

COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION: A REVIEW  
OF RESEARCH AND A SURVEY OF EDUCATORS

by

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COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION:  
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Research concerned with fear and anxiety about oral communication has been conducted under various labels. Clevenger (1959) referred to oral apprehension as "stage fright" and associated it with the feelings most people experience when being in front of a group or audience. Phillips (1968) discussed it as "reticence," being restrained or reserved in expression and presentation during a speaking situation. Zimbardo (1977) wrote an entire book on fear and anxiety in communication and referred to it as "shyness." McCroskey (1970) has extensively researched this area of communication and has labeled and defined it. He refers to an individual's level of fear and anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons as communication apprehension (CA). In the past decade of research, the term communication apprehension has been most widely used. The purpose of this report is to survey research on the causes of communication apprehension, the effects it has on an individual's life, and the available treatment methods. Finally, I will suggest an approach to training our teachers in the prevention of CA in the classroom.

State And Trait

CA has been approached from two angles, by subdividing it into what has been termed state apprehension and trait apprehension. Speilberger (1966), McCroskey (1977b), Richmond (1978) and Lamb (1972) have made useful distinctions between state and trait apprehension. State apprehension

is characterized by fear or anxiety with regard to certain situations, which is what Clevenger and Phillips were referring to. Trait apprehension is characterized as a more constant feeling or fear regarding various types of encounters. A person with trait apprehension has feelings of fear and anxiety when talking to another person or when functioning in a group, such as a classroom. McCroskey and Wheelless (1976) have further stated that the person suffering trait apprehension is a person for whom apprehension about participating in communication "outweighs any projection of gain" from the interaction. The person anticipates negative feelings or outcomes from communication and thus, either avoids interaction if possible, or suffers from a variety of anxiety related feelings while communicating.

State CA is the more typical reaction experienced by the majority of people, whereas trait CA is not characteristic of well-adjusted individuals. Lohr, Rea, Porter and Hamberger (1980) report two studies that correlate state-trait measures of anxiety with communication apprehension and public speaking fear. Their data demonstrates that CA is associated with trait anxiety and that public speaking fear is associated with both state and trait anxiety. This study extends the findings of Lamb (1972) and is consistent with McCroskey's (1977c) position that public-speaking anxiety as a situation-specific fear is significantly correlated with state anxiety when trait anxiety is held constant.

How many people are there who suffer from the higher levels of communication apprehension? Research conducted by the Bruskin Associates in their Bruskin Report (1973) revealed that the most commonly reported fear was apprehension about public speaking. Various other studies show high percentages of people who suffer from CA. As reported by Friedman



(1980), 28% of students do not communicate sufficiently in the classroom. Zimbardo (1977) reported findings that revealed 80% of the respondents in his survey have been shy at some time in their lives, 25% chronically shy and 4% felt shy all the time, regardless of where they are. Zimbardo also reported finding that 42% of a group of fourth, fifth and sixth graders revealed feeling shy and 54% of the junior high students had the same feelings.

On a larger scale, McCroskey (1977b) collected data from 20,000 college students at five major universities which suggest that 15 to 20% of the student population suffer from high levels of CA. He also reported in the summary study that research involving the general United States population, varying from grade-school children through college students to senior citizens, indicates that the proportion of apprehensives in all age groups in the United States is approximately 20%. Zimbardo states that some estimates range as high as 40%.

The causes of CA have been difficult to determine. However, four areas of concern have been studied: demographic variables, environmental influences, heredity, and intelligence.

#### Demographic Variables

Among demographic variables, both sex and culture seem related to differences in apprehension levels. Lohr, et al. (1980) found females to be more anxious than males in public speaking situations. This finding is supported by Greenblatt, Hasenauer and Freimuth (1980) who discovered that feminine females were more apprehensive than androgynous males and females. Zimbardo (1977) found that girls are more frequently shy than boys. Zimbardo also studied apprehension levels among different cultural

groups. He found a lower proportion of apprehensive individuals among Israelis and Jewish Americans than in the general U. S. population. In contrast, Germans, Indians, Japanese and Mexicans had a higher proportion of apprehensives than the 20% of the general population.

### Environmental Influences

One major area of concern in relation to communication apprehension is the home environment. Recent research according to Hurt, Scott and McCroskey (1978) has pointed toward the environment created by family size as a major contributor to differences among children. The basic theory is that the IQ of a child is a function of the average intellectual-stimulation level available in the family environment of the child. Since children have lower intellectual capacities than adults, the more children in a child's environment, the lower the average of the child's intellectual stimulation. Hurt, et al., have used the same assumption to advance a theory of how family size and spacing influence different levels of communication apprehension in children. The following statements are components of the theory:

1. Reinforcement for communication in childhood results in increased confidence in the child about his or her communication; lack of reinforcement and/or adverse response to communication attempts results in reduced confidence ergo increased communication apprehension.
2. A child who develops and exhibits skills in communication early will receive more re-

inforcement than other children.

3. With biological maturation held constant, the acquisition of language and communication skills is a function of the child's interaction with communication models in the child's environment and the amount and quality of reinforcement the child receives from that interaction.
4. On the average, the best available models for a child are the child's parents, but the more children present in the family, the lower the percentage of the total interaction of the child with the parents.
5. In the typical family, the models that will provide the most discriminating reinforcement for the child's developing communication skills will be the parents (other children are more likely to provide indiscriminate reinforcement according to their own needs and to ignore communication attempts of younger children). But the more children present in the family, the lower the percentages of the total interaction of the child with the parent. (p. 152)

This theory argues that as family size increases, the communication skill of the children in the family decreases and the amount of positive reinforcement of communication will decrease correspondingly. The negative impact on later-born children is expected to be stronger, since

early-born children will have a comparatively larger amount of interaction with the parents during their formative years. There are two considerations Hurt et al. added to this theory: spacing between children could exaggerate or reduce the impact of family size on the child's development and single parent families have an added impact because the available interaction time with parents is automatically cut in half.

In their book, Introduction to Human Communication, McCroskey and Wheelless (1979) support the idea of early formative reinforced learning which produces a conditioned response pattern within the child. They believe that children are reinforced for communicating while they are young. Therefore, they learn to value communication and engage in communication behaviors more frequently and thus learn to adapt their communication to their environment. But some home situations do not provide the necessary positive reinforcement. Some parents punish their children rather than reward them for communicating. With a negative reinforcement pattern, the likely result is a communication apprehensive child.

Wheelless (1971) states "it is reasonable to assume that communication apprehension has its origins in the early years. The penalties, frustrations, anxieties, guilts and hostilities which manifest themselves in speech disorders may well produce severe communication apprehension" (p. 297). Even though speech disorders can be minimized as the child becomes older through speech pathology programs, Wheelless believes the opposite is true of communication apprehension. Because some apprehensive children enter school with existing high levels of anxiety originating from the home environment (McCroskey, 1977c; Friedman, 1980) the anxiety is increased when the child is faced with classroom situations.

Wheless supports the idea of special programs of "communication therapy" designed to treat CA, to attack the problem closest to its level of origin, the early formative years. But the first opportunity does not exist until children become of school age. Thus, the crucial time is the first three or four grades of school.

Bryngelson (1966) former Director of the Speech and Hearing Clinic at the University of Minnesota reinforces the idea that the home environment and parental influence can greatly affect a child's personality. He states,

Because of the high premium our culture places on fluent speech, parents are concerned about the speech development of their children. They like to be able to tell someone that their child spoke fluently at a very early age. If the child's speech is slow in maturing, a good deal of harmful anxiety can be aroused. This emotion expression on the part of the parent often affects not only the child's rate of speech growth, but also his personality. He can become overly apprehensive, and worst of all, he may feel he is not up to par for not meeting the parents' standards in talking.

(p. 97)

Phillips (1968) reports that older students who are reticent vividly recall embarrassing moments resulting from their apprehension and anxiety about communicating. He admits that the impact of those experiences is almost impossible to assess, but nonetheless, it must be acknowledged that effects do exist. McCroskey (1977b,c) and Phillips state that when chil-

dren combine what is said about them with what happens to them they tend to develop the traits that they have heard ascribed to them. Zimbardo (1977) reported instances where people traced the beginning of their shyness to being told in early childhood that they were shy by prominent adult figures in their lives. They accepted the label that had been placed upon them and lived up to the expectations of that label.

Phillips (1968) examined the issue of communication apprehension causes from another angle, the attitudes of parents toward the communication process itself. He stated that if parents used communication as a weapon against one another or against the child, the child may have avoided communication to escape the abuse. Thus, a child may not learn that communication is a means of obtaining rewards and may lack reinforcement for making any attempts at oral exchange.

Researchers Bell (1968), Garrison (1979) and Freedman (1979) suggest that parent-child relationships are likely to have influences on each other, called interaction conception. From the first days after birth the child's behavior influences the parents and vice versa. Basic personality factors in the infant combine with factors in the environment which influence the child's behavior: thus, the interaction conception. They believe this explains some children having higher or lower apprehension levels than others within the same family. This factor has not been examined by McCroskey from an environmental perspective.

On the other hand, McCroskey (1977c) has pointed out skill deficiency as a possible cause of CA that correlates with the reinforcement theory. He noted that not all children develop the skills for language and communication at the same speed. Some develop early, thus receiving rewards for their progress. Late developers, perceived as being slow, naturally

receive less reinforcement. Those children who develop communication skills late have no doubt missed an ample number of opportunities for reinforcement that the typical child had. Their attempts at communicating may have been quite ineffective. They may have learned that being quiet was more likely to bring positive results than communicating would. As mentioned previously, Bryngelson (1966) also believes that society places emphasis on early, fluent speech and therefore, parents want their children to progress at these standards. Pressure from parents may cause some children to be overly apprehensive and leave them feeling inferior and inadequate.

