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# A Study into the Effects of Knowledge of Peer Group Evaluation upon Self-Concept Change

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This research is a product of the graduate program in [Speech Communication](#) at Eastern Illinois University.

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Author

A STUDY INTO THE EFFECTS OF KNOWLEDGE

OF PEER GROUP EVALUATION UPON SELF-CONCEPT CHANGE

(TITLE)

BY

JANICE MARIE BEYER

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF

M.A. in SPEECH

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1974

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING  
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CHAPTER I  
THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS  
I. INTRODUCTION

The investigation of theories of self-concept is important from three fundamental points of view. Social psychologists desire to discover the process through which individuals form and change their beliefs about themselves. Psychologists are concerned with the relationship between an individual's perception of himself and his subsequent adjustment to his environment. Speech teachers are interested in the effects that speech training has on an individual's self-concept. Several theorists have underscored the thought that self-concept and communicative ability are intricately related. Richard Dieker summarized it when he stated that the basic speech course should aid in the development of an actual self-concept which is more congruent with the ideal self. To accomplish this end it is necessary to teach the student to understand his impact upon the audience and to help him increase his ability to understand others.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Richard J. Dieker, "Repeated Self-Viewings on Closed-Circuit Television as it Affects Changes in the Self-Concept and Personality Needs of Student Speakers," The Speech Teacher, 20 (March 1971), 131.

The basic speech course at Eastern Illinois University offers various speaking situations which should aid in self-concept improvement. Of the various exercises, group activities can possibly be of vital importance in the process of self-concept adjustment. Ronald Lippitt draws together the opinions of several other theorists when he states:

Our world is the place of groups in which the person becomes an individual by virtue of his memberships. We learn from others that we are worthy and valued and permitted to make choices.<sup>2</sup>

If the outcomes of such group processes are to improve in quality, the individual must improve his performance and his estimation of his performance. The necessity for evaluation becomes apparent at this point. Several alternatives are available to the evaluation process. Teacher or expert evaluation, peer evaluation, and self-evaluation are possible avenues. If one utilizes peer evaluations within a group, and then makes these peer evaluations available to all members, what effect will this introduction have upon the self-concepts of the members? It is to this question that the proposed investigation is directed.

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<sup>2</sup>Elizabeth L. Simpson, "The Individual in the Group," Phi Delta Kappan (February 1969), 322.

## II. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Man has long desired to study his relationship to others. A review of classical rhetoric indicates man's innate need to know himself and those in his surrounding field of experience. Socrates' often quoted "know thyself" and Protagoras' assumption that "man is the measure of all things" are representative examples. Cicero distinguished five areas of interest to students of human behavior when he outlined the following:

- (a) What you think of yourself
- (b) What others think of you
- (c) The part or role you play in life
- (d) A special selfhood is sometimes reached, of great distinction and dignity perhaps, that may characterize a person and lift him above the common mass of a, b, or c.
- (e) There is the vast assemblage of personal qualities that constitute a man's capabilities or potentialities, which, as Cicero put it, "fit a man for his work".

More contemporary theorists have pointed out the reciprocal influences of the self in all aspects of communication. A person's perception of another often changes as a result of interaction. These changes have directionality in terms of an individual's perceptions of self.<sup>3</sup>

Teachers of speech communication should recognize the role that a person's self-concept plays in his ability to communicate with others. Genuine speech development is reconditioning to social situations which allow more complex adjustments to be

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<sup>3</sup>James Bieri, "Changes in Interpersonal Perceptions Following Social Interaction," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 48 (1953), 61.



made. The group situation is a close approximation of reality.<sup>4</sup> This reconditioning process necessarily consists of evaluative procedures. The relationship of students to their peers is a crucial relationship. In light of this assumption, it appears to be justifiable to measure the potential effects that a knowledge of peer evaluations will have on an individual's self-concept.

### III. THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to answer the question: What is the relationship between knowledge of peer evaluation and self-concept? More specifically, the goal of the present study is to discover the effect that knowledge of peer evaluation has upon a subject's self-concept, as measured by the Q-sort technique of evaluating communicative behavior. It appears from the literature pertaining to self-concept and peer evaluation that a positive relationship exists. Assuming that this is correct, it appears that those subjects who receive peer evaluations will change their self-concept.

Before proceeding to the actual design and hypothesis, it is necessary to define terms and review the literature pertaining to the study under consideration. Chapter II will provide the review of literature.

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<sup>4</sup>Elwood Murray, "What is Fundamental in Speech?" The Southern Speech Journal, 4 (November 1938), 3.

#### IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Self-concept is defined theoretically as the composite of the individual's thoughts and feelings about himself; an organized configuration of perceptions of the self which are admissable 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.<sup>5</sup>

Operationally, self-concept is defined in this study as an individual's self-perceptions of himself as a communicator as determined by his responses to the Q-sort.

