

THE EFFECT OF HUMOR ON PERCEIVED
ATTRACTIVENESS OF A SPEAKER

By

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ATTRACTIVENESS OF A SPEAKER

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Since the days of Greek scholars man has spent a great deal of time and effort in attempting to understand the uniquely human phenomenon, humor. Philosophers and men of literature have continued to discuss and debate humor and the humor response for hundreds of years, and in this century a great quantity of experimental effort has been devoted toward the same end. The early historical writers achieved little more than exposing, by their almost total lack of agreement, the utter complexity of their subject, but the experimental approach has yielded a more cohesive body of data.

A very large percentage of this research can be subsumed in the general classification, personal and social desirability of a sense of humor. More specific categories include: the correlation of intelligence and creativity to sense of humor, the relationship between sense of humor and emotional well-being, humor's effectiveness as a release from tension and the burdens of reality, the advantages to individual group members and to the group of utilizing humor, and humor as a means of easing aggressive tendencies.

Results from these studies evidence that for the individual a sense of humor and the utilization of humor are advantageous and desirable, particularly in interpersonal relationships. However, the effect on the individual who receives the humorous stimuli has been

neglected, and it is this effect which will be explored here. More specifically, this study will investigate whether a speaker can enhance his perceived attractiveness by using humor in verbalizations. The term perceived attractiveness of the speaker will be employed here in place of various terms others have used; these include: favorable perceived image of the speaker, desirability of the speaker, rapport formed between speaker and listeners, and "liking" for the speaker.

In addition to the above hypothesis that speaker attractiveness can be enhanced with humorous verbalizations, a theory explaining why this occurs will be developed. It is believed that a particular type of assumed similarity or identification is responsible.

The remainder of this chapter will review many of the studies which demonstrate the advantage to the individual of possessing a sense of humor. This section will close with a review of studies concerning the effect of humor on others, particularly with respect to their perception of the speaker, and a possible explanation of this effect. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a specific statement of the problem and the hypotheses to be tested.

Review of the Literature

Within the broad area, personal and social desirability of a sense of humor, the review will deal with seven specific categories: intelligence and the sense of humor, creativity and the sense of humor, emotional adjustment and the sense of humor, humor in small groups, humor in social interactions, easing aggressive tendencies with humor, and enhancement of speaker attractiveness with humorous verbalizations. The final category will include research directly related to this

study and possible explanations of these results.

Intelligence and the Sense of Humor

Of the many studies which have associated "superior" individuals or desirable individual characteristics with a sense of humor, a large number have attempted to correlate the sense of humor with intelligence. Evidence of such a relationship has been found in many cases, although there is some contradictory evidence. Overlade (1954) found that the ability to understand a joke and perceive its humorous characteristic was significantly related to American Council of Education test performance, the ability to think abstractly, and the ability to discern embedded figures. Levine and Redlich (1960) found a high correlation between comprehension of cartoons and intelligence test scores for both psychiatric patients and Naval enlistees. Bird (1925) reported that scores on a humor test she devised and the intelligence quotients of her subjects showed a correlation of +.89. Kenderline (1931) found that when pre-school children were presented with one hundred possibilities for laughter, in the group with an average IQ of 141 the average number of laughs was thirteen; this contrasted with an average of four laughs for the entire group. Justin (1933) stated that between IQ and length and number of laughter responses to a humorous situation, the coefficients of correlation ranged from +.40 at three years of age to +.12 at age six. Wynn-Jones (1934) recorded marked differences in scores on a "scale of wit" between university graduates and schoolboys of various standards, due probably to both intelligence and educational achievement. Brackett (1934) reported a positive correlation between gross amount of laughter and mental development, and a correlation between gross amount of laughter and the ability to recognize

incongruities was found by Brumbaugh (1939) and Behan and Bevan (1956).

On the other hand, several investigators have failed to find a significant relation between humor and intelligence, e.g., Stump (1930), Cattell and Luborski (1947), Hester (1924), Kambouropoulon (1926, 1930), and Omwake (1939). Others have specifically concluded that intellectual development is not a deciding factor in the appreciation of humor (Ding and Jersild, 1932; Gregg, 1928; Landis and Ross, 1933).

In view of the above it seems inappropriate to draw anything but tentative conclusions concerning intelligence and sense of humor. Although many studies have indicated a correlation, the contradictory evidence cannot be ignored. In addition, in those studies finding positive results, it was evident that measurement of the two variables differed appreciably, and markedly different subject populations were employed. As stated by Flugel (1954), "...there is still no agreement as to the exact relationship between intelligence and sense of humor, either in children or in adults" (p. 726).

Creativity and the sense of humor

Concerning the relationship between humor appreciation and a concept similar to intelligence, creativity, the results are less contradictory. Smith and White (1965) found a positive correlation with air corpsmen as subjects. Several studies utilizing adolescent subjects are reported by Getzels and Jackson (1963) and by Torrence (1963), all with positive correlations between appreciation of humor and creativity. Torrence stated that clowning or humor is one of several effective adaptive techniques which the creative person uses to remain in groups, or possibly to fend-off, to some degree, group pressures toward conformity.

Emotional Adjustment and the sense of Humor

The desirability of possessing a sense of humor is further supported by research concerning the association between adequate or superior emotional adjustment and the possession of a sense of humor. Levine and Redlich (1960), using subject groups composed of different classifications of mental patients and a control group of "normal" individuals, reported that the controls consistently found more occasion for a humorous response in the stimuli than did the mental patients, although there was no difference in intelligence. In fact, the patients reported they "disliked" a significantly large amount of the material, a response not evoked in the controls. The schizophrenics, generally assumed to be most ill, understood less than the "anxiety" group and the "miscellaneous" group of patients. In explaining their results, the authors pointed out that the very complexity of the humor phenomenon is due to the fact that both the intellectual and the emotional functions combine into a single psychological process. For this reason, although intelligence was equal for all groups, the controls were better able to respond to the humorous stimuli because emotional disturbances did not interfere. Roberts and Johnson (1957) found that patients who rated cartoons more amusing were better able to empathize with the main character and were also rated higher in amount of reality contact. In explaining their results the authors stated, "This has bearing upon Freud's assertion that humor is as important a mechanism as neurosis and psychosis for adapting to suffering" (p. 60). They felt that since persons with good to fair reality contact do appreciate humor to a greater extent than those in poorer contact, humor may function to relieve tensions which would otherwise make life

intolerable. These results suggest that those who are better able to discover opportunities for laughter in their daily environment possess fewer emotional disturbances. Results similar to the above were reported by Redlich, Levine, and Sohier (1951), Levine and Abelson (1959), Hester (1924), Loos (1951), and by O'Connell (1962).

Humor in Small Groups

Additional evidence favorable towards those possessing a sense of humor, with respect to effectiveness in a group situation, has been compiled (Smith & White, 1965; Smith & Goodchilds, 1963; Smith & Goodchilds, 1959; Goodchilds & Smith, 1964). Results from these studies of small groups indicated that humorous group members gave more positive descriptions of themselves and of the group, and were negatively associated with defensiveness. They were high participants in the group, were associated with higher group morale, greater problem-solving efficiency, and greater role clarity. Humorous group members also were seen both by themselves and by other group members as performing significantly fewer negative roles.

Humor in social interactions

The social, unifying function of humor has been frequently advanced. Max Eastman (1937) claimed, "Laughter is, after speech, the chief thing that holds society together" (p. 692). He was supported by Ralph Waldo Emerson (1964):

The perception of the comic is a tie of sympathy with other men, a pledge of sanity, and a protection from those perverse tendencies and gloomy insanities in which fine intellects sometimes lose themselves... Wit makes its own welcome, and levels all distinctions. No dignity, no learning, no force of character, can make any stand against good wit (p. 381).

Middleton and Moland (1959) felt that an important social function of humor which has been overlooked is the solidarity and intimacy it can build within a group. Whether a joke is obscene or not, its very presentation not only serves the teller of the joke with a means of winning the social approval of the group, but also strengthens the bonds of the group.

Coser (1959) studied the conversations of patients in a convalescent home and reported:

To laugh or to occasion laughter through humor and wit is to invite those present to come close. Laughter and humor are indeed like an invitation, be it an invitation for dinner, or an invitation to start a conversation: it aims at decreasing social distance (p. 172).

Coser stated that a patient who invited others to laugh with him was of value to the whole hospital community. Older patients were able to remove the threatening quality of shrieking and laments over death for a new patient by telling him a humorous story in which they were mentioned. Coser's arguments were supported by Zigler, Levine, and Gould (1966); they considered humor a constructive and cementing force in human affairs and cited others in agreement (Coser, 1960; Goodrich, Henry, & Goodrich, 1954; Hes & Levine, 1962; Worcester, 1940).

Easing Aggressive Tendencies with Humor

Besides serving as a unifying force between individuals, humor may ease tensions and prevent overt acts of aggression in situations where chances for genuine unification are slight. Burma (1946), in his article "Humor as a Technique in Race Conflict," explained that a relatively harmless way of expressing racist motivated aggression is through humor. He stated that anti-white jokes by Negroes are older and more numerous than anti-Negro jokes by whites. For many years this

was the only possible way for slaves, and later, servants and other working-class blacks to gain superiority over whites, i.e., in the joke itself. An example is presented by Middleton and Moland (1959),

A colored maid and her white employer became pregnant and gave birth at the same time. A few months later the white woman came running into the kitchen and said, "Oh, my baby said his first word today!"

The little colored baby who was in a basket on the floor looked around and said to her, "He did, wha' 'id 'e say?" (p. 67).

Davis, Gardner, and Gardner (1941) also pointed out that joking is often used to ease tensions in situations involving "status contradictions," "... for example, in the case of a white clerk who must wait on a Negro customer" (p. 459).

Enhancement of Speaker Attractiveness with Humorous Verbalizations

This final category of the review is more directly related to the purpose of this study. Many advantages and desirable characteristics appear to be associated with individuals who possess a sense of humor and make use of it in interpersonal relations. A logical next question would seem to be how they affect other individuals with whom they interact. What effect does the utilization of humorous stimuli in conversation or in a speech have on the reaction of listeners to the speaker; how will a speaker's perceived attractiveness be affected?

It can be hypothesized that the individual who presents humorous stimuli will be perceived as attractive and desirable. More simply, he will be "liked" by those to whom he is presenting the material.

Common sense supports this hypothesis. Most people like a good comedian, respond favorably to a teacher who occasionally interjects humor into his lectures, and seek out a "witty" individual for conversation at a cocktail party. Many people seem to make use of this

concept almost unconsciously. Good teachers, counselors, and therapists frequently employ humor to build rapport or enhance their perceived image without a conscious intention of doing so.

Nussbaum and Michaux (1963) used drugs to bring patients out of depressive states and evaluated patients' responses to humorous riddles to determine change in amount of depression. They believed that their humor test situation was a method of determining whether a depressed patient could form a transference relationship. They stated that a particular "bond" developed between the psychiatrist and those patients who responded to the humor. This positive regard for the psychiatrist even developed in the "non-responders," but to a lesser degree. This latter group seemed to appreciate the doctor and his effort to amuse them, even though it was unsuccessful. It appears that even when humor does not evoke an overt mirth response, feelings for the speaker can still be somewhat improved.

Additional evidence of the use of humor to enhance a perceived image was reported by Gruner (1967). He gave different recorded speeches to two groups of Ss. One group heard a speech with humor pertinent to the subject matter; the other group heard the same speech, but with the humor deleted. The speaker was then evaluated by these Ss on semantic differential scales measuring "authoritativeness" and "character." He found a significant difference in favor of the humor speech on the character aspect, i.e., how Ss "like" the speaker.

The studies cited indicate that humorous material has an effect on the person to whom it is presented. A listener seems to perceive the individual who presents humorous material as attractive; he "likes" a humorous speaker. The factors behind this attraction deserve some

attention. Obviously, pleasurable sensations have become associated by learning with the laughter response. It is proposed, however, that the primary reason for a listener liking one who presents humorous stimulation is that he identifies with the presenter. The listener believes they have something in common--that the speaker is similar to him because both have a sense of humor.

This explanation is supported by Kagan's (1967) study. He conducted an experiment in which Ss were given personality and extra-curricular activity descriptions of two girls who later read poetry they had composed. The Ss not only recalled a significantly greater amount of the poems of the girl most like themselves, but they rated that girl superior to the other. Kagan attributed the greater recall of poems and the positive rating to the perceived sharing of attributes. He felt that this perceived sharing is a bond which makes a speaker more distinctive, "for a typical adult ordinarily feels he does not share basic personality traits with most of the strangers he meets" (p. 139). He is normally not particularly interested in a stranger. On the other hand, when this adult does perceive that he shares personality traits with a stranger, he identifies with the stranger and a bond between the two is established. The stranger is no longer so "strange;" they have something in common.