McCroskey reported in his 1977 summary that rural environments could cause children to be apprehensive. He cited Robertson and Richmond who reasoned that rural children were exposed to fewer adults and exposed to fewer situations requiring communication to avoid certain outcomes and would be more likely to develop high levels of communication apprehension. The study examined 813 college subjects from Nebraska. The study revealed significantly higher levels of CA among students who had lived most of their lives on farms or in small towns with populations under 5,000 than among those students from cities with populations of 5,000 to 50,000 including those from larger urban areas. In further support of rural living as a likely contributor, Butzeck (1970) found that rural children have more difficulty than others in communicating on an average basis with their school friends and other peer groups.

Classroom environments are as influential as the home environments because a considerable amount of time in every child's life is spent in the classroom once school begins for him or her. Porter (1979) presented a review of studies which have been done relevant to the specific environ-

mental causes of CA. He states that there is great importance attached to the elementary school classroom environment and its relationship to CA. His study compared experiences during early childhood and experiences during the first years of schooling. The results revealed that elementary experiences were more relevant to the presence of communication apprehension traits. From these findings, Porter concludes that institutionalized settings have more effect upon communication apprehension. Porter stated,

Apparently, opportunities to "speak up" and develop positive affiliative behaviors in elementary school are more important determinants of CA. (p. 9)

According to Garrison (1979), students whose self-reports indicate high apprehensives can clearly remember having had behaviors in elementary school and pre-school that are considered indicative of communication apprehension. The importance of early experiences, whether in the home or in the classroom, cannot be ignored.

### Heredity

Heredity has been extensively studied as a possible cause for communication apprehension. As McCroskey (1977c) points out, some evidence suggests that a person's differences in verbal activity are partially a function of heredity.

The genetic basis of personality traits is explained by Freedman (1974, 1979) in relation to the development of CA. He explains what is meant by the genetic basis of behavior:

If a behavior trait has a genetic basis then it is probably polygenic: the result of the contributions of many genes. (p. 39)



However, genetically influenced behavior traits are open to the influence of the environment. He explains that there are:

. . . limits to the way that a given trait responds to the environment, this range of constraint imposed by genes is called a "reaction range." (p. 39)

Freedman goes on to report that even the most powerful environmental experiences will produce little change in certain genotypes, while others are easily influenced by surroundings.

Several researchers have provided explanations for personality characteristics stemming from genetic determinants of behavior. Endler, Boulter and Osser (1976); Freedman and Keller (1963); and Thomas, Chess and Birch (1970) have researched and identified nine personality characteristics: activity level, adaptability, approach-withdrawal, distractibility, intensity of reaction, persistence and attention span, quality of mood, rhythmicity and sensory threshold. The relationships between the environment, the so-called "personality constellations," and CA is hypothetical, even though related research has supported it. Highly apprehensive people have been described (McCroskey, 1977b; McCroskey, Daly, Sorenson, 1976; and Thomas et al. 1970) as introverted, resistant to change, aloof, cautious, easily annoyed, quiet, reserved, rigid, shy, slow, stiff, strongly affected by emotions, tense, withdrawn and worried. These descriptions and personality features related by the various researchers point up the similarities in characteristics of those who suffer from high levels of apprehension.

The factor of heredity could aid in explaining why the same experiences can be viewed as traumatic by one person and have little or no effect on another. This is especially relevant to the family situation,

according to McCroskey, et al. (1976) where one child experiences high apprehension while the other children are extroverts and described as low apprehensives.

### Intelligence

Intelligence, on the other hand, should be ruled out as a possible causal factor according to most research findings. Intelligence and communication apprehension have not been found to be correlated, as confirmed by McCroskey, Daly and Sorenson (1976). They say that even if a correlation existed, since high CA's were found to achieve less than low CA's in some instructional situations but not in others, that correlation could not begin to account for the differential results.

According to Garrison and Garrison (1979), one definite aspect of communication apprehension is that it appears to get worse as the person progresses through grade school. This study reported support for this statement from Shaw (1966) and Wheelless (1967). Their studies showed an increase in CA from grade to grade in elementary school. A number of research projects directed by R. Ross of Wayne State University in the 1960's, as reported by Garrison, indicated that increases in CA occur between the third and the fifth grades. As explained earlier, Zimbardo (1977) reported almost half of the fourth, fifth and sixth graders surveyed reported strong feelings of shyness. Wheelless (1971) supports that this is an age when socialization and self-expectations begin to grow within the child. This emphasizes the importance of early treatment and effective intervention at the elementary school level.

Even though the causes of communication apprehension are difficult to define and differentiate, the effects are much more distinguishable and

can be demonstrated to be detrimental to those who are afflicted by high apprehension. McCroskey (1977b) outlined three general theoretical propositions that are specific to the issues regarding the effects of communication apprehension. He appropriately phrased these propositions in terms of people with high levels of CA. The propositions state:

1. People who experience a high level of communication apprehension will withdraw from and seek to avoid communication when possible.
2. As a result of their withdrawal from and avoidance of communication, people who experience a high level of communication apprehension will be perceived less positively by others in their environments than people who experience lower levels of CA.
3. As a result of their withdrawal and avoidance behaviors and in conjunction with the negative perceptions fostered by those behaviors, people who experience a high level of CA will be negatively impacted in terms of their academic, economic, political and social lives. (p. 85)

McCroskey's propositions of avoidance, perceptions and negative impact make up the following subdivisions of the effects of communication apprehension. There are summaries of the research related to each proposition within those subdivisions.

### Avoidance and Withdrawal

People who suffer from high degrees of CA will withdraw and avoid interaction with others whenever possible rather than risk becoming involved. This type of behavior seems to manifest itself in many different ways. High apprehensives avoid public speaking courses, they talk less and make irrelevant comments, contribute less to groups and avoid areas of interaction. A voluntary statement from one teacher who responded to my survey questionnaire is evidence of the fear and anxiety an individual suffers when highly apprehensive. It also reflects that desire to draw away from interaction with others. This high school teacher states:

I was a victim of communication apprehension during much of my high school and college years. I was an excellent student and was capable of discussing any of the subject areas, but lived in fear of being called on or even noticed. As I have matured I have tried to gain confidence in myself to overcome these fears.

A number of researchers have confirmed that the type of avoidance behavior described by this teacher is widespread among most communication apprehensive people. One of those concerned people is McCroskey, who has researched many facets of CA. In a 1970 study he conducted a research program designed to test methods of helping students overcome high levels of CA. He screened all the students entering a public speaking course at two major universities. One to two weeks after the initial screening, attempts were made to contact those students who were determined to have high levels of apprehension and offer them a treatment program. Findings

from both universities revealed that during that period, 50% to 70% of these students had dropped the course, even though it was required for a majority of them.

In a survey at another university, McCroskey (1975) found interesting behavioral results related to avoidance. The basic communication course requirement was modified to allow students to choose among classes focusing on dyadic, small group, or public speaking communication. Information during the first year was withheld from the students so they didn't know in advance the differences in the courses; there were no catalog descriptions. The number of students enrolled with high CA were distributed randomly throughout the three courses. Two years afterwards, course descriptions were released in the catalog which resulted in very few people with high CA enrolling in the public speaking courses.

An observation by McCroskey (1977b) relates to this previous study. An instructor of a section of interpersonal communication reported to her supervisor that she was having trouble getting students in one class to interact, while her other two sections of the same course had no difficulty interacting. Fortunately, all the students at the start had taken the PRCA, a self-report questionnaire (Personal Report of Communication Apprehension). The scores of the inactive section revealed that virtually all of the people in that section were high CA students. It was also discovered that this same section had been added to the schedule during the last day of registration to provide for freshman who failed to appear for orientation sessions or who failed to see an advisor until the last minute. It seems safe to assume that their apprehension held up their actions, thus resulting in an entire section of high CA students.

Another way people avoid communicating is to talk less. If they talk

less others may attempt to draw them into a conversation or group discussion, but usually give up after a time. Hamilton (1972), McCroskey and Sorenson (1977), Weiner (1973), Wells (1970) and Fenton and Hopf (1976) found significant support for the hypothesis that people with high levels of apprehension talk less in a small group setting. When high CA's do participate, it has been found that their verbalizations are different and much more infrequent than the verbalizations of lower CA's. Powers (1978) found that high apprehensives' talk includes a great many more fillers or rhetorical interrogatives like "you know?" or "okay?" and "you see?" Evidently this could be due to a type of uncomfortable feeling of silence after one does begin speaking.

Weiner (1973) and Wells (1970) found that when high apprehensives do involve themselves in communication their comments are very likely to be irrelevant to the subject being discussed. The researchers explained this as a means of shunning further involvement with the communicating party. It isn't likely that these other participants in the conversation will press for additional irrelevant comments. Jablin and Sussman (1976) conducted a study of apprehension in small groups and found that highly apprehensive members of brainstorming groups produce fewer original ideas than less apprehensive members.

According to Burgoon (1977), highly apprehensive people want to avoid communication in general, but they especially avoid involving themselves in self-disclosive communication. Studies by Wheelless, Ness and McCroskey (1976), Hamilton (1972), McCroskey and Richmond (1978) and Post, Wittmaier and Radin (1978) reveal that people with high levels of CA involve themselves in less self-disclosure. Post, et al. conducted a study dealing with the influence of state and trait anxiety on self-disclosure. The

subjects were asked to fill out a written questionnaire assessed for the basis of self-disclosure. The results were confirmed that individuals who experience state anxiety will disclose less than "normals." Those who suffered higher levels of anxiety revealed information with less depth (information which was less revealing and more superficial). The high apprehensive reported experiencing greater anxiety both before and after completing the questionnaire. It is not yet known what produces this pattern of avoiding self-disclosive communication, but implications are that lack of self-esteem and self-confidence could be a major factor. It has been determined by Hamilton that after controlling for the amount of talking, the self-disclosure level of high CA's is significantly lower than the level of those with low apprehension.

Daly and McCroskey (1975), McCroskey and Sheahan (1976) and Scott, McCroskey and Sheahan (1977) have found available evidence to indicate that high apprehensives construct a life style which places them outside of the areas of interaction whether it is in the classroom, small groups, housing choices, community involvement or occupations.