Q-sort. The Q-sort is a device which employs the technique of a forced sorting of a definite number of statements into a continuum from "least like" to "most like" the individual. These statements, self-descriptive of the sorter, are positively worded and covertly categorized. For the purposes of this study, the Q-sort will consist of a set of 70 items ordered into 9 categories and with an assigned number of items placed in each category. The items are placed on a continuum from "least-like-me" to "most-like-me." Each pile represents a point on the continuum that has a numerical value so that data can be statistically treated.

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<sup>5</sup> William D. Brooks and Sarah M. Platz, "The Effects of Speech Training upon Self-Concept as a Communicator," The Speech Teacher, 17 (January 1968), 45.

Small group. The small group is defined theoretically as a cooperative process in which a group of persons (4-7) exchange and evaluate ideas and information about a mutual problem in order to understand or solve that problem.<sup>6</sup> The population used in this study is comprised of eight groups consisting of 4-7 members in the basic speech courses at Eastern Illinois University.

Peer evaluation. Peer evaluation is the composite of the evaluations made by other group members regarding each subject's rank within the total group process. A rating scale and open-ended questions will be used as the measuring device.

#### V. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

The remainder of the study is reported in four chapters. These chapters were organized to provide essential information pertinent to the study beyond the initial considerations presented in Chapter I. The organization of these four chapters is as follows:

Chapter II, The Review of the Literature. In order to provide a thorough understanding of the present study, a review of the literature dealing with self-concept and peer evaluation was included in Chapter II. The information was reported in the following manner:

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<sup>6</sup>C. Gratton Kemp, Perspectives on the Group Process (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964).

1. General Introduction
2. Self-concept and Its Relation to the Group
3. Evaluative Procedures
4. Instruments to Measure Self-concept

Chapter III, Method of Procedure and the Materials Used.

The method of procedure and the materials used for the present investigation were organized and reported as follows:

1. The Basic Design of the Study and the Population Used
2. Method of Procedure
  - a. Pretest Using the Q-Sort
  - b. Peer Evaluation
  - c. Posttest to Measure Self-Concept Change
3. Treatment of the Data

Chapter IV, Results of the Study. The results of the study were organized into tables to illustrate Q-sort self-concept scores and subsequent changes as measured by the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation.

Chapter V, Summary and Conclusions. Chapter V summarized the study and the conclusions arrived at as a result of the study. Following the bibliography, an appendix was included for the purpose of presenting the materials and data used in this study in greater detail.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Theories of self-concept, group processes, and evaluation procedures occupy a large portion of speech, psychology, and education journals. For the purpose of this study the following speech journals were examined: Quarterly Journal of Speech, Speech Monographs, Speech Teacher, Central States Speech Journal, Journal of Communication, ETC., Western Speech Journal, Southern States Speech Bulletin, and Today's Speech. In addition, the Education Index, Dissertation Abstracts, and the psychology, sociology, and social psychology journals were consulted. Hares' Handbook of Small Group Research and McGrath and Altman's Small Group Research were also examined for relevant material.

Research endeavors were divided into three major areas of concentration: (1) Basic self-concept theories and their relation to the group, (2) evaluation procedures, and (3) instruments to measure self-concept.

#### II. SELF-CONCEPT AND ITS RELATION TO THE GROUP

The individual's internal being has been given many terms. Snygg refers to it as the phenomenal self,<sup>1</sup> while others have

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<sup>1</sup>Donald Snygg and W. A. Combs, Individual Behavior. (New York Harper and Brothers, 1949), 65.

labeled it self-acceptance,<sup>2</sup> selfhood,<sup>3</sup> and self-esteem.<sup>4</sup>

However, most of the articles surveyed agree that what a person does and how he behaves is directly attributable to an individual's concept of himself and his capabilities.<sup>5</sup> Agnes Hatfield summarizes this basic self-concept theory when she states:

Individual behavior is determined by a person's perception of himself and the world around him. Adequately functioning personalities see themselves in essentially positive ways.<sup>6</sup>

Anderson believes that a person's self-concept is a crucial factor in the control of his way of life and his meeting of responsibility. He says:

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<sup>2</sup>Sarah Scherer Spivack, "A Study of a Method of Appraising Self-Acceptance and Self-Rejection," Journal of Genetic Psychology, 88 (June 1956), 183.

<sup>3</sup>Harold G. Shane, "Social Experience and Selfhood," Childhood Education, 33 (March 1957), 297.

<sup>4</sup>Churchill Roberts, "The Effects of Self-Confrontation, Role Playing and Response Feedback on the Level of Self-Esteem," Speech Teacher, 21 (January 1972), 22.

<sup>5</sup>Julia Kilpatrick, The Q-Sort: An Evaluation of Its Effectiveness in Assessing Certain Aspects of Self-Discipline. (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Xerox Company, 1960), 7.

<sup>6</sup>Agnes B. Hatfield, "An Experimental Study of the Self-Concept of Student Teachers," Journal of Educational Research, 55 (October 1961), 87.

