

FUNDAMENTALS OF SPEECH AT STERLING COLLEGE:  
AN INVESTIGATION OF ITS PURPOSES  
AS SEEN BY STUDENTS

by

CHARLES K. KINYON  
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have long had an almost fanatical interest in reading acknowledgments and prefaces. For the most part this interest stemmed from a morbid curiosity of wishing to know how an author had originally or tritely, but always dutifully, upheld this "social prerequisite" for entering academia. This sadistic idiosyncrasy has now been replaced. I suspect that most of the acknowledgments are genuine. Furthermore, I suspect that often the names of the "real" heroes appear here, not on the title page. While I'm too egocentric to relinquish all the praise, I do pause to remember in this way those who have guided me well.

Dr. Del Hilyard. In spite of my philosophical verbiage, of my profoundly stupid questions, and of my pesky persistence, he has withstood. For this alone, Dr. Hilyard merits something. But beyond this, his patience, his encouragement, and his time have been auspicious gifts that I can't repay, nor can I forget. His sense of propriety and stubborn insistence for perfection have rubbed off on me. Someday, somewhere, I hope, I can help another as he helped me. Dr. Hilyard, I thank you.

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## CHAPTER I

### RATIONALE

#### Introduction to the Study

One serious question which confronts the speech profession is: When speech is required of all students before their graduation, what kind of a course should be offered? To explore that problem, the Committee on Problems in Undergraduate Study of the Speech Association of America devised a questionnaire. This effort was not an attempt to determine what the speech course should be ideally, but rather, to discover what the course was in reality. The committee, at the time of the presentation of the general conclusion that "There is a diversity of opinion about the course," suggested additional studies regarding the beginning speech course be made. The stated reasons of the committee for requesting further investigations were (1) that "no attempt" was made "to discover the statistical reliability or validity of the data", and (2) that "it would be worthwhile . . . to study student reaction to the objectives and values" presented in the 1954 report.<sup>1</sup>

#### Purpose of the Study

This study was developed in response to the recommendations indicated in the Speech Association of America committee's request. Therefore, the purposes of the study were twofold: (1) to examine student

attitudes or expectations regarding purposes or objectives of initial undergraduate speech courses through a descriptive analysis of the expectations or attitudes of a specific group of college students, and (2) to contribute to the development of procedures for measuring and evaluating student expectations.

#### Limitations of the Study

A major limitation of the study is that it is an analysis of a limited sample of students from a specific population. All members of the population from which the sample was derived were students at Sterling College, Sterling, Kansas, during the second semester of the 1966-1967 academic year.

A second limitation was the restriction on the number of purposes which were responded to by the subjects of the study. The "diversity of opinion about the course," referred to by the Speech Association of America committee and supported by a review of the literature, bespeaks an apparently unwieldy number of purpose and objective statements. In order to keep the responsibility of the subjects of the study within reasonable limits, it was necessary to restrict the statements to those purposes which were judged, a priori, as being widely held opinions within the speech field.

#### Review of the Literature

Although this descriptive study is, to the author's best knowledge, without precedent, a review of the literature discloses other studies allied in purpose, perspective, and design. This section will include



a review of speech literature common to the problem of discerning expectations and attitudes towards fundamentals of speech courses from a student viewpoint, and a review of the literature from other disciplines kindred to the value of determining expectations and attitudes toward specific areas of concern from a student perspective. The literature from other disciplines, researched in part to support the proposition that attitude studies are being performed and are being recommended, was done to suggest methods and procedures for use in determining student attitudes and expectations.

Speech Literature. Formal studies of student reactions to fundamentals of speech since the 1954 committee report have numbered only two. In 1959 Rodney Cole in a Master's study, "Attitudes and Needs as Expressed by Various Groups of Oral Communications I Students," proposed to measure, "The attitude of students newly enrolled in Oral Communications I [at Kansas State University] toward that required course," to survey "the speech needs and interests of these students," and to correlate "student curriculum, size of high school class and amount of previous speech experience and these attitudes, needs, and interests."<sup>2</sup> The questionnaire used to obtain this information was administered to 425 students. Of the twelve items included in the questionnaire, three appear to relate indirectly to the specific problem of this thesis.

2. Which experience will be of most value to you?
  - Actual speaking before an audience?
  - Listening to and criticizing speeches?
  - Outlining and preparing speeches?
  - Other?                     (specify)



5. For this course to be of greatest value to you personally, should you:
- Speak weekly?
  - Speak every other week?
  - Speak once a month or less?
  - (check one in this list)
  - Make speeches 10 minutes long?
  - Make speeches 5 minutes long?
  - Speak under 3 minutes each time?
  - (check one in this list)
  - Speak to a group of 25 or more?
  - Speak to a group of about 15?
  - Speak to a group under 10 in number?
  - (check one in this list)
8. Do you think there should be emphasis on any special skills (such as microphone work, reading aloud, debate, discussion, or any other)?
- No
  - Yes (if so, specify)

Seventy-two percent of the total number of respondents placed the greatest value on actual speaking; fourteen percent on outlining and preparation. The stated conclusion regarding question five was that, "the overall picture indicated that frequent (weekly) recitation is considered much more favorably than infrequent (monthly) recitation, that shorter recitations (under three minutes) are considered more desirable than longer talks (ten minutes), and that a large class (twenty-five or more) is favored more than a small class (ten or less)." Depending on the subgroup used (responses by curriculum, by high school class size, or by previous speech experience) from fifty-eight to eighty-two percent of the total number of students responded that no emphasis should be placed on special skills. These results seem to imply according to Cole that a portion of the purposes of the speech course should be to construct the initial speech class as a skills, not a theory, course; and to effect this purpose by frequent short speeches, not special skills.<sup>3</sup>

In March, 1966, Franklin Klower reported the conclusions reached in his study in which he hypothesized "that the student's image of speech as he comes to courses in speech may influence learning in such courses. If his image is consistent with the views of the instructor, he will respond positively to the suggestions of the instructor. On the other hand, if the suggestions by the instructor are at serious variance with his concepts of what he should be doing, [a] dissonant state may be created which will inhibit his efforts and thus serve as a barrier to learning."<sup>4</sup> To determine whether such images influenced learning, 133 items were listed, and the subjects were asked to respond to each item by checking an appropriate statement--strongly disagree, moderately disagree, uncertain, moderately agree, strongly agree. The following selection indicates the types of statements students were asked to rank:

- (1) Few people in my chosen profession have need for public speaking;
- (2) If the topic is important, a speaker needn't be concerned about boring his audience;
- (3) The size of an audience makes very little difference in the way a person should talk;
- (4) The pun is such a lowly form of humor it should be avoided;
- (5) Speech instruction is of principal value for persons who want to be orators;
- (6) Most of the social conventions about public speaking are unimportant;
- (7) Most speakers are pretty good judges of the reaction of the audience to them.

Included in Klower's conclusions are:

First course college student images of the nature of speech are reasonably stable from year to year over a five year period.

College students show serious inadequacies of understanding some principles and processes of speech behavior.

Our better student speakers have a significantly better image of the nature of speech behavior than do poorer speakers.<sup>5</sup>

While Knower's conclusions indicate that his random sample provided a reliable index of student attitude, that students need speech to correct misunderstandings of speech processes, and that good speakers are superior to poor speakers in understanding speech behavior, they say little, if anything, to support his hypothesis. His study unearths some student attitudes, but it does not touch directly upon the purposes of the beginning speech course.