An effective way apprehensives avoid interaction is by choosing a seat in the room where less activity takes place. Sommers (1969) has determined that certain seats in a classroom are characterized by high levels of interaction between students and their peers and teachers. McCroskey (1976) pointed out in support of Sommers:

Recent research indicates that while low communication apprehensives are twice likely to sit in high interaction areas (20% of the total seats) as they are to sit anywhere else (80% of the total seats), high communication apprehensives



are four times as likely to sit outside this interaction area as sit in it. (p. 8)

McCroskey also indicated that discrepancies between achievement scores of high and low CA's may be a function of high CA's avoiding the zone of activity and the low CA's occupying it. Students who avoid the areas of interaction in the classroom may be cutting themselves off from information which may help clarify or explain academic issues of study.

Weiner (1973) revealed that high apprehensives have a definite seating pattern in small groups even within a variety of different situations. It was also found that people with low levels of CA prefer seats in the high interaction areas of small groups.

Highly apprehensive people will seat themselves outside the areas of communication in order to avoid interaction. Similar behavior has been found regarding housing choices of high CA's. McCroskey and Leppard (1975) did a study of communication apprehension and housing choices, predicting that high CA's would choose a house far away from centers of interaction while people with low CA would prefer housing close to the areas of high activity. The subjects were asked to indicate their preferences for housing locations based on the following choices; dormitory, mobile home park or a suburban housing development. It was previously determined where the zones of high interaction were in each area. The hypothesis was supported revealing people with high CA made choices in the remote areas of each location.

Festinger, Schachter and Back (1950) found that housing proximity does have an impact on subsequent communication. Dormitory rooms closest to the bathroom and apartments nearest the mail boxes, designated as high interaction areas, were occupied by low apprehensives. Some housing units



because of their location encouraged interaction among neighbors, while people in other units tended to have much less contact with neighbors. Findings such as these suggest that high apprehensives would be much less likely to have an impact in their community, their classrooms or other social circles, regardless of the quality of their possible contributions.

In the areas of jobs, highly apprehensive people apparently seek out positions which require less communication. They tend to seclude themselves on the job as they do in their living space. This avoidance of interaction was confirmed by Daly and McCroskey (1975) with relation to occupational choice. Their study points to the fact that research on vocational desirability and choice has seldom examined the role of either perceived communication requirements or communication apprehension in career decisions. It was hypothesized that high CA's perceive occupations requiring less communication as more desirable than occupations requiring more communication, while low apprehensives perceive occupations requiring more communication as more desirable than those jobs requiring less communication. A second hypothesis stated that when compared with low apprehensives, high apprehensives select occupations they perceive as requiring minimal communication. Both hypotheses were supported. The results clearly demonstrate that a person's choice of occupations is strongly related to his level of communication apprehension. The results imply that a person's level of CA may serve as a predictor of job satisfaction and job performance. Daly and McCroskey state,

It would be reasonable to expect that communication apprehensive individuals would seldom be found in upper managerial positions, since these normally require a great deal of communication. (p. 312)

Sheahan, McCroskey and Scott (1978) conducted a study of governmental employees and found that low apprehensives stayed longer with the agency than high apprehensives. They speculated that high apprehensive employees left to avoid moving into a position which would require more interaction with fellow workers.

### Perceptions

Because people with high communication apprehension withdraw and avoid communication, they are perceived less positively by others in their environment than people who have lower levels of apprehension. There are specific characteristics which seem to be associated with high and low apprehension which fall into positive and negative areas. These characteristics are perceived by teachers, peer groups, prospective employers and others. These perceptions determine to a large extent their attitudes and behaviors toward apprehensive people.

Classroom teachers formulate impressions of each student, thus developing certain expectations of their capabilities, both positively and negatively. These expectations appear to have a strong relationship to communication apprehension. The way an individual communicates has been found to have a major effect on other people's perceptions of that individual (Daly, McCroskey and Richmond, 1975; McCroskey, Hamilton and Weiner, 1974; McCroskey and Richmond, 1975; McCroskey, Richmond, Daly and Cox, 1975).

Daly and McCroskey (1975) exposed teachers to brief descriptions of one elementary child with high CA and one with low CA. They found that teachers expected the highly apprehensive child to score lower in overall academic achievement, achieve less in every subject at the elementary

level, have less satisfactory relationships with peer groups and have less probability of success in future education. A recent study by Powers and Smythe (1980) supports that low CA students are evaluated significantly higher than high CA students. The study was based on behavioral descriptions in the actual on-going classroom in all three apprehensive levels: low, moderate and high. The low and high apprehensive students were perceived as significantly different in every performance task. This study infers that the positive expectancies toward low apprehensives, based on their performance and increased interaction with the teachers, may establish a precedence for future and final evaluations, a type of halo effect. Likewise, less positive expectancies toward high apprehensives based on the same premise may result in more critical observations of their performances and a more rigid application of the grading system. In further support, McCroskey and Daly (1976) found that elementary teachers' expectations of a low apprehensive child would be better in all academic areas than with a high apprehensive child. Low apprehensives were seen to have a greater chance of success in developing personal relationships than the higher apprehensive child. In a number of studies related by Dusek (1975) in the Review of Educational Research, it has been reported that teachers' expectations predict differential achievement between students even when there is no difference in the students' actual abilities.

Negative perceptions of high CA's extend far beyond the educational setting and affect the perceptions of social attractiveness and job related traits. McCroskey, Daly, Richmond and Cox (1975) conclude that behaviors characteristic of high communication apprehensives have a significant negative impact on a person's social attractiveness by the opposite sex. Low

CA's were perceived as more socially attractive than high CA's. Similarly, low CA's perceive high CA's in cross-sex dyads as less desirable communication partners and low apprehensives will be perceived in cross-sex dyads as more desirable potential sexual partners. The study points to a reason for negative perceptions; high apprehensives communicate less. High apprehensives were especially sensitive to differences in attitudes between themselves and others and were much less attracted to those with different attitudes.

Hurt and Preiss (1978) found that communication apprehension influences peer group choices among students in a classroom communication network. In general, high CA students were found not to be considered desirable communication choices by their peer groups.

Quiggins (1972) found that high apprehensives are seen by others in small groups as less extroverted, less composed, and less task attractive to others in the group. The highly apprehensive person may have little contact with or influence upon others (McCroskey, et al., 1975; Quiggins, 1972). High CA's are viewed as less sociable, less competent, less powerful and are less likely to be turned to as an opinion leader, especially by low apprehensives.

Lashbrook and Knutson (1976) further support the idea that high CA's are perceived as less assertive and less responsive, but in particular, they are viewed in this manner by low apprehensives. The reverse was also found to be true; low CA's were viewed as being highly assertive and highly responsive.

In relation to small groups, McCroskey, Hamilton and Weiner (1974) found that people with high tension in their communication behaviors in a small group were viewed as less socially attractive and less similar on a

personal basis. A positive correlation exists between the amount of time a person is perceived to talk in a small group and other people's perceptions of their competence, sociability, extroversion, composure, power, task attractiveness and social attractiveness (McCroskey, Daly, Richmond and Cox, 1975).

Freimuth (1976) conducted a study which revealed that the relationship between communication apprehension and communication effectiveness consistently appears to be a negative one regarding speech performance. It was stated, "As CA increases, effectiveness decreases." Individuals who reported high apprehension experienced much silence in their presentations and received low ratings, particularly on language facility, vocal characteristics and general overall effectiveness.

The probability of future success for the highly apprehensive person in both the academic area and the business world has been found to be negative. Richmond (1977) conducted a study involving the job applicant screening process with students in their second and third year of a school for business administration. The study revealed that job applicants with superior credentials, except for passing references to behaviors typical of high communication apprehension, were perceived to be less task attractive and less socially attractive compared to low CA applicants. High CA's were also projected to be less satisfied with their jobs, to have poorer relationships with their colleagues, supervisors and subordinates at work, to be less productive, and to have less likelihood for advancement in the business world.

Daly and Leth's (1976) study is quite similar and very much in support of Richmond's. They found that the high CA applicant is less successful on the job, requires more extensive training, is less satisfied

with his job, and has more problems establishing good rapport with his fellow workers.

### Negative Impact

In conjunction with withdrawal and avoidance behaviors and negative perceptions resulting from those behaviors, people who suffer from a high level of communication apprehension will be negatively impacted in relation to their academic, economic, political and social lives. Research has been conducted which attempts to confirm that communication apprehension negatively affects virtually every aspect of a person's life. The various areas of study have dealt with negative impact due to perceptions of others, speech performance, academic achievement, teacher communication style, class size, student attitudes, social behavior, attractiveness, self-disclosure, involvement and impact in community affairs, job interviews, work evaluations and interview section, job satisfaction, occupational choice and organizational communication.

Deffenbacher and Payne (1978) did a study which explored the relationship of communication apprehension to assertiveness and fear of negative evaluation. Their reasoning is as follows: since most social-interpersonal situations require a high degree of oral interaction, the more apprehensive individuals are about communication, the more likely they are to be fearful of negative social evaluation and to be less confident and less skillful in social situations. The results supported the hypothesis that students who were apprehensive about speaking or performing in front of others were more fearful of negative evaluation and were less assertive in social situations. The study also found that high apprehensives respond to low apprehensives' perceptions of them by withdrawing from and avoiding interaction. This

study reveals a type of circular motion of negative impact where high apprehensives are fearful of the negative perceptions of others to begin with. They become even more fearful of social interaction because of the negative perceptions from others. That fear of negative evaluation feeds more apprehension into an already fearful social-interpersonal situation.

Research concerning teacher expectations and student achievement (McCroskey, 1976, 1977a,c; McCroskey, Daly, Sorenson, 1976, 1977; McCroskey and Sheahan, 1978; Bashore, 1971; McCroskey and Anderson, 1976; Scott and Wheelless, 1977) has illustrated that negative expectations may retard learning, while positive expectations may enhance learning. The various studies indicate that high CA's have distinctive learning-achievement characteristics.