Apparently as a result of his experiences and because he needs to explain and understand himself, the person builds up a concept of himself and the universe. As he thinks about this relation, values appear through which he interprets the universe.<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, as pointed out by Combs,

thousands of people in our society see themselves as inadequate and, as a result, perform inadequately...a positive view of self gives its owner a tremendous advantage in dealing with life. It provides the basis for great personal strength. Feeling positively about themselves, adequate persons can meet life expecting to be successful...<sup>8</sup>

Persons can sometimes learn to meet life more effectively by changing their self-concepts. Research has revealed that self-concepts are, indeed, not static, Shane theorizes that self-concepts are built through positive experiences.<sup>9</sup> Carl Rogers summarizes the thoughts of Shane and several others when he states: "When changes occur in perception of self and perception of reality, changes occur in behavior."<sup>10</sup>

Several researchers have investigated the relationship between such basic self-concept theories and their subsequent

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<sup>7</sup> John E. Anderson. The Psychology of Development and Personal Adjustment (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1949), 410.

<sup>8</sup> Wayne Dumas, "Factors Associated with Self-Concept Change in Student Teachers," Journal of Educational Research, 62 (February 1969), 275.

<sup>9</sup> Shane, 297.

<sup>10</sup> Dumas, 275.

relationship to communication. Laura Crowell gave one of the most concise explications when she deduced that

whether or not self-images are realistic, it may be expected that they play an important part in the nature of the individual's communicative behavior...it seems reasonable to hypothesize that readjustment of communicative behavior may well be a matter of changing one's self-concept as a communicator. Therefore it is not unusual for one of the stated objectives of the basic speech course to be related to self-concept.<sup>11</sup>

Churchill Roberts reinforces this viewpoint when he states:

People who have difficulty in communicating have low self-esteem...Each time a person fails in a communication situation, his self-esteem is lowered. A person's self-esteem affects the evaluation he places on his performance and the manner in which he behaves when interacting with others.<sup>12</sup>

Interaction with others, or involvement in group processes, appears to affect self-concept. Basic findings are as follows: Festinger discovered that a group's perception of an individual will have more influence on his self-perception when he is highly attracted to the group and when other group members encourage his participation.<sup>13</sup> Dittes further supports this viewpoint with the finding that persons with high self-concepts find the group more attractive than those persons with low self-esteem.<sup>14</sup> Gebel found that leaders exhibit a higher

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<sup>11</sup>Brooks, 44.

<sup>12</sup>Roberts, 22.

<sup>13</sup>L. Festinger, et al., "Self-Evaluation as a Function of Attraction to the Group," Human Relations, 7 (1954), 161.

<sup>14</sup>James E. Dittes, "Attractiveness of Group as Function of Self-Esteem and Acceptance by Group," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 59 (July 1959), 81.



self-concept than do typical group members.<sup>15</sup> Bieri discovered that after a period of interaction, individuals tend to perceive their fellow group members as possessing characteristics closer to those they perceive themselves to typify.<sup>16</sup>

Theories of self-concept and group processes, then, are intricately intertwined. A person's self-concept largely determines his role in the communicative process. A change in self-concept involves a change in behavior within the group structure and subsequently a change in one's estimation of himself as a communicator.

To realize the changes that can be effected, a person needs feedback from others so as to realize the estimation they have of him and his abilities. Strong restraints are sometimes set against discussing one's own self directly with others, however. Rarely does one receive direct communication from others as to their evaluation of his self-concept. The changes that may accrue as a result of social influence are then obstructed. Thus, peer evaluation may have a marked effect on a person's changing self-concept.

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<sup>15</sup> Arnold S. Gebel, "Self-Perception and Leaderless Group Discussion Status," Journal of Social Psychology, 40 (1954), 311.

<sup>16</sup> James Bieri, "Changes in Interpersonal Perceptions Following Social Interaction," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 48 (1954), 311.

### III. EVALUATION

Improvement in self-concept is not the job of the teacher alone. Each individual is at the center of his changing field of experience. Part of the experiential field necessarily involves an assessment of the evaluative procedures undertaken by others, as well as himself.

Rogers presents this theory of the effect of evaluation upon self-concept:

As a result of interaction with the environment, particularly as a result of evaluational interaction with others, the structure of self is formed--an organized, fluid but consistent conceptual pattern of perceptions of characteristics, and relationships of the "I" or the "me," together with values attached to these concepts.<sup>17</sup>

Through this process of evaluation, students gain an idea of the impact they have upon other students.<sup>18</sup> Wiseman and Barker conclude, more specifically, that evaluations by peers in a class should help an individual make better evaluations in other realms of life.<sup>19</sup>

The following synopsis cites some specific effects that evaluation may have upon self-concept development. Lazarus, Deese, and Oseer observed that verbal evaluations of a threatening nature reduced the effectiveness of military

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<sup>17</sup> Carl Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1951), 498.

<sup>18</sup> Joseph P. Zima, "Self-Analysis Inventory: An Interpersonal Communication Exercise," Speech Teacher, 20 (March 1971), 113.