In the case of the receiver and presenter of humor, the personality trait which the receiver believes they share is a sense of humor. The presenter is believed to have a sense of humor since he has just emitted a humorous response. The receiver assumes they are similar in this respect because practically everyone views himself as possessing a sense of humor to an above-average degree. At least two studies

support this hypothesis. Omwake (1937) asked Ss to rate themselves on a five-point scale for certain personality traits. "Possession of a sense of humor" was second only to "possession of a good appetite" as the trait receiving the highest general average. Omwake reasoned that there is a tendency to over-rate oneself on sense of humor since only 1.4 percent of the total group rated themselves below average while 25 percent rated themselves in the highest category, "very superior." More recently, Allport (1961) found 94 percent of his Ss rating their sense of humor as equal to or above average. Omwake explained these findings elsewhere in his article:

We are more reluctant to admit a defective sense of humor than a poor ear for music, a lack of physical skill or endurance, or even an inferior intelligence. So coveted and broad is the trait that to say a person has a good sense of humor is almost synonymous with, "He is intelligent, he is a good sport; I like him immensely" (p. 692).

In summary of this final section of the review, evidence was presented that an individual can enhance his perceived attractiveness with humorous verbalizations. It was proposed that this enhancement resulted from a listener assuming similarity to a humorous speaker. Studies have found that almost everyone believes he has an above-average sense of humor, so he should believe he has something in common with one who evidences a sense of humor by humorous verbalizations.

Statement of the Problem

Studies have associated a sense of humor to many characteristics of individuals and of groups which our society commonly considers desirable, e.g., creativity, possibly intelligence, emotional stability, effectiveness in group situations, positive self-image, and others. Little is

known, however, concerning how using humor in conversation affects an individual's perceived image or attractiveness. [The purpose of this study was to investigate whether an individual's perceived attractiveness could be favorably enhanced by his including appropriate humorous verbalizations in his interactions with others.] A study by Gruner (1967) supports this hypothesis. He found a significant positive effect on a speaker's image when the speaker made use of appropriate humor in a recorded speech. One group of undergraduate college students heard a recorded speech which contained humor, and a control group heard the same speaker give the same speech, but with humor deleted. Afterwards both groups rated the speaker on twelve-item semantic differentials. The group which heard the speech with humor rated the speaker significantly higher on the items which contributed to his "character" rating, i.e., how they "liked" him. There was no difference on the items which contributed to his "expertness."

Gruner's experimental design, however, was open to some criticism and certainly was more applicable to how individuals as members of a group react to a speaker. The present study was concerned with each individual's reactions to the speaker. Stated another way, since Gruner's Ss heard the speech in groups of thirty-two, it is not known to what extent group laughter effected individual reactions. One would expect that in a group in which a large quantity of overt mirth responses occurred, an individual might develop regard for a speaker simply from hearing his classmates' positive laughter responses; this is similar to television's use of "canned" laughter during comedy shows. In a group such as that used in Gruner's study, an individual might not necessarily believe the speaker was humorous and "like" him for it, or

he might not even be paying attention and might only be aware that others seemed to "like" the speaker. A group which included a few individuals who were quite vocal with their laughter would probably produce more favorable ratings of the speaker than a group which was not so vocal. In other words, a variable which Gruner did not control was the group's effect on individual response. This was remedied in the present study by presenting the recorded speech to Ss on an individual basis.

Another criticism could be directed at Gruner's use of an audio tape recording for presentation of the speech. Although it afforded a means of eliminating differences in speaking technique and effectiveness from one presentation to the next, it lacked any of the visual cues which an individual normally utilizes in evaluating a speaker in person or even on television. This lack of similarity to conversation or even to a speech seemed to preclude much generalization of results to normal interpersonal relationships.

An alternative chosen for this study was a video-recording. This allowed the production of speeches in which delivery techniques were equalized, or at least made similar enough to satisfy judges, to insure that the only variable was the humor. A video tape was convenient for repeated showings to individual Ss, and it appeared to be a better approximation of a personal interaction than the audio tape recording Gruner used. The video recording was also convenient for leading Ss to believe they were watching a "live" televised broadcast from another room. Pre-testing had determined that the S's attention was increased if he believed he was judging an ongoing presentation rather than a recording.

Gruner's Ss saw either a humorous or non-humorous speech. However,

in this study, to determine whether additional increments of humor have an additional positive effect on a speaker's image, three speeches which differed only in humor content were devised. One group saw a high-humor version, another saw a low-humor version, and the third group viewed a version with humor deleted. In selecting the humor to be added, only that which was neither too sarcastic nor too clownish was utilized. Goodchilds (1959) found that a sarcastic wit could be respected but not liked, while a clownish wit could be well-liked but not respected. Additional criteria were that a joke offend as few Ss as possible, and that the material be appropriate and easily worked into the speeches' contexts. These criteria dictated that material which some might find extremely funny, e.g., a nightclub comedian's material, ethnic humor, a long humorous monologue, had to be excluded. Most of the humor used might be termed "classroom" humor.

After Ss had seen the video tape, they completed the same semantic differentials used by Gruner for evaluating the speaker. These included two items to determine whether there was a significant difference in the humorousness of the three speeches, an Authority scale to insure that the humor did not make the speaker appear "clownish," and a Character scale to determine the difference in speaker attractiveness. The items measuring humorousness were originally devised by Smith (1959), and the Authority and Character scales were by McCroskey (1966). Since it was also proposed that regard for a humorous speaker could be due to identification or Assumed Similarity (AS), Fiedler's (1958) check lists to measure this factor were included. Fiedler developed a twenty-four item personality factor evaluation list on which an S rated himself and then rated another. By comparison of the ratings of the two on each factor, an overall measure of AS was obtained. Fiedler had

omitted the factor "sense of humor," however, so this item was added to determine the assumed similarity between an S's and the speaker's sense of humor. The "sense of humor" item was also a means of checking whether almost every S rated his own sense of humor as average or better, as Omwake (1939) and Allport (1961) found.

To further substantiate the paper-and-pencil ratings of regard for the speaker, a measure of Personal Space (PS) was included. The PS value was obtained by allowing the S to approach in person the speaker he had just seen on the video tape. Mehrabian (1968) found a direct relation between attitude and PS; the closer one approaches an individual while interacting with him, the more positive is the attitude toward the one who is approached. Similar results have been reported by Exline, Gray, and Schuette (1965) and by Sommer (1967).

It was necessary to determine whether Ss were attending to the video presentations. Instructions stressed the importance of their watching carefully, but if they were not, there would be less chance of the presentation altering the speaker's attractiveness. As a measure of Ss' attention, a short questionnaire was devised which covered information from the speech context.

Hypotheses

In view of the above, two major hypotheses were formulated to be explored in this study; these were:

1. Increasing the amount of a speaker's humorous verbalizations would increase his perceived attractiveness; this increase should be measurable both by judgements on the Character scale and behaviorally with measures of PS.

2. Increasing the amount of a speaker's humorous verbalizations would increase the amount of identification or Assumed Similarity perceived by others; this difference should be measurable with the AS scale.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects

The Ss were 30 undergraduate volunteers tested during summer session at Oklahoma State University. There were 15 males and 15 females, ranging in age from 18 to 26.

Materials

The general text for the speech without humor was the same as that used by Gruner (1967) on the subject of "listening." The speech explained that listening is the communication skill most used but least practiced and suggested ways of improving listening skills. This topic seemed to be one about which few Ss would have prior knowledge and would be a subject of approximately equal interest to all. This speech was originally developed by Kibler (1962) and had been rated by a panel of experts as an effective speech to inform and as highly "readable." In both this study and in Gruner's, part of the introduction which might have been perceived as funny was deleted. For his humorous speech, Gruner added twelve instances of humor where they were appropriate to the context of the speech. In this study it was decided to improve on the quality of the humor and to make some attempt to quantify the amount of funniness which would be included in the high and low humor speeches. In a pre-testing study Ss from the same population as the

actual experimental Ss were given printed copies of the humorous speech devised by Gruner. They were asked to rate the humor on a five-point scale. Another group rated different humor added to the same speech and average ratings for each incident of humor were determined. Copies of both speeches and average ratings for each incident of humor are included in Appendix A. The ten "jokes" which had the highest ratings and which could be added most effectively to the speech context were selected for the high humor speech. Five of these ten were selected for the low humor speech so that the overall average rating of funniness was equal for both speeches (see Appendix A). In other words, according to values of funniness assigned by Ss in the pre-test group, the high humor version included relatively twice as much humor as the low. In the high version there was approximately one incident of humor per minute, and in the low approximately one every two minutes. Final copies of both speeches are included in Appendix A.

The speaker chosen to give the speeches was a graduate student in English, and he was experienced in both public speaking and in theatrical comedy. The speaker was not told of the hypotheses being tested in this study and knew only that the speeches differed according to the amount of humor included. With the exception of the humorous material, he was instructed to make his delivery as similar as possible in all the speeches.

The video tapes were filmed with a Sony DVC-2400 Video camera, recorded on a Sony CV-2100 Video recorder, and played back on a Sony Instant Play Television Monitor. Judges viewed the tapes prior to the experiment and found no significant difference between speeches except the humorous material.

Check-lists which subjects completed after seeing the video tape included: two semantic differentials found by Smith (1959) to measure the seriousness of the speeches; two six-item semantic differentials devised by McCroskey (1966) to measure the speaker's perceived "authoritativeness" and "character;" and Fiedler's (1958) twenty-four item Assumed Similarity scales. An additional item added to Fiedler's scale was "possess sense of humor--lack sense of humor." Those Ss who completed Stage II (below) also completed a short questionnaire to determine if they were attending to the speech; it consisted of five questions plainly answered in the speech. A copy of all material presented to Ss is included in Appendix B.

Experimental Design

There were three experimental groups--high humor, low humor, and non-humor, with ten Ss randomly assigned to each group. All Ss completed Stage I; six Ss from each group were randomly selected to complete Stage II.

Procedure

Stage I

A single S entered the experimental room and was told he was to view a short "live" telecast of a speech by a graduate student. The S could see the monitor but not the recorder (see Figure I), and he was led to believe the speech was being televised from another room nearby. He was instructed to pay close attention because he would be asked to evaluate the speaker immediately following the speech. Specific instructions to the S and the evaluation questionnaire are included in

Appendix B. As soon as the S had been briefed, the experimenter (E) stepped out of view, started the video recording, and remained hidden until it was finished to avoid distracting the S (see Figure I). Immediately after viewing the film for the group to which he had been assigned, the S was taken to another room where he completed the questionnaire. Those Ss not selected for Stage II were dismissed at this point.

Stage II

In order to reduce the time required for the speaker to be present as a model for the measure of personal space, eighteen of the thirty Ss or six per group, were randomly selected to complete this phase. After one of these Ss completed the questionnaire he was told by an assistant that the speaker was interested in his personal comments on the speech. The S was taken into a room where the speaker was standing at a rostrum directly across the room from the door he entered. The speaker appeared to be practicing for another speech. Pre-testing had determined that by having the speaker stand behind a rostrum and by making no mention of names, either the speaker's or the S's, the S was less likely to approach simply to shake hands. The speaker asked each S a specific set of questions concerning his reactions to the speech he had just watched. During this period the assistant entered an adjacent room and observed the S through a two-way mirror for one minute. The assistant determined the closest point to the speaker which the S occupied. A portable blackboard and a bulletin board were along the wall opposite the observation glass, and an inconspicuous graph running the length of these two had been marked off in five-inch intervals to enable the assistant to accurately determine the measure of personal

