift in self-concept for all three groups which indicated that other factors should also be considered. Furr states in his conclusion,

The development of a positive self-concept is here postulated as being a valid goal of the professional educator. The process of such development may well include the provision of direct, specified experiences.²⁸

This statement lends support to the idea that actual instruction in self-concept as part of the basic course may help to improve self-concept.

Miyamoto, Crowell and Katcher²⁹ tested the hypothesis that in a given interval speech students will reflect more change in the direction of favorable self-evaluation than will psychology students. No significant differences were observed, but both groups increased scores between testing items but on different items. These findings suggest that different factors may affect self-concept, but they are not identified in the study.

²⁷Furr, "Influences of a Course in Speech-Communication," 26-31.

²⁸Ibid., 31.

²⁹Miyamoto, Crowell and Katcher, "Self-Concepts of Communicative Skill, " 66-74.

In still another study, Crowell et al.³⁰ explored the relationship between self-concepts of communicative skill and performance in group discussion. Their findings revealed a significant positive relationship between self-descriptions and actual performance.

Roberts³¹ revealed that videotape playback did not make a significant difference in change of either self-confidence or personal adjustment. The playback did, however, exhibit a tendency to counterbalance criticism received during an interview situation. This basically supports the findings of Dieker et al. in that videotape feedback aids in creating a more realistic self-concept.

Hilpert, Kramer and Clark³² investigated perceptions of self and partner in mixed-sex dyad discussions. Three results were obtained: 1) There was no significant difference in the frequency with which men and women chose themselves as compared to their partner as to who contributed more to a feeling of trust and friendship. 2) Men and women did have significantly

³⁰Laura Crowell, Allan Katcher and S. Frank Miyamoto, "Self-Concepts of Communication Skill and Performance in Small Group Discussion," Speech Monographs, 22 (March 1955), 20-27.

³¹Churchill Roberts, "The Effects of Self-Confrontation, Role Playing, and Response Feedback on the Level of Self-Esteem," The Speech Teacher, 21 (January 1972), 22-38.

³²Fred P. Hilpert, Cheris Kramer and Ruth Anne Clark, "Participants' Perceptions of Self and Partner in Mixed-Sex Dyads," Central States Speech Journal, 26 (Spring 1975), 52-56.

different perceptions as to who contributed more to the decision reached by the dyad. 3) The question of who talked more generally followed the responses of result two. The results support those of other studies which indicate that college women hold negative values of their worth when comparing themselves to college men.

Rose³³ investigated the assumption that an educational program which includes speech training has a greater effect on personality than one which does not include speech training. As measured by the Bernreuter Personality Inventory, speech training resulted in a greater decrease in neurotic tendency and a greater increase in dominance. The study, however, revealed inconclusive results regarding the elements of self-sufficiency and sociability.

Studies specifically in the communication area have revealed numerous and often conflicting results as have those in related fields.

Using members of two men's cooperative houses at the University of Michigan, Brownfain³⁴ tested the hypothesis that

³³Forrest H. Rose, "Training in Speech and Changes in Personality: A Study of the Effect of Beginning Speech Courses Upon Personality Traits," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 26 (April 1940), 193-195.

³⁴John J. Brownfain, "Stability of the Self-Concept as a Dimension of Personality," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 47 (July 1952), 597-606.

subjects whose self-concept is comparatively stable are better adjusted than subjects with the least stable self-concepts. All findings supported the hypothesis as measured by the Guilford-Martin Inventory of Factors.

Rezler and Anderson³⁵ examined the effects of "focused" versus "unfocused" videotape review of self-perception. Focused feedback meant that the subject reviewed a tape of himself in a t-group which was stopped at selected places to call the viewer's attention to cues in order to alter his self-perception. In the unfocused group, a subject reviewed the tape with no interruption. The results indicated that focused self-confrontation brought about more realistic self-perceptions than did unfocused self-confrontation.

The purpose of a study by Neuringer and Wandke³⁶ was to investigate the influence of interpersonal conflict on persons of both high and low self-concepts. The Bills Inventory of Adjustment and Values was used to measure self-concept. The results indicated that high self-concept subjects, when confronted with disruptive information about the other member of a dyad, changed their attitude toward that person to a significantly greater extent than the low self-concept subject.