Through elementary and secondary education high communication apprehensives have low achievement levels as reflected by standardized achievement tests, like the ACT (American College Testing Program). Two studies have been reported which indicate that a person's level of communication apprehension has a major influence on his or her achievement level. McCroskey and Anderson (1976) found that students who were highly apprehensive scored significantly lower on the ACT than less apprehensive students. They scored lower both on the overall score and on the composite scores in the areas of social science, natural science, mathematics and English. Bashore (1971) came up with similar results on the ACT and the Illinois State High School Test, the verbal part of the College Entrance Exam, and the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test. With regard to testing, it has also been determined that high apprehensives receive lower scores on objective type tests in general.



High CA's have significantly lower grade point averages at the college level. A study of 1,454 college students showed a sharp distinction in grade point averages between high and low apprehensive students. Low apprehensives had grade point averages approximately one half grade point higher than high apprehensives across all courses on a 4.0 scale. The three previous studies emphasize the fact that high CA's achieve less, due to their oral passiveness, than low apprehensive students throughout their educational experience. They receive lower grades on evaluated written projects. Some researchers have suggested that teachers' negative expectations promote strict adherence to the grading system and thereby directly influence final grade reports (McCroskey and Daly, 1976; McCroskey, Hamilton and Weiner, 1974).

Teachers basically expect high CA's to be less successful academically in all subject areas, less social with their peers, and less likely to achieve future success in a career. Teachers expect them to do worse particularly in the elementary grades. (Daly, McCroskey, 1975; McCroskey, Daly and Sorenson, 1977; Daly, McCroskey and Richmond, 1975; Scott and Wheelless, 1977.) Generally, they achieve less even though they are as intelligent as others (Dusek, 1975).

Scott, Yates, Wheelless and Randolph (1977) associate oral passiveness as a possible cause for lower achievement among the highly apprehensive students. According to McCroskey (1977), most instructional methods entail student input and interaction with teachers and other students. There are two serious problems associated with this teacher-student or student-student interaction (McCroskey, Anderson, 1976; McCroskey, 1977a,c). Regardless of whether the class is large or small, those who are highly communicative apprehensive are not going to benefit. The more students



there are in the class, the less time there is for individual students to express themselves. Teachers argue that there is not enough time to talk with each student personally. This situation can greatly inhibit student learning and contribute possibly to more fear for the apprehensive. Large lecture type classes have been criticized for being highly impersonal and ineffective. Increased class size means a decrease in the amount of communication within the group. Many teachers and administrators feel large classes are detrimental to learning because of this decrease in interaction. Apparently neither high nor low apprehensives gain much from large lecture type classes. Actually, the large classes are preferred by high CA's where there is less of a chance to be called upon. Therefore, they can easily continue to avoid confrontation with their problem of anxiety: the large class size simply makes it easier.

The other problem for highly apprehensive students comes to light in the small class size where more interaction, more personal atmosphere and more effective learning take place. Students who suffer high apprehension find it impossible to function comfortably. They are so anxious about communication with teachers and peers that they do not make an effort to ask questions, respond with answers or include themselves in class discussion. Some end up avoiding small classes where pressure to communicate is greatest. Seeking separation, they also deprive themselves of the opportunities to make academic progress.

There are implications from a study by Burgoon (1977) which indicate that negative effects exist within small groups where communication apprehension has an influence. The negative effect occurs in somewhat of a circular pattern. He states:

Unwillingness to communicate leads to reduced

information giving and seeking which in turn undermines the quality of the group decision making and could result in less satisfaction with the outcome. (p. 131)

Another negative effect pointed out by Burgoon is that the mere presence of a member who is unwilling to communicate may reduce the group's satisfaction, making the members less willing to participate in group activities in various capacities.

When McCroskey (1976) compared student attitudes and communication, he found that high degrees of CA and negative attitudes towards school are definitely correlated (Hurt, Preiss, Davis, 1976; McCroskey, Sheahan, 1976). Hurt, et al. found that there is a definite correlation between CA and less favorable attitudes towards school in general among middle school or junior high students. McCroskey and Sheahan found similar results among college students. It is not yet clear whether negative attitudes or high apprehension affects achievement levels more than other factors.

A child with high CA is likely to have consistently strong feelings of anxiety, low self-esteem and low acceptance of himself (Garrison, 1979). Some of these children could very well dislike school and become a behavior problem in the classroom or elsewhere. Such a child may find school to be a difficult punishment and act out his feelings of aggression. Because he finds it difficult to communicate, a child may act out his aggression rather than verbalize it. Thus, attitudes towards school based on one's apprehension level could negatively affect behavior.

Social behaviors are also negatively affected by communication apprehension. Social behavior of college students in relation to CA was investigated in the previously mentioned study by McCroskey and Sheahan (1978).

This study was based on the prediction that, for a person with high CA, it would be difficult to engage in normal courtship behaviors and to date a variety of people. The hypothesis was confirmed that students with high CA interacted less with peer strangers. They were most likely to just date one person on a steady basis. They were less likely to accept a blind date, had fewer dates in general and had close relationships with fewer faculty people. Overall, they were less satisfied with the entire college environment. The researchers pointed out that socially both high and low CA's did desire dates. They found that over a fourteen day period students with high apprehension were more than twice as likely to engage in steady dating patterns. But the students with low apprehension had about twice as many dates during that time as the high apprehensives.

Parks, Dindia, Adams, Berlin and Larson (1980) replicated and extended this earlier study of McCroskey and Sheahan's. In addition to testing the original hypothesis, this study examined the entire range of CA from low through medium low, medium high and high. Two of McCroskey and Sheahan's hypotheses were supported: that communication apprehension was unrelated to the desire for dates and that apprehensive people were more likely to date exclusively.

A general pattern among college students indicates that people with high CA find other people in their environment to be less attractive than people who are not so apprehensive, (McCroskey, Daly, Richmond and Cox, 1975). Thus, the more communication apprehensive the subject, the less the subject was attracted to other people. McCroskey, et al. concluded that behaviors characteristic of high CA's have a significantly meaningful negative impact on a person's perceived social attractiveness by the opposite sex.

Negative impact has been studied in relation to political life with regard to the highly apprehensive person. Sheahan (1976) found that such people are less likely to register and proceed to vote than people who are less apprehensive. A person who is less involved in his community is naturally going to be less effective as a member of a community or a member of any group, whether a corporation or a classroom.

Another aspect of the highly apprehensive's life which is negatively impacted is the area of jobs, especially during the interviewing, evaluating and selecting process. The findings of Daly and Leth (1976) reveal a major concern for the interviewing process and the highly apprehensive individual. The researchers briefly reviewed information on personnel selection which suggests that applicants who are similar to an interviewer are more positively evaluated than dissimilar applicants. The research on communication apprehension on the other hand, suggests that the person with high apprehension regardless of the interviewer's similarity, is negatively evaluated. The first investigation of Daly and Leth's placed particular emphasis on interviewer-applicant similarity. Previous research suggests that the more similar the applicant is to the interviewer the more positively he or she will be evaluated. However, the literature on CA predicts that either similar or dissimilar interviewers would evaluate the highly apprehensive person lower than the person with low apprehension. The purpose of the first study was to resolve this contradiction and to explore some of the effects of communication apprehension on attributions made by interviewers about prospective employees. The results clearly support the prediction based on communication apprehension. Applicant-interviewer similarity did not predict evaluative responses of interviewers when that similarity was based on communication apprehension. People with

equal competence and background who varied in their ability to communicate orally, were rated quite differently from one another.

The results of this investigation revealed that subjects (interviewers) indicated that they would be less willing to interview the high apprehensive applicant than the low apprehensive applicant. The subjects also indicated that they were significantly more willing to recommend the low apprehensive candidate than the high apprehensive applicant and expressed significantly greater expectations of success for the low apprehensive than the high apprehensive applicant. The interviewers saw the high apprehensive as needing more on the job training. They saw the low apprehensives as being much more satisfied with the position than the high apprehensive applicant. They rated high apprehensives as being less able to get along with his or her co-workers. The high apprehensives themselves saw all applicants as having a significantly harder time getting along with co-workers than did the low apprehensive subjects. And furthermore, the high apprehensive applicant was seen as significantly less competent than the low apprehensive applicant. The high apprehensives were found to be less discriminating than low apprehensives because they recognized the consequences of apprehensiveness. This first investigation raised the question, "Would the same results occur if subjects (interviewers) knew more about the positions the applicants were candidates for?"

Daly and Leth's second investigation included information about the communication demands of the available position. The results showed significant interactions between applicant apprehension and communication demands of the positions in such a way that the applicant was evaluated more positively when the available position "fit" the applicant's level

of apprehension. The high apprehensive was evaluated positively when he or she was applying for a low communication position and vice versa for the low apprehensive and high communication demands. Overall, high apprehensive applicants were judged significantly less favorably than low apprehensives. Daly and Leth stress:

These findings become especially important when one considers that virtually all major corporations and businesses demand interviews with potential management employees. And, reasonably extensive evidence indicates that between ten and twenty percent of the population suffers from high apprehension. While the high apprehensive may be extremely qualified for a position, it is likely, given the findings . . . , that he will lose the available position to a low apprehensive if all else is equal. (p. 15)

In support and extension of Daly and Leth's study, Richmond (1977) found through research screening that a job applicant with high levels of apprehension was less likely to be offered a chance to even interview for the position for which he was applying. Even if he did make it to the interviewing level, he would be less likely to be offered the job.

High CA's do receive jobs, but not always the type of work they find to be satisfying. Falcione, McCroskey and Daly (1977) found that high communication apprehension was negatively associated with job satisfaction. The study also revealed that high CA's were less content with their supervisors. In this same study, Falcione, et al., considered teachers in public schools and found a similar pattern based on satisfaction with the teachers' supervisors.

Investigations have also confirmed that a person's level of communication apprehension is predictive of his or her occupational choice. High CA's will seek to avoid communication and prefer jobs that require less interaction with others. McCroskey and Daly (1975) tested this hypothesis and found that this pattern was clearly present and that the reverse pattern was also true. People with low levels of CA sought jobs which entailed a high degree of communication interaction. The positions that low apprehensives seek offer more in the way of economic rewards, as well as job status (McCroskey and Daly, 1976). On the other hand, people with high CA would rather accept positions with less pay and less status than take one which requires more involvement with communication.