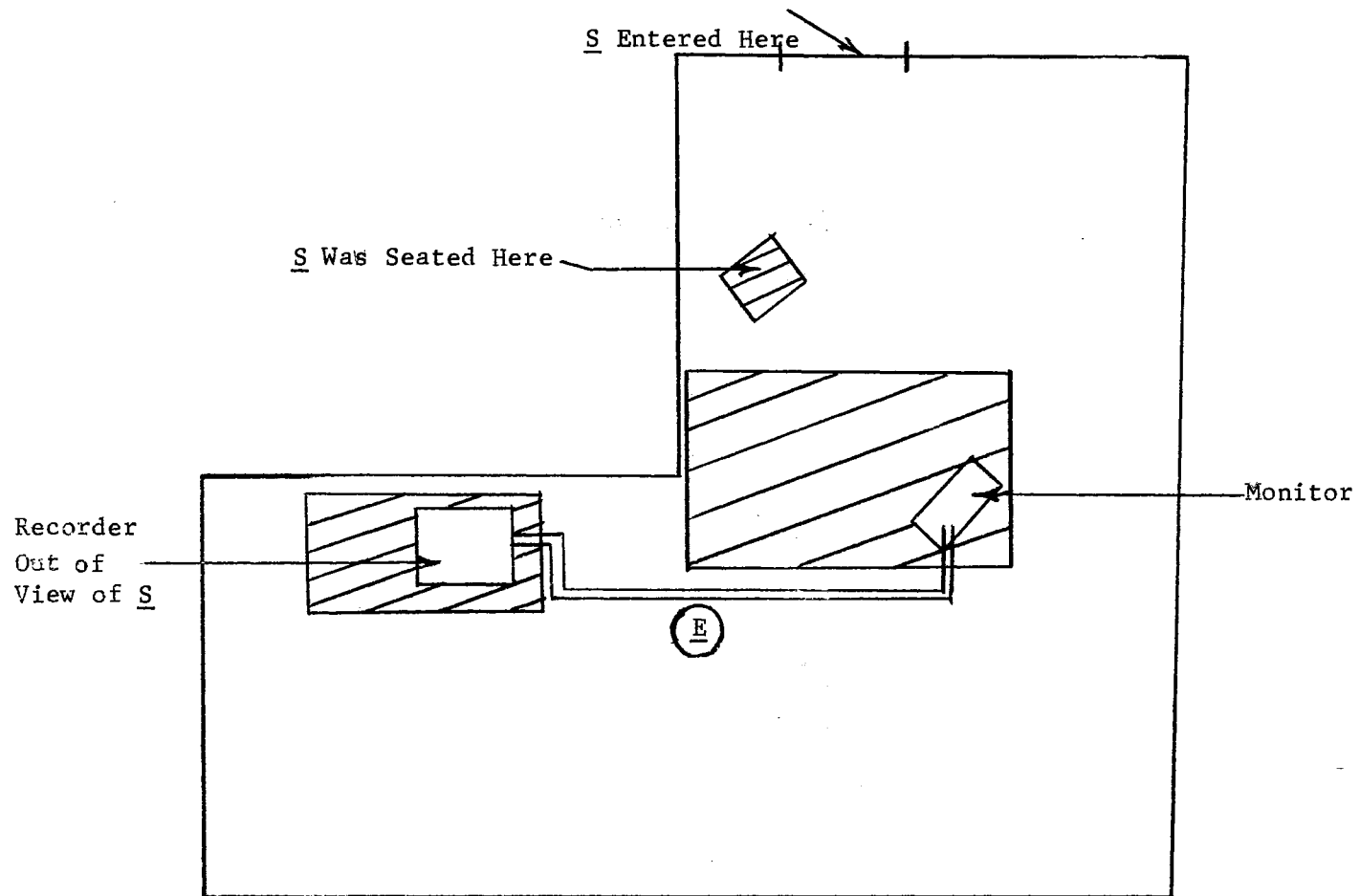


Figure I. Experimental Room for Viewing Video Tapes

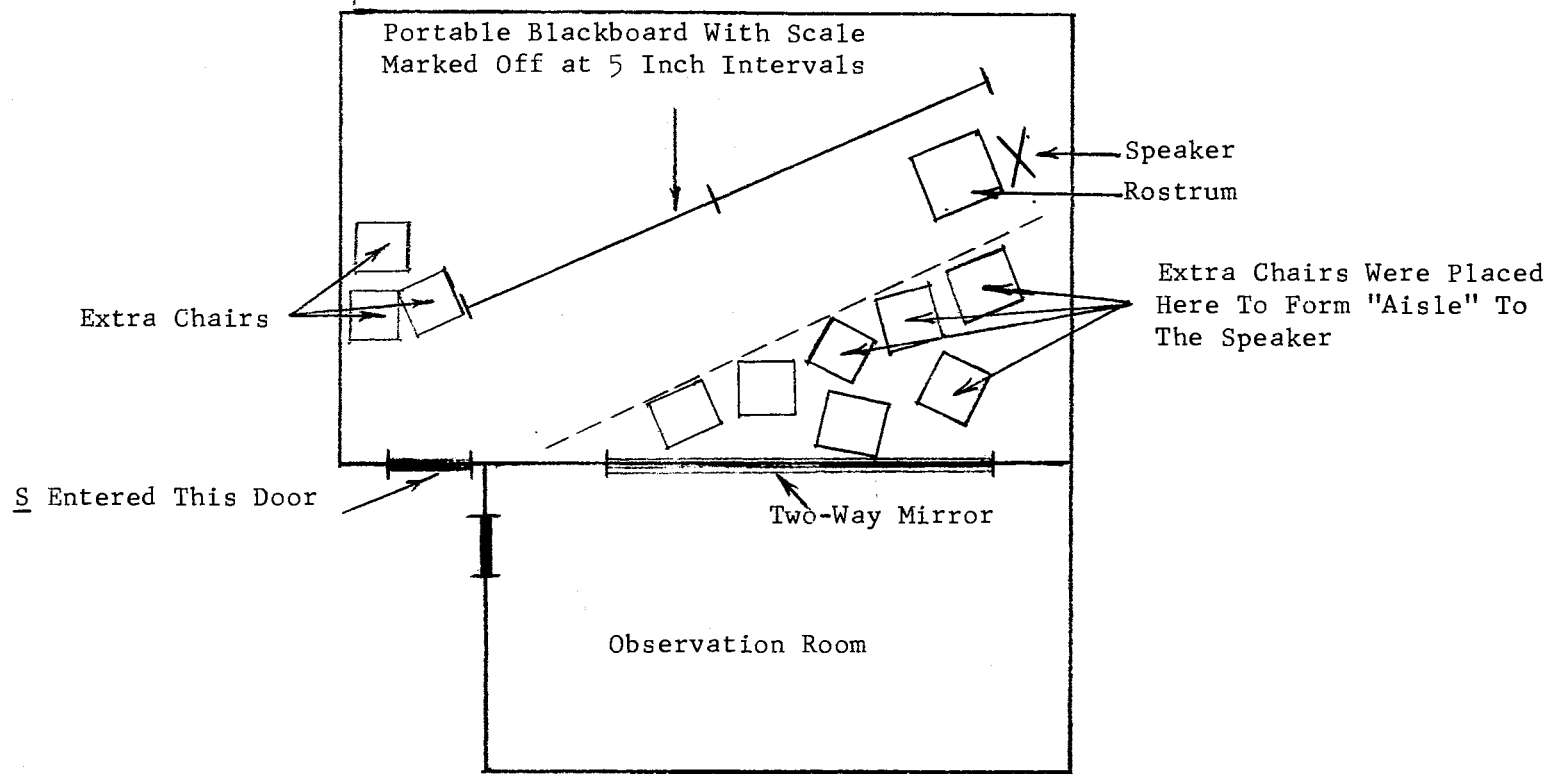


Figure II. Experimental Rooms for Measuring Personal Space

space. The assistant and the speaker were "blind" to the major experimental hypotheses, to theories concerning personal space, and to which speech the S had just seen. All of the room, except a three-foot-wide aisle running directly from the door the S entered to the rostrum, was occupied with extra chairs, apparently placed there for temporary storage and arranged so it was impossible for an S to sit down (see Figure II). After the one minute had elapsed the S was taken to another room where he completed a short questionnaire over facts from the text of the speech.

Approximately two weeks later, each S received a debriefing letter which explained the hypotheses being tested, the role which he had played in the research, and the necessity for the false impressions given him during the experiment (see Appendix B).

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

A one-way analysis-of-variance (Hays, 1963) was performed on the data from the two six-item semantic differentials which measure perceived Character and Authority of the speaker by the non-, low, and high humor groups (see Table I and Table II). The hypothesis of no significant difference could not be rejected at the .05 confidence level. Both F values were less than one.

An analysis-of-variance of the data from Fiedler's scales for Assumed Similarity (AS) is presented in Table III. The F value of 1.12 was not significant at the .05 level of confidence. The single item which was added to this scale, "possess sense of humor--lack sense of humor," was analyzed separately and results are also in Table III. This F value was not significant at the .05 level, but it was significant at the .10 level. Each S rated himself in the "possess sense of humor" range; 29% rated themselves in the "extremely" positive category, 50% in the "moderately" positive category, and 21% in the "slightly" positive category. On both the general AS and on the single item concerning sense of humor, one subject was lost in the high and one in the low humor groups because they placed more than one mark per item on the check lists.

An analysis-of-variance of Personal Space (PS) yielded no significant difference, and the F value was less than one (Table IV).

TABLE I
AOV OF SCORES ON CHARACTER SCALE

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Treatment	2	4.07	2.035	.255
Error	27	215.40	7.977	
Total	29	219.47		

TABLE II
AOV OF SCORES ON AUTHORITY SCALE

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Treatment	2	10.07	5.035	.365
Error	27	371.90	13.773	
Total	29	381.97		

After inspecting this data, an analysis-of-variance was performed for males vs. females, regardless of the humor group to which they were assigned. The mean for the nine male Ss was 8.22 (1 unit equals 5 inches); for the nine females it was 13.33. The F value was not significant at the .05 level (Table V), and a T test specifically designed

TABLE III
AOV OF SCORES ON ASSUMED SIMILARITY SCALE

GENERAL ASSUMED SIMILARITY -- ALL CHARACTERISTICS TOTALED FOR EACH S				
Source	df	SS	MS	F
Treatment	2	6.30	3.15	1.12
Error	25	70.18	2.81	
Total	27	76.48		

ASSUMED SIMILARITY FOR SENSE OF HUMOR ITEM FOR EACH S				
Source	df	SS	MS	F
Treatment	2	1.91	.955	2.55*
Error	25	9.34	.374	
Total	27	11.25		

*Significant at .10 level

TABLE IV
AOV OF SCORES ON PERSONAL SPACE -- GENERAL

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Treatment	2	61.29	30.64	.605
Error	15	759.83	50.65	
Total	17	821.12		

TABLE V
AOV OF SCORES ON PERSONAL SPACE -- MALE VS. FEMALE

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Treatment	1	117.56	117.56	2.67
Error	16	703.56	43.97	
Total	17	821.12		

for comparing means of two small samples (Hays, 1963) was also not significant at the .05 level (Table VI).

The two items which comprised the measure of seriousness of the speech content, Seriousness--Humorousness and Heaviness--Lightness, were first calculated separately. An analysis of variance of the data on the Seriousness--Humorousness item yielded an F value of 5.03, significant at the .05 level of confidence. The F value for the Lightness--Heaviness item was significant at the .01 level of confidence (Table VII). A post hoc comparison of the means on the Seriousness--Humorousness item with the method developed by Scheffé (Hays, 1963) yielded a difference between the non- and the high humor groups significant at the .05 level. On the Lightness--Heaviness item Scheffé's method indicated the difference between the high and non-humor groups was significant at the .01 level, while the difference between the high and low groups was significant at the .05 level of confidence (Table VIII). On both items one S was lost in the high group, and two were lost in the non-humor group because they placed more than one

TABLE VI

RESULTS FROM T TEST COMPARING MEANS OF PERSONAL SPACE--MALE VS. FEMALES

$$\text{Mean}_{\text{male}} = 8.22$$

$$\text{Mean}_{\text{female}} = 13.33$$

$$s_{\text{male}}^2 = 20.65$$

$$s_{\text{female}}^2 = 57.86$$

$$T \text{ value required for rejection} = 2.120$$

$$T \text{ value calculated} = 1.617$$

mark per item on the checklist. When the two items were combined for each S an analysis-of-variance yielded an F value significant at the .05 level (Table VII). A comparison of the combined means of each group by the Sheffé' method showed the difference between the high and non-humor groups was significant at the .025 level (Table VIII).

The results from the questionnaire over content were not significant. With the exception of one S in the non-humor group who missed two of the five questions, all questions were answered correctly.

