

LESSON 5

IMPROVING THE VOICE

Introduction

A good voice is essential for public speakers as well as singers. Even in daily personal relationships, the voice is a major factor in impressing or repelling others. The sound of one's voice is a key to his personality. It reveals whether or not one is friendly and congenial. Some voices irritate and repulse.

The voice is an essential tool of the preacher's trade. It must indicate conviction, reveal sincerity, and avoid irritation. Its quality must be pleasing and clear. The preacher needs to ask himself the following questions:

Do people react favourably to my voice?

Can they understand me easily?

Can they hear what I say?

Do they find my voice pleasant and agreeable?

Do they find my speech animated and interesting to listen to?

People who are closest to us become accustomed to our voices even though they are irritating, whining, or harsh. However, people whom we meet for the first time are repulsed if our voices are unpleasant. Normally, one is not born with an especially good speaking voice; it has to be developed and improved. Improvement comes by one's taking the basic equipment already possessed and using it with greater efficiency, and this requires practice. Since the preacher uses his voice so much, any amount of time he uses in practice for improving it is a good investment. Without a clear and expressive voice, he will labour under a severe handicap.

Demosthenes, a Greek orator of the fourth century B.C., was one of the greatest orators of all time. As a youth, his voice was weak and his articulation was defective. To correct these faults, he went daily to the ocean, placed pebbles in his mouth, and shouted against the roar of the waves. On occasions, he lived in a cave in order to

A preacher's voice should express
f _____, c _____, and
s _____.

(friendliness, conviction, sincerity)

The time which a preacher spends in practice
to improve his _____ is a good
_____.

(voice, investment)

Demosthenes placed pebbles in his mouth and
shouted against the roar of the waves in
order to _____ his weak voice and
to correct his faulty _____.

(strengthen, articulation)

concentrate on the improvement of his voice. Booker T. Washington, the great Negro orator, received private lessons in the matter of breathing, emphasis, and articulation. Each Saturday evening, he attended a meeting of the debating society at Hampton and practised regularly the principles of voice improvement which he learned.

This one lesson on voice improvement will serve only as an introduction. The serious student, who desires to go further in the principles of speech and voice development, will find the titles of helpful books in the selective bibliography.

Characteristics of a Good Speaking Voice

The good speaking voice articulates well

A good voice is understood easily throughout the assembly hall. Clarity, volume, and projection are essential. In smaller auditoriums or in buildings with poor acoustics, the normal rate of speaking and volume may need to be reduced in order for the sounds to be distinct.

In addition to volume, individual speech sounds should be clear. Articulation is the formation of sounds, involving the movements of the lips, jaw, tongue, and soft palate. The slurring and mumbling of words are unpleasant and irritating to those who listen. Distinct and intelligible speech requires correct articulation. Speech sounds are joined together to form words and phrases. Pronunciation concerns choosing the correct sounds and placing the proper stress upon the syllable or syllables to be accented.

Mumbling is the result of carelessness and sluggishness in articulation. The mumblor says "gi-me" for "give me," and the word "understanding" becomes "unnerstaning." The garbler uses incorrect sounds. He may say "doze, dem, deze, and wit" for "those, them, these, and with." This type of speech is objectionable and should be corrected.

A good speaking voice is free of affectations

The antithesis of slurring or mumbling is an overly precise articulation which calls attention to itself. Syllables become chopped up into individual words. The word education may be pronounced "ed-you-kay-shawn." Articulation which attracts attention to itself is described as affected speech and is to be avoided.

Unscramble the groups of letters to make words for the blanks below.

Articulation is the formation of sounds, involving the movements of the _____
silp
 _____, _____, and _____
waj gonute tofs

lapeat

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Read the last two paragraphs on this page before doing the following exercise.

Identify each of the below examples of bad articulation as mumbling, garbling, or affectation.

- "gi-me" for "give me" 1. _____
- "ed-you-kay-shawn" for "education" 2. _____
- "unnerstaning" for "understanding" 3. _____
- "doze" for "those" 4. _____
- "wit" for "with" 5. _____

(1. mumbling, 2. affectation, 3. mumbling, 4. garbling, 5. garbling)

A good speaking voice has pleasing quality

An undesirable voice may be characterized as raspy, guttural, breathy, thin, harsh, whining, or monotonous. A good speaking voice has quality in the tone and texture. The breathy voice is much too soft and does not carry well. The raspy, harsh voice may have either a high or low pitch. Each extreme is unpleasant to the ear. The whining voice is too nasal. Poor voice characteristics can be corrected by understanding how sounds are formed and practising the correct formation of them.

A good speaking voice is flexible and varied

Although a speaker may have adequate volume, the same level of loudness is not appropriate for every occasion. Volume varies for an audience of 50 and of 200. Failure to vary the volume, pitch, and rate creates monotonous patterns which are irritating to listeners. Variety and flexibility are the results of expanding the range of pitch, varying the rate, and learning to project the voice without having to shout.