In his study Eugene White reported that in a 1954 survey of 384 communication skills students at the University of Iowa, eighty-four percent experienced mild to severe stage fright, and in a second group of 789 students eighty-nine percent indicated similar nervousness. White concluded from these data that students implied that "a basic purpose [of communication courses] is to develop the students' poise and self-confidence."<sup>6</sup>

In 1959 Wil Linkugel, University of Kansas, surveyed 329 speech students to find out which types of speech activity assigned during the semester were "most helpful." From this opinion poll Linkugel arrived at a "core" of six assignment types around which to build the beginning speech course.<sup>7</sup>

General Education Literature. This section of the review of the literature which was indexed in the Education Index and in Dissertation Abstracts regarding student expectations or attitudes and procedures and techniques for determining such in disciplines other than speech

is divided into four areas: (1) literature from general education; (2) literature from the humanities; (3) literature from the natural sciences; and (4) literature from the social sciences.

A. A. Locognta attempted "to find out to what extent teaching faculty and credit-enrolled students in extension course programs agree and disagree with reference to expected academic behavior."<sup>8</sup> To elicit the information from a sample of seventy-five faculty members and ninety-six students, a closed-form questionnaire was used. This questionnaire was designed so that the tabulated results would permit the author "to determine how closely academic expectations and academic performance correlate," in addition to answering the query previously noted.

A general study at California State College, Long Beach, of 175 freshmen was conducted "to ascertain prevalent attitudes of college freshmen toward forty issues involving high school experience, the effect of these experiences upon their college status, and some feelings toward their early college pursuits."<sup>9</sup> The study was conducted by using "semi-structured, open-ended completion items" such as "Taking notes. . . , Quality of work required . . . , Tests . . . , Reading skill . . . , The change from high school to college . . . , This college . . . ." Regarding the study, Demos states, "It is important to note that these data represent the attitudes of freshmen during their first semester on the campus." The author continued by stating that the ideas of the subjects would probably change; however, he still felt that such information was essential because, "to communicate and to have

impact we [counselors and teachers] must become aware of student attitudes."<sup>10</sup>

A review of the literature in a more specific area, the humanities, revealed several expectation studies. One study was initiated to answer among others,

. . . the following questions: (1) Is there general agreement among college students specializing in English as to the relative merit of a selected sample of major novels [20th Century British]? (2) Do such student ratings parallel those of a professor specializing in the period covered by such novels? 11

The instrument used to secure data was a checklist which was completed by thirty-four students and one instructor. Despite inconclusive results, the authors state that,

. . . it would seem that the techniques used in the present study would be advantageous to any number of courses. This would be a means of pinpointing discrepancies between what the teacher wants to communicate and tries to communicate and what in fact is actually communicated.<sup>12</sup>

McCalib in another humanities' division study entitled, "Try An Attitude Survey," calculated the medians of the scores derived from a Thurstone-type five point attitude scale to provide relevant data. "The teacher," he concluded, "can be more effective if at the beginning he knows prevailing attitudes that may affect response to the study."<sup>13</sup>

The advent of new teaching methods and curriculum has prompted numerous studies in a second specific area, the natural sciences. A 1964 summary of research in the area of attitudes toward the "new math" noted the following as typical of the findings:

. . . fifth grade SMSG [the new math] students did respond significantly more positively in their measured attitudes than did those who had studied in traditional mathematics. However, this find was not true for eighth grade students.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, Zant, the author of the summary, concluded: "These studies make it apparent that much research remains to be done concerning how attitudes of both students and staff members affect teaching, learning, and the curriculum."<sup>15</sup>

To perfect reliable procedures for measuring such attitudes was the purpose of a study by Blankenship. His study, "The Effectiveness of Four Methods of Determining Science Teacher Attitudes toward a New Biology Program," consisted of an attitude inventory, a peer rating, an instructor's rating, and a follow-up questionnaire. The attitudes used in the inventory were developed by reviewing the literature of the new biology program and by interviewing involved teachers and students of the biology program. From this information seventy statements, thirty-five favorable to the new program and thirty-five unfavorable to the program, were chosen that would likely indicate the "genuine reaction" of the subjects. The seventy statements, after a pilot test, were reduced to forty-six. The peer rating used in the study compared the subject's stated attitude with his attitude toward the program as perceived by the other subjects involved. The instructor's rating used listed the instructor's perception of each subject's attitude toward the new biology program. The follow-up questionnaire was designed to determine how many subjects that indicated a favorable attitude toward the new program actually used the program in the



classroom. Blankenship concluded (1) that the attitude inventory and the peer rating were equally effective guides of attitudes, and (2) that the instructor's perception was an unreliable indicator of attitude.<sup>16</sup>

Another attitude study in the natural sciences revealed that "The aspects of science disliked . . . were lack of participation, work with crawling insects or reptiles, and handling dead animals."<sup>17</sup> These data were determined by subjecting 226 subjects to an attitude scale questionnaire.

The third specific area, the social sciences, also indicated an attempt to elicit information regarding student expectations of courses. Costin and Kerr in "The Effects of an Abnormal Psychology Course on Student's Attitudes toward Mental Illness" state that,

It is hoped that other researchers may also carry out studies concerned with students' attitudes toward mental illness so that as such knowledge grows instructors of courses in abnormal psychology, mental hygiene, and related fields may gain a better understanding of the attitudinal effects of the courses they teach, and what can be done to facilitate these changes.<sup>18</sup>

This conclusion was reached after analyzing the data provided by seventy subjects at the University of Illinois through an attitude scale developed by Cohen and Struening.

Marjorie Schewitzky's study at the State University College at Oneonta, New York explored a comparison of "student's attitudes, as revealed through their responses to the instrument, with what critics have said about education courses," and endeavored to construct an instrument to measure the attitudes of students toward educational



courses. The instrument used was a list of 112 items, each ranked individually on a descriptive graphic scale. Her rationale for conducting the study was:

Even though student views may be immature and not tempered by foresight in regard to future needs, students should, nevertheless be given an opportunity to evaluate experiences. Faculty members should take time to appraise and guide student opinion. Student-faculty interchange would give the faculty a chance to take a close look at themselves and the course offerings and to take note of negative attitudes and misunderstandings. It would also help students see purposes more clearly and benefit personally from any constructive contributions they might make for the improvement of their programs.<sup>19</sup>

In summary, the literature examined supports the proposition that the awareness of student attitudes and expectations toward course objectives is valuable and the seeking of such knowledge is, therefore, a legitimate area of concern and research. Such literature also suggests that while the speech field has done little to detect student expectations, other disciplines have frequently approached this area. Finally, the literature examined reveals that most attitude or expectation studies were conducted by using some type of limited response attitude scale, checklist, or questionnaire. One exception was a study conducted by Bidwell and Ureland who used the in-depth interview. Despite the widespread use of attitude scales, checklists, and questionnaires, these procedures have limitations that restrict their usefulness in studying purposes. According to Auer these limitations include: (1) the limited information that can be secured from highly restricted response choices; (2) the imprecise information that results from the

use of the general categories; and (3) the limited types of analysis that can be performed on the data. In contrast, the in-depth interview counteracts those limitations, but has the disadvantage of its time consuming nature and the difficulty of classifying the data in an exploratory, descriptive study.<sup>20</sup>

Although not necessarily free of limitations, the method, developed by Stephenson and known as Q-technique, was selected for this descriptive study as an appropriate means of circumventing some limitations of the other methods. Hence, the following section reviews the literature pertaining to the use of Q-technique as a justifiable means of studying attitudes.

Q-Technique Literature. The Q-sort was used in this study to determine speech purposes for the introductory speech course for the following reasons.