TABLE VII
 AOV OF SERIOUSNESS OF SPEECHES' CONTENTS AS MEASURED BY
 SCORES ON THE ITEMS LIGHTNESS--HEAVINESS
 AND SERIOUSNESS--HUMOROUSNESS

LIGHTNESS--HEAVINESS SCORES ANALYZED SEPARATELY				
Source	df	SS	MS	F
Treatment	2	19.76	9.88	7.01**
Error	24	33.86	1.41	
Total	26	53.63		

SERIOUSNESS--HUMOROUSNESS SCORES ANALYZED SEPARATELY				
Source	df	SS	MS	F
Treatment	2	19.41	9.70	5.03*
Error	24	46.27	1.93	
Total	26	65.41		

LIGHTNESS--HEAVINESS AND SERIOUSNESS--HUMOROUSNESS SCORES COMBINED FOR EACH <u>S</u>				
Source	df	SS	MS	F
Treatment	2	68.75	34.38	4.03*
Error	24	204.66	8.52	
Total	26	273.41		

*Significant at .05 level

**Significant at .01 level

TABLE VIII
 COMPARISON OF MEANS OF SERIOUSNESS--HUMOROUSNESS AND
 LIGHTNESS--HEAVINESS USING SCHEFFE'S PROCEDURE

SERIOUSNESS--HUMOROUSNESS MEANS			
<u>Totals</u>	Non- 1.87	Low 3.50	High 3.88
Non- 1.87		-1.63	-2.01*
Low 3.50			- .38
High 3.88			
LIGHTNESS--HEAVINESS MEANS			
<u>Totals</u>	Non- 2.87	Low 3.30	High 4.89
Non- 2.87		-.43	-2.02**
Low 3.30			-1.59*
High 4.89			
COMBINATION OF SERIOUSNESS--HUMOROUSNESS AND LIGHTNESS--HEAVINESS MEANS			
<u>Totals</u>	Non- 4.75	Low 6.80	High 8.78
Non- 4.75		2.05	4.03*
Low 6.80			1.98
High 8.78			

*Significant at .05 level

**Significant at .01 level

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The hypothesis that increasing a speaker's humorous verbalizations would increase his perceived attractiveness was not supported by results from the Character scale, although group differences were in the hypothesized directions. This is in contrast to Gruner's (1967) results. Using the same Character scale for attitude measurement, he found a significant difference in perceived attractiveness of the speaker between a group hearing a humorous speech and a group hearing the same speech without humor. This study utilized the same non-humorous speech and only altered the humorous speech by substituting different humorous material. These alterations increased the "funniness" level for the high speech, according to other Ss' ratings of the jokes, and were expected to increase the Ss' "liking" for the speaker. The low humor speech also differed only with respect to humor; it contained half as much humorous material as the high version.

Since this study and Gruner's were similar in so many respects, a consideration of important differences between the two is helpful in explaining the differences in results. The different social conditions affecting the Ss in the two studies is one such point. In Gruener's group presentation of the recorded speech, each individual's perception of the funniness of the material and/or his perception of the speaker's

attractiveness may have been enhanced by the effect of the group's laughter, smiles, apparent attention, etc. This is the principle partially responsible for television's use of "canned laughter." Also evidence by both Perl (1953) and Malpass and Fitzpatrick (1959) indicated jokes are judged significantly more funny when presented to large groups than when presented to individuals. This effect was eliminated in this study by Ss solitarily hearing the speech and then evaluating the speaker, and this may partially explain the lower ratings of the speaker. In fact, the presence of even one companion in the viewing room might have increased an individual's judgement of the funniness of the material by eliciting more overt mirth responses. Davis and Farina (1970) found that laughter is often a method of communication-- usually of positive regard. Since Ss in this study had only a television screen with which to communicate, their general level of amusement seems not to have been as aroused as in Gruner's group presentation.

Another major difference in the two studies was that this study used video tape recordings instead of audio tapes. This was an attempt to approximate more closely a genuine personal interaction. The addition of visual cues, however, may have diverted some attention from the text of the speech. In addition, since the speaker on the video tapes was more obviously a "real person" than was a mere voice on the audio tapes, it may have been more difficult to cause a perceived image to be favorably enhanced. In Gruner's study the voice was the only characteristic of the speaker to which Ss could react, so what he said may have had a greater effect.

As expected, there were no significant differences among the

groups on the items which make up the Authority scale. As previously mentioned, as long as humor is appropriate to the subject matter and is not overly "clownish," there should be no effect on a speaker's perceived authority. If the groups viewing the humorous speeches had rated the speaker lower on the Authority scale, it would have indicated the humor chosen had made the speaker appear too foolish to be credible.

The other major hypothesis, that Ss would perceive a greater amount of identification or Assumed Similarity (AS) for the speaker due to the humorous speeches, was also not supported by the data. Again the differences were in the hypothesized direction but were not significant. The single item added to this scale, "possess sense of humor--lack sense of humor," was only marginally significant. This item also was utilized to confirm that most individuals believe they possess a sense of humor. Each of the thirty Ss rated himself in the "possess sense of humor" range, and 29% chose "extremely," the most positive category.

The same possible explanations cited for the differences in Character scores not reaching significance seem to apply to the AS scores. Speeches were presented to individuals rather than to groups, and visual cues may have distracted from the text of the speech. Stated another way, the humorous stimuli appear to have been simply not as powerful as necessary for this particular set of experimental conditions. In addition, if the scores obtained on the single item of AS (significant at the .10 level) could have been maintained with a larger sample, the difference might have been significant.

The difference between groups on the measure of Personal Space (PS) was not significant. In evaluating the data it was noted that the mean for the nine males, regardless of humor level, was 8.22, while

the mean for the nine females, regardless of humor level, was 13.33. An analysis-of-variance by sex, regardless of group, yielded insignificant results. Nevertheless, sex differences of the Ss appears to have confounded the general PS results. An obvious explanation is that female Ss, irrespective of the humor level to which they had been exposed, were more uneasy about approaching the male speaker than were the male Ss. In addition, Argyle and Dean (1965) believe that any measure of the attraction or intimacy between the two individuals must take into account that this intimacy is a function of several variables interacting. They propose a combination of PS, eye-contact, intimacy of topic, amount of smiling, etc., to reflect amount of intimacy. Further, Exline, Gray, and Schuette (1965) believe that women engage in more eye contact than men. If this is the case, and if Argyle and Dean's theory that a combination of behavioral factors best measures intimacy, it would seem probable that where eye contact was increased by women, PS would decrease. In this experiment, three females who saw the high humor speech remained the greatest distance from the speaker of any of the Ss (mean for the three was 16.67), but it is not known whether or not they maintained more eye contact to compensate. In other words, a combination of several behavioral variables to arrive at a composite score for each S would have been more appropriate, rather than the single measure, PS. Subject matter of the conversation was held approximately constant by having the speaker ask each S specific questions, but it was physically impossible to efficiently measure eye contact in the room employed. Perhaps an alternative would have been to hold eye contact constant by having the speaker look at each S only while directing the specific questions to him.

The results from the Ss' evaluations of the seriousness of the speeches' contents were significant for "Seriousness--Humorousness" and "Lightness--Heaviness," in combination and separately. In each case there was a significant difference between the means of the high and the non-humor group. In fact, the difference was slightly greater than that for Gruner's humorous and non-humorous groups. This indicated not only that the manipulation of the levels of humor was successful, at least between the high and non-humor groups, but that the high humor speech utilized here was perceived as slightly more humorous than Gruner's humorous speech.

Results from the short questionnaire over content of the speeches indicated that Ss were listening to each speech, so the possibility that Ss were not affected by the humor because of simple inattention had to be ruled out.

In summary, although differences between groups on the Character scale and on AS were in the hypothesized direction, they were not significant. Naturally, it can be postulated that although differences in humor level between speeches did exist, the humor was simply not powerful enough to effect a significant enhancement of speaker attractiveness. However, pending further research with more powerful humor and perhaps with other suggestions advanced above, it must be concluded that humor does not increase a speaker's perceived attractiveness or assumed similarity.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

This study investigated whether the inclusion of humor in a speech would increase a speaker's perceived attractiveness. Gruner (1967) found differences in two groups of students' evaluations of a speaker after one group heard an audio tape recorded speech which contained humor and a similar group heard the same speech with humor deleted. The "humor" group rated the speaker higher on a six-item semantic differential found by factorial analysis to represent perceived "character."

In this experiment it was decided to replicate much of Gruner's work with certain alterations. First, rather than an audio tape, a video tape recording of speeches was used to better simulate a genuine personal interaction. Second, it was decided to eliminate possible group effects, which may have affected Gruner's results, by having each S solitarily view the speech and make his evaluation. Third, to investigate better how much humor would cause a significant change in perceived attractiveness of the speaker, two levels of humor were employed. A high humor version was developed which contained, according to pre-test ratings, more humor than that used in Gruner's humorous version. A low humor version was designed to contain approximately one half as much humorous stimuli as the high. A third speech, a control, with all humor deleted was also included. Fourth, to lend additional support to ratings of the speaker from the Character and

Authority scales Gruner employed, this study included a measure of Personal Space and a check-list for Assumed Similarity. This last scale, besides indicating how the speaker was liked, was included to determine whether individuals are attracted to one who is funny because of assumed similarity. Previous studies have shown that almost everyone thinks he possesses an above average sense of humor. If a speaker appeared to have a sense of humor, than a listener would believe they had something in common and would assume there were other similarities in their personalities. For this reason, it was believed that Ss hearing the humorous speeches would rate themselves significantly more similar to the speaker on the twenty-five personality traits than the control Ss.

Thirty Ss participated in the study. Each was randomly assigned to view one of the speeches. He then completed a questionnaire to determine his reaction to the speaker. Certain of these Ss were randomly selected to interact with the speaker to attain measures of Personal Space.

There were no significant differences among the groups on the Authority and Character scales, the Assumed Similarity scale, or the Personal Space measure. This result was expected on the Authority scale and indicated that the inclusion of humor did not lower Ss' perceptions of the speaker's "expertness" on his topic. However, the results from the other measures did not support the major hypotheses.

A comparison of this study's results to Gruner's suggested certain explanations and possible alterations. Since Gruner found a significant increase in his speaker's attractiveness with less humor, it was postulated that his group presentation was at least partially

responsible. To determine if this was the case, the video tapes used in this experiment could be shown to large groups, and results could be compared with those found individually here. It was also suggested that reacting to a speaker's image as in the video tapes used here, in contrast to just a voice on Gruner's audio tapes, might require more powerful or effective humor to enhance perceived attractiveness of the speaker. This could easily be determined by presenting only the audio portion of this study's tapes and comparing results. In addition, new video tapes could be developed which included additional measured amounts of humor. Perhaps a version containing relatively twice as much humor as the high humor speech used here would have achieved the desired effect.

Concerning the behavioral measures of Ss' positive regard for the speaker, it was suggested that measures of eye contact and perhaps facial expressions be added to the measure of Personal Space used here. A composite score of "intimacy" could be calculated for each S. Although the single measure of Personal Space might indicate a lack of positive regard, a high amount of eye contact and pleasant facial expressions occurring at the same time could represent the opposite. For this reason, an average score, taking at least three such measures into account, would have been more representative of an S's attitude toward the speaker.

In summary, differences among groups on the Character and Assumed Similarity scales were in the hypothesized direction, but were not significant. Although possible explanations and alterations were suggested, it must be concluded that the ability of humorous verbalizations to increase a speaker's perceived attractiveness or assumed similarity has not been demonstrated.

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APPENDIX A

SPEECHES AS PRESENTED TO Ss IN PRE-TESTING STUDY TO
ESTABLISH AVERAGE RATINGS FOR EACH JOKE

The first speech, A, is that used by Gruner in his study and includes 12 pieces of humor. The second speech, B, is identical except that 14 different pieces of humor have been substituted.

Speech A as Presented to Ss

DIRECTIONS: Below is the test of a speech which might be presented in a college class. You are to pretend you are actually listening to a speaker giving this speech and evaluate the humor it contains. Throughout the speech you will find the numbers 1 through 12, each followed by a blank space. In this space write a number from the list below which corresponds to your evaluation of the material which immediately pre-ceeded this space and is in capital letters. Choose your number evaluations from the following:

- 0 -- Not humorous
- 1 -- Slightly humorous
- 2 -- Moderately humorous
- 3 -- Very humorous
- 4 -- Extremely humorous
- 5 -- One of the most humorous pieces of material ever encountered

Work quickly; your immediate judgement will probably be your best, but please read the entire speech, not just the capitalized material.

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT THE HUMAN BRAIN IS A WONDERFUL AND REMARKABLE THING. IT STARTS TO FUNCTION THE INSTANT YOU ARE BORN AND DOESN'T STOP UNTIL THE MOMENT YOU STAND UP TO GIVE A SPEECH. (1) _____ Most of you can appreciate this remark because you have probably experienced some anxiety when called on to speak in class. But how many of you function effectively when you're not speaking--when you're listening?

LISTENING, FOR INSTANCE, TO A LECTURE. SOME SAY, YOU KNOW, THAT: "LECTURING IS THE PROCESS OF CONVEYING INFORMATION FROM THE NOTEBOOK OF THE PROFESSOR TO THE NOTEBOOK OF THE STUDENT--WITHOUT GOING THROUGH THE MINDS OF EITHER." (2) _____ This is due partly to poor listening. And partly due to poor lecturing. I SUPPOSE YOU'VE ALL HEARD ABOUT THE PROFESSOR WHO DREAMED HE WAS LECTURING TO HIS CLASSES--AND WHEN HE WOKE UP, HE WAS! (3) _____

We're going to spend about ten minutes together today trying to understand the listening process. As you might suspect, listening is the communication skill that is most frequently used today. Chances are, you listen three times as much as you read. Yes, even you who are over-talkative do this. Yet in schools, listening receives less than one-sixth as much emphasis.