<sup>19</sup> Gordon Wiseman and Larry Barker, "Peer Group Instruction: What is It?" Speech Teacher, 15 (September 1966), 221.

personnel engaged in a variety of physical tasks.<sup>20</sup>  
 Newcomb found that individuals were attracted to those  
 who evaluated them in a positive manner.<sup>21</sup> Raskin  
 discovered that when evaluations by the therapist were  
 withheld, patients began to rely more upon their own self-  
 evaluations and less upon the judgment of others.<sup>22</sup>  
 Proshansky and Murphy show that evaluations have a measurable  
 effect on the manner in which individuals perceive events.<sup>23</sup>  
 Gergen lends further support to this point of view when he  
 states that self-descriptions become more positive during  
 feedback than in conditions where no feedback is present.  
 Persons tend to have a positive view of themselves if others  
 view them positively.<sup>24</sup>

How one judges another is a problem important for its  
 theoretical implications and for its practical significance  
 in group psychology and teaching. Recent studies have been

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<sup>20</sup> Alvin Goldberg, "An Experimental Study of the Effects  
 of Evaluation Upon Group Behavior," Quarterly Journal of Speech,  
 46 (1960), 274.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> K. J. Gergen, "The Effects of Interaction Goals and  
 Personalistic Feedback on the Presentation of Self," Journal  
 of Personality and Social Psychology, 1 (1965), 424.

chiefly concerned with differences among perceivers in terms of their accuracy or in terms of evaluative effects upon task productivity. More research is necessary regarding evaluative effects of peer groups upon self-concept in the group setting.

#### IV. TESTS OF SELF-CONCEPT

The survey of literature revealed several tests as suitable measures of self-concept. Measurement of self-concept is not always a simple task. Therefore, it becomes imperative to employ some method of data collection which will be as free from error as possible.

Stern, Stein, and Bloom, among others, have suggested that a technique should be used which (1) elicits from the subject responses which he cannot evaluate himself and (2) is not necessarily dependent on the subject's awareness or unawareness of reasons underlying his behavior.<sup>25</sup> George Frank concludes that the Q-sort meets the above qualifications: it is a valid and reliable means of measuring self-concept.<sup>26</sup> Carl Rogers lends further credence to this observations when he states: "We have found an instrument which comes close to measuring the specific kind of change which comes about in psychotherapy."<sup>27</sup>

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George B. Stern, Morris I. Stein and Benjamin Bloom, Methods in Personality Assessment (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1956), 121.

<sup>26</sup>

George H. Frank, "Note on the Reliability of Q-Sort Data," Psychological Reports, 2 (1956), 182.

<sup>27</sup>

Ibid.

Seeman and Raskin discovered that "the Q-sorting instrument... provides an efficient method of securing a large number of ratings which can be compared from person to person."<sup>28</sup>

Several studies in the speech field have reported the efficacy of using the Q-sort technique. Terry Welden found that this technique is a useful approach to empirical and theoretical research in task-oriented small groups. It has a built-in measure of group behavior.<sup>29</sup> Robert E. Cummins reports that Q-methodology can be used to advantage in teaching and educational research.<sup>30</sup> William D. Brooks employed the Q-sort to measure self-concept and ideal self-concept as a communicator.<sup>31</sup>

Edelson and Jones give a basic definition of Q-sort technique:

...a covertly categorized population of overt items scored on a rating scale having prescribed scoring specifications by a certain person of a certain class in a certain situation according to a certain criterion.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Frank, 182.

<sup>29</sup> Terry A. Welden, "Small Group Applications of Q-Technique," Speech Monographs, 36 (March 1969), 68.

<sup>30</sup> Robert E. Cummins, "Some Applications of 'Q' Methodology to Teaching and Educational Research," Journal of Educational Research, 57 (October 1963), 96-98.

<sup>31</sup> Brooks, 45.

<sup>32</sup> Marshall Edelson and Arthur E. Jones, "Operational Exploration of the Conceptual Self-System and the Interaction Between Frame of Reference," Genetic Psychology Monographs, 50 (1954), 67.

More specifically, self-descriptive statements of the self-concept are typed on cards. This pack of cards is handed to the subject with instructions to sort them into a continuum from "most-like-me" to "least-like-me." The subject is instructed to sort the cards into a specified number of piles, with a certain number of cards per pile. There is a "most-like-me" pile, an "unlike-me" pile, and an "indifferent" pile. He is encouraged to respond to his first reaction to each statement. After the initial breakdown, the cards are once again sorted.<sup>33</sup>

The number of statements employed in the Q-sort varies widely. However, the consensus of opinion is that from 40 to 100 items should be used.