³⁵Agnes G. Rezler and Alexander S. Anderson, "Focused and Unfocused Feedback and Self-Perception," The Journal of Educational Research, 65 (October 1971), 61-64.

³⁶Charles Neuringer and Lowell W. Wandke, "Interpersonal Conflicts in Persons of High Self-Concept and Low Self-Concept," The Journal of Social Psychology, 68 (April 1966), 313-322.

Boyd and Sisney³⁷ used the Leary Interpersonal Check List to measure changes in self-concept of patients on a psychiatric ward following self-image confrontation via videotape as compared to a control group which did not receive self-image confrontation. The self-image confrontation resulted in less discrepant and less pathological concepts of the self, the ideal self and the public self.

In addition to studies on self-concept, numerous tests have been developed for its measurement. Emanuel M. Berger developed a group instrument for the measurement of self-acceptance and the acceptance of others.³⁸ The scale consists of thirty-six items for self-acceptance and twenty-eight items for the acceptance of others. This scale was rejected for use in the present study because of the amount of items involved. It was believed by the researcher that for the grade level being tested, a shorter measuring instrument was needed.

The Rotter Internal-External Scale³⁹ consists of twenty-nine forced choice items. This scale was also rejected because of

³⁷Harry S. Boyd and Vernon V. Sisney, "Immediate Self-Image Confrontation and Changes in Self-Concept," Journal of Consulting Psychology, 31 (June 1967), 291-294.

³⁸Emanuel M. Berger, "Acceptance of Self and Expressed Acceptance of Others," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 47 (January 1952), 778-782.

³⁹Julian B. Rotter, "Generalized Expectancies for Internal Versus External Control of Reinforcement," Psychological Monographs: General and Applied, 80 (January 1966), 1-28.

the greater complexity of the items and in anticipation of difficulties that the subjects might encounter in understanding the items.

The Guttman Self-Esteem Scale⁴⁰ seemed well-suited for the subjects' grade level but consists of only ten items. Because the test used in the study had to be given four times over a period of only nine weeks, it was rejected on the basis that it would be too easily remembered from test time to test time.

The Adjective Check List⁴¹ was also rejected on the basis of the difficulty of some of the vocabulary for the grade level being tested.

The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale⁴² (see Appendix A) consists of thirty-three items concerning personal attitudes and traits which are marked true or false as they pertain to the individual subject. Both internal consistency and test-retest coefficients were obtained by Marlowe and Crowne to determine the reliability of the scale. Using the Kuder-Richardson formula 20, they also determined the internal consistency coefficient for the final form of the scale to be .88. Fifty-seven subjects took the test on two occasions separated by a one-month interval. A

⁴⁰ Rosenberg, Society and the Adolescent Self-Image, 305-319.

⁴¹ Harrison G. Gough, The Adjective Check List (Palo Alto, California: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1952).

⁴² Douglas P. Crowne and David Marlowe, The Approval Motive: Studies in Evaluative Dependence (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1964), 23-25.

test-retest correlation of .88 was obtained. These correlations indicate that reliability was very satisfactorily achieved. For these reasons and because of the ease of administration and scoring of the scales, the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale was selected for use in the present study.

The contradictory findings of the research cited and the lack of any studies dealing specifically with instruction in self-concept warrant further investigation into this area. Judd⁴³ suggests that possible areas of future research should consider the factors of: 1) general tendency of self-concept to change, 2) differences between male and female self-concepts, 3) individual differences in direction of change, 4) effects of reward, and 5) possible variability among measures of self-concept.

THE HYPOTHESES TO BE TESTED

The following hypothesis will be tested: Students receiving instruction in self-concept will improve more in self-concept than those students receiving no instruction. A secondary hypothesis will be that students completing a unit in self-concept instruction by an activities-game method will improve more in self-concept than students completing a unit in self-concept instruction by a lecture method.

⁴³Larry Judd, "Research in Improving Self-Concept in the Basic Course: Review and Recommendations," Today's Speech, 21 (Summer 1973), 51.

In the primary hypothesis the independent variable will be the instruction in self-concept. In the secondary hypothesis, it will be the method of instruction in self-concept. In both cases, the dependent variable will be the change in self-concept as measured by the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale..