How Sounds Are Produced

The four phases of the process of making speech sounds are: respiration, phonation, resonance, and articulation. Sounds are produced when air from the lungs is forced from them and across the vocal cords in the voice-box (larynx), thus causing the cords to vibrate. This process is called phonation and involves such factors as pitch, range, and inflection. After the sound has been formed in the voice-box, it is amplified and resonated in the cavities of the throat, nose, and mouth, and the small cavities of the head, called sinuses. The resonating mechanisms give tone quality to the voice. The tongue, teeth, and lips articulate the tones into meaningful speech sounds. Voice improvement requires—

developing adequate and controlled breathing for initiating the tones,

relaxation of throat and jaw to permit free and unhampered swinging of the vocal cords,

learning to place properly the tones so that resonance may be used most advantageously, and

An unpleasant voice may be characterized as
r _____, b _____, w _____,
g _____.

(raspy, breathy, whining, guttural)

List in order the four phases of the process of making speech sounds.

- 1. _____ 3. _____
- 2. _____ 4. _____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Voice improvement requirements are related to the four phases of the process of making speech sounds. They are:

- 1. Development of adequate and controlled _____.
- 2. Relaxation of _____ and _____.
- 3. Proper _____ of tones for resonance.
- 4. _____ in lips and tongue for proper articulation.

(breathing, jaw, throat, placement, Flexibility)

cultivating flexibility in the lips and tongue for proper articulation.¹

Improving Respiration

Respiration is the act of breathing—inhaling and exhaling air. Smooth and proper breathing is essential for steadiness of vocalization, projection, rate, pitch, phrasing, and poise in speaking. Breathing has the triple function of supplying oxygen through the lungs to the blood, removing carbon dioxide from the body, and providing air by which sounds are produced. Breath is expelled from the lungs through the bronchial tubes. It passes through the windpipe (trachea), which is about four inches long and one inch in diameter, and through the voice-box or larynx at the top of the windpipe. While speaking, proper breathing provides a sufficient and smooth flow of air to the vocal cords.

The lungs are housed in the chest or thorax. The framework of the thorax consists of the spinal column, the sternum (breastbone), the shoulder blades and collar bones, and twelve pairs of ribs. The ribs are attached to the backbone (spinal column), and the seven upper pairs are joined in front to the sternum. Each of the next three pairs are joined by cartilages to the rib above it. The two lowest pairs are not directly attached in front and are called floating ribs. The rib cage is structured to permit flexibility and outward movement. When a deep breath is taken, the chest expands and rises. Inhaling is the result of the expanding of the thorax and the rushing in of air to fill the vacuum created by the expansion.

The diaphragm, which is a tough, double-domed muscle, separates the chest and abdominal cavities. The muscles of the diaphragm alternately contract and expand. As the dome-shaped muscle contracts, it moves downward and flattens, compressing the visceral organs (the stomach, liver, and kidneys). When a person inhales, he may observe that the abdominal walls bulge slightly. The ribs are raised upward and outward and the shoulders may be lifted. When the muscles of the diaphragm are relaxed, the visceral organs return to their uncompressed positions, and the diaphragm moves upward, thus decreasing the size of the thorax cavity. The decrease in size forces the air out of the lungs.

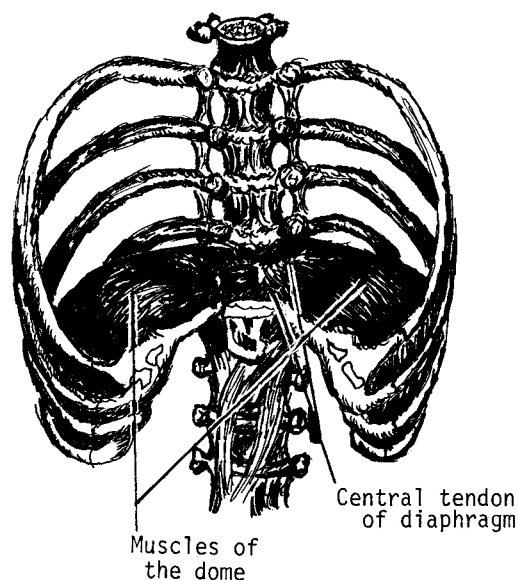
The lungs do not actually suck in and expel air, but they are spongy, porous organs which fill with the

¹Harrison M. Karr, Your Speaking Voice (Glendale, Calif.: Griffin-Patterson Publishing Co., 1938), pp. 261-62.

Proper breathing aids in steadiness of _____, _____ of the voice, r _____, p _____, phrasing, and p _____ in speaking.

(vocalization, projection, rate, pitch, poise)

LOWER RIBS AND DIAPHRAGM



The following exercise is based on this paragraph and the preceding one.

Use the following words in the blanks in the sentence below:

flattening
enlarging
raising

The _____ of the thorax by the _____ of the diaphragm and the _____ of the ribs and shoulders cause air to be inhaled.

(enlarging, flattening, raising)

in-rushing air as the cavity of the thorax expands. The air is forced out of the lungs as the thorax cavity becomes smaller with the downward movement of the ribs and the upward movement of the diaphragm.

Talking requires that the flow of air and respiration be controlled and modified. The creating of continuous sounds requires much air; therefore, the speaker must learn to breathe deeply and to control the exhalation of breath.