First, Q-methodology permits the study of hitherto subjective behavior "with full scientific sanction, satisfying every rule and procedure of scientific method."<sup>21</sup> 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>22</sup>

Secondly, the Q-sort "makes it possible to make factor studies on a single or a few individuals, thus bringing the methods of correlation and factor analysis into the laboratory and clinic." In defense of "a single or few individuals," Stephenson states,

The study of only 20 students along Q-lines provide facts of the same order as those reached in the more customary way from the analysis of data for 300 students . . . . Our facts, however, are satisfying in principle, since there is a rationale for them, and nothing but faith in large numbers and averaging in the other case. It has been argued that factors found in Q-technique for relatively few persons are likely to remain substantially unaltered, under certain conditions, no matter how many persons are considered. Thus we argue that students are likely to be the same, in America everywhere . . ."23

Guilford in Psychometric Methods points out that,

Q technique is one of practical appeal when the number of experimental variables is very large and the number of individuals is very small. For example, if we have measures of 20 persons on 200 tests it would be ridiculous to intercorrelate the 200 tests with an N of 20. Instead, we can intercorrelate the 20 persons with an N of 200.<sup>24</sup>

Q-sort data can be handled in a variety of ways. The researcher may compute the median position of statements for the entire sample or various groups within the sample, may develop an acturial key for items predictive of a criterion, may compute a correlation showing how similar one subject is to another, or may perform a factor analysis of the data.<sup>25</sup>

The Q-sort in this study seemed superior to the traditional questionnaire and checklist. "In Q," Stephenson points out, "all the statements of a sample have to be compared with one another, and judgments must be made about each statement in the context of all others. . . ." 26

Thus a definite hierarchy of purposes results. While in a questionnaire each statement is considered separately; therefore, a number of seemingly equal, essential purposes can result. Cronbach points out the advantage of the Q-sort over the checklist in this way:

The sorting procedure has some advantages over the usual rating form, since the rater can shift items back and forth. In the usual inventory or checklist his definition of a category such as "Definitely true" may shift while he is making his ratings, but in a Q-sort we may expect the items placed in the same pile to be truly comparable.<sup>27</sup>

Fifthly, the Q-sort has been recommended for use in studies involving the assessments of attitudes, beliefs, and values.

Q has been used to advantage among communication researchers during exploratory stages of their research.

Q-methodology has a marked advantage of bringing both system and depth into communication studies.

There have been many communication studies . . . using Q-technique. To name a few: studies of patterns of newspaper reader interest and attitudes; typologies of television viewers regarding program interests; patterns of role identification in advertising photographs; patterns of orientation and belief toward civil defense and implications for public information programs; and images of public libraries as they related to public relations problems.<sup>28</sup>

Additional justification of the Q-methodology is inherent in the following review of literature regarding the Q-sort developed by Stephenson. Cronback notes that the Q-sort, "is of greatest value where a comprehensive description" of a sample is sought and, "where the rater can be expected to give patient consideration to a long list of questions."<sup>29</sup> He continues by stating that much of this comprehensive assessment, "is lost if it is reduced to a few simple numerical ratings" as is the case in the tabulation of attitude scales and questionnaires.<sup>30</sup>

The methodology as a whole we hope has some newness or is novel, if not radical in many respects. It is a comprehensive approach to the study of behavior, where man is at issue as a total thinking and behaving being.<sup>31</sup>

The "newness" of the technique is summarized in the founder's words:

We shall study man's attitudes, his thinking behavior, his personality, his social interaction, his self, his psychoanalytic mechanisms, and all else objective to others or subjective to himself, and we can do all this scientifically, without using any formal scales or measuring instruments of the kind with which psychology is familiar. This is achieved by Q-technique . . ."<sup>32</sup>

The technique in the words of Stephenson is "eminently simple."<sup>33</sup>

Since 1948 the Q-technique has been used in clinical psychology, in self-psychology, in type psychology, in social psychology, as well as in communication research. The recent advent makes it difficult to make conclusive statements regarding the reliability and validity of the Q-sort. However, Frank concluded from his research that, "Test-retest reliability coefficients were computed for personality data using Q-sorts by 10 subjects. Coefficients of correlation were high (between .93 and .97) suggesting that the technique yields reliable measures."<sup>34</sup>

Shirley Marsh states in her paper reviewing Q-methodology that,

In discussing the issues relevant to Q-technique, both positive and negative assessments have been cited. There is notable lack of empirical evidence to take firm stands on many issues. As Q develops, the issues . . . may hopefully be resolved empirically and new ones develop. There is much room for research on the methodological approach employed by Q.<sup>35</sup>

#### Definition of the Terms

"Purposes are statements that imply prescriptive guidelines--in this instance to Fundamentals of Speech. "Students" are those full time underclassmen who were enrolled in Fundamentals of Speech either the first

or second semester of the 1966-1967 academic year at Sterling College who possessed at least a 1.00 cumulative grade point average on a four point scale.

#### Summary of the Chapter

In summary, this study was developed to investigate relationships between commonly-held purposes of introductory college speech courses and attitudes of college students regarding those purposes. The studies related to this investigation in the speech area are relatively few in number, but they, in combination with studies in other academic areas, support the general importance of the problem.

These studies of student attitudes regarding course expectations, educational purposes, and procedures have generally used restricted response scales or checklists which typically provide imprecise and limited information. The Q-sort, consequently, was used in this study as a method tentatively more suited to evaluating the diversity of purposes projected as objectives of the initial speech course from a student's viewpoint.



## CHAPTER II

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

#### Preparation of the Q-sort

The initial task in the formulation of the Q-sort was the selection of the statements of purposes regarding fundamentals of speech. To assist in determining these purposes, the following sources were consulted:

- (1) general speech texts designed for use in initial speech courses (see Appendix A);
- (2) speech journal articles related to the subject of suggesting purposes for the beginning speech class (see Appendix A);
- (3) available college catalogues and syllabi prepared to, in part, list general purposes of the introductory speech course;
- (4) previous research done in the area of speech needs, student attitudes, and faculty expectations of fundamentals of speech (see review of literature in chapter one); and
- (5) student responses regarding purposes of the first speech course elicited from members of speech classes at Sterling College and Kansas State University.

After consultation of these sources, a list of approximately 250 purpose statements emerged. However, since the literature regarding Q-sort technique suggested the researcher use a specified number of ranks



with a specific number of statements to be placed in each rank, the 250 purpose statements were reduced accordingly. The appropriate number of statements discussed for use by Stephenson was 48, 60, 80, or 100. These particular quantities permit an arrangement that corresponds to a statistically normal distribution. Stephenson stated that the final figure representative of the number of statements used would be rather arbitrary after taking into consideration the time available for the test, the total number of statements possible, and the validity of items as discriminating ones as documented by previous tests.<sup>36</sup> Considering such factors, forty-eight statements to be sorted in the manner suggested by Stephenson were decided upon. The final distribution which was used appears in Table I.

Table I. Graphic illustration of the final distribution of purpose statements used in the Q-sort.

Number of statements in each rank:	2	3	5	5	6	6	6	5	5	3	2	n = 48
	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	
Strongly agree	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Strongly disagree
	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	
Rank:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	

To reduce the number of statements, the original 250 purpose statements of fundamentals of speech were examined. A duplication of purposes was detected. Thus through combination of closely related purposes and through elimination of parallel purposes, the list was pared to seventy-six. The seventy-six statements were then checked for clarity, conciseness, word order, and understandability by C. C. Campbell, Head

of the Speech Department at Sterling College and Dr. Del Hilyard, Kansas State University. Two students then expressed their interpretation of each of the seventy-six statements. Appropriate changes were made, i. e., inclusion of parallel structure, omission of ambiguous words, substitutions for specialized terms.

Then, as noted above, since it was necessary to select forty-eight items to include in the Q-sort, the seventy-six statements were placed in categories so that a variety of purposes was included in the sort. The divisions used were: (a) general speech theory and knowledge; (b) general speech delivery and practice; and (c) general personal and educational development. Each purpose statement was then placed in one of the three categories. Two faculty members served as judges in placing each statement into its appropriate category. Sixteen statements were randomly selected from each of the three groups. After the forty-eight statements were selected, they were checked to see that included among the number were those statements of purpose listed in the syllabus for Fundamentals of Speech at Sterling College. These purposes were:

- (1) to acquire greater skill in the use of oral communication;
- (2) to develop the ability to think creatively and analytically;
- (3) to impart confidence and assurance in informal and formal speaking situations; and
- (4) to increase the ability to use language expressively.