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURES

For this study, freshman English classes at Peoria-Heights High School, Peoria Heights, Illinois were used. The English program there is divided into four nine-week subject areas -- Speech, Grammar and Composition, Fiction-Nonfiction and Poetry-Drama. This is the only level at which any speech training is received.

Each nine weeks the student moves to a new subject area and usually to a different teacher for at least three of the four nine-week periods. The present study was conducted during the fourth nine-week period. At this time, the researcher taught two classes of Speech with approximately twenty students in each class. The majority of the students were those which the researcher had previously instructed in Grammar and Composition for the first nine-week period.

The basic design of this study was the repeated measures. The testing instrument was administered four times over a period of nine weeks. The experimental population consisted of the two groups of freshman Speech classes. The control population consisted of two groups of a Fiction-Nonfiction class taught by another instructor during the same time period. The control group had already completed the Speech course but under an instructor other than the author of this study and

with no emphasis on self-concept instruction.

The following schedule indicates the exact procedure followed. More detailed lesson plans for the experimental groups follow.

Day 1 -- All subjects completed the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

Day 18 -- All subjects completed the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

Days 19, 20, 21 -- The two experimental groups received instruction in self-concept.

Day 22 -- All subjects completed the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

Day 42 -- All subjects completed the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

Although the instruction in self-concept was accomplished through two different methods, the objectives for the units were the same. Precisely stated these were:

- 1) The student will examine his feelings about himself and others.
- 2) The student will be able to define the term self-concept and discuss how it is formed.
- 3) The student will be able to identify ways in which the development of a positive self-concept may be helped or hindered.

All experimental class sessions were recorded in addition

to the use of extensive outlines for the lecture sessions.

This was done as a check on the content of each session

and to control any other variables as much as possible.

The following books served as a guideline for the materials

covered during both the lecture and activities sessions:

Galvin, Kathleen M. and Book, Cassandra L., Person-to-Person: An Introduction to Speech Communication (Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1973).

Johnson, David W., Reaching Out (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972).

Krupar, Karen R., Communication Games (New York: The Free Press, 1973).

Myers, Gail E. and Myers, Michele Tolela, The Dynamics of Human Communication: A Laboratory Approach (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1976).

PROGRAM FOR INSTRUCTION IN SELF-CONCEPT

BY ACTIVITIES METHOD

Day 1 -- Students were divided into groups of four or five.

They were instructed to read the handout on the Johari Window (see Appendix B). The information it contained was discussed by the class. The students then completed activities a through d on the handout, discussed these as a class, and answered the questions: How does your window look? How would you like it to look?

Each group wrote down the changes that occurred within the windows of the group members and shared these with the rest of the class. The following questions were covered in the discussion:

What is the purpose of the Johari Window?

What does the window reveal about you? What does it reveal about others?

What happens when one section of the window changes?

Which section do you think should be the largest? Why?

How could you go about trying to change the sections of your window?

The students then completed as much of the Who Am I? questionnaire (see Appendix C) as time allowed and shared any answers that they wanted to with their group.

Day 2 -- Discussion on the Who Am I? questionnaire continued and its purpose was investigated.

Each group was then given a stack of old magazines, scissors, and glue and enough paper bags for each member. They were instructed to imagine that the paper bags represented themselves and to put pictures and words on the outside which represented things that they revealed to others and to place on the inside, things that they kept to themselves. The researcher completed this activity along with the class.

After finishing the activity students shared them with the rest of the class and again discussed the purpose of the activity.

Day 3 -- Students were given the handout on the Welsh Instrument (see Appendix D) and the instructions were discussed. Each group then discussed the listed questions, completed the ratings and discussed them within the group. The entire class

then discussed the purpose of the activity and any difficulties that they encountered. The activities of the past two days were then reviewed.