A follow-up study conducted by Scott, McCroskey and Sheahan (1977) established that the preferences revealed in the previous study were also shared by governmental employees. Scott, et al., confirmed that people with high CA would be less likely to desire advancement than others because of the necessity for more communication required of a higher position. Other findings revealed that people with low CA had served 50% longer with the organization than high CA's. The average was 11.3 years vs. 7.5 years. It was speculated that perhaps high CA's were never hired, left the job because they were unhappy, left to avoid being assigned to take on more responsibility involving more communication, or were fired.

In summary, research has shown that communication apprehension causes a severe negative impact on those afflicted with it. Since this problem may encompass approximately 20% of the population, obviously the need exists to help high CA's overcome their feelings of anxiety and shyness.



## Identification

Identifying people who suffer from high levels of communication apprehension is the first major step towards helping them cope. Through the use of observable characteristics and self-report instruments, researchers have begun to develop the identification process. There have been assessments and reassessments of various self-report scales in an attempt to validate and improve them as a means of diagnosing degrees of communication apprehension.

One method of identifying the high apprehensive is by observing various personality characteristics linked with CA. Through the use of the self-report scale, the PRCA, McCroskey, Daly and Sorenson (1976) found that high CA is associated with a wide range of socially "maladaptive" personality characteristics. First of all, the researchers discovered that the behavior of a low apprehensive person is generally a positive one. A few of the many descriptive terms are: confident, stable, calm, expressive, cheerful, determined, independent, responsible, sociable, secure, decisive, talkative, objective, a joiner, a leader, high interactor, self-assured, enjoys people, strong control, open-minded, thick-skinned, seeker of high communication occupations, high need to achieve and sees self in control of one's own life. On the other hand, the highly apprehensive person was described in mainly a negative picture. A few of the descriptive characteristics such an individual is likely to exhibit are: rigid, quiet, reserved, submissive, withdrawn, moody, shy, indecisive, ineffective speaker, closed-minded, easily annoyed, lacks leadership, avoids people, prefers working alone, influenced extensively by emotions, has a hard time expressing himself or herself, and sees external forces as controlling one's life.



In a similar fashion, Zimbardo (1977) stated that high apprehensives often have soft voices, little eye contact, and a tendency to blush. A pattern of avoiding social interaction, not initiating or continuing conversations, rarely offering opinions, or declining requests has also been noted by Zimbardo. According to Elliott (1968), shy children more often have articulation problems, filled pauses and speech rate problems. These speech difficulties can be observed more easily than the nonverbal cues which often characterize someone experiencing speech anxiety. Those cues, reported by Elliott, were posture tension, shifts in posture and unconscious, non-directive hand movements that become distracting.

Phillips, Butt and Metzger (1974) state more complete advice to teachers on what student behaviors to observe for detecting apprehension. The following ten items explain in detail student reactions and the situation in which these reactions might occur:

1. Student does not voluntarily make contributions in class; does not raise hand, does not add information.
2. Student seems shaky during oral recitations; asserts that he came prepared but it did not seem to come out right.
3. Student talks about symptoms when called on to recite: rapid heartbeat, headache, butterflies in the stomach, nausea.
4. Student has attempted to recite or perform orally and has quit because of fear or apprehension.

5. Student seems to have some communication problem which does not quite fall into the purview of the speech correctionist.
6. Student seems unable to communicate with you during conferences or other times when the two of you have tried to talk alone.
7. Student has seemed to you to be excessively quiet, does not participate in oral interaction with his peers.
8. Student has shown resistance when written assignments were to be presented orally; classroom reports, book reviews, etc.
9. Student seems unnaturally apologetic when ideas are challenged; backs off, seems to change ideas to accommodate the antagonist.
10. Parents have told you the student does not communicate well with them. (p. 34)

It is not always possible and certainly not very accurate to rely on observation alone. Observation is a key factor in helping to determine individuals with high levels of CA, but self-reporting methods are much more reliable and are valuable aids in the identification process. Some self-report scales have not been developed much past the introductory stages and have not been used extensively for identification or research purposes. A few of these instruments used for assessing the needs of college students are the Social Self-Esteem Inventory, (Girodo, 1978); Social Avoidance and Distress report developed by Watson and Friend (1969);

and Fear of Negative Evaluation Measure. Wheelless (1971) found that the Phillips-Erickson Reticence scale and the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation Behavior instrument (FIRO-B) highly correlated with each other when used to discriminate reticent and non-reticent students.

One of the most evaluated measures of CA in school children is the Personal Report of Communication Fear (PRCF), developed by McCroskey. It can be used in all grades from kindergarten on. For children below the sixth grade level it can be given orally, otherwise it is administered in written form. The PRCF consists of 14 statements with which the subject indicates a degree of agreement or disagreement. It is structured around the academic and classroom environment, which makes it different from other forms McCroskey has devised. A copy of the PRCF is included in Appendix A. There are two additional forms of the PRCF which can be used for secondary and college students. The instrument that has received the most extensive use in previous research on communication apprehension at all levels is the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA) also constructed by McCroskey. The PRCA is a Likert-type, self-report measure consisting of 25 statements. Compared with the PRCF, the PRCA is structured for more general communication experiences outside of the classroom, such as new acquaintances, public addresses, group meetings, conversations and personal feelings related to such areas. A copy of the PRCA can be found in Appendix B. A critical analysis of past research permits the conclusion that the PRCA is both a reliable and a valid index of oral communication apprehension (McCroskey, 1978).

McCroskey reviewed the research which has employed the PRCA and concluded that the instrument is a reliable and valid measure of the construct. The internal reliability estimates ranged between .80 and .90. The test-

retest reliability was estimated at .74. He compared the PRCA to Lustig's Verbal Reticence Scale and found that the two were significantly correlated at .74, which suggests concurrent validity for both measures. One criticism of the original PRCA is that it contained large portions of items directed towards the public performance setting. Revisions were made (McCroskey, 1978) to include dyadic and group communication settings to broaden the dimensions and increase the accuracy of the self-report scale. The new long form found in Appendix C, has been used by over 12,000 college students and 4,000 other adults, and in all the administrations the scores have failed to deviate from the expected normal distribution. A short form and a long form are in existence to accommodate researchers with time restraints. The short form has been administered to over 5,000 public school students and over 4,500 college students. The results have once again not deviated from the norm. McCroskey suggests that since reliability and precision are reduced by the use of the short form, the long form should always receive preference, unless time is a factor.

According to McCroskey, the results of the examination of the PRCA suggests the following:

The PRCA is capable of predicting behavior that is theoretically consistent with the construct of oral communication apprehension. It is correlated with other personality variables at a level consistent with the CA construct. And it provides a measure of a stable characteristic of an individual that can be altered through substantial intervention. (p. 203)

In assessment of fourteen self-report scales, Daly (1978) conducted

research to verify the accuracy of the measures of social-communicative anxiety. He concluded that practically every measure was significantly and strongly associated with most other measures and most reflected the same general construct. A replication study was also compared which supported the conclusions in the initial research. The measures selected as representative of communication anxiety, in the order of most representative, were McCroskey's PRCA, then Burgoon's Unwillingness to Communicate Scale (Ap) and Lustig's Verbal Reticence scale (VR).

McCroskey's PRCA had the highest average correlation with all other measures and the smallest range. The overall results suggest that the PRCA may be the most encompassing instrument of those assessed. The most reliable measures appear to be the PRCA, the PRCS (Personal Report of Confidence as a Speaker) and the VR instrument. Daly suggests for those assessing social-communicative anxiety in empirical and clinical research settings, a multiple measurement may be most helpful.

Research by Parks, et al. (1980) focused upon one specific situation where the PRCA may not be an adequate measuring instrument. They found that the PRCA may be an inappropriate or invalid measure of communication anxiety in dating relationships. The results of their study imply that more specific situationally sensitive measures of communicative anxiety should be used in research on dating patterns. They referred to two other recent studies (Richmond, 1978; Parks, 1980), which have raised similar doubts about the trait validity of the measure. Furthermore, they feel the PRCA is a poor predictor of anxiety and behavior regarding interpersonal situations. Specific studies on friendship and acquaintanceship development have similarly agreed, according to Parks, et al. This criticism of the PRCA seems to be a valid consensus based on the recent number

of assessed conclusions. The PRCA needs to be revised to include items dealing with long-term relationships, acquaintanceship development, and friendship to meet the needs of research in the areas of interpersonal communication.

Daly and Street (1980) conducted a series of three studies examining the social desirability and fakability (transparency) of fourteen self-report measures of social communication anxiety. The results indicate that virtually all measures of anxiety are fakable. When asked to portray themselves positively, the subjects consistently responded as low-anxious individuals. And when the subjects were asked to look undesirable, the measures were completed to suggest they had high levels of anxiety. There is one major implication to be seriously considered from Daly and Street's research. The results imply that highly apprehensive people are viewed socially as undesirable and low apprehensives are viewed as desirable. This reflects the negative image that others have of apprehensive people and the negative image they see in themselves. Daly and Street cautioned administrators of self-report scales regarding the interpretation of findings, because of the fakability factor. Administrators should use the observable characteristics displayed by apprehensive people (being quiet, unsociable, and anxiety filled) to separate them from the low apprehensives (talkative, sociable and low-anxious) to guard against the fakability factor. Thus, by observing behavior then testing with a self-report scale, the results are likely to be more accurate representations.

Based on the previous review of self-report measures, it can be concluded that identifying the anxious and non-anxious individual may be best accomplished by using more than one means of assessment. And rather than only predict some of the people part of the time, it would be more con-

sistent to observe people who more frequently reflect high apprehensive types of behaviors and characteristics before selecting them to be measured.

### Treatment

Communication scholars, psychologists and educators have become interested in determining methods for helping people reduce their levels of anxiety. Some methods recommended in recent years have not yet been refined for effective use outside of research. Hypnosis (Barker, Cegala, Kibler and Wahlers, 1972), biofeedback used for a relaxation approach (Fenton, Hopf and Beck, 1975), group counseling (Griffin and Bradley, 1975), reality therapy (Phillips and Metzger, 1973) and false feedback of heart-rate (Motley, 1974) are a few of the measures which are still in the early stages of development for the reduction of anxiety.