The intent of these purposes was found among the forty-eight statements previously selected. Each statement was identified by a statement number

in order to facilitate analysis. These forty-eight statements of purpose, listed below, formed the basis for the Q-sort.

1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery
2. to provide students an opportunity to display their speaking abilities
3. to provide students an opportunity to experiment with various speech techniques
4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability
5. to help students develop more pleasing vocal characteristics
6. to provide opportunities for sharing
7. to eliminate impediments (i.e., stuttering, lisping) in voice production
8. to develop correct diction, grammatical, and pronunciation habits
9. to increase the size of the speaking vocabulary
10. to provide the student practice for developing an effective oral style
11. to develop physical grace and poise in speaking
12. to develop skills in oral interpretation of literature
13. to develop skills in effective bodily movement
14. to develop skill in debate and argumentation
15. to increase the ability to communicate while "thinking on one's feet"
16. to emphasize the skillful use of expressive (colorful, vivid, literary) language
17. to stimulate an interest in current events
18. to broaden students' interests in new areas of knowledge
19. to improve writing skills
20. to establish a systematic reading program

21. to help students isolate and emphasize their positive personality traits
22. to develop the individual students' ability to adjust to group responsibility
23. to develop tolerance for the expression of opinions of others
24. to promote students' willingness to reason independent of group influence
25. to develop more scholarly research habits
26. to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation
27. to help students become aware of their own speech needs
28. to acquaint students with principles of language development
29. to increase student awareness of the values of communication
30. to evaluate the listener's responsibility to a speaker
31. to improve attitudes toward speech and speaking
32. to develop students' sense of the moral responsibility of the speaker
33. to teach techniques for speaking without notes
34. to teach methods for securing the attention of an audience
35. to teach methods for analyzing an audience
36. to improve the students' ability to adapt to different speech situations
37. to learn new concepts such as process communication
38. to establish standards for criticizing and evaluating speeches
39. to provide a knowledge of the physiology of the vocal mechanism
40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedures
41. to develop skill in developing a subject in an original manner
42. to increase skills in outlining material to be presented orally
43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure

44. to distinguish between the types and purposes of oral communication
45. to provide students an opportunity to learn the oral tradition of our culture
46. to increase students' abilities to use logical arguments
47. to develop an understanding of the creative art of public address
48. to show students the relationships between their own lives and rhetorical practices

After the statements were selected, thirty packets were prepared so that the Q-sort might be effected. This required the preparation of an information card, eleven rank order cards, and forty-eight coded purpose statement cards for each of the thirty packets. The information card listed the subject's identification number and requested the following information: classification, sex, home state, semesters of high school speech, cumulative grade point average, age, size of high school, and fundamentals of speech instructor's name. Samples of each of the cards are reproduced in Appendix B. Instructions to the students, which were then written regarding the procedures for performing the Q-sort included the following information regarding the sorting procedure:

In this group [white cards] are 48 cards. On each card is printed an opinion regarding the purpose of a fundamentals of speech course which is held by some person. Please sort these 48 opinion statements into 11 ranks. Begin by putting those two opinion statements that state purposes of fundamentals of speech that you agree with most strongly on top of RANK NUMBER 1. Likewise place those two opinion statements that you disagree with most strongly on top of RANK NUMBER 11. Then of the remaining statements, place the three that you agree with most strongly on top of RANK NUMBER 2; likewise of those remaining statements place the three that you disagree with most strongly on top of RANK NUMBER 10. Continue this process until all statements are placed on one of the eleven blue rank cards. Consider RANK NUMBERS 5, 6,

and 7 neutral positions. You are allowed to place only a specified number of opinion statements on each blue rank card. Each rank card states the number of opinion statements that may be placed on it. Read each statement carefully before you place it. Feel free to change the opinion statements from one rank to another at any time.

The forty-eight purpose statement cards which were mimeographed on three by five index cards were shuffled to insure randomization and were placed with the information card and the eleven rank cards in an envelope containing the subject's identification number.

#### Administration of the Q-sort

The first task in the administration of the Q-sort was the selection of the thirty subjects. Thirty subjects was the maximum number used in the study because of limitations of computer capacity in analyzing the data. As previously defined, the subjects were randomly chosen from those students having completed Fundamentals of Speech I during the 1966-1967 academic year at Sterling College. The total number of students included under such a definition was 114. From the 114, thirty-five names were drawn. The thirty-five were then mailed a duplicated letter explaining the need for their assistance. Of the thirty-five, twenty-four replied that they would be available to perform the Q-sort at the appointed time and place--Tuesday, March 21 at 8:00 P. M. in the east classroom of Kelsey Library. Nineteen of that number actually appeared.

The nineteen were handed the packets and instruction sheets. A brief explanation of the purpose of the research was made. The necessity



for honest expressions of opinion regardless of an instructor's bent or orientation was stressed. The fact that the subject would remain anonymous was emphasized; and the fact that this was not a test with right or wrong answers was also heavily stressed. Then the instructions were read orally, and time was given for the students to ask questions before beginning the Q-sort. Questions were answered. The subjects then followed the instructions as printed in Appendix B to effect the Q-sort.

The students that did not appear, did not respond to the initial letter, or noted that a conflict prohibited them from coming to do the sorting were contacted a second time. Only six indicated that they would be willing to perform the Q-sort. Consequently, it became necessary to select at random five additional students to provide Q-sort data. The five drawn accepted. The eleven students appeared on April 17, 1967 in Brown Hall at 3:00 P. M. The previous procedure of administering the Q-sort was followed on this second date.

After the thirty had performed the Q-sort, a chart was prepared listing the rank of each statement by each subject.



## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSES AND RESULTS

#### Introduction

The data acquired by the evaluations of thirty students regarding forty-eight statements of speech course objectives provide descriptive information regarding attitudes of students. The data also provide some tentative estimations of the relative efficiency of the statement items as a means of measuring student attitudes in follow-up studies. These later studies could be designed to test specific hypotheses regarding differences and changes in attitudes. Therefore, the analysis of the Q-sort data is presented in two parts. Section one presents the descriptive classification of the sample of students; the second section presents an analysis of the statements.

#### Descriptive Analysis of Student Attitudes

Factor Analysis. The first procedure used for analytical purposes was factor analysis, a technique suggested by Stephenson as being particularly functional for Q-sort data. The factor analysis incorporated a principal axes solution and varimax rotation. Preliminary results of the factor analysis indicated that a single factor provided the only information derivable from the analysis.\* This factor was interpreted as being no more descriptive of student attitudes than the median values

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\* This decision was based on the recommendation reported by Veldman that factors with eigenroot values of less than 1.00 should not be treated as important.<sup>37</sup> Because only one factor exceeded that cut-off value, it was decided that descriptions of student attitudes would be based on alternative descriptive statistics.

of the students' ranking of the statements. Therefore, all analyses reported are based on median and rank values of the statements.

Median Values. (Total Sample). As indicated by Tables II and III which follow, those statements\* having the highest median value, which indicates the purpose statements evaluated by the students as most favorable, are statements:

4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability;
1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery;
41. to develop skill in developing a subject in an original manner;
31. to improve attitudes toward speech and speaking;
27. to help students become aware of their own speech needs;
10. to provide the student practice for developing an effective oral style;
29. to increase student awareness of the values of communication;
36. to improve the students' ability to adapt to different speech situations;
47. to develop an understanding of the creative art of public address; and
32. to develop students' sense of the moral responsibility of the speaker.

As indicated in Tables II and III which follow, those statements\*\* having the lowest median value, which indicates the purpose statements evaluated by the students as most unfavorable, are statements:

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\* The highest ten statements are listed as that number corresponds to the number of statements placed by each subject in ranks 1, 2, and 3 of the Q-sort. These ranks indicate the highest priority is given to the statements placed there.