We will consider three questions. (1) Why study listening?
 (2) What is listening? (3) What are some principles of listening which, when practiced, will aid you in becoming a more capable listener?

Most of us are pretty poor listeners. For example, you will probably not remember more than 25 percent of the information in this speech. Listen carefully, and maybe you can make me eat my words. AND I'M KEEPING THIS SHORT. AFTER ALL, A SPEAKER WHO CAN'T STRIKE OIL IN TEN MINUTES SHOULD STOP BORING. (4)_____

Start right now! We've uncovered three points thus far. First, listening is the most-frequently-used communication skill. Second, it is emphasized less than one-sixth as much as reading in schools and is used three times as frequently. Third, you will only remember about 25 percent of the information I give you.

But you still want to know, "Why study listening?" Your grades are based on tests over lectures. Studies reveal training in listening increases comprehension and understanding of lectures. AND I'M SURE WE'VE ALL SAT THROUGH SOME LECTURES THAT NEEDED ALL THE COMPREHENSION AND UNDERSTANDING THEY COULD GET. YOU'VE PROBABLY ALREADY HEARD MY FAVORITE DEFINITION OF A LECTURE: "SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU FEEL NUMB ON ONE END AND DUMB ON THE OTHER." (5)_____ WHICH REMINDS ME OF A PHILOSOPHY CLASS I WAS IN ONCE. THE PROFESSOR LOOKED UP FROM HIS YELLOWED NOTES, PEERED TOWARD THE BACK OF THE ROOM, AND ASKED: "WHO'S SMOKING BACK THERE?" ONE STUDENT YELLED BACK: "NO ONE. THAT'S JUST THE FOG WE'RE IN." (6)_____

Dr. Charles Irvin tested 1,400 Michigan State college freshmen before and after listener training. Poor to above-average listeners before training improved the most. Listening-trained students improved 9-12 percent--9-12 percent--over non-listening-trained students. Listening does improve through training.

In another study, Dr. Arthur Heilman gave students a listening test. Next, they were taught six lessons in listening. Then, they took a second listening test. Students receiving listening training improved greatly over students without training. Students with low listening scores and high I.Q.'s improved more than other groups.

SO, YOU SEE--THE NEXT TIME YOU GET A LOW GRADE ON AN HOUR EXAM, YOU HAVE A READY-MADE ALIBI FOR YOUR INSTRUCTOR. JUST TELL HIM THAT YOUR PROBLEM IS YOU NEVER HAD TRAINING IN LISTENING. HE MIGHT NOT BELIEVE YOU, BUT AT LEAST HE'LL APPRECIATE HEARING A NEW AND RATHER CREATIVE EXCUSE. (7)_____

How about outside the classroom? In outside listening situations, listening trained-students were superior. Johnson and Haugh also note listening improvement through training.

How about practical training? Forrest Whan reported pilots with listening training reduced the number of messages repeated. Pilots trained to adapt to the listener in various flying conditions acted more quickly and more accurately in tests. Remember, listener training reduced repetition of messages by pilots, and helped them act more quickly and more accurately in flight. ONE PILOT WHO APPARENTLY DID NOT GET SUCH TRAINING IS SAID TO HAVE COME ON THE INTERCOM WITH SOMETHING LIKE THIS, "HELLO LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THIS IS THE CAPTAIN SPEAKING. WELCOME TO FLIGHT 207, NON-STOP TO - UH-UH-UH--."

(8) _____

Another reason for studying listening is the wide differences in listening ability. Dr. Jones' Columbia study showed high scores were about six times--get that--six times--higher than the lowest scores. Dr. Paul Rankin's work supports these findings.

What's the point? Simple! Most students benefit from listening training. Reducing wide differences in listening ability produces more effective communication.

Doesn't listening ability develop without special training? No! Dr. Rankin concluded listening ability doesn't develop adequately for life-needs without special training. Dr. Ralph Nichols states daily practice doesn't eliminate need for training. Practicing the same faults is falsely assuming that practice makes perfect. Why study listening? Listening abilities are taught, not caught. But they're not taught enough in formal education. Nichols believes it is considered by all, but really taught by none. An English teachers' survey showed listening was one of the most important skills that needs to be taught. Why study listening? Teachers think it needs to be taught--formally.

Have we answered, "Why study listening?" Yes! We showed that listening ability is learned and improved through training; that comprehension and understanding improve through listening training; that wide differences in listening ability exist and training shortens the gap; that listening doesn't usually develop adequately without training; that teachers believe it should be studied formally.

Now, what is listening? Listening is comprehending. Listening occurs when meaning is attached to aural symbols or words that we hear--we understand. Listening is a process--an ongoing, dynamic activity.

To define listening meaningfully, silence is accepted as an aural symbol. I mean aural--a-u-r-a-l--aural. Silence has meaning. Ever ask for a date and get silence? It had meaning. Listeners digest or prepare for new ideas during silence. Much listening occurs during silence.

Remember, listening isn't limited to immediate speaking situations. Word meanings may start before and continue after talk. Let's say you quarreled with a friend one night. Next day you walk silently toward class together. The silence has meaning. OR, TO PARAPHRASE ONE WAG'S DESCRIPTION OF A COLLOSSAL BORE: "HIS DULL CONVERSATION IS OCCASIONALLY HIGHLIGHTED BY ONE OF HIS BRILLIANT FLASHES OF SILENCE." (9)_____

Are hearing and listening the same? No! Hearing is focusing on or becoming aware of sound through the senses. Hearing defects reduce classroom learning for only 3-6 percent of the nation's children. Listening is adding meaning to sound symbols, or words.

Are reading and listening the same? No! They are related; but not the same. Heilman found a .66 or moderate relationship between listening and reading. Reading is a visual activity. Nichols states, listening is an aural--or ear--plus a visual activity. TO PUT IT ANALOGICALLY, TO SAY THAT READING OR HEARING IS THE SAME AS LISTENING IS LIKE SAYING THAT THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CALLING YOUR GIRL FRIEND A "VISION" AND CALLING HER A "SIGHT." (10)_____

Ear and eye activity differ. Ear activity is multidirectional. Eyes require focusing. You can listen to me from all sides; you must focus your eyes on me to see me. Ears are more sensitive than eyes. Ears require less energy to activate them, are more durable than eyes, and have greater capacity for continued use. Long movies may make your eyes hurt; but do your ears?

Reading and listening differ, because listening is a social activity. Reading is individualized. The reader sets his own pace. Listening requires other people interacting--it's social. In listening, the speaker sets the pace. Read as fast as you wish, but you can listen only as fast as the speaker speaks--it's social.

Good readers aren't necessarily good listeners. Training in one skill doesn't carry-over to another skill. Reading and listening, then, are related but not the same.

In summary, listening is comprehending through the ear by attaching meaning to words or symbols. Silence has meaning and is an aural symbol. Listening is related, but not the same as hearing or reading. Listening is a social process that is not limited to speaking situations.

Our last and most important question is, "What can we do to listen better?"

First, get interested in topics--be attentive. Good listeners find interest in most topics; poor listeners find topics dry. Create interest by selfishly realizing listening is an easy way to (1) get information; (2) grow culturally; (3) mature socially. There are no uninteresting topics, only uninterested listeners. You listen to what you want to listen. Watkins and Frost state over half of deafness is really inattentiveness.

Second, don't over-criticize the speaker, speech, or situation; stimulate him. Build his confidence. Listener and speaker share responsibility for successful speech--it's a two-way street. Listening is inside-action, no one else does it for you. Help the speaker, don't over-criticize.

Third, keep cool toward emotion-rousing points or over-stimulation. Fully understand points before judging. Exercise emotional control and maturity before responding to terms like "nigger," "strip-tease," "mercy-killing." KEEP YOUR HEAD. AFTER ALL, IF YOU CAN KEEP YOUR HEAD WHEN ALL THOSE ABOUT YOU ARE LOSING THEIRS--YOU'RE EITHER A MAN, OR ELSE YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION. (11)_____

Fourth, develop a philosophy that is objective and open-minded. Listen to and identify words. Analyze reasons for word meanings. Rationalize word impact through discussions with others.

Fifth, don't over- or under-expend energy--don't fake it. Seniors fake attention well. Effective listeners increase heart action, blood circulation, and body temperature when listening. Do you? Nichols states attention is a collection of inner tensions satisfied when related messages are received from the speaker. Try to: (1) come rested to listen; (2) concentrate on what's said; (3) give prior thought to topic; (4) behave as listeners should behave.

Sixth, recognize main points. Lee found only 25 percent of the listeners recognize main ideas.

Seventh, take notes only when there is a reason for taking them. McClendon's study revealed comprehension was not increased when students took notes. THEN WHY TAKE NOTES? YOU MAY BE MISTAKEN FOR A "GRIND," YOU KNOW. YOU ALL KNOW WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AN INSTRUCTOR WALKS IN AND SAYS, "GOOD MORNING, CLASS." THE C STUDENTS SAY "GOOD MORNING" BACK--THE A STUDENTS WRITE IT DOWN IN THEIR NOTES. (12)_____

Remember, get interested in topics. Don't over-criticize. Keep cool toward emotion-rousing points. Take notes only when necessary.

Summary

In closing, let's review main points. First, why study listening? Listening is learned and improved through training. Wide differences in listening ability exist. Listening doesn't usually develop adequately without training.

Second, what is listening? Listening is comprehending through the ear and attaching meaning to words and symbols. Silence has meaning. Listening is a social process not limited to speaking situations.

Third, how can we listen better? We can get interested; avoid over-criticizing; keep cool toward emotion-rousing points; be open-minded; avoid faking attention; recognize main points; and take only necessary notes.

Speech B as Presented to Ss

DIRECTIONS: Below is the text of a speech which might be presented in a college class. You are to pretend you are actually listening to a speaker giving this speech and evaluate the humor it contains. Throughout the speech you will find the numbers 1 through 14, each followed by a blank space. In this space write a number from the list below which corresponds to your evaluation of the material which immediately preceeded this space and is in capital letters. Choose your number evaluations from the following:

- 0 -- Not humorous
- 1 -- Slightly humorous
- 2 -- Moderately humorous
- 3 -- Very humorous
- 4 -- Extremely humorous
- 5 -- One of the most humorous pieces of material ever encountered

Work quickly; your immediate judgement will probably be your best, but please read the entire speech, not just the capitalized material.

Let me say immediately that I won't be speaking about the pollution of our environment or inflation. I don't mean to downgrade the importance of these topics, but perhaps they are a bit overworked these days. CONCERNING INFLATION, I RECENTLY HEARD ABOUT ONE MAN WHO HAS WRITTEN A BOOK ON THE SUBJECT AND WHO RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM A STRANGER, WHO QUESTIONED THE AUTHOR'S STATISTICS ON THE HIGH COST OF LIVING. "MY WIFE AND I," SAID THE VOICE OVER THE PHONE, "EAT EVERYTHING WE DESIRE, AND IT COSTS EXACTLY 49 CENTS A WEEK."

"FORTY-NINE CENTS A WEEK!" EXCLAIMED THE ECONOMIST. "ITS UNBELIEVABLE. TELL ME HOW YOU DO THAT, PLEASE, AND TO BE SURE I UNDERSTAND YOU CORRECTLY, WON'T YOU TALK A LITTLE LOUDER?"

"I CAN'T SPEAK LOUDER," SAID THE VOICE FROM THE OTHER END. "I'M A GOLDFISH." (1) _____

But, as I said, my topic is not inflation. I am going to talk to you about personal communication, more specifically, about the listening process. Obviously there's not much possibility for improving communications between man and goldfish, but for those of you who aren't goldfish, possibilities are better.

Why worry about how you communicate? One reason might be to help keep yourself out of some embarrassing situations. A FRIEND OF MINE WITH A RATHER BAD MEMORY FOR NAMES WAS AT A PUBLIC GATHERING RECENTLY, WHEN HE SAW A WOMAN APPROACHING WHO HE FELT HE SHOULD RECOGNIZE. HE WAS GREETING HER WITH A WARM HANDCLASP WHEN A MAN HE KNEW QUITE WELL CAME ALONG. STILL CLASPING THE LADY'S HAND, HE WAVED THE OTHER HAND

IN GREETING. "HELLO, FRED," HE CALLED, "HOW IS YOUR LOVELY WIFE THESE DAYS?"

"YOU OUGHT TO KNOW," REPLIED FRED. "YOU'RE HOLDING HANDS WITH HER." (2) _____

You may have experienced something similar and attributed it to poor memory. Actually, a problem with names may concern something more encompassing, that is, the listening process.