PROGRAM FOR INSTRUCTION IN SELF-CONCEPT

BY LECTURE METHOD

The following subject areas were covered during the three days of instruction:

Day 1 -- Definitions of interpersonal and intrapersonal communication

The role of "self" in communication

Definition of self-concept and how it is formed

Roles people play and how they all make up an individual's self-concept

How others see us

Day 2 -- Continued lecture on how others see us

How we adapt our communication to different situations

How self-concept is affected by how others see and respond to us

Examples of how daily encounters affect self-concept

Day 3 -- Sharing yourself as a communicator

Public, Public-Private and Private feelings

Self-disclosure

Analyzing relationships with others

Thomas Harris' four positions - I'm Ok, You're Ok

Ways to achieve the I'm Ok, You're Ok position

Review of the past two days' instruction

TREATMENT OF THE DATA

The reliability of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale used in this study was computed using Kuder-Richardson formula 20. This reliability coefficient, defined as a measure of internal consistency, was .75.

An item analysis was computed for each separate test time for all experimental and control groups and also for all groups combined. This was done to determine if any test items contributed more directly to measuring self-concept than others.

A factorial analysis of variance from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was computed in the following manners:

- 1) the two experimental groups as compared to the two control groups.
- 2) all four groups combined.
- 3) the activities group as compared to the lecture group.

The first factorial analysis variance will show the effects of the independent variable, the instruction in self-concept. The second analysis will reveal any differences between the groups. The effectiveness of the methods of instruction will be provided by the third analysis.

From these three sources of data, it will be possible to support or contradict the primary and secondary hypotheses.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

According to the item analysis for all groups combined, the following items exhibited the highest degree of discrimination between high and low self-concepts:

- 21. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
- 13. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.
- 7. I am always careful about my manner of dress.
- 26. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.

Those items exhibiting the lowest discrimination index were:

- 1. Before I would ever vote, I would thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates.
- 11. I like to gossip at times.
- 23. There have been occasions when I felt like smashing things.
- 27. I would never make a long trip without checking the safety of my car.

In programming for the factorial analysis of variance in this study, the following elements were tested as main effects and as interactions:

- 1) Group indicated the method of instruction (lecture or activity) and the presence of two control groups.
- 2) Test time was labeled as 1, 2, 3 or 4 and indicated the

test sequence.

3) Sex of the respondents.

4) Test score was the number of correct answers on the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

The results of the factorial analysis of variance indicated that:

1) For the two experimental groups as compared to the two control groups, there was no significance for main effects or two-way interactions. Table 1 shows these results.

TABLE 1
EXPERIMENTAL COMPARED TO CONTROL

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Significance of F
Main Effects	35.960	8.990	.348	.999
Group	11.098	11.098	.430	.999
Test Time	24.862	8.287	.321	.999
Two-way Interactions	41.843	13.948	.540	.999
Group/Test Time	41.843	13.948	.540	.999

2) For all four groups combined, the difference between the means was significant at the .013 level. Table 2 shows these results.

TABLE 2
ALL GROUPS

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Significance of F
Main Effects	303.713	50.619	2.016	.064
Group	278.850	92.950	3.702	.013
Test Time	24.862	8.287	.330	.999
Two-way Interactions	130.600	14.511	.578	.999
Group/Test Time	130.600	14.511	.578	.999

3) For the activities group as compared to the lecture group, the difference between the means was significant at .001 and the difference between the means of males and females at .002. Table 3 shows these results.

TABLE 3
LECTURE COMPARED TO ACTIVITIES

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Significance of F
Main Effects	454.213	90.843	6.380	.001
Group	278.902	278.902	19.589	.001
Sex	154.708	154.708	10.866	.002
Test Time	35.963	11.988	.842	.999
Two-way Interactions	81.232	11.605	.815	.999
Group/Sex	6.404	6.404	.450	.999
Group/Test Time	25.790	8.597	.604	.999
Sex/Test Time	50.725	16.908	1.188	.319
Three-way Interactions	67.328	22.443	1.576	.199
Group/Sex/Test Time	67.328	22.443	1.576	.199

The means for all four groups and for males and females were then calculated to determine which group and which sex accounted for the significance of the F scores. The means were as follows:

Experimental - Activities	12.1
Experimental - Lecture	15.3
Control	13.6
Control	13.3
Males	14.8
Females	12.5

Therefore, the self-concept scores for the lecture group and for males were significantly higher. A Scheffé test⁴⁴ was also computed on the means of the four groups to affirm the significance.