The Q-sort is a research tool which seems to prove useful in the measurement of self-concept. Edelson and Jones support this assertion:

With the rapid advancement of scientific research into the unexplored psychological realms of the human person, one of the most important discoveries which is presently emerging is that of the individual's conception of himself. And we are fast coming to consider as crucial the relationship that exists between the ways in which a person regards himself and the way in which he interacts with his environment. Psychotherapy

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<sup>33</sup> William Stephenson, The Study of Behavior: Q-Technique and Its Methodology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 59.

is continuously pointing up the significance which the individual's system of conceptions about his self has in relation to his perceptions of and reaction to his environment and, indeed, psychological theory is being forced to ponder the unique fact that each individual possesses his own "psychological theory" about himself...And what is more, if we can provide the individual with the operational means, we will be able to obtain from him an objective representation of his experiential field as introspectively observed in his own frame of reference thus making possible the operational investigation of the experiential field.<sup>34</sup>

In the words of Stephenson:

Q-technique provides a systematic way to handle a person's retrospections, his reflections about himself and others, his introjections and projections, and much else of an apparent "subjective" nature.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Edelson and Jones, 45.

<sup>35</sup>Stephenson, 86.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD OF PROCEDURE AND THE MATERIALS USED

#### I. THE SELECTION OF THE MATERIALS USED

The selection of testing instruments was one of the first considerations in this study. The fields of speech, education and psychology provided several devices for measuring self-concept. The review of the literature showed that the Q-sort technique would provide the most reliable method of data collection. The fields of psychology and education, as pointed out in Chapter II, found that the Q-sort "provides an efficient method of securing a large number of ratings which can be compared from person to person."<sup>1</sup> Representatives of the speech field have employed the Q-sort to measure self-concept and ideal self-concept as a communicator. They have found that the instrument is a valid and reliable approach to empirical and theoretical research in task-oriented small groups.

For the above reasons the Q-sort was selected as the device to measure self-concept and self-concept change. The Q-sort used in this study has been tested for reliability by completing test-retest correlation coefficients. All

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<sup>1</sup>George H. Frank, "Note on the Reliability of Q-Sort Data," Psychological Reports, 2 (1956), 182.



r's were significant with the average r of the test-retest reliability coefficients being .90.

After determining the testing instrument for self-concept, a method of recording peer evaluations had to be determined. A survey of the literature revealed that the most widely employed method of peer evaluation within a group structure is the rank-order method. Each subject was to rank himself and the other members of his group on a scale from one to seven, depending upon the number of subjects in his group. The rankings provided raw data to tabulate and give to the experimental groups each day of the testing period.

## II. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The basic design of this study was pretest-posttest control group design. The experimental sample consisted of five groups of four to seven students randomly selected from the basic speech course at Eastern Illinois University. The control groups were three in number and consisted of four to seven members randomly selected from the basic speech course at Eastern Illinois University.

The following schedule indicates the exact procedure used and the treatments introduced:

Day 1 -- Each subject was given instructions on the use of the Q-sort and practiced arranging the cards to correspond to his self-concept as a communicator. The following instructions were given:

You have a pack containing seventy cards and nine envelopes. Arrange the nine envelopes in a line in front of you. You will notice that only two are labeled but all have on them a number in a circle. To your left place the envelope marked "most-like-me" followed by the envelope with a +6 on it, next, the ones marked +10, +11, 12, -11, -10, -6, and on the righthand end of the row place the envelope marked "least-like-me." Each card has on it a statement which is descriptive of qualities belonging to a communicator. You are to read quickly through all of the cards and stack them into three piles. In the pile to your left place those statements which describe you most. In the righthand pile place those statements which describe you least, and in the center pile put those statements which you find difficult to place in the other two piles. Now, starting with the lefthand pile of cards, select the two cards which describe you most and place them in the envelope so marked. Pick out of the pile the 6 cards which describe you fairly well and place in the +6 envelope, then the 10 which are somewhat like you, and the 11 which are very little like you. Repeat the process for those least like you. Those cards which are left belong in envelope 12. Count your cards to be sure you have the right number in each pile. Place all cards in the envelopes. Do not seal the envelopes. Stack the envelopes in order and place the rubber band around them.

All Ss were given a code number. This number appeared on each of the subject's envelopes. Each person's responses were recorded for analysis on individual Q-sort record sheets.

Day 2 -- Each subject arranged the Q-sort cards to correspond to his self-concept. These responses were recorded.

Days 3-5 -- The groups met for 35 minutes each day to decide upon a discussion topic and to make preliminary

arrangements for their later performance. The groups were given a list of topics from which to choose so that each topic was relatively equal as far as research material available, appeal, and the possession of a contemporary aspect. The chosen topics were advertising, courts, ecology, elections, the Jesus movement, and censorship. The remaining fifteen minutes of the group discussion were spent in peer-evaluation. Each person in the group ranked each of his peers on a one to seven scale. The remainder of the evaluation was open-ended, ie. he wrote specific criticisms in order to justify his particular ranking. The experimental group received on each day a composite of peer evaluations. The control group received no evaluations. The researcher maintained a daily record of all evaluations.

Days 6-9 -- Each group was allowed 35 minutes each day to present their topic in a cooperative group effort. Shared leadership was used. Again, the last fifteen minutes was used for peer-evaluation. The experimental groups received a composite of peer evaluations. The control group did not.