One more widely developed method used for reducing anxiety is behavior rehearsal, sometimes referred to as skills training. Studies by Fremouw (1975) and Fremouw and Zitter (1978) related to public speaking skills have indicated that training through rehearsal of actions is an effective approach toward the specific improvement of actions and behaviors in communication situations where anxiety range is high. It involves a practice approach to reduce CA levels.

This behavior rehearsal, according to A. Vrolijk (1975) is an effective technique to treat state anxiety related to speech making. Through the use of video-taping, students can see objective pictures of themselves as speakers. Video tapes allow the students to criticize themselves with minimal resistance or defensive feelings. Such a method, he states, is better designed for state anxiety, whereas other methods are more effective for trait anxiety.



Various researchers support Vrolijk's conclusion that behavior rehearsal, i.e. speech making, is not the best method of aiding a person suffering from trait apprehension. Speech performance, unfortunately, has been employed on a wide scale and can be seriously harmful to those with high levels of communication apprehension. (McCroskey, 1977b; Vrolijk, 1975; Goss, Olds and Thomson, 1978; Zimbardo, 1977; P. Friedman, 1980; Barnes, 1976.) The method of public speaking is incorporated at all levels from "show and tell" in the elementary grades to oral reading, and even church performances. There is an entire repertoire of activities required by young people in the guise of education. Required public performances and training in public speaking do have great value for students who are moderate or low apprehensive types. But for people with high apprehension, "such experiences are detrimental, deeply traumatic and worthless" (McCroskey, 1977b).

According to McCroskey (1977b), research by Brooks and Platz (1968) and Taylor and Hamilton (1974) indicates that a course in public speaking does not necessarily reduce students' communication apprehension. Phillips and Metzger (1973) state that public speaking training may result in high CA for those with high entering levels of apprehension. These observations are strongly supported by the research of Brooks and Platz (1968). They took a random sample of 1,200 freshman enrolled in a required basic speech course at the University of Kansas. The subjects were asked to take a pre-test and post-test with a Q-Sort designed to produce data that revealed self-concept as a communicator and ideal communicator concepts. The findings revealed that while 75% of the students in their study showed significant improvement in their self-concept as a communicator, 25% of the students suffered a deterioration in self-concept. One major implication

from this study is that a public speaking course affects students in different ways. Some students may suffer gravely detrimental effects. A less threatening approach than public speaking training is advocated by Dymacek (1971), who found that "a class in communication theory was at least as effective in reducing CA as classes which required from one to seven speeches" (p. 91). In further support, Barnes (1976) found that an interpersonal communication course has been found to produce markedly positive effects in reducing CA. Barnes explains:

For the least confident students . . . anticipated speaking experiences have traumatizing effects, resulting in weak performances followed by negative evaluations and criticisms. For 20 to 30% of the students, a course in public speaking does not seem to fulfill objectives of increased competency and confidence. The immediate neurotic response to an aversive condition is avoidance. The students avoid enrolling in a speech course or fail to attend on days of assigned speeches. Avoidance behavior should not be permitted . . . because then the neurotic response becomes excessively dominant. However, individuals should not be placed in a situation that will reinforce the anxiety state, i.e. a public speaking class in which evaluations and criticisms are given by instructors and peers. (p. 4)

Lohr, et al., (1980) suggest that:

Remediation of public-speaking fear might require

more comprehensive treatments than mere practice or exposure to public speaking opportunities.  
(p. 283)

Another approach to aiding those who suffer high CA, is through formal methods of treatment which have been developed specifically for anxiety problems. One extensively studied treatment method is the behavior modification process known as systematic desensitization, more easily referred to as SD (McCroskey, 1972). It has been used in a number of studies and found to be effective for most people with high CA, besides being relatively inexpensive and easy to administer. This approach focuses on relieving the symptoms of anxiety. A subject learns to control his own levels of relaxation. Once he puts himself into a relaxed state, free from anxiety symptoms he uses this ability to enter into actual situations that might be anxiety provoking with a reduction in tension. The subject is actually conditioned to cope through relaxation with anxiety felt under real conditions or anticipated communication.

The process of systematic desensitization deals with physical relaxation and mental imagery. First the subject is instructed to become relaxed. The subject is then asked to imagine being in a semi-threatening situation, such as thinking about giving a speech in front of 10 people two weeks before the occasion. While remaining relaxed in this new-imaginary setting, the subject is instructed to proceed to imagine mental images that gradually become more challenging. Progressive relaxation goes on until he or she learns to be relaxed while picturing himself giving a speech or involved in whatever speaking activities had previously caused anxiety. Learning to substitute this relaxed state for a tense state can eventually become an adaptive behavior. This procedure seems to work

especially well for those who are preparing or delivering a speech or some type of performance in front of other people.

SD requires a sensitive, concentrated effort on the part of the "administrator" or "therapist," who teaches this method of relaxation. The therapist gradually leads the subject through a stepwise progression in which more and more threatening situations are brought to mind while the relaxed state is maintained. Audio tapes developed by Lohr and McManus (1975) are available for this process. SD can be administered by non-psychologists as effectively as by people with extensive clinical training, (McCroskey, 1978). However, it would be best at the start of a program of SD to begin with at least one person involved who has had training and worked with a similar program. McCroskey (1972) urged that programs at some functioning capacity are needed at the elementary, secondary college and adult levels. Based on the findings of Vrolijk (1975), behavior rehearsal plus systematic desensitization provide better results than either method used alone. SD is a successful method but is even more effective when used with another approach.

In contrast, there are some important considerations related to SD as pointed out by Vrolijk (1975). He stated that the theory of SD appears to be sound but the methods of implementation are questionable. There is no information for the therapist about the content or the intensity of imagination because each person's images differ in degree and content. The ability of the subject to imagine clear visuals is assumed as quite fundamental to the success of the method. Lazarus (1961) claims that a prerequisite for effective application of desensitization is the "ability to conjure up reasonably vivid images." Even though a subject may describe an image very vividly, there is no way of verifying the intensity with

which he has seen the image. Wolpe (1958) expresses the view that some desensitization clients fail to make progress because the emotional responses just do not happen for them. Barlow (1968) prefers using the real objects to be paired with relaxation. In an SD experiment using fear of snakes, relaxation exercises were paired with real snakes. The results led to greater improvement than the use of an imagined stimulus. Thus SD is at a disadvantage as long as the variables of relaxation and imagination are not controlled. SD still has benefits to be gained as has been previously indicated.

Meichenbaum and Cameron (1974) suggest that the literature supporting SD increasingly points to its success as working well with monosymptomatic phobias, but ineffectively with free-floating anxiety states. Therefore, SD may be more appropriately used with state CA as opposed to trait CA.

According to Fremouw and Scott (1979), systematic desensitization has received so much attention and use that other potential treatment methods have been relatively ignored. They suggest that researchers and educators alike may be unaware of alternative methods.

One such method which emphasizes the cognitive area of anxiety is cognitive restructuring (CR). CR is a refined, systematic technique that alters the cognitive dimension of anxiety (Fremouw and Scott, 1979). This structuring was developed by Meichenbaum (1972). Highly apprehensive individuals are first taught to identify anxiety provoking, negative self-statements, i.e. "I'm going to sound dumb." Then students are trained to substitute more adaptive, non-anxiety provoking statements of coping, i.e. "I know the information because I have researched it." Training time is devoted to the active rehearsal of coping statements through role playing and small group discussion. To increase mastery learning, the subjects

try to put into practice personal circumstances that occur between sessions and discuss with the CR group the coping statements they use during these instances. The subjects keep journals to write down self-statements and the contents are discussed with the members of the CR group.

CR has been compared to Rational Emotive Therapy (RET), developed by Albert Ellis, author of Reason and Emotion is Psychotherapy, because both are based on the notion that maladaptive behavior is maintained by irrational self-statements. Yet CR differs from RET because CR attempts to substitute coping statements for the negative self-statements and does not attack the irrational thoughts of the individual. One problem with apprehensive people is that they do tend to make irrational, negative self-statements, so to redirect their thinking can help to develop positive rational beliefs about themselves. Several studies have found cognitive restructuring to significantly reduce subjective anxiety, as well as positively affect the behavior of the CA subjects (Fremouw and Harmatz, 1975; Fremouw and Zitter, 1978). Fremouw and Scott (1979) reflect in their report that cognitive restructuring helps anxious people who have negative feelings about themselves to be more relaxed and confident with more positive self-images because the coping statements eventually become learned behaviors.

Researchers Meichenbaum and Cameron believe that current behavior theories, such as SD, have overemphasized or overlooked how the person actually views and evaluates environmental results. Their research on cognitive factors in behavior modification has led them to conclude that environmental consequences are of little relevance, but what the person tells himself or herself is of major importance. Negative anxiety and self-

statements can be replaced by positive and encouraging thoughts.

Cognitive restructuring and systematic desensitization are similar in several respects. Both methods can be learned by inexperienced people with little difficulty. Both treatment methods can be executed on a large scale at minimal cost and are effective in training the communication apprehensive individual to pursue training on his own for future development. They differ, however, in other areas worthy of note. Cognitive restructuring deals with the cognitive thinking part of communication apprehension providing examples of self-instructional statements, whereas systematic desensitization involves the physical reactions of the intensified feelings producing anxiety.