\*\* The lowest ten statements are listed as that number corresponds to the number of statements placed by each subject in ranks 9, 10, and 11 of the Q-sort. These ranks indicate the lowest priority is given to the statements placed there.

Table II. Median values and ranks of median values arranged by statement number.

Statement Number	Median Value	Rank	Statement Number	Median Value	Rank	Statement Number	Median Value	Rank
1.	2.8	2	17.	6.9	31	33.	7.0	33.5
2.	7.9	40	18.	5.9	23.5	34.	5.5	21
3.	4.8	12	19.	8.0	41.5	35.	6.0	25.5
4.	2.6	1	20.	8.4	44	36.	3.6	7.5
5.	5.3	16.5	21.	6.6	29	37.	6.7	30
6.	7.5	36	22.	6.9	32	38.	5.4	18
7.	7.7	37	23.	5.3	16.5	39.	8.5	45
8.	4.9	14	24.	6.0	25.5	40.	9.5	46
9.	5.9	23.5	25.	7.9	39	41.	2.9	3
10.	3.5	6	26.	10.7	48	42.	7.0	33.5
11.	4.5	9.5	27.	3.4	5	43.	10.0	47
12.	8.0	41.5	28.	7.8	38	44.	5.3	15
13.	6.2	27	29.	3.6	7.5	45.	8.3	43
14.	7.2	35	30.	5.5	21	46.	5.4	19
15.	5.5	21	31.	3.4	4	47.	4.8	11.5
16.	4.5	9.5	32.	4.8	11.5	48.	6.5	28

25. to develop more scholarly research habits;
2. to provide students an opportunity to display their speaking abilities;
19. to improve writing skills;
12. to develop skills in oral interpretation of literature;
45. to provide the students an opportunity to learn the oral tradition of our culture;
20. to establish a systematic reading program;
39. to provide a knowledge of the physiology of the vocal mechanism;
40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedures;
43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure; and
26. to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation.

Table II classifies the median values of each statement and its respective rank among the forty-eight statements, listed by statement number. The lower the median value the more highly favored the statement was judged by the respondents.

Table III classifies the median value of each statement according to the relative rank among the forty-eight statements of the median value. The lower the median value the more highly favored the statement was judged by the respondent.

(Sub Group Analyses). The total population was divided into various groups according to the variable of grade point average, previous speech experience, size of high school graduated from, and sex. Each student was assigned to appropriate sub-groups. For the grade point average variable, each student was classified as low, possessing a grade point average from 1.00-1.99; medium, possessing a grade point average from 2.00-2.99; or high, possessing a grade point average from 3.00-4.00. For the previous speech experience variable, each student was classified as none, having no high school speech experience; one, having one semester of high school speech; or two, having two or more semesters of

Table III. Median values of each statement number arranged by rank of the median value among the forty-eight statements.

Rank	Median Value	Statement Number	Rank	Median Value	Statement Number	Rank	Median Value	Statement Number
1	2.6	4.	16.5	5.3	5.	33.5	7.0	42.
2	2.8	1.	18	5.36	38.	33.5	7.0	33.
3	2.9	41.	19	5.4	46.	35	7.2	14.
4	3.39	31.	21	5.5	34.	36	7.5	6.
5	3.4	27.	21	5.5	15.	37	7.7	7.
6	3.5	10.	21	5.5	30.	38	7.8	28.
7.5	3.6	29.	23.5	5.9	18.	39	7.88	25.
7.5	3.6	36.	23.5	5.9	9.	40	7.9	2.
9.5	4.5	16.	25.5	6.0	24.	41.5	8.0	19.
9.5	4.5	11.	25.5	6.0	35.	41.5	8.0	12.
11	4.8	47.	27	6.2	13.	43	8.3	45.
12.5	4.83	32.	28	6.5	48.	44	8.4	20.
12.5	4.83	3.	29	6.6	21.	45	8.5	39.
14	4.9	8.	30	6.7	37.	46	9.5	40.
15	5.25	44.	31	6.9	17.	47	10.0	43.
16.5	5.3	23.	32	6.92	22.	48	10.7	26.

high school speech. For the size of high school graduated from, each student was placed in the category small, graduating from a high school of under five hundred enrollment or large, graduating from a high school of over five hundred enrollment. For the sex variable, each student was classified as male or female.

The medians of the statements of each category for each of the four variables were calculated and arranged in order of median value. The median value of each statement was compared with the other median value(s) of the same statement within the group. This comparison involved using the median test to see whether statistically significant differences at the .05 level of confidence existed for any particular statement within the confines of its group. No significance of this type was found for the five statements with the lowest median values or for the five statements with the highest median values within a division of a group. Considering the size of the sub-groups when the entire sample of thirty was divided, only ten purposes, comprising the extremes, are listed in the tables which follow. The five most acceptable purposes (indicated by the lowest median values), and the five least acceptable purposes (indicated by the highest median values) correspond to the number of statements placed in either rank 1 and 2 or rank 10 and 11 of the Q-sort.

Table IV indicates the five statements ranked lowest in median value by each sub-group--low, medium, and high--for the analysis according to grade point average.



Table IV. Statements with lowest median values for the sub-group divisions of grade point averages.

SUB-GROUPS	MEDIAN VALUE	STATEMENT NUMBER AND STATEMENT
Low	2.8	4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability
	3.2	27. to help students become aware of their own speech needs
	3.5	11. to develop physical grace and poise in speaking
	3.5	5. to help students develop more pleasing vocal characteristics
	3.5	1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery
Medium	2.0	1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery
	2.7	41. to develop skill in developing a subject in an original manner
	2.7	4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability
	3.2	10. to provide the student practice for developing an effective oral style
	3.5	--- statements number 36, 31, 29, 27, and 3 were tied for the fifth rank
High	2.5	41. to develop skill in developing a subject in an original manner
	2.8	1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery
	3.0	36. to improve the student's ability to adapt to different speech situations
	3.0	4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability
	3.2	31. to improve attitudes toward speech and speaking



The five statements ranked highest in median value by each sub-group--low, medium, and high--for the analysis according to grade point average are listed in Table V.

Table V. Statements with highest median values for the sub-group division of grade point averages.

SUB-GROUPS	MEDIAN VALUE	STATEMENT AND STATEMENT NUMBER
Low	10.8	26. to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation
	9.0	20. to establish a systematic reading program
	9.0	40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedures
	9.0	43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure
	8.9	6. to provide students opportunities for sharing
Medium	10.5	26. to fulfill general education requirements for graduation
	10.5	43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure
	9.8	40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedures
	9.0	39. to provide a knowledge of the physiology of the vocal mechanism
	8.9	19. to improve writing skills
High	10.8	26. to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation
	10.0	43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure
	9.5	40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedures
	9.2	12. to develop skills in oral interpretation of literature
	9.0	45. to provide students an opportunity to learn the oral tradition of our culture

The five statements ranked lowest in median value by each sub-group--none, one, and two--for the analysis according to previous speech experience are listed in Table VI.

Table VI. Statements with lowest median values for the sub-group divisions of previous speech experience.

SUB-GROUPS	MEDIAN VALUE	STATEMENT NUMBER AND STATEMENT
None	2.2	4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability
	2.8	29. to increase students awareness of the values of communication
	3.3	41. to develop skill in developing a subject in an original manner
	3.8	31. to improve attitudes toward speech and speaking
	3.8	10. to provide the student practice for developing an effective oral style
One	1.2	1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery
	2.2	10. to provide the student practice for developing an effective oral style
	2.8	31. to improve attitudes toward speech and speaking
	2.8	27. to help students become aware of their own speech needs
	2.8	36. to improve the students' ability to adapt to different speech situations
Two	2.2	41. to develop skill in developing a subject in an original manner
	2.8	1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery
	2.8	4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability
	3.3	27. to help students become aware of their own speech needs
	3.5	36. to improve the student's ability to adapt to different speech situations

The five statements ranked highest in median value by each sub-group--none, one, and two--for the analysis according to previous speech experience are listed in Table VII.