We're going to spend about ten minutes together today trying to understand the listening process. As you might suspect, listening is the communication skill that is most frequently used today. Chances are, you listen three times as much as you read. Yes, even you who are over-talkative do this. Yet in schools, listening receives less than one-sixth as much emphasis.

We will consider three questions. (1) Why study listening? (2) What is listening? (3) What are some principles of listening which when practiced, will aid you in becoming a more capable listener?

Most of us are pretty poor listeners. For example, you will probably not remember more than 25 percent of the information in this speech. Listen carefully, and maybe you can make me eat my words. AND I'M KEEPING THIS SHORT. I'M LIKE THE POLITICIAN WHO DISCONTINUED LONG SPEECHES BECAUSE OF HIS THROAT. TOO MANY PEOPLE THREATENED TO CUT IT. (3) _____ BESIDES, I'VE ALWAYS HAD A GREAT DEAL OF RESPECT FOR MEN WHO DIDN'T NEED AN OVERABUNDANCE OF WORDS TO GET THEIR MESSAGE ACROSS. YOU MAY HAVE HEARD THE STORY ABOUT CALVIN COOLIDGE WHO, UPON HIS RETURN FROM CHURCH ONE SUNDAY, WAS ASKED BY HIS WIFE WHAT THE MINISTER SPOKE ABOUT.

"SIN," SAID COOLIDGE.

"WHAT DID HE SAY ABOUT IT?" ASKED MRS. COOLIDGE.

"HE WAS AGAINST IT." (4) _____

But, back to listening--start right now! We've uncovered three points thus far. First, listening is the most-frequently-used communication skill. Second, it is emphasized less than one-sixth as much as reading in schools and is used three times as frequently. Third, you will only remember about 25 percent of the information I give you.

SPEAKING OF PROBLEMS WITH REMEMBERING, I KNOW A YOUNG WOMAN SCHOOLTEACHER WHO BOARDED A CITY BUS, NOTICED A FAMILIAR FACE ACROSS THE AISLE, AND NODDED AT HIM. HE STARED AT HER BLANKLY, GIVING NO SIGN OF RECOGNITION.

FLUSTERED, THE GIRL CALLED OUT, "I'M SORRY. I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE FATHER OF ONE OF MY CHILDREN." (5) _____

But you still want to know, "Why study listening?" Your grades are based on tests over lectures. Studies reveal training in listening increases comprehension and understanding of lectures. AND I'M SURE WE'VE ALL SAT THROUGH SOME LECTURES THAT NEEDED ALL THE COMPREHENSION AND UNDERSTANDING THEY COULD GET. I REMEMBER ONE PHILOSOPHY CLASS IN WHICH THE PROFESSOR WANTED TO MAKE A POINT IN LOGIC, SO HE SAID, "THE

UNITED STATES IS BOUND ON THE EAST BY THE ATLANTIC OCEAN, AND ON THE WEST BY THE PACIFIC OCEAN. NOW HOW OLD AM I?"

"YOU ARE FORTY-EIGHT," CALLED OUT ONE OF THE STUDENTS.

"HOW DID YOU ARRIVE AT THAT?" ASKED THE SURPRISED PROFESSOR.

"IT WAS EASY," SAID THE STUDENT. "MY TWENTY-FOUR-YEAR-OLD BROTHER IS ONLY HALF CRAZY." (6) _____

But to return to the subject of listening, Dr. Charles Irvin tested 1,400 Michigan State college freshmen before and after listener training. Poor to above-average listeners before training improved the most. Listening-trained students improved 9-12 percent--9-12 per cent--over non-listening-trained students. Listening does improve through training.

In another study, Dr. Arthur Heilman gave students a listening test. Next, they were taught six lessons in listening. Then, they took a second listening test. Students receiving listening training improved greatly over students without training. Students with low listening scores and high I.Q.'s improved more than other groups.

SO YOU SEE--WITHOUT LISTENER TRAINING THERE SEEMS TO BE A GREAT DEAL OF TRUTH TO THE OLD ADAGE THAT, "A COLLEGE EDUCATION IS ONE OF THE FEW THINGS A PERSON IS WILLING TO PAY FOR AND NOT GET." OR ONE MIGHT SAY THAT A STUDENT WHOSE ONLY FAULT IS AN INABILITY TO LISTEN PROPERLY IS SIMILAR TO THE MATRON OF WHOM NAPOLEON SAID, "SHE HAS ONLY ONE FAULT. SHE IS INSUFFERABLE." (7) _____

How about outside the classroom? In outside listening situations, listening trained-students were superior. Johnson and Haugh also note listening improvement through training.

How about practical training? Forrest Whan reported pilots with listening training reduced the number of messages repeated. Pilots trained to adapt to the listener in various flying conditions acted more quickly and more accurately in tests. Remember, listener training reduced repetition of messages by pilots, and helped them act more quickly and more accurately in flight. ONE PILOT WHO WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN MUCH AIDED BY THIS TRAINING, HOWEVER, WAS ONCE APPROACHED BY AN OLD NEW ENGLANDER AND HIS WIFE WHO WANTED TO TAKE A PLANE RIDE. "\$10? TOO MUCH!" THEY SAID.

THE PILOT MAKE A PROPOSITION. HE WOULD TAKE THEM FREE IF THEY DID NOT SAY A SINGLE WORD DURING THE TRIP. IF THEY SPOKE, THEY WOULD PAY THE \$10.

TRIP OVER AND NOT A WORD SPOKEN. ONCE LANDED, THE PILOT SAID HE DIDN'T THINK THEY'D DO IT.

"WELL," SAID THE OLD MAN, "YOU ALMOST WON--SURE FELT LIKE HOLLERING WHEN MAMA FELL OUT." (8) _____

Another reason for studying listening is the wide differences in listening ability. Dr. Jones' Columbia study showed high scores were about six times--get that--six times--higher than the lowest scores. Dr. Paul Rankin's work supports these findings.

What's the point? Simple! Most students benefit from listening training. Reducing wide differences in listening ability produces more effective communication.

AND WITH SOME SPEAKERS YOU NEED ALL THE LISTENING ABILITY YOU CAN MUSTER. THEY SAY THAT SOME YEARS AGO LLOYD GEORGE WAS MAKING A SPEECH AT A POLITICAL RALLY IN IRELAND.

"WILL YOU FREE IRELAND?" YELLED A HECKLER.

"I WILL," WAS THE UNPERTURBED REPLY, FOLLOWED BY THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE FROM THE PROPONENTS OF IRISH FREEDOM.

WHEN THE APPLAUSE DIED DOWN, LLOYD GEORGE ADDED, "--NOT," WHICH WAS AGAIN FOLLOWED BY APPLAUSE, THIS TIME FROM THE OPPONENTS OF IRISH FREEDOM.

WHEN THE CHEERING HAD DIED DOWN, HE CONCLUDED, "--TELL YOU."
(9) _____

But to return to the subject of listening ability, you might wish to ask--doesn't listening ability develop without special training? No! Dr. Rankin concluded listening ability doesn't develop adequately for life-needs without special training. Dr. Ralph Nichols states daily practice doesn't eliminate need for training. Practicing the same fault is falsely assuming that practice makes perfect. Why study listening? Listening abilities are taught, not caught. But they're not taught enough in formal education. Nichols believes it is considered by all, but really taught by none. An English teacher's survey showed listening was one of the most important skills that needs to be taught. Why study listening? Teachers think it needs to be taught--formally.

Have we answered, "Why study listening?" Yes! We showed that listening ability is learned and improved through training; that comprehension and understanding improved through listening training; that wide differences in listening ability exist and training shortens the gap; that listening doesn't usually develop adequately without training; that teachers believe it should be studied formally.

Now, what is listening? Listening is comprehending. Listening occurs when meaning is attached to aural symbols or words that we hear--we understand. Listening is a process--an ongoing, dynamic activity.

To define listening meaningfully, silence is accepted as an aural symbol. I mean aural--a-u-r-a-l--aural. Silence has meaning. Ever ask for a date and get silence? It had meaning. Listeners digest or prepare for new ideas during silence. Much listening occurs during silence.

Remember, listening isn't limited to immediate speaking situations. Word meanings may start before and continue after talk. Let's say you quarreled with a friend one night. Next day you walk silently toward class together. The silence has meaning.

BY THE WAY, YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED BY NOW THAT I'M GIVING THIS SPEECH FROM A MANUSCRIPT. I HOPE MY TALK WON'T BE THOUGHT OF AS SIMILAR TO ONE GIVEN BY THE LATE VICE-PRESIDENT BARKLEY; ONE IN WHICH HE USED A MANUSCRIPT, INSTEAD OF NOTES. AFTER HE HAD SPOKEN AND SAT DOWN, HE TURNED

TO A FRIEND AND ASKED, "WHAT DID YOU THINK OF IT?"

"WELL, I HAVE ONLY THREE CRITICISMS. FIRST, YOU READ IT. SECOND, YOU READ IT POORLY. THIRD, IT WASN'T WORTH READING." (10) _____

But, to return to our subject--are hearing and listening the same? No! Hearing is focusing on or becoming aware of sound through the senses. Hearing defects reduce classroom learning for only 3-6 percent of the nation's children. Listening is adding meaning to sound symbols, or words.

Are reading and listening the same? No! They are related; but not the same. Heilman found a .66 or moderate relationship between listening and reading. Reading is a visual activity. Nichols states, listening is an aural--or ear--plus a visual activity.

Ear and eye activity differ. Ear activity is multidirectional. Eyes require focusing. You can listen to me from all sides; you must focus your eyes on me to see me. Ears are more sensitive than eyes. Ears require less energy to activate them, are more durable than eyes, and have greater capacity for continued use. Long movies may make your eyes hurt; but do your ears?

Reading and listening differ, because listening is a social activity. Reading is individualized. The reader sets his own pace. Listening requires other people interacting--it's social. In listening, the speaker sets the pace. Read as fast as you wish, but you can listen only as fast as the speaker speaks--its social.

Good readers aren't necessarily good listeners. Training in one skill doesn't carry-over to another skill. Reading and listening, then, are related but not the same.

STAY AWAKE NOW. I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO THINK OF THIS SPEECH AS CARL SANDBURG IS SAID ONCE TO HAVE THOUGHT OF A PLAY. HE KEPT HIS PROMISE TO APPEAR AT A DRESS REHEARSAL OF A YOUNG PLAYWRIGHT'S SHOW-- BUT HE SLEPT DURING MOST OF THE PERFORMANCE. HIS YOUNG FRIEND WAS DISTRAUGHT LATER: "HOW COULD YOU SLEEP WHEN YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I WANTED YOUR OPINION?"

"SLEEP," SANDBURG REMINDED HIM, "IS AN OPINION." (11) _____

In summary, listening is comprehending through the ear by attaching meaning to words or symbols. Silence has meaning and is an aural symbol. Listening is related, but not the same as hearing or reading. Listening is a social process that is not limited to speaking situations.

Our last and most important question is, "What can we do to listen better?" YOU MIGHT PREFER AN ANSWER OFFERED BY W. C. FIELDS--"IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED, TRY, TRY AGAIN. THEN QUIT. THERE'S NO USE MAKING A FOOL OF YOURSELF." (12) _____

But let me also give you some alternatives. First, get interested in topics--be attentive. Good listeners find interest in most topics; poor listeners find topics dry. Create interest by selfishly realizing listening is an easy way to (1) get information; (2) grow culturally;

(3) mature socially. There are no uninteresting topics, only uninterested listeners. You listen to what you want to listen. Watkins and Frost state over half of deafness is really inattentiveness.

Second, don't over-criticize the speaker, speech, or situation; stimulate him. Build his confidence. Listener and speaker share responsibility for successful speech--it's a two-way street. Listening is inside-action, no one else does it for you. Help the speaker, don't over-criticize.

Third, keep cool toward emotion-rousing points or over-stimulation. Fully understand points before judging. Exercise emotional control and maturity before responding to terms like "nigger," "strip-tease," "mercy-killing." DON'T BE LIKE THE CO-ED ON HER WAY TO A POLITICAL RALLY WHO SAID, "I'M GOING WITH AN OPEN MIND, A COMPLETE LACK OF PREJUDICE, AND A COOL, RATIONAL APPROACH TO LISTEN TO WHAT I'M CONVINCED IS PURE RUBBISH." (13) _____

Fourth, develop a philosophy that is objective and open-minded. Listen to and identify words. Analyze reasons for word meanings. Rationalize word impact through discussions with others.

Fifth, don't over- or under-expend energy--don't fake it. Seniors fake attention well. Effective listeners increase heart action, blood circulation, and body temperature when listening. Do you? Nichols states attention is a collection of inner tensions satisfied when related messages are received from the speaker. Try to: (1) come rested to listen; (2) concentrate on what's said; (3) give prior thought to topic; (4) behave as listeners should behave.