A final approach to treating communication apprehension combines systematic desensitization and cognitive restructuring into one method called cognitive modification (CM). Meichenbaum (1972) outlined the procedures for cognitive modification in the following order. The first step entails group discussions which include model examples that aim at making the subjects aware of their thoughts, of the statements they make to themselves and of self-instructions they make before and during the anxiety producing situation. Second, the subjects are taught to make task-relevant self-statements, coping statements and self-reinforcing statements along with the techniques for deep muscle relaxation. The basic SD procedure is next, including the visualization of coping behaviors first, then mastery behaviors, and finally the positive self-talk. If the subjects get too anxious while imagining a situation, they are instructed to visualize themselves coping with anxiety by using slow, deep breaths, self-instructions and coping statements. Only when the coping techniques do not work to reduce their anxiety are they to seek help from the session leader. The subjects



then incorporate self-reinforcing statements after successfully completing the imagery of the mastery behaviors. Cognitive modification is highly supported by Garrison (1979) and Meichenbaum (1972) who suggest that SD alone fails to deal with the "worry" component while dealing with the "emotionality" aspect of anxiety. Cognitive modification deals with both.

CM has been a successful method for reducing communication apprehension among children (Garrison, 1979). Garrison and Brown (1979) report that the use of CM procedures significantly reduces apprehension among fourth, fifth and sixth graders. Meichenbaum and Cameron report successful use of self-instructional methods with children who suffer from anxieties of various types, using task-relevant self-statements, self-reinforcing statements and imagery techniques.

Studies comparing cognitive modification to systematic desensitization have found that CM is superior to SD. Meichenbaum (1972) found that CM reduced test anxiety in college students. When CM was used in the treatment for speech anxiety and general anxiety, Weissberg (1975) and Weissberg and Lamb (1977) found CM to be significantly more effective than systematic desensitization in reducing both. This combination treatment approach has been encouraged by several other researchers (Vrolijk, 1975; Garrison, 1979; Garrison and Brown, 1979; Daly and Street, 1980) and shall be supported by this report as the most encompassing solution to the problem of communication apprehension.

Some researchers have suggested that there is no universal cure for CA. The treatment needs to be matched with the specific individual and his or her own problem. Lohr, et al. (1980) refer to a statement by Borkovec (1976) who puts it this way:

Persons who respond to stressful situations in  
the form of physiological arousal benefit most

from treatment techniques which are designed to directly modify such reactions. Other persons who respond with escape and avoidance behavior (reticence, class absence) may be best helped with procedures designed to modify the existing environmental contingencies for such behaviors. Finally, those persons who respond with self-defeating, negative evaluations, are best helped by procedures which modify cognitive processes.

(p. 284)

### Survey

Research on the prevention of communication apprehension has been encouraged and supported by many researchers (McCroskey, 1970, 1972, 1977a,b,c; Garrison; 1979, Friedman, 1980; Weissberg and Lamb, 1977; Garrison and Garrison, 1979; McDowell and McDowell, 1978; Seiler, Garrison and Boohar, 1978; Wheelless, Scott, Yates and Randolph, 1978; Garrison and Brown, 1979; Daly and Street, 1980; McCroskey and Daly, 1976; and others). Much of this research has been focused in the educational arena. Communication apprehension is of considerable importance to the classroom teacher where problems negatively affect student behavior, social involvement and academic achievement. Teachers are in a key position to aid in helping treat the problem of CA; but first of all, teachers must be made aware of the problem, what both the long and short term affects of CA are, and what they can do about it. This concern for teacher involvement encouraged me to investigate what inservice teachers actually know or do not know about communication apprehension. A survey was mailed to a random

sample of teachers within the state of Kansas at the elementary, junior high and high school levels. Of the 554 surveys mailed, 146 teachers responded; 56.1% of these were elementary teachers, 15.7% junior high and 28% were high school instructors. The survey requested an honest "yes" or "no" response to four basic questions:

1. Do you know what communication apprehension is?
2. Do you know what communication apprehension's possible causes and effects are in the classroom?
3. Do you know about systematic desensitization, cognitive restructuring or cognitive modification?
4. Have you ever heard of a self-report test called the PRCA (Personal Report of Communication Apprehension), the PRCF (Personal Report of Communication Fear) or the VA (Verbal Activity scale)?

A shocking 49.3% of the respondents answered "no" to all questions. Of these 72 teachers who answered "no," 42 were elementary teachers. And just as shocking is the small number of teachers who could answer "yes" to all four questions, a mere 2.7%, only 4 teachers out of 146 responses. The other percentages are included in the following table:

#### SURVEY RESULTS

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes to all 4	4	2.7%
Yes to 1, 2, 3 only	10	6.8%
Yes to 1, 2 only	29	20.5%
Yes to 1 only	17	11.6%
No to all 4	72	49.3%
Other combinations	14	9.4%

This survey suggests that higher education has not fully equipped teachers with the proper information about communication apprehension. If a survey of this nature were given to parents of school age children, the results would undoubtedly be the same, minimal knowledge.

The most logical area to begin attacking the problem of CA is through educating our teachers. Teachers must be informed to help them understand that a student's avoidance of communication may not be due to his or her lack of motivation, intelligence, or willingness to communicate, but it may be due to high apprehension (McCroskey, 1977a). Teachers should be trained so they can better recognize those students who suffer from CA by observing various behavioral and personality characteristics displayed by highly apprehensive individuals. They need to learn how to use tests like the PRCA or the PRCF. They must be made aware of what they can do to help students overcome the problem of CA and how not to contribute to it. Teachers need to be taught treatment techniques such as cognitive modification, use of the counseling service for help and referral methods for those who seem to need more professional help. Teachers need to encourage the implementation of CA education and treatment programs into their school systems. There is a definite need for communication apprehension education in general teacher training. Workshops need to be developed and made available to inservice teachers and administrators so they can learn about the problem of CA. And college curricula need to provide instruction on communication apprehension for students preparing for the teaching profession.

Some work in this area has already begun. A kit has been developed by James W. Lohr (1978) which includes a textbook and six cassette tapes, "Building Speech Confidence: A Program for Coping with Speech Anxiety," using the systematic desensitization treatment approach. Another example

is in the Speech Communication Department at West Virginia University, which has conducted a large extension program aimed at introducing in-service teachers and administrators to the principles of communication and how they can be applied in the classroom, including extensive coverage of communication apprehension. As a result of this program, Hurt, Scott and McCroskey (1978) have developed an instructional communication textbook designed for those who are educating potential or current classroom teachers and including research and findings on communication apprehension.

Information about CA definitely must be more widespread and brought to the teachers' attention. They need to know how to modify procedures, develop communicative atmospheres, arrange their seating in an effective plan, know how their behavior affects the students and how to reinforce communication in the proper manner. These basic facets of a teaching situation can influence levels of apprehension either negatively or positively, and much of the current influence may be negative due to sheer lack of knowledge. It seems that higher education has ignored an integral part of our educational process, that of effective communication.

Teachers need to learn how to modify their classroom procedures so that children are not required to perform orally at levels beyond their skills. McCroskey (1977a,c) suggests eliminating oral reading as a requirement in the first and second grades, which includes language sounds the individual student has not yet mastered. Seiler, Garrison and Boohar (1978) suggest teachers use a variety of methods to instruct, including techniques for tutorial help outside the classroom. Teachers must realize that students who suffer from CA may not seek help that is made available to them. This places the responsibility on the teacher to determine who those students are and to take the initiative to reach out to them. This teacher initiative is most important regarding those students with high CA.

Teachers need to develop a communication permissive classroom not a silent one, according to McCroskey. A teacher's personality is extended to the classroom. There are different atmospheres which prevail in every room of a school, due to the teachers' own influence. Some atmospheres may be quite cheerful and pleasant, while others seem harsh, cold and even fearful. Cartledge and Milburn (1978) reported that many teachers rate social skills concerning order, rules, obedience and responsibility as the most important area for their classroom. And they attached much less importance to skills that involved initiative, interpersonal communication and assertiveness. It seems as if teachers may be playing down oral interaction and encouraging silence.

Some classroom arrangements are very centered on the teacher for interaction, while others are obviously much more student oriented. Hurt, Scott and McCroskey (1978) state that each type of seating arrangement has positive aspects depending on the amount and type of communication desired. They suggest that if the purpose of the class is primarily an information lecture type, the traditional arrangement is best because it minimizes student/student interaction and the focus is on the teacher. They suggest the horseshoe arrangement as best if both student/student and student/teacher interaction is desirable for more learning. And finally, the modular, which is an arrangement of tables consisting of groups of five, encourages student/student interaction where tasks are performed, such as experiments in chemistry. This arrangement permits maximum interaction among the various groups. Hurt, et al. refused to encourage one set up over another, because of the differences in purpose for which each arrangement is best suited. They do argue that the traditional set up is least conducive to interaction and that if the teacher desires to increase interaction among students, the horseshoe or modular is a better choice.

McCroskey and McVetta (1978) studied the same three seating arrangements and found that students prefer the traditional arrangement for required classes but the horseshore or modular plan for elective courses. They also found that students with high CA compared to low CA's expressed greater preference for inhibiting interaction and less preference for the modular and horseshore interaction arrangements. This led the researchers to conclude that students are aware of both their own desired level of participating and the interaction demands of different classroom arrangements. They prefer arrangements which coincide with their desire or lack of desire for participation, just as high apprehensives prefer jobs with minimal communication interaction.

There are several implications from McCroskey and McVetta's results which are significant for classroom teachers. First of all, decisions on classroom arrangements should consider the attractiveness of the course to the student. Also if students want to interact, but the arrangement conflicts, or if the opposite is the case, and students do not want interaction but the arrangement demands high interaction, students may develop negative feelings which interfere with their learning. Students should be given a choice in selecting specific seats regardless of the arrangement, because students have quite different preferences. When given the option, highly verbal students will sit where interaction is easiest and more apprehensive students will sit farther away from the center of interaction. Seating is not a matter to be manipulated for a particular type of interaction, because even if students of high apprehension are placed in high interaction areas they aren't likely to interact any more by being there. Their apprehension level may rise as a result of being forced to sit there.

The more positive effect the student feels about his or her location in the classroom, the more likely he or she will interact with others.



McCroskey and McVetta conclude that the seating arrangement chosen by the teacher may have an impact on whether there is a negative or positive effect in the classroom or an atmosphere which permits communication.