Table VII. Statements with highest median values for the sub-group divisions of previous speech experience.

SUB-GROUPS	MEDIAN VALUE	STATEMENT NUMBER AND STATEMENT
None	10.8	26. to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation
	9.9	43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure
	9.2	39. to provide a knowledge of the physiology of the vocal mechanism
	8.5	7. to eliminate impediments in voice production
	8.5	--- statements number 40 and 20 were tied for the fifth rank
One	10.8	43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure
	9.5	40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedure
	9.2	20. to establish a systematic reading program
	9.0	14. to develop skill in argumentation and debate
	9.0	24. to promote student willingness to reason independent of group influence
Two	10.8	26. to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation
	9.8	43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure
	9.0	40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedures
	8.8	19. to improve writing skills
	8.5	2. to provide students an opportunity to display their speaking ability

The five statements ranked lowest in median value by each sub-group--small or large--for the analysis according to size of high school graduated from are listed in Table VIII.

Table VIII. Statements with lowest median values for the sub-group divisions of size of high school graduated from.

SUB-GROUPS	MEDIAN VALUE	STATEMENT NUMBER AND STATEMENT
	2.8	4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability
	2.9	41. to develop skill in developing a subject in an original manner
Small	3.3	1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery
	3.3	31. to improve attitudes toward speech and speaking
	3.3	27. to help students become aware of their own speech needs
	2.5	1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery
	2.5	36. to improve the student's ability to adapt to different speech situations
Large	3.5	10. to provide the student practice for developing an effective oral style
	3.5	4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability
	3.5	27. to help students become aware of their own speech needs

Table IX indicates the five statements ranked highest in median value by each sub-group--small or large--for the analysis according to the size of high school graduated from.

Table IX. Statements with highest median values for the sub-group divisions of size of high school graduated from.

SUB-GROUPS	MEDIAN VALUE	STATEMENT NUMBER AND STATEMENT
	10.9	26. to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation
	10.5	43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure
Small	9.7	40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedure
	8.5	--- statements number 2, 19, and 45 were tied for the fifth rank
	10.8	26. to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation
	9.5	40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedure
Large	9.5	43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure
	8.7	20. to establish a systematic reading program
	8.5	--- statements number 19 and 45 were tied for the fifth rank

Table X indicates the five statements ranked lowest in median value by each sub-group--male or female--for the analysis according to sex.

Table X. Statements with lowest median values for the sub-group divisions of sex.

SUB-GROUPS	MEDIAN VALUE	STATEMENT NUMBER AND STATEMENT
Males	2.6	4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability
	2.8	41. to develop skill in developing a subject in an original manner
	3.1	1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery
	3.3	27. to help students become aware of their own speech needs
	3.7	36. to improve the student's ability to adapt to different speech situations
Females	2.0	1. to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery
	2.5	4. to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability
	3.0	10. to provide the student practice for developing an effective oral style
	3.0	31. to improve attitudes toward speech and speaking
	3.0	41. to develop skill in developing a subject in an original manner



Table XI indicates the five statements ranked highest in median value by each sub-group--male or female--for the analysis according to sex.

Table XI. Statements with highest median values for the sub-group divisions of sex.

SUB-GROUPS	MEDIAN VALUE	STATEMENT NUMBER AND STATEMENT
Males	10.7	26. to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation
	9.7	43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure
	9.2	40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedure
	8.7	6. to provide students an opportunity for sharing
	8.6	20. to establish a systematic reading program
Females	10.8	26. to fulfill general education requirements for graduation
	10.5	43. to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure
	9.7	40. to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedure
	9.5	39. to provide a knowledge of the physiology of the vocal mechanism
	8.5	--- statements number 2, 19, and 12 were tied for the fifth rank

Correlations. Preliminary procedures for the factor analysis included the development of an intercorrelation matrix based on the correlations of each student's Q-sort with each and every other students' Q-score. The range of these 450 correlations was from  $-.12$  to  $+.76$ .

Through the procedures of hierarchical grouping the eight subjects whose Q-sorts were the most highly correlated were determined.<sup>38</sup> These eight subjects represent the most highly correlated twenty-seven percent of the sample. The intercorrelation matrix for these subjects is presented in Table XII.

Table XII. Intercorrelation matrix of Q-sorts of the eight most highly correlated subjects.

SUBJECT NUMBER	2	5	6	12	14	15	20	22
2	-	.56	.76	.53	.49	.54	.46	.67
5		-	.64	.66	.61	.51	.44	.61
6			-	.46	.42	.53	.47	.54
12				-	.62	.57	.50	.49
14					-	.55	.58	.57
15						-	.57	.55
20							-	.53
22								-

No significant correlation was found among this group in regard to the variables of grade point averages, previous speech experience, size of high school graduated from, sex, or geographical location of home state.

### Descriptive Analysis of Statements

A second purpose of the study was to gain information relative to the development of a measuring instrument for future research in student attitudes toward speech course objectives. This section, therefore, presents the results of the analysis of the data in regard to the relationships among statements.

Analysis of Statement Consistency. For purposes of analysis it was assumed that statements which best described the sample would be most likely to reflect differences between the population and other hypothesized populations. Therefore, the ten statements which were judged most favorable and the ten statements which were judged least favorable would be potentially useful for future studies.

Statements in the middle range, i. e., whose median values were from 4.83 to 7.8 were then analyzed by computing the semi-interquartile range Q statistic.<sup>39</sup> These Q values serve to index ambiguity or uncertainty of meaning. (The smaller the Q, the more certain the meaning.) The ten statements, from the mid-range of median values, which had the smallest Q-values, are reported in Table XIII. These ten statements are assumed to be the most efficiently discriminatory of relatively neutral attitudes toward purposes.<sup>40</sup>

Test of Statement Discrimination. For purposes of analysis it was also assumed that statements which discriminated between sub-groups of the sample would be potentially efficient in discriminating among populations. Therefore, median tests were conducted to compare statement rankings about sub-groups. Three statements were accepted at the

Table XIII. Statements with median values from 4.8 to 7.8 with lowest interquartile Q-scores.

QUARTILE Q	STATEMENT NUMBER AND STATEMENT
.93	22. to develop students' ability to adjust to group responsibility
1.22	43. to teach methods of securing the attention of an audience
1.33	46. to increase students' abilities to use logical arguments
1.35	21. to help students isolate and emphasize their positive personality traits
1.38	35. to teach methods of analyzing an audience
1.38	16. to emphasize the skillful use of expressive language
1.40	37. to learn new concepts such as process communication
1.43	18. to broaden students' interests in new areas of knowledge
1.56	44. to distinguish between types and purposes of oral communication
1.62	5. to help students develop more pleasing vocal characteristics

.05 level of confidence as discriminating in at least one instance between sub-groups. Statement number 5 (to help students develop more pleasing vocal characteristics) differentiates between those students classified as "low" grade point average and those students classified as "high" grade point average. The students possessing the "low" grade point average ranked the statement statistically significantly more favorable than did the other group. Statement number 14 (to develop skill in debate and argumentation) differentiates between those students classified "one" in previous speech experience and those students classified as "two" in previous speech experience. The students having two

semesters or more of high school speech ranked the statement significantly more favorable than did those with a single semester of high school speech. Statement 15 (to increase the ability to communicate while "thinking on one's feet") was ranked significantly more favorable by students classified as "medium" in grade point average than it was by students classified as "low" in grade point average.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

This Master's thesis was designed (1) to provide a descriptive analysis of the expectations and attitudes of Sterling College students toward Fundamentals of Speech, and (2) to make a tentative contribution to the development of procedures for measuring and evaluating student expectations and attitudes. The legitimacy of such a study and its subsequent design for execution, the Q-sort, were supported by a review of relevant literature. The construction of the purpose statements for use in the Q-sort involved checking speech texts, speech articles, and other relevant available sources to determine widely-held purposes of speech from instructor's viewpoints. Ideas included in this material were transformed into a list of purpose statements. From this list, forty-eight statements were then administered via the Q-sort to thirty, randomly selected, students who were enrolled in Fundamentals of Speech during the 1966-1967 academic year at Sterling College, Sterling, Kansas. The data derived from this sorting was analyzed and reported in the foregoing pages.