Day 10 -- All subjects again arranged the Q-sort. All responses were recorded.

### III. TREATMENT OF THE DATA

The Q-sort used in this study was tested for reliability by computing test-retest correlation coefficients. All  $r$ 's were significant with the average  $r$  of the test-retest reliability coefficients being .90.

A group of seven experts sorted the cards according to their concept of an ideal communicator. This served as the criterion sort and has been tested for reliability. The criterion sort gives values of each statement and can be used, in addition, to show the direction of change between pretest and posttest scores.

For scoring, weighted values are assigned to each pile, as shown in Table 1. The numbers 2, 6, 10..., 10, 6, 2 are the numbers of the cards to be placed in each pile. The numbers below the line are the values assigned to the cards in each pile. This Q-distribution has 9 piles with varying numbers of cards in each pile, the cards in the piles being assigned values from 1-9. All statistical analyses are based on these latter values.

TABLE 1  
Q-DISTRIBUTION

Most Like Me					Least Like Me			
2	6	10	11	12	11	10	6	2
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

The Pearson product-moment correlation ( $r$ ) was used to determine relationships between pretest and posttest Q-sort scores, between pretest scores and criterion scores, between posttest scores and criterion scores, and between group scores. The following formula describes the computational procedure:

$$r = \frac{N\sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

where  $N$  = number of pairs of scores

$\sum XY$  = sum of the products of the paired scores

$\sum X$  = sum of scores on one variable

$\sum Y$  = sum of the scores on the other variable

$\sum X^2$  = sum of the squared scores on the X variable

$\sum Y^2$  = sum of the squared scores on the Y variable

Two different procedures may be used to test the hypothesis that  $r = 0$ . Since  $N$  was more than 30, a critical-ratio  $z$ -test was used to test the significance of the difference between the experimentally dependent correlations. The following formula was used:

$$z = r \sqrt{N - 1}$$

If  $z$  was greater than  $\pm 1.96$ , then  $r$  was found to be significant at the .05 level using a two-tailed test.

CHAPTER IV  
RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The report of the results of this investigation is based on the findings secured from statistical treatment of the accumulated data. The number of subjects participating in this study totalled forty-four. Following the ordering of subjects, the scores for the pretest and the posttest were recorded. The tables below list the value of  $r$ ,  $z$ -test significance, and the final correlations resulting from this study.

Table 1 shows the correlations between the pretest and the posttest Q-sort in the experimental groups. Data are presented as  $r$  values.

TABLE 1  
EXPERIMENTAL PRETEST-POSTTEST CORRELATIONS

Subject	Value of $r$
1	+.642
2	+.576
3	+.711
4	+.846
5	+.580
6	+.591
7	+.679
8	+.843
9	+.784

TABLE 1--Continued

---

Subject	Value of r
10	+.711
11	+.588
12	+.869
13	+.861
14	+.726
15	+.700
16	+.910
17	+.715
18	+.686
19	+.733
20	+.894
21	+.802
22	+.784
23	+.784
24	+.456
25	+.693

---

$\bar{X}$  of Individual Correlations = +.726

Table 2 shows the correlations between the pretest and the posttest Q-sort in the control groups.

TABLE 2  
CONTROL PRETEST-POSTTEST CORRELATIONS

Subject	Value of r
26	+ .722
27	+ .869
28	+ .905
29	+ .449
30	+ .449
31	+ .657
32	+ .576
33	+ .248
34	+ .617
35	+ .693
36	+ .584
37	+ .460
38	+ .843
39	+ .766
40	+ .533
41	+ .784
42	+ .836
43	+ .449
44	+ .825

$\bar{X}$  of Individual Correlations = +.645



Table 3 reports the scores for computing a z-test between the pretest and the posttest Q-sort in the experimental groups. If z is greater than  $\pm 1.96$ , then r is significant at the .05 level of confidence.

TABLE 3  
EXPERIMENTAL Z-TEST SCORES

Subject	Value of z
1	5.333
2	4.784
3	5.906
4	7.027
5	4.818
6	4.909
7	5.640
8	7.002
9	6.512
10	5.906
11	4.884
12	7.218
13	7.152
14	6.030
15	5.814
16	7.559
17	5.939
18	5.698
19	6.089
20	7.426
21	6.662
22	6.512
23	6.512
24	3.787
25	5.756

$\bar{X}$  of Individual Scores = 6.03

Table 4 reports the scores for computing a z-test between the pretest and the posttest Q-sort in the experimental groups.

TABLE 4  
CONTROL Z-TEST SCORES

Subject	Value of z
26	5.997
27	7.218
28	7.517
29	3.729
30	5.457
31	4.784
32	2.060
33	5.125
34	5.756
35	4.851
36	3.821
37	7.002
38	6.363
39	4.427
40	6.512
41	6.944
42	3.729
43	6.853
44	3.729

$\bar{X}$  of Individual Scores = 5.36

CHAPTER V  
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to discover the relationship between knowledge of peer evaluations and changes in self-concept. This involved the administration and analysis of specific measurements of self-concept change.