Sixth, recognize main points. Lee found only 25 percent of the listeners recognized main ideas.

Seventh, take notes only when there is a reason for taking them. McClendon's study revealed comprehension was not increased when students took notes.

Remember, get interested in topics. Don't over-criticize. Keep cool toward emotion-rousing points. Be open-minded. Don't fake attention. Recognize main points. Take notes only when necessary.

NOW, LIKE LADY GODIVA AT THE END OF HER FAMOUS RIDE, I AM DRAWING NEAR TO MY CLOSE. (14) _____ And in closing, let's review main points. First, why study listening? Listening is learned and improved through training. Wide differences in listening ability exist. Listening doesn't usually develop adequately without training.

Second, what is listening? Listening is comprehending through the ear and attaching meaning to words and symbols. Silence has meaning. Listening is a social process not limited to speaking situations.

Third, how can we listen better? We can get interested; avoid over-criticizing; keep cool toward emotion-rousing points; be open-minded; avoid faking attention; recognize main points; and take only necessary notes.

AVERAGE RATINGS FOR JOKES IN ORDER OF PRESENTATION

(18 Ss rated Speech A, and 18 Ss rated Speech B)

<u>A</u>		<u>B</u>	
1.	1.833	1.	1.66
2.	1.00	2.	1.42
3.	1.58	3.	1.66
4.	1.25	4.	1.75
5.	1.66	5.	2.50
6.	2.17	6.	2.17
7.	.416	7.	1.17
8.	1.58	8.	2.58
9.	1.50	9.	1.58
10.	1.08	10.	1.33
11.	1.00	11.	1.33
12.	<u>2.25</u>	12.	2.33
	16.32	13.	1.83
		14.	<u>.833</u>
Average	1.36		24.14
		Average	1.72

 JOKES CHOSEN FOR THE TWO HUMOROUS SPEECHES USED IN THIS STUDY

(Presented in order of appearance)

<u>High Humor Speech</u>		<u>Low Humor Speech</u>	
1.	A3 1.58	1.	A3 1.58
2.	B3 1.66	2.	B3 1.66
3.	B4 1.75	3.	B8 2.58
4.	A6 2.17	4.	B12 2.33
5.	B8 2.58	5.	A12 <u>2.25</u>
6.	B6 2.17		10.40
7.	B5 2.50		
8.	B12 2.33	Average	2.08
9.	B13 1.83		
10.	A12 <u>2.25</u>		
	20.82		
Average	2.08		

High Humor Speech as Recorded by Speaker

Today I'm going to help you become better at listening--listening, for instance, to lectures. I should point out, of course, that the student sometimes is not the only one to blame for communication problems in this situation. I suppose you've all heard about the professor who dreamed he was lecturing to his classes--and when he woke up, he was?

We're going to spend about ten minutes together today trying to understand the listening process. As you might suspect, listening is the communication skill that is most frequently used today. Chances are, you listen three times as much as you read. Yes, even you who are over-talkative do this. Yet in school, listening receives less than one-sixth as much emphasis.

We will consider three questions. (1) Why study listening? (2) What is listening? (3) What are some principles of listening which, when practiced, will aid you in becoming a more capable listener?

Most of us are pretty poor listeners. For example, you will probably not remember more than 25 percent of the information in this speech. Listen carefully, and maybe you can make me eat my words. And I'm keeping this short. I'm like the politician who discontinued long speeches because of his throat. Too many people threatened to cut it. Besides, I've always had a great deal of respect for men who didn't need an overabundance of words to get their message across. You may have heard the story about Calvin Coolidge who, upon his return from church

one Sunday, was asked by his wife what the minister spoke about.

"Sin," said Coolidge.

"What did he say about it?" asked Mrs. Coolidge.

"He was against it," said Coolidge.

But, back to listening--start right now! We've uncovered three points thus far. First, listening is the most-frequently-used communication skill. Second, it is emphasized less than one-sixth as much as reading in schools and is used three times as frequently. Third, you will only remember about 25 percent of the information I give you.

But you still want to know, "Why study listening?" Your grades are based on tests over lectures. Studies reveal training in listening increases comprehension and understanding of lectures. And I'm sure we've all sat through some lectures that needed all the comprehension and understanding they could get. I'm reminded of a philosophy class I was in once. The professor looked up from his yellowed notes, peered toward the back of the room, and asked: "Who's smoking back there?" One student yelled back: "No one. That's just the fog we're in."

But to return to the subject of listening, Dr. Charles Irvin tested 1,400 Michigan State college freshmen before and after listener training. Poor to above-average listeners before training improved the most. Listening-trained students improved 9-12 percent--9-12 percent--over non-listening-trained students. Listening does improve through training.

In another study, Dr. Arthur Heilman gave students a listening test. Next, they were taught six lessons in listening. Then, they took a second listening test. Students receiving listening training improved greatly over students without training. Students with low listening scores and high I.Q.'s improved more than other groups.

How about outside the classroom? In outside listening situations, listening trained-students were superior. Johnson and Haugh also note listening improvement through training.

How about practical training? Forrest Whan reported pilots with listening training reduced the number of messages repeated. Pilots trained to adapt to the listener in various flying conditions acted more quickly and more accurately in tests. Remember, listener training reduced repetition of messages by pilots, and helped them act more quickly and more accurately in flight. One pilot who wouldn't have been much aided by this training, however, was once approached by an old New Englander and his wife who wanted to take a plane ride. "\$10? Too much!" they said.

The pilot made a proposition. He would take them free if they did not say a single word during the trip. If they spoke, they would pay the \$10.

Trip over and not a word spoken. Once landed, the pilot said he didn't think they'd do it.

"Well," said the old man, "You almost won--sure felt like holler-ing when mama fell out."

Another reason for studying listening is the wide differences in listening ability. Dr. Jones' Columbia study showed high scores were about six times--get that--six times--higher than the lowest scores. Dr. Paul Rankin's work supports these findings.

What's the point? Simple! Most students benefit from listening training. Reducing wide differences in listening ability produces more effective communication.

And we all know that the classroom is one place where communication skills need to be as sharp as possible. I recently heard about

one class in which the professor wanted to make a point in logic, so he said, "The United States is bound on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, and on the west by the Pacific Ocean. Now, how old am I?"

"You are forty-eight," called out one of the students.

"How did you arrive at that?" asked the surprised professor.

"It was easy," said the student. "My twenty-four-year-old brother is only half crazy."

But to return to the subject of listening ability, you might wish to ask--doesn't listening ability develop without special training? No! Dr. Rankin concluded listening ability doesn't develop adequately for life-needs without special training. Dr. Ralph Nichols states daily practice doesn't eliminate need for training. Practicing the same fault is falsely assuming that practice makes perfect. Why study listening? Listening abilities are taught, not caught. But they're not taught enough in formal education. Nichols believes it is considered by all, but really taught by none. An English teachers' survey showed listening was one of the most important skills that needs to be taught. Why study listening? Teachers think it needs to be taught--formally.

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we understand. Listening is a process--an ongoing, dynamic activity.

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Remember, listening isn't limited to immediate speaking situations. Word meanings may start before and continue after talk. Let's say you quarreled with a friend one night. Next day you walk silently toward class together. The silence has meaning.

Another type of silence with which we've all probably had some experience is that caused by embarrassment. I know a young woman school-teacher who boarded a city bus, noticed a familiar face across the aisle, and nodded at him. He stared at her blankly, giving no sign of recognition.

Flustered, the girl called out, "I'm sorry. I thought you were the father of one of my children."

But, to return to our subject--are hearing and listening the same? No! Hearing is focusing on or becoming aware of sound through the senses. Hearing defects reduce classroom learning for only 3-6 percent of the nation's children. Listening is adding meaning to sound symbols, or words.

Are reading and listening the same? No! They are related; but not the same. Heilman found a .66 or moderate relationship between listening and reading. Reading is a visual activity. Nichols states, listening is an aural--or ear--plus a visual activity.

Ear and eye activity differ. Ear activity is multidirectional. Eyes require focusing. You can listen to me from all sides; you must

focus your eyes on me to see me. Ears are more sensitive than eyes. Ears require less energy to activate them, are more durable than eyes, and have greater capacity for continued use. Long movies may make your eyes hurt; but do your ears?

Reading and listening differ, because listening is a social activity. Reading is individualized. The reader sets his own pace. Listening requires other people interacting--it's social. In listening, the speaker sets the pace. Read as fast as you wish, but you can listen only as fast as the speaker speaks--it's social.

Good readers aren't necessarily good listeners. Training in one skill doesn't carry-over to another skill. Reading and listening, then, are related but not the same.

In summary, listening is comprehending through the ear by attaching meaning to words or symbols. Silence has meaning and is an aural symbol. Listening is related, but not the same as hearing or reading. Listening is a social process that is not limited to speaking situations.

Our last and most important question is, "What can we do to listen better?" You might prefer an answer offered by W. C. Fields--"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. Then quit. There's no use making a fool of yourself."

But let me also give you some alternatives. First, get interested in topics--be attentive. Good listeners find interest in most topics; poor listeners find topics dry. Create interest by selfishly realizing listening is an easy way to (1) get information; (2) grow culturally; (3) mature socially. There are no uninteresting topics, only uninterested listeners. You listen to what you want to listen. Watkins and Frost state over half of deafness is really inattentiveness.

Second, don't over-criticize the speaker, speech, or situations; stimulate him. Build confidence. Listener and speaker share responsibility for successful speech--it's a two-way street. Listening is inside-action, no one else does it for you. Help the speaker, don't over criticize.

Third, keep cool toward emotion-rousing points or over-stimulation. Fully understand points before judging. Exercise emotional control and maturity before responding to terms like "nigger," "strip-tease," "mercy-killing." Don't be like the co-ed on her way to a political rally who said, "I'm going with an open mind, a complete lack of prejudice, and a cool, rational approach to listen to what I'm convinced is pure rubbish."

Fourth, develop a philosophy that is objective and open-minded. Listen to and identify words. Analyze reasons for word meanings. Rationalize word impact through discussions with others.

Fifth, don't over- or under-expend energy--don't fake it. Seniors fake attention well. Effective listeners increase heart action, blood circulation, and body temperature when listening. Do you? Nichols states attention is a collection of inner tensions satisfied when related messages are received from the speaker. Try to: (1) come rested to listen; (2) concentrate on what's said; (3) give prior thought to topic; (4) behave as listeners should behave.

Sixth, recognize main points. Lee found only 25 percent of the listeners recognized main ideas.

Seventh, take notes only when there is a reason for taking them. McClendon's study revealed comprehension was not increased when students took notes. Then why take notes? You may be mistaken for a "grind,"

you know. You all know what happens when an instructor walks in and says, "Good Morning, class." The C students say "Good Morning" back-- the A students write it down in their notes.

Remember, get interested in topics. Don't over-criticize. Keep cool toward emotion-rousing points. Be open-minded. Don't fake attention. Recognize main point. Take notes only when necessary.

In closing, let's review main points. First, why study listening? Listening is learned and improved through training. Wide differences in listening ability exist. Listening doesn't develop adequately without training.

Second, what is listening? Listening is comprehending through the ear and attaching meaning to words and symbols. Silence has meaning. Listening is a social process not limited to speaking situations.

Third, how can we listen better? We can get interested; avoid over-criticizing; keep cool toward emotion-rousing points; be open-minded; avoid faking attention; recognize main points; and take only necessary notes.

Low Humor Speech as Recorded by Speaker

Today I'm going to help you become better at listening--listening, for instance, to lectures. I should point out, of course, that the student sometimes is not the only one to blame for communication problems in this situation. I suppose you've all heard about the professor who dreamed he was lecturing to his classes--and when he woke up, he was?

We're going to spend about ten minutes together today trying to understand the listening process. As you might suspect, listening is the communication skill that is most frequently used today. Chances are, you listen three times as much as you read. Yes, even you who are over-talkative do this. Yet in school, listening receives less than one-sixth as much emphasis.

We will consider three questions. (1) Why study listening? (2) What is listening? (3) What are some principles of listening which, when practiced, will aid you in becoming a more capable listener?

Most of us are pretty poor listeners. For example, you will probably not remember more than 25 percent of the information in this speech. Listen carefully, and maybe you can make me eat my words. And I'm keeping this short. I'm like the politician who discontinued long speeches because of his throat. Too many people threatened to cut it.

Start right now! We've uncovered three points thus far. First, listening is the most-frequently-used communication skill. Second, it is emphasized less than one-sixth as much as reading in schools and is used three times as frequently. Third, you will only remember about 25 percent of the information I give you.

But you still want to know, "Why study listening?" Your grades are based on tests or lectures. Studies reveal training in listening increases comprehension and understanding of lectures.