#### Conclusions

In combination with the ranks of the median values of the entire sample, the ranks of median values of various sub-groups within the



sample (sub-groups delineating the variables of grade point average, previous speech experience, size of high school graduated from, and sex), the correlations of the twenty-seven percent most homogenous subjects within the sample, the modes of purpose statements, and the semi-interquartile range Q-scores were used to describe the sample.

The following lists of purpose statements depicting the most preferred, the least preferred, and the most neutral statements best described the total sample. This total sample ranked the following ten statements as the most preferred purposes for an initial course in speech:

- (1) to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery;
- (4) to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability;
- (10) to provide the student practice for developing an effective oral style;
- (27) to help students become aware of their own speech needs;
- (29) to increase student awareness of the values of communication;
- (31) to improve attitudes toward speech and speaking
- (32) to develop students' sense of the moral responsibility of the speaker;
- (36) to improve the students' ability to adapt to different speech situations;
- (41) to develop skill in developing a subject in an original manner; and
- (47) to develop an understanding of the creative art of public address.

The total sample ranked the following ten statements as the least preferred purposes for an initial course:

- (2) to provide students an opportunity to display their speaking ability;
- (12) to develop skills in oral interpretation of literature;
- (19) to improve writing skills;
- (20) to establish a systematic reading program;
- (25) to develop more scholarly research habits;
- (26) to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation;

- (39) to provide a knowledge of the physiology of the vocal mechanism;
- (40) to provide a knowledge of correct breathing procedures;
- (43) to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure; and
- (45) to provide students an opportunity to learn the oral tradition of our culture.

The total sample ranked the following ten statements as the most neutral purposes for an initial course:

- (5) to help students develop more pleasing vocal characteristics;
- (16) to emphasize the skillful use of expressive (colorful, vivid, literary) language;
- (18) to broaden students' interests in new areas of knowledge;
- (21) to help students isolate and emphasize their positive personality traits;
- (22) to develop the individual students' ability to adjust to group responsibility;
- (34) to teach methods for securing the attention of an audience;
- (35) to teach methods for analyzing an audience;
- (39) to learn new concepts such as process communication;
- (44) to distinguish between the types and purposes of oral communication; and
- (46) to increase students' abilities to use logical arguments.

In view of this over-all description of student opinion regarding Fundamentals of Speech at Sterling College, it is noteworthy that Eugene White's and Rodney Cole's studies referred to in the review of the literature and nearly all the general speech texts and articles listed in Appendix A support the conclusion that statements (1), (4), (10), and (29) be essential purposes of beginning speech classes. The opinions of the respondents to the query of the 1954 Speech Association of America's committee that were most often noted as objectives for the first course were parallel to those student projected purposes of the first course at Sterling College. Finally, three of the four purposes stated in the syllabus for Fundamentals of Speech at Sterling are roughly

analogous to four of the ten most preferred purposes of speech according to Q-sort data.

From this over-all description of student expectations of Fundamentals of Speech at Sterling College plus the parallel support of the description from other sources, yet in deference to the limitation of the study, two generalized implications may be stated. First, the instructor, who accepts the student-projected preferred, neutral, and least preferred statements of purpose as authentic and valid guidelines to determine course content, seemingly need not spend much time providing a rationale for the course. Nor would he need to expect adverse group reaction to disturb his communication of essential course goals. Secondly, instructors who project other purposes contrary to these expectations projected by students, will probably find it necessary to spend time providing reasons for centralizing their courses around different purposes.

Most of the sub-groups of the total sample tended to be similar to each other in their rankings of the purpose statements. However, three statements did tend to discriminate between groups in at least one instance. The three statements were:

- (5) to help students develop more pleasing vocal characteristics;
- (14) to develop skill in argumentation and debate; and
- (15) to increase the ability to communicate while "thinking on one's feet."

The statement labeled (5) distinguished those students who had a 3.00-4.00 grade point average from those students who had a 1.00-1.99 grade point average and who ranked it significantly more favorable. The

statement labeled (14) distinguished those students who had one semester of high school speech from those students who had two or more semesters of high school speech and who ranked it significantly more favorable. The statement labeled (15) distinguished those students who had a 1.00-1.99 grade point average from those students who had a 2.00-2.99 grade point average and who ranked it significantly more favorable.

Although there are only the three significant differences statistically in the median values calculated according to the variables of grade point average, previous speech experience, size of high school graduated from, and sex, there are suggestions of trends that might warrant study with larger samples of students.

An apparent trend in the preferred statements according to grade point average indicates the lower the grade point average the greater the need for purposes that permit confidence building in students through speaking situations. Conversely, as grade point average increases students become less concerned with the need "to have confidence in their speaking" and more concerned with the refinements of speaking--originality of approach, adjustment to different situations, opportunity to experiment. The purpose of encouraging student confidence in his speaking seemed to be more of a concern to those students having no previous speech experience and of less importance to those with high school speech training. The students with one or two semesters of high school speech highly ranked as a purpose of speech "to help students become aware of their own speech needs." Such notation of speech needs by

an instructor is interpreted as not being a confidence-building technique. The size of the high school apparently makes little difference in the purposes most preferred by students; however, the sex of the student does seem to imply that the subject will view essential purposes of speech somewhat differently. Again the matter of confidence appeared to be the indicator of the trend. Males apparently see more necessity in achieving confidence and receiving social approval from the basic speech course than do females.

While not a distinguishing trend, a noteworthy trend is that all divisions seemed to least prefer those statements that suggested restricted subject areas or special skills, i. e., a knowledge of specific functions such as breathing, the vocal mechanism, parliamentary procedure, an opportunity of developing writing skills or oral interpretation skills. This general trend of least preference for those purposes relating to speech theory and general education seemed evident not only in an analysis of the groups, but in an analysis of the total sample.

In addition to reaching these conclusions regarding a description of the sample, the statements themselves were analyzed to provide some conclusions regarding tentative purpose statements of high discriminatory value in an effort to refine the Q-sort. To accomplish this refinement the median test and the semi-interquartile range Q statistic were used in association with ranks of median values of individual statements. The median test revealed three statements listed (5), (14), and (15) in this section as useful discriminatory statements of purpose. However,



the other analyses indicate that the ten most preferred, the ten least preferred, and the ten neutral statements are most discriminatory of the forty-eight, and thus merit consideration in future Q-sorts to determine purposes of fundamentals of speech.

#### Recommendations

While the paramount motivation for this research was to describe, not to recommend, the following are presented as recommendations.

(1) The study might well be conducted again at Sterling College. If such were done, the use of a larger number of purposes statements and the elimination of those statements revealed in this study as held by the majority of the sample might well be in order. Considering the possibility of having eliminated in a random selection statements such as those related to building confidence in speaking, improving attitudes toward speech, and increasing competence in delivery, a different description of Fundamentals of Speech might have resulted. Thus in limiting the purposes of speech to forty-eight for the study, perhaps other relevant purposes of speech were lost in the randomization process of final selection of statements. An extended list would seem to impose no time problem to the students. Most of the subjects performed the Q-sort of forty-eight statements in thirty to forty minutes. The recommendation to eliminate certain statements used is made because the possibility exists that either some statements are so obviously absurd or are so widely accepted that they are of little discriminatory significance.