The subjects for this study were forty-four students from the basic speech course during the Summer Quarter, 1972, at Eastern Illinois University.

It took ten days to perform the investigation. The first day the pretest Q-sort was given to determine initial estimation of self-concept. Eight days were then spent in a group situation. The experimental group received peer evaluations each day. The control groups did not. On the tenth day the posttest Q-sort was given so that self-concept change could be measured.

The pretest and posttest scores were correlated by using the Pearson-Product Moment Correlation. A z-test was then performed to determine the significance of  $r$ .

II. CONCLUSIONS

The data analyzed and collected in this study suggested the following conclusions:

1. The z-test relating the difference between the pretests and posttests for all subjects resulted in a z with significance greater than the .05 level of confidence. Therefore, it appeared that self-concept change definitely occurred.

2. The nature of the treatment used did not allow a single score to be obtained for the control and experimental groups. Therefore, only certain trends can be cited rather than statistical correlations. The average of the r and z scores for the experimental group was +.726 and 6.03, respectively. The control group's averages were +.645 and 5.36. This data would seem to suggest that the change was more significant in the control group.

3. The accumulated data suggest that other variables are involved in the self-concept change since both the experimental and the control groups produced significant changes in self-concept.

4. The data revealed no significant correlations between knowledge of peer evaluation and self-concept change.

### III. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Evidently the experimental manipulations in the preceding study were not entirely effective. The levels of confidence definitely support a change in the self-concept estimations of the subjects. However, the present study did not isolate all of the contributing variables since the

significance was noticed in both the experimental and the control groups. Perhaps peer evaluation is not that important or perhaps the subjects did not value the peer evaluation they received. It is possible that the experiment was not entirely realistic. Or perhaps it is the experience of the speech-communications course itself which suggests a self-concept change.

Many benefits accrue as a result of experiments. The lead-ins, the suggestions for further study, and the reflections are all conducive to further learning and experimentation. The following two pages will outline some main after-thoughts which this experimenter now possesses.

1. The study did not conclusively prove that knowledge of peer evaluations and self-concept change are positively related. Future studies would be beneficial if other variables were examined. Perhaps it is the speech course itself that may produce changes.

2. Differences between male and female change could be investigated. If there is indeed a difference, some of the contributing variables could be isolated.

3. Future studies could go beyond the initial considerations of this study to measure directions of self-concept change. Does knowledge of peer evaluations cause subjects to move toward an ideal self-concept or toward a lower self-concept? This could be determined by correlating pretest and posttest

scores with the criterion Q-sort.

4. It would be worthwhile to measure degree of self-concept change for those subjects with low peer rankings and for those with high peer rankings. Direction of change could also be measured.

5. It is always rather practical to consider training factors. Is there any difference in initial self-concept estimation between those subjects who have had previous speech training and those who have not? Which subjects have self-concepts which lean toward the ideal self-concept?

From the preceding discussion, one can see that several avenues are open to further study.

**APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A  
EXPERIMENTAL PRETEST-POSTTEST CORRELATIONS

---

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19	+.733
20	+.894
21	+.802
22	+.784
23	+.784
24	+.456
25	+.693

---

$\bar{X}$  of Individual Correlations = +.726



## CONTROL PRETEST-POSTTEST CORRELATIONS

---

Subject	Value of r
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27	+.869
28	+.905
29	+.449
30	+.449
31	+.657
32	+.576
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39	+.766
40	+.533
41	+.784
42	+.836
43	+.449
44	+.825

---

$\bar{X}$  of Individual Correlations = +.645

APPENDIX B  
EXPERIMENTAL Z-TEST SCORES

---

Subject	Value of z
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9	6.512
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17	5.939
18	5.698
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23	6.512
24	3.787
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---

$\bar{X}$  of Individual Scores = 6.03

## CONTROL Z-TEST SCORES

---

Subject	Value of z
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27	7.218
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34	5.756
35	4.861
36	3.821
37	7.002
38	6.363
39	4.427
40	6.512
41	6.944
42	3.729
43	6.853
44	3.729