⁴⁴Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research, 2d ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1973), 240-241.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine if actual instruction in self-concept as part of the basic speech course improved self-concept. The results revealed that:

1) Students in the class receiving instruction in self-concept by a lecture method had a significantly higher score in self-concept over the four test times than did the activities group or the two control groups as measured by the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

2) Males had a significantly higher score in self-concept over the four test times than did females.

Since no interactions between the testing time and the group were significant, the primary hypothesis could not be supported. Although the scores in the lecture group were significantly higher, this could not be interpreted as improvement in self-concept or as a result of the actual instruction. This result could neither support nor directly contradict the secondary hypothesis that students receiving instruction by the activities method would show greater improvement in self-concept than those receiving instruction by a lecture method.

This first result indicated several important factors:

1) Since no relationship between instruction and improvement was proven significant, factors other than the instruction in self-concept could have attributed to the differences in self-concept.

2) The instruction in self-concept could have been so designed as to have little or no effect. Since no materials are available which have been tested to assure improvement in self-concept, the researcher gathered information from the sources previously listed. Although these sources provided what seemed to be reliable information for the lectures and activities, they could possibly have had no effect or been so organized and used in this study as to have no effect.

3) As reported in several previous studies, the basic speech course by itself may affect self-concept. It should be noted that subjects used in the control groups had already completed a speech course but with no emphasis on self-concept instruction. This could account for the non-significant results if the speech course by itself is a source of improvement. This does not, however, account for the significantly higher self-concept scores achieved by the lecture group. Since the factorial analysis of variance showed no significant interactions, this higher score is not an indication of improvement in self-concept or of the effectiveness of the lecture method. One possible explanation for this occurrence is that the subjects in the lecture group were atypical and the principle of randomness did not operate in this case.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Although the present study did indicate a higher self-concept score in one experimental group as compared to the other experimental group and the two control groups, it failed to isolate the variables which contributed to this. Evidently, the experimental manipulations had little, if any, effect.

The study did suggest several areas for further research which will be discussed here.

1) Since the subjects in the control groups had already completed the basic speech course, this could have affected the results. A control group consisting of students who had not been exposed to the speech course experience could contribute to a different outcome and more significant differences in self-concept.

2) Variables in the actual instruction in self-concept need to be isolated. Tested methods of instruction by both activities and lectures need to be developed before their effects can be more precisely measured. Detailed evaluations of subject areas and methods in self-concept instruction would provide valuable information for the speech educator.

3) Since no predictions were made as to the influence of the variable of sex, this could serve as the basis for a future study.

4) The reliability of self-concept measuring instruments needs to be further investigated. Since the reliability coefficient

for the present study's use of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale was lower than that obtained by the authors of the scale, this could have affected the results. With the variety of self-concept measuring devices, another instrument for measurement may be more suitable for use with high school students.

5) If the basic speech course by itself improves self-concept, what specific factors in the course have this effect? Since previous studies have not isolated such variables, this could also provide the basis for future research.

These areas indicate a variety of research studies which still need to be investigated in determining the relationship between self-concept and oral communication.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

MARLOWE-CROWNE SOCIAL DESIRABILITY SCALE

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item and decide whether the statement is true or false as it pertains to your personally. (Correct answers are indicated in parentheses).

1. Before I would ever vote, I would thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates. (T)
2. I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble. (T)
3. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged. (F)
4. I have never intensely disliked anyone. (T)
5. On occasion I have had doubts about my ability to succeed in life. (F)
6. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way. (F)
7. I am always careful about my manner of dress. (T)
8. My table manners at home are as good as when I eat out in a restaurant. (T)
9. If I could get into a movie without paying and be sure I was not seen, I would probably do it. (F)
10. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability. (F)
11. I like to gossip at times. (F)
12. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right. (F)
13. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener. (T)
14. I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something. (F)
15. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone. (F)
16. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake. (T)

17. I always try to practice what I preach. (T)
18. I don't find it particularly difficult to get along with loud mouthed, obnoxious people. (T)
19. I sometimes try to get even, rather than forgive and forget. (F)
20. When I don't know something I don't at all mind admitting it. (T)
21. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable. (T)
22. At times I have really insisted on having things my own way. (F)
23. There have been occasions when I felt like smashing things. (F)
24. I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings. (T)
25. I never resent being asked to return a favor. (T)
26. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own. (T)
27. I would never make a long trip without checking the safety of my car. (T)
28. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others. (F)
29. I have almost never felt the urge to tell someone off. (T)
30. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me. (F)
31. I have never felt that I was punished without cause. (T)
32. I sometimes think when people have a misfortune they only got what they deserved. (F)
33. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings. (T)

APPENDIX B

JOHARI WINDOW

Created by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham; therefore, the name "Johari".