Teachers need to be taught proper reinforcement for oral communication in developing a communicative atmosphere in their classrooms. McCroskey has stressed positive reinforcement of oral interaction throughout most of his studies encompassing communication apprehension. Teachers need to guard against punishing a child for being verbal. While some conversations may not be directly related to learning of the subject matter, it is most important for the teacher to accept this as part of social interaction to ensure that learning-related communication is not inhibited. It is up to the teacher to decide which talking behaviors are productive and which are not. All teachers need to enforce punishment on occasion, but the important consideration stressed by McCroskey (1977c) is that communication itself should never be the object of punishment. When a child misbehaves, the teachers must make it clear to the child and to the remainder of the class that the punishment is not for communication, but for the behavior involved. (p. 23)

As indicated in the discussion on formative years, quiet children easily learn to remain quiet so as to avoid punishment when they see others being punished for talking. Seeing another child punished for talking can also cause the apprehensive child to avoid communication, even when he or she would benefit by it.

Teachers need to know how their actions and behaviors affect the students they have in class. Kearney and McCroskey (1980) conducted a study

which examined the nature of the relationship of teachers' and students' trait and state communication apprehension to students' perceptions of their teachers' communicative behaviors in the classroom and to teacher effectiveness. The results indicated that only student perceptions of teacher assertiveness and responsiveness were related to teacher effectiveness. The researchers stated several implications based on these results which indicate ways teachers may contribute to an overall improvement of the classroom communication situation. Teachers who are perceived as highly versatile and responsive may enhance student participation by reducing the students' state apprehension level, regardless of students' trait CA levels. One major benefit in reducing students' state apprehension may be the corresponding increase in student feedback to instruction, a potential source of peer-teaching and modeling. These results suggest that reduced CA in the classroom and increased participation and involvement may lead to more positive teacher perceptions and expectancies for students' performance and achievement in academic environments.

Given the clear awareness of the importance of effective communication in the classroom, it is surprising that not more colleges, elementary and secondary school systems have made efforts to inform and train their teachers to overcome this significant barrier to effective communication, academic achievement, positive self-images, and improved attitudes toward school and faculty. A logical reason for this may be oversight. The available information about communication apprehension that has been collected is widely scattered in various psychology, communication and education journals not commonly read by the majority of teachers. Idealistically we would like to believe these journals are read by at least those in the respective fields, yet CA is not just a problem for psychologists or com-

municologists. Those who deal with it the majority of the time are teachers and parents. Information about CA must be brought to the attention of teachers at all levels through active inservice experiences or workshop presentations. Methods of diagnosis and treatment are developed; textbooks and tapes are available. It is just a matter of pursuing proper channels and taking the proper action so that current classroom teachers and prospective teachers can take the necessary steps to aid those students who suffer from communication apprehension.

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### Appendix A

Directions: The following 14 statements concern feelings about communication with other people. Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by circling your response. Mark "YES" if you strongly agree, "yes" if you agree, "?" if you are unsure, "no" if you disagree, or "NO" if you strongly disagree. There are no right or wrong answers. Work quickly; record your first impression.

- |     |     |   |    |    |  |
|-----|-----|---|----|----|--|
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 1. Talking with someone new scares me.                     |
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 2. I look forward to talking in class.                     |
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 3. I like standing up and talking to a group of people.    |
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 4. I like to talk when the whole class listens.            |
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 5. Standing up to talk in front of other people scares me. |
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 6. I like talking to teachers.                             |
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 7. I am scared to talk to people.                          |
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 8. I like it when it is my turn to talk in class.          |
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 9. I like to talk to new people.                           |
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 10. When someone asks me a question, it scares me.         |
| YES | yes | ? | no | NO | 11. There are a lot of people I am scared to talk to.      |

YES	yes	?	no	NO	12. I like to talk to people I haven't met before.
YES	yes	?	no	NO	13. I like it when I don't have to talk.
YES	yes	?	no	NO	14. Talking to teachers scares me.

(Scoring: YES=1, yes=2, ?=3, no=4, NO=5)

To obtain the score for the PRCF, complete the following steps: (1) Add the scores for the following items: 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 12. (2) Add the scores on the following items: 1, 5, 7, 10, 11, 13, and 14. (3) Add 42 to the total of step 1. (4) Subtract the total of step 2 from the total of step 3. Your score should be between 14 and 70.

The normal range of scores on the PRCF is between 28 and 47. Children who score above 47 are most likely communication apprehensive.

## Appendix B

Directions: This instrument is composed of 25 statements concerning your communication with other people. Indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking whether you (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Are Undecided, (4) Disagree, or (5) Strongly Disagree with each statement. There are no right or wrong answers. Work quickly; record your first impression.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance, I feel very nervous.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I have no fear of facing an audience.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I talk less because I'm shy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I look forward to expressing my opinions at meetings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I am afraid to express myself in a group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I look forward to an opportunity to speak in public.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I find the prospect of speaking mildly pleasant.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. When communicating, my posture feels strained and unnatural.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I am tense and nervous while participating in a group discussion.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Although I talk fluently with friends, I am at a loss for words on the platform.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I have no fear about expressing myself in a group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. My hands tremble when I try to handle objects on the platform.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I always avoid speaking in public if possible.

- \_\_\_\_ 14. I feel that I am more fluent when talking to people than most other people are.
- \_\_\_\_ 15. I am fearful and tense all the while I am speaking before an audience.
- \_\_\_\_ 16. My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I speak before an audience.
- \_\_\_\_ 17. I like to get involved in group discussions.
- \_\_\_\_ 18. Although I am nervous just before getting up, I soon forget my fears and enjoy the experience.
- \_\_\_\_ 19. Conversing with people who hold positions of authority causes me to be fearful and tense.
- \_\_\_\_ 20. I dislike using my body and voice expressively.
- \_\_\_\_ 21. I feel relaxed and comfortable while speaking.
- \_\_\_\_ 22. I feel self-conscious when I am called upon to answer a question or give an opinion.
- \_\_\_\_ 23. I face the prospect of making a speech with complete confidence.
- \_\_\_\_ 24. I'm afraid to speak up in conversations.
- \_\_\_\_ 25. I would enjoy presenting a speech on a local television show.

To determine your score, complete the following steps: (1) Add up your scores for items 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 14, 17, 18, 21, 23, and 25. (2) Add up your scores for items 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, and 24. (3) Add 84 to the total for step 1. (4) Subtract the total for step 2 from the total for step 3. Your score should be between 25 and 125.

## APPENDIX C

### PRCA -- Long Form

Directions: This instrument is composed of 25 statements concerning your communication with other people. Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking whether you (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Are Undecided, (4) Disagree, or (5) Strongly Disagree with each statement. There are no right or wrong answers. Work quickly, just record your first impression.

1. While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance I feel very nervous.
2. I have no fear of facing an audience.
3. I talk less because I'm shy.
4. I look forward to expressing my opinions at meetings.
5. I am afraid to express myself in a group.
6. I look forward to an opportunity to speak in public.
7. I find the prospect of speaking mildly pleasant.
8. When communicating, my posture feels strained and unnatural.
9. I am tense and nervous while participating in group discussions.
10. Although I talk fluently with friends, I am at a loss for words on the platform.
11. I have no fear about expressing myself in a group.
12. My hands tremble when I try to handle objects on the platform.
13. I always avoid speaking in public if possible.

14. I feel that I am more fluent when talking to people than most other people are.
15. I am fearful and tense all the while I am speaking before a group of people.
16. My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I speak before an audience.
17. I like to get involved in group discussions.
18. Although I am nervous just before getting up, I soon forget my fears and enjoy the experience.
19. Conversing with people who hold positions of authority causes me to be fearful and tense.
20. I dislike to use my body and voice expressively.
21. I feel relaxed and comfortable while speaking.
22. I feel self-conscious when I am called upon to answer a question or give an opinion in class.
23. I face the prospect of making a speech with complete confidence.
24. I'm afraid to speak up in conversations.
25. I would enjoy presenting a speech on a local television show.

To compute the PRCA score, follow these three steps: (1) Add the scores for items 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, and 24. (2) Add the scores for items 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 14, 17, 18, 21, 23, and 25. (3) Combine the following formula:  $PRCA = 84 - (\text{total from step 1}) + (\text{total from step 2})$ .

#### PRCA -- Short Form

Directions: This instrument is composed of 10 statements concerning your communication with other people. Please indicate the degree to



which each statement applies to you by marking whether you (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Are Undecided, (4) Disagree, or (5) Strongly Disagree with each statement. There are no right or wrong answers. Work quickly, just record your first impression.

1. I look forward to expressing myself at meetings.
2. I am afraid to express myself in a group.
3. I look forward to an opportunity to speak in public.
4. Although I talk fluently with friends, I am at a loss for words on the platform.
5. I always avoid speaking in public if possible.
6. I feel that I am more fluent when talking to people than most other people are.
7. I like to get involved in group discussion.
8. I dislike to use my body and voice expressively.
9. I'm afraid to speak up in conversation.
10. I would enjoy presenting a speech on a local television show.

To compute the PRCA score, follow these three steps: (1) Add the scores for items 2, 4, 5, 8, 9. (2) Add the scores for items 1, 3, 6, 7, 10. (3) Complete the following formula:  $PRCA = 36 - (\text{total from step 1}) + (\text{total from step 2})$ .

COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION: A REVIEW  
OF RESEARCH AND A SURVEY OF EDUCATORS

by

CAROLYN MARIE SANKO SCOFIELD

B. S., Kansas State University, 1973

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS REPORT

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requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Speech

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

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## ABSTRACT

This report was designed to review extensively the research that has been conducted concerning fear and anxiety associated with anticipated or real oral communication with another person or persons. This fear has been appropriately labeled as communication apprehension (CA).

Research reveals that high percentages of people suffer from this fear in varying degrees. Studies have been conducted to determine the possible causes of CA, the effects it has on an individual's life, and treatment methods.

Based on this collection of evidence, a survey was conducted to find out what elementary, junior high and high school teachers knew or did not know about the problem of apprehension. The results revealed that the respondents knew very little about the problem of CA.

Guidelines and suggestions for combating this gap in our educational systems are suggested. The proposition that teachers must be informed about communication apprehension and trained in its prevention in the classroom is advocated.