(2) Similar studies could be conducted using other samples to validate the student attitudes toward purposes of Fundamentals of Speech revealed at Sterling College, as commonly-held expectations of first courses everywhere. High correlations between such studies would also serve to validate the Q-sort as a new means of measuring student opinions in speech. From such studies factor analysis might well function to unearth purposes that reliably distinguish between various populations.

(3) Finally, using the analyses and conclusion from this study and subsequent studies, a simplified, but reliable procedure might be developed for instructors to see if students are receiving that which they expect or to see if students are re-orienting their expectations to acceptable standards.

## FOOTNOTES

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3. Cole, pp. 9, 17, 34-35, and 31-38.
4. Franklin H. Knower, "A Symposium: Learning in Speech Classrooms Part III The College Student Image of Speech, Communication, and Speech Instruction," The Speech Teacher, XV (March 1966), p. 108.
5. Knower, p. 112.
6. Eugene White, "Assembly Line Techniques: Teaching the Large Class in Speech Education," The Speech Teacher, II (November 1953), p. 225.
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8. A. A. Lacognata, "University Extension Faculty and Student Role Expectations: An Empirical Analysis," The Journal of Experimental Education, XXXIII (Winter 1964), p. 108.
9. George Demos, "Attitudes of College Freshmen toward their Classroom Work," Journal of National Association of Women Deans and Counselors, XXVIII (Spring 1965), p. 129.
10. Demos, p. 132.
11. Gloria Fischer and Alphonse J. Fritz, "Student Attitudes toward the 20th Century British Novel," The Journal of Educational Research, LVIII (March 1965), p. 307.
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14. James H. Zant, "The Teaching of Mathematics at the College and University Level," Review of Educational Research, XXXIV (June 1964), p. 350.
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16. Jacob Blankenship, "The Effectiveness of Four Methods of Determining Science Teacher Attitudes toward a New Biology Program," School Science and Mathematics, LXVI (December 1966), pp. 381-387.
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23. Stephenson, p. 218.
24. J. P. Guilford, Psychometric Methods (New York, 1954), p. 529.
25. Lee J. Cronbach, Essential in Psychological Testing (New York, 1960), p. 515.
26. Stephenson, p. 59.
27. Cronbach, p. 515.
28. Shirley A. Marsh, "Q-techniques: An Advance in Idiodynamics," Michigan State University, 1963, pp. 20-21.
29. Cronbach, p. 516.
30. Cronbach, p. 514.
31. Stephenson, p. 4.
32. Stephenson, p. 8.
33. Stephenson, p. 17.
34. G. H. Frank, "Note on the Reliability of Q-sort," Psychological Reports, II (1956), p. 182.

35. Marsh, p. 36.
36. Stephenson, pp. 94.
37. Don J. Veldman, Fortran Programming for the Behavioral Sciences (New York, 1967), p. 212.
38. Helen Walker and Joseph Lev, Statistical Inference (New York, 1960), p. 415.
39. Guilford, p. 458.
40. Walker and Lev, p. 233.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

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## APPENDIX B

## Instructions for Q-sort

- I. Remove the orange card from the envelope. Print the requested information in the appropriate blank.
- II. Remove the blue cards from the envelope. On each card you will notice following the words "RANK NUMBER" a number. Arrange these cards in numerical order according to the "RANK NUMBER" in front of you. Place number 1 farthest to your left. Number 11 will then be farthest to your right.
- III. Remove the white cards from the envelope. In this group are 48 cards. (Count them to be sure you have all 48.) On each card is printed an opinion regarding the PURPOSE of a fundamentals of speech course which is held by some person. Please sort these 48 opinion statements into 11 ranks. Begin by putting those two opinion statements that state purposes of fundamentals of speech that you agree with most strongly on top of RANK NUMBER 1. Likewise place those two opinion statements that you disagree with most strongly on top of RANK NUMBER 11. Then of the remaining statements, place the three that you agree with most strongly on top of RANK NUMBER 2; likewise of those remaining statements place the three that you disagree with most strongly on top of RANK NUMBER 10. Continue this process until all statements are placed on one of the eleven blue rank cards. Consider RANK NUMBERS 5, 6, and 7 neutral positions. You are allowed to place only a specified number of opinion statements on each blue rank card. Each rank card states the number of opinion statements that may be placed on it. Read each of the statements carefully before you place it. Feel free to change the opinion statements from one rank to another at any time.
- IV. When you have completed the sorting, place a rubber band around each of the eleven piles. (Put the rank number card on the top, please.) Be careful not to mix the opinion statements at this point. Place the eleven stacks of cards and the orange information card in the envelope. Return the envelope to the proctor.
- V. You may ask questions at any time.

## Samples of Q-sort Materials

Subject number 18 Trade \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Home state \_\_\_\_\_  
 Semesters of high school speech \_\_\_\_\_  
 Grade point average \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
 Size of high school at graduation \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fundamentals instructor \_\_\_\_\_

RANK NUMBER 6

PLACE ONLY 6 OPINION

STATEMENTS ON THIS RANK.

to develop skills in debate and  
 argumentation

142222

FUNDAMENTALS OF SPEECH AT STERLING COLLEGE:  
AN INVESTIGATION OF ITS PURPOSES  
AS SEEN BY STUDENTS

by

CHARLES K. KINYON

B. A., Sterling College, 1961

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Speech

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1967

A question confronting the speech profession is: For the initial undergraduate speech course, what kind of a course should be offered? Several studies have been made to answer that query using speech instructors as respondents. To counteract this consistently sought faculty-oriented opinion, the Committee on Problems in Undergraduate Study of the Speech Association of America in 1954 recommended research seeking student opinion regarding objectives and values of the required first course. Consequently, this study was designed (1) to provide a descriptive analysis of the expectations and attitudes of Sterling College students toward Fundamentals of Speech, and (2) to make a tentative contribution to the development of procedures for measuring and evaluating student expectations and attitudes. The Q-sort was selected to provide the data for this descriptive exploratory study in an effort to circumvent some of the limitations of the oft-used questionnaires and check-lists. Forty-eight purpose statements drawn from a list of first course objectives judged, a priori, as being widely-held opinions within the speech discipline, formed the basis of the Q-sort which was performed by thirty Fundamentals of Speech students at Sterling College, Sterling, Kansas.

The analysis of the data consisted of using median values, inter-correlations, median tests, and inter-quartile range Q scores. These techniques of analysis were applied to the entire sample and to sub-groups within the sample divided according to the variables of grade point average, previous speech experience, size of high school attended, and sex, in addition to the statements themselves.

After the analysis of the data, the conclusion was made that the best description of student expectations of the first course at Sterling College was a list of thirty statements--the ten most preferred, the ten least preferred, and the ten most neutral. For example, the two most preferred statements were to encourage students to have confidence in their speaking ability and to improve the general level of speech competence and delivery. The two least preferred statements were to provide students with a knowledge of parliamentary procedure and to fulfill general educational requirements for graduation. The two most neutral statements were to develop students' ability to adjust to group responsibility and to teach methods of securing the attention of the audience.

The analysis of the sub-groups provided statistically significant differences in only three minor instances. However, suggestions of certain trends that might warrant further study with larger samples appeared. The most noticeable of these trends was for students possessing high grade point averages, students having two semesters of high school speech, and for female students to place less emphasis on purposes relating to the building of self-confidence than did their counterparts possessing low grade point averages, and having no high school speech, and being males. A second trend was that sub-groups and the sample as a whole seemed to least prefer the purpose statements that suggested restricted subject areas or special skills, i.e., a knowledge of specific functions such as breathing or the vocal mechanism or an opportunity of developing writing or oral interpretation skills.



In an effort to refine the Q-sort as a measuring device, an analysis of the statements, per se, was made using the median test. This revealed three purpose statements as statistically significant in discriminating between sub-groups. Other analyses indicated that the thirty statements previously noted are the most discriminatory of the forty-eight, and thus merit consideration in future Q-sorts to determine purposes of fundamentals of speech.