	Known to self	Not known to self
Known to others	Area of Free Activity 1	Blind Area 2
Not known to others	Avoided or Hidden Area 3	Area of Unknown Activity 4

- Quadrant 1: The area of free activity, or open area, refers to behavior and motivation known to ourselves and others.
- Quadrant 2: The blind area is where others can see things in us of which we are unaware.
- Quadrant 3: The avoided or hidden area represents things we know but do not reveal to others.
- Quadrant 4: The area of unknown activity points to the area where neither the individual nor others are aware of certain behaviors or motives. Yet we can assume their existence because eventually some of these things become known, and we then realize that these unknown behaviors and motives were influencing relationships all along.

Write free, hidden, blind or unknown in the appropriate space:

- _____ a. A boy is reluctant to express his resentment for another member of his group.
- _____ b. A girl does not know that both she and others think she is a critical person.
- _____ c. A boy expresses his religious doubts to his friends.
- _____ d. Unexpectedly, a girl expresses anger at a group she is a member of and cannot explain why she is angry.

Meet with your group and discuss the answers to a through d.

How does your window look?

How would you like it to look?

Discuss the changes in your group.

APPENDIX C

WHO AM I? QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What would be a good adventure for you today?
2. What thought always causes you to "groove"?
3. I feel most competent when --
4. When and where have you felt beauty in silence?
5. What is a secret?
6. Nobody but a fool would --
7. How high is up?
8. How deep is down?
9. For me the most embarrassing thing is --
10. What smell do you like best?
11. What is home?
12. The people who love me don't --
13. Why is a smile?
14. What is sadness?
15. It is important for me to --
16. What is a friendly sound by night?
17. What is a friendly sound by day?
18. I resent --
19. Where is a treasure?
21. What is the best thing you've ever tasted?
22. What have you heard today that made you laugh?
23. What have you touched this week that made you wonder?

24. It's human nature to --
25. Describe in one word a little girl you know.
26. Describe in one word a little boy you know.
27. It's no use to --
28. I think I would be willing to die if --
29. The greatest thing in the world is --
30. Describe briefly one person you love.
31. The worst thing that could happen to me is --
32. My heart really goes out to people who --
33. Ask a question you have always wondered about.
34. Time seems to fly when I'm --
35. The most horrible feeling is --
36. Who are you? (Don't just give your name).
37. Why are you who you are?
38. List three people in the room you feel are most like you.
39. List three people in the room you feel are most unlike you.
40. List three people in the room you would like to get to know better.

APPENDIX D

WELSH INSTRUMENT

In order to explore our personal perspective in class, divide into groups of five to seven members and discuss the following:

A. How different is your behavior when you are with people you know and trust as compared with your behavior with people you do not know?

B. What kind of opinion would you like others to have of you?

C. When someone starts telling you something which does not agree with your image of yourself, how do you typically react?

Now each group member should fill out the Welsh Instrument. After completing the form, discuss your ratings for each group member, keeping in mind these questions:

1. On what basis did you rate people -- looks? How they talked? What they said?

2. Did you rate people on a kind of gut-level feeling which you really cannot explain?

3. Why do you feel that you could and did perceive some people accurately?

4. Would you have preferred to have discussed the ratings on a one to one basis instead of in the entire group? Why?

5. Did you tell the reasons for rating a group member 1 or 5? Why or why not?

6. How do you feel about withholding feedback from those you rated?

Perception of Self and Others

Perception Instrument
(List the people in your group)

Rates

Expected

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

In the column labeled Rates, to the right of each name, rate each person in your group on the basis of whether or not you would like to be in a group with that person again. In the Expected column, give the rating you think each group member will give you.

1 -- very much like to

3 -- so-so, wouldn't strongly object

5 -- couldn't care less

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