---

$\bar{X}$  of Individual Scores = 5.36

## APPENDIX C

## COMMUNICATION Q-SORT

1. I have no trouble keeping conversation going.
2. I often make people feel as if I were better versed on the subjects they are talking about than they are.
3. I sometimes try so hard to make myself understood that I almost stutter.
4. I have to know exactly what I am going to say before I can say it well.
5. I often wish that I had a better speaking voice.
6. I frequently have trouble trying to follow instructions which people give me.
7. I usually convey my thoughts clearly.
8. I am the kind of person everyone likes to tell his troubles to.
9. When other people are talking my mind often wanders.
10. I often find myself acting in the role of an interpreter when others are confused by what someone has said.
11. It is hard for me to catch the hidden meanings behind what people say.
12. I often wish I could express myself better than I do.
13. If I feel that people disapprove of what I am saying, I find it extremely difficult to express myself clearly.
14. I often have difficulty in expressing myself when talking to someone I especially love or admire.
15. I express myself in a clear and well-organized manner.
16. I find it hard to concentrate for a long period of time on what other people are saying.
17. If I know I have made a mistake in grammar or pronunciation, it interrupts my flow of thought.
18. I am not very good at telling jokes.
19. I think most people talk too rapidly for me.
20. I find it a great deal easier to understand what I read than what I hear.
21. In conversations and discussions I "talk to the point."
22. I have to search for the words I want.
23. I tend to flit from subject to subject.
24. I usually feel inhibited when I am expected to contribute something to a discussion.
25. When listening to a difficult, technical discussion, I am usually one of the first to get lost.
26. I find it easy to change my language if I see that my ideas aren't getting across.
27. I am pretty good at painting word pictures.
28. I have a habit of being overcritical of what other people say.
29. I have a tendency to ramble in my conversation.
30. I frequently engage in heated arguments with people.
31. I am not very good at summarizing the main points brought up during a group discussion.

32. It is often difficult for me to understand children's questions.
33. Most group discussions bore me.
34. I have little difficulty putting complex ideas into words.
35. I always try to put myself in the other person's place when he is speaking.
36. Instead of listening to the other person, I often find myself thinking of what I am going to say.
37. My ability to express myself remains pretty much the same regardless of whether I am talking with fellows or girls.
38. I am usually sure of what I want to say.
39. I keep trying to relate what someone is saying to what I already know.
40. When I talk I give a favorable impression of myself.
41. When I talk, other people listen carefully.
42. I don't usually stop talking until I have said what I mean.
43. It is no harder for me to talk to strangers than to anyone else.
44. I have trouble following a conversation that shifts rapidly from one topic to another.
45. When I can't find the correct word, I tend to gesture helplessly and say that it wasn't important anyway.
46. I don't have much respect for the ideas of a person who continually mispronounces words.
47. I am quick to notice the changes in mood of a person who is talking with me.
48. I frequently have difficulty in determining whether a statement is made seriously or in a light manner.
49. I can't follow anyone's idea unless I watch him very carefully as he talks.
50. I often know what I want to say but not how to say it.
51. I often wish that I had a much better command of vocabulary.
52. It is easy for me to express complex ideas clearly.
53. I catch on easily to what other people are saying.
54. It is difficult for me to understand people whose backgrounds and interests are different from mine.
55. When the occasion demands, I can speak well enough to hold an audience "in the palm of my hand."
56. I have a reputation for not being able to get anything straight that people tell me.
57. I often find that what I said was not what I meant to say.
58. I am inclined to listen better to people whom I respect and admire than to those whom I don't.
59. When I retell a story someone has told me I find it difficult to get the details straight.
60. I usually do not learn well through hearing.
61. I enjoy spending time in conversation with others.
62. I can't remember another person's words very well but I can always tell what the gist of his idea was.
63. I act as though I'm considering the other person's point even if I really disagree.

64. I generally feel that people who are dull and uninteresting speakers aren't worth listening to.
65. I can enter a group late and get my bearings pretty quickly.
66. I usually find it difficult to remember names after being introduced to people.
67. I listen carefully to the communications of others even though the subject matter may not be of particular interest to me.
68. I have a habit of interrupting others before they finish what they are saying.
69. I pronounce my words clearly.
70. I frequently find myself jumping to conclusions as to what other people mean.

APPENDIX D

EVALUATION SHEET

Rank every member in your group as to their communicative ability in this session. List by name every member in your group, including self, and rank from 1 - how ever many are in your group. There are to be no ties. All members may have done an adequate job. However, 1 indicates the person who did the best, 2 indicates the person who did the second best, and so on through all members of your group. The space at the bottom is provided for any comments which you feel would help others in your group become better communicators. Constructive or critical evaluations may be given.

Names

Rank

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

COMMENTS:

## APPENDIX E

## Q-SORT INSTRUCTIONS

You have a pack containing seventy cards and 9 envelopes. Arrange the 9 envelopes in a line in front of you. You will notice that only two are labeled but all have on them a number. To your left place the envelope marked "most-like-me" followed by the envelope with a +6 on it, next, the ones marked +10, +11, 12 -11, -10, -6, and on the right-hand end of the row place the envelope marked "least-like-me."

Each card has on it a statement which is descriptive of quality belonging to a communicator. You are to read quickly through all of the cards and stack them into three piles. In the pile to your left place those statements which describe you most. In the right-hand pile place those statements which describe you least, and in the center pile put those statements which you find difficult to place in the other two piles. Now, starting with the left-hand pile of cards, select the two cards which describe you most and place them in the envelope so marked. Pick out of the pile the 6 cards which describe you fairly well and place in the +6 envelope, then the 10 which are somewhat like you, and the 11 which are very little like you. Repeat the process for those least like you. Those cards which are left belong in envelope 12.

Count your cards to be sure you have the right number in each pile. Place all cards in the envelopes. Do not seal the envelopes. Stack the envelopes in order and place the rubber band around them.



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