Dr. Charles Irvin tested 1,400 Michigan State college freshmen before and after listener training. Poor to above-average listeners before training improved the most. Listening-trained students improved 9-12 percent--9-12 percent--over non-listening-trained students. Listening does improve through training.

In another study, Dr. Arthur Heilman gave students a listening test. Next, they were taught six lessons in listening. Then, they took a second listening test. Students receiving listening training improved greatly over students without training. Students with low listening scores and high I.Q.'s improved more than other groups.

How about outside the classroom? In outside listening situations, listening trained-students were superior. Johnson and Haugh also note listening improvement through training.

How about practical training? Forrest Whan reported pilots with listening training reduced the number of messages repeated. Pilots trained to adapt to the listener in various flying conditions acted more quickly and more accurately in tests. Remember, listener training reduced repetition of messages by pilots, and helped them act more quickly and more accurately in flight. One pilot who wouldn't have been

much aided by this training, however, was once approached by an old New Englander and his wife who wanted to take a plane ride. "\$10? Too much!" they said.

The pilot made a proposition. He would take them free if they did not say a single word during the trip. If they spoke, they would pay the \$10.

Trip over and not a word spoken. Once landed, the pilot said he didn't think they'd do it.

"Well," said the old man, "You almost won--sure felt like hollering when mama fell out."

Another reason for studying listening is the wide differences in listening ability. Dr. Jones' Columbia study showed high scores were about six times--get that--six times--higher than the lowest scores. Dr. Paul Rankin's work supports these findings.

What's the point? Simple! Most students benefit from listening training. Reducing wide differences in listening ability produces more effective communication.

Doesn't listening ability develop without special training? No! Dr. Rankin concluded listening ability doesn't develop adequately for life-needs without special training. Dr. Ralph Nichols states daily practice doesn't eliminate need for training. Practicing the same fault is falsely assuming that practice makes perfect. Why study listening? Listening abilities are taught, not caught. But they're not taught enough in formal education. Nichols believes it is considered by all, but really taught by none. An English teachers' survey showed listening was one of the most important skills that needs to be taught. Why study listening? Teachers think it needs to be taught--formally.

Have we answered, "Why study listening?" Yes! We showed that listening ability is learned and improved through training; that comprehension and understanding improve through listening training; that wide differences in listening ability exist and training shortens the gap; that listening doesn't usually develop adequately without training; that teachers believe it should be studied formally.

Now, what is listening? Listening is comprehending. Listening occurs when meaning is attached to aural symbols or words that we hear--we understand. Listening is a process--an ongoing, dynamic activity.

To define listening meaningfully, silence is accepted as an aural symbol. I mean aural--a-u-r-a-l--aural. Silence has meaning. Ever ask for a date and get silence? It had meaning. Listeners digest or prepare for new ideas during silence. Much listening occurs during silence.

Remember, listening isn't limited to immediate speaking situations. Word meanings may start before and continue after talk. Let's say you quarreled with a friend one night. Next day you walk silently toward class together. The silence has meaning.

Are hearing and listening the same? No! Hearing is focusing on or becoming aware of sound through the senses. Hearing defects reduce classroom learning for only 3-6 percent of the nation's children. Listening is adding meaning to sound symbols, or words.

Are reading and listening the same? No! They are related; but not the same. Heilman found a .66 or moderate relationship between listening and reading. Reading is a visual activity. Nichols states, listening is an aural--or ear--plus a visual activity.

Ear and eye activity differ. Ear activity is multidirectional. Eyes require focusing. You can listen to me from all sides; you must

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Second, don't over-criticize the speaker, speech, or situation; stimulate him. Build his confidence. Listener and speaker share responsibility for successful speech--it's a two-way street. Listening is inside-action, no one else does it for you. Help the speaker, don't over-criticize.

Third, keep cool toward emotion-rousing points or over-stimulation. Fully understand points before judging. Exercise emotional control and maturity before responding to terms like "nigger," "strip-tease," "mercy-killing."

Fourth, don't over- or under-expend energy--don't fake it. Seniors fake attention well. Effective listeners increase heart action, blood circulation, and body temperature when listening. Do you? Nichols states attention is a collection of inner tensions satisfied when related messages are received from the speaker. Try to: (1) come rested to listen; (2) concentrate on what's said; (3) give prior thought to topic; (4) behave as listeners should behave.

Sixth, recognize main points. Lee found only 25 percent of the listeners recognized main ideas.

Seventh, take notes only when there is a reason for taking them. McClendon's study revealed comprehension was not increased when students took notes. Then why take notes? You may be mistaken for a "grind," you know. You all know what happens when an instructor walks in and says, "Good Morning, class." The C students say "Good Morning" back--the A students write it down in their notes.

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Non-Humor Speech as Recorded by Speaker

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We will consider three questions. (1) Why study listening? (2) What is listening? (3) What are some principles of listening which, when practiced, will aid you in becoming a more capable listener?

Most of us are pretty poor listeners. For example, you will probably not remember more than 25 percent of the information in this speech. Listen carefully, and maybe you can make me eat my words.

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APPENDIX B

MATERIAL PRESENTED TO Ss AFTER THE SPEECH

(cover sheet)

Directions: Please read carefully. You are to rate the speaker and his performance. As previously stated, it is important that you respond honestly and to the best of your ability, since this information will be used not only for present evaluation of the speaker, but also for planning his future training in possible areas of weakness. Your first impression will probably be most accurate, so work quickly. When you have finished, hand your paper to the experimenter.

Questionnaire to Measure Attention to Speech Content

Only Ss in Stage II received this page

Directions: Circle the correct letter. Choose only one letter for each question, except question (6).

1. The main topic of the speech was: (a) the listening process
(6) the lack of communication in our society (c) how to pronounce words correctly.
2. The speaker (a) did (b) did not cite statistical evidence to support his points.
3. The speaker (a) does (b) does not believe that listening ability can be improved through training.
4. The speaker stated that (a) telephone company officials (b) teachers believe listening needs to be studied formally.
5. The speaker said that (a) policemen (b) pilots who received special training reduced the number of messages repeated and helped them to act more quickly in emergencies.
6. Different subjects in this experiment view slightly different speeches and methods of presentation. In the speech you have just seen, did the speaker tell any jokes? (a) yes (b) no

If your answer is--Yes, check off the jokes you remember from the list below. You may have heard several of these or none at all.

There was a joke about:

- (a) a professor who woke up and found he was lecturing to his class.
- (b) a politician worried about getting his throat cut because of long speeches.
- (c) a class where a student complained about "the fog we're in."
- (d) an old man and woman who took a plane ride.
- (e) a student whose twenty-four-year-old brother was half crazy.
- (f) a schoolteacher who thought she recognized the father of a student on a bus.
- (g) W. C. Fields advising that there's no use making a fool of yourself.

- (h) a co-ed with an open mind, convinced that she was about to hear pure rubbish.
- (i) "A" students writing down "Good Morning" in their notes.

Specific Verbal Instructions Given to Ss During the Testing

(After a few minutes of casual conversation to put the S at ease, he heard these instructions.)

You are about to see a live telecast of a graduate student making a short, informative speech. The speech will be given in another room in this building and we will pick up the broadcast here. Afterwards, you will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire evaluating the speaker and his manner of presentation. It is very important that you pay close attention to the speech and then respond honestly and to the best of your ability, since this information will be used not only for present evaluation of the speaker, but also for planning his future training in possible areas of weakness. The speaker understands his speech is being televised and that he will be evaluated by those watching.

Watch the set immediately in front of you. The speech will begin within the next few minutes and will last approximately ten minutes. Immediately afterwards, you will receive the questionnaire.

Do you have any questions? If not, I will give the broadcast room a signal, and we will get started within the next few minutes.

(After an S had seen the speech, he was taken to another room to complete the questionnaire. He was told to hand the questionnaire to an assistant in the next room when finished. Stage I Ss were dismissed at this point. Stage II Ss were told--)

Thank you for your answers. Now I would like you to talk with the speaker for a moment. He has finished speaking for now and is working on another speech in Room B, but he would certainly appreciate your spontaneous comments on the speech you saw. You need not feel uneasy about how you evaluated him, because he will not see your answers. Just relax; he will not be asking questions to which there is a right or wrong answer, but simply your opinion on a few points. (Knocks on door.) Go right in.

(After one minute had elapsed and the measure of Personal Space had been determined, the assistant returned to Room B and said--)

I am sorry, that is all the time we have. Mr. Moore has to give another speech. We do have, however, one final set of questions for you to answer, and they will only take a minute.

(Upon completion of this sheet the S was thanked and dismissed. A "debriefing" letter was sent to each S within a few days.)

Debriefing Letter

Dear _____,

I want to thank you again for your participation as a subject in my research. Many of you had questions which I discouraged at the time of the experiment, but which I will now attempt to answer. My refusal to answer questions immediately following your participation was not simply to withhold information as though the research were secret, and it was not completely due to my being too busy at that time, as I implied (although this was partially the case). The principle reason was to prevent later subjects from having any prior knowledge of the experimental goals--that is, the last subject should have no knowledge that might affect his performance which the first subject did not have. Of course, it is unlikely that one subject would intentionally give information which might alter results to one who would later serve as a subject, but it could easily happen accidentally, and the best way to prevent this result seemed to be to withhold all information concerning the hypotheses and purpose until all testing of subjects was completed. In addition, the time span between testing the first and last subject was relatively short--approximately a week. For these reasons, the explanation of the research to participating subjects--the "debriefing"--has been delayed until this time.

The main purpose of the experiment was to investigate the effect of humor on a listener's perception of a speaker, more specifically, whether a listener will "like" a speaker who uses humor more than a speaker who does not.

Three different speeches, each about ten minutes in length, were used; one contained no humor, another--the "low" humor speech--contained five pieces of humorous material--approximately one every two minutes, and the third speech--the "high" humor version--contained ten pieces of humorous material--approximately one every minute. With the exception of the humorous material, the speeches were identical and were all delivered by the same speaker. The pieces of humorous material were chosen from a larger group previously presented to thirty-six other subjects for "funniness" ratings and all had received average ratings placing them somewhere between "slightly" and "moderately" funny--thus roughly equivalent to "classroom" humor in contrast to "very" or "extremely" humorous material one might expect from a professional comedian.

Each subject saw one of the speeches, and then filled out a checklist which will be used to evaluate how much he "likes" the speaker. Hopefully those who saw the high humor version will rate higher on "liking" the speaker than those who saw the low humor

version, and both these groups will rate higher than those who saw the non-humor version.

Finally, about half the subjects (previously chosen by random selection) completed an additional phase in the experiment; they conversed with the speaker for one minute concerning his speech presentation. During this time an assistant was measuring how closely they approached the speaker through a two-way mirror. Several studies have shown that individuals who are better liked are more closely approached in situations such as this, so this was simply an additional measure to further support the paper-and-pencil ratings of how the speaker was liked.

These subjects also completed one last page of questions after talking to the speaker. These were designed simply to measure attention and comprehension for the speech, since subjects not listening to the speech could not be expected to like the speaker.

Obviously there were a few instances where you were lead to believe that which was not exactly the case. Those of you who have had any experience with psychology know this is not uncommon in experimental work, and though this may not seem to be sufficient justification, I can add that nothing you were told could logically be expected to have caused you any harm or anxiety, and that the accumulation of scientific data seems occasionally to be sufficient reason for conduct one might not normally condone. In any case, please accept my apology for not being completely truthful with you during the experiment.

Finally, I will now attempt to explain some of the specific reasons for what you were told during the experiment. No mention was made of humor being an important variable so subjects would not be particularly attuned to it and since one-third of the subjects saw a speech containing no humor. It was necessary to use a visual recording for each of the three speeches so subjects in each group would be presented with identical stimuli, and subjects were told it was a "live" telecast and that they were evaluating the speaker for his own benefit in order to better simulate a "real-life" situation and to insure attention and motivation. Finally, some of the subjects were asked to converse with the speaker to give them a reason for being in the room with the speaker while their distance of approach to him could be measured, as previously mentioned.

If you have any further questions, don't hesitate to contact me. Hopefully, a copy of the completed thesis will be in the O.S.U. library at the end of the semester.

Sincerely yours,

John K. Reid

VITA

2

John Kenneth Reid

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: THE EFFECT OF HUMOR ON PERCEIVED ATTRACTIVENESS OF A SPEAKER

Major Field: Psychology

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Kansas City, Missouri, May 30, 1945, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth M. Reid.

Education: Attended grade school in Blackwell, Oklahoma; graduated from Blackwell High School in 1963; received the Bachelor of Science degree from Oklahoma State University in May, 1967, with a major in Psychology; completed requirements for the Master of Science degree in May, 1971.

Professional Experience: Began employment as a Psychological Assistant for the State of Oklahoma, Department of Public Welfare in August, 1970.