In shallow breathing, inhalation may involve only the upper ribs, collar-bone and shoulders. This type of breathing can be illustrated by lifting and lowering the shoulders. Deeper breathing expands the rib cage, and is observed when the chest expands and contracts. The deepest breathing involves the abdomen and diaphragm and is indicated by the bulging of the waist during inhalation. Speaking requires proper use of all three, but the diaphragm provides for the best control in speaking.

The student should try each of the three methods of breathing until he can distinguish between them; after he is able to make the distinction, he should select a paragraph and see how far he can read aloud on one breath at each level of breathing.

Controlled breathing is improved by exercises requiring conscious inhaling and exhaling. The following exercises should be helpful.

1. After inhaling slowly, hold the breath for three seconds and then exhale slowly. Next, inhale quickly and hold the breath for five or six seconds before exhaling slowly. Repeat these exercises several times each day.
2. Inhale quickly and count slowly as you exhale. Continue to practise this exercise until you can count to fifty orally during a period of approximately 35 seconds on one breath. Avoid permitting breath to escape between numbers.
3. While standing erect, place your hands on your hips and practise inspiration and expiration by the deep breathing method.
4. While standing erect with hands on your hips, pant like a dog after a long run.

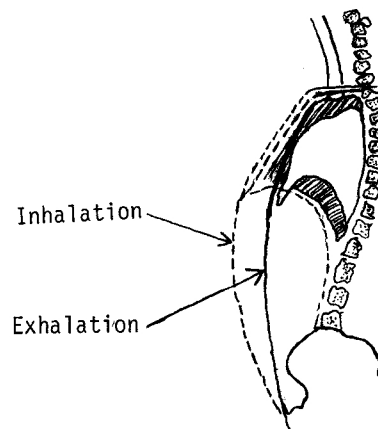
The three levels of breathing are:

_____ , _____ , _____ .

Are these statements true or false?

- _____ 1. Speaking requires proper use of all three levels of breathing.
- _____ 2. The deepest level does not involve the diaphragm but provides the best control in speaking.

(shallow, deeper, deepest, true, false)



5. While standing erect, inhale by the correct use of the diaphragm and then slowly, smoothly, and steadily utter as many letters of the alphabet as you can on one breath.
6. While standing erect, pack your air against your belt and then expul- sively and with moderate force say "Ho!" Do this a dozen times with- out additional inhalation, bringing your abdomen in with a sharp jerk with each "Ho!" as if the abdomen and diaphragm were pumping up the word.
7. While standing erect, inhale deeply and then force the air out in a slow, steady, firm stream by pulling in your abdomen. With considerable volume, but with a relaxed throat, utter the phrase "ah-hoy-oy-oy-oy- oy."

The goal of the speaker is to learn to breathe deeply and to release his breath slowly and smoothly. Repeating daily these suggested exercises will result in significant progress in controlling the breath and in increasing the amount of air available for speaking. The exercises should be continued until the proper breathing techniques become natural.

Improving Phonation

Phonation is the making of speech sounds. Breath control must be coordinated with phonation in order that breathing will not interfere with it. Prac- tice will enable the speaker to use economically the breath being exhaled to produce an easy and adequate tone. The sound vibrations are produced as the controlled exhaled air passes through the larynx.

The larynx is a shield-shaped box of cartilages situated at the top of the trachea. Stretched across it are two tendinous folds or bands. They are not cords or muscular strings as some people believe but folds of tough fibrous muscle. The pitch of the tone is determined by the thickness and tension of the folds. The most normal pitch for each person varies, de- pending on the structure of the vocal folds.

When breathing and not speaking, the vocal folds are drawn apart leaving an opening. They are attached by intrinsic muscles to various parts within the structure of the larynx. When a person begins to speak, the folds come together and cut off the air passage. Air pressure begins to build up in the trachea beneath them. When the pressure is sufficient,

The making of speech sounds is called

_____.

Voice sounds are made as exhaled air passes between the _____ in the

_____.

(Compare your answers with the text.

the taut folds are forced apart and a bit of air escapes. With the release of pressure, the folds vibrate and a sound wave is created. The vibration of the folds causes the column of air in the voice tract to vibrate. The vibration is projected from the mouth and is picked up by the ear of the listener.

The faster the folds vibrate, the higher the pitch. The slower they vibrate, the lower the pitch. The over-all vibration of the folds produces a basic pitch or fundamental tone. In addition, the vocal folds vibrate in small parts or segments. The secondary vibrations produce overtones which give richness and distinctiveness to the voice of the speaker.

Even though voices of different people may have approximately the same pitch, seldom does one mistake the voice of one person for that of another. One person's voice may have a nasal twang while another may sound raspy or husky and another fuzzy and breathy. Voice quality is the characteristic of tone by which the voice of one person is distinguished from that of another, although both have approximately the same pitch level. Quality determines whether the voice is pleasant or unpleasant. It is determined primarily by two things: (1) the production of the original tone by the vocal folds; and (2) the process of selection, re-enforcement and enrichment of that tone by the resonators (throat, mouth, nasal cavities.)

Raspy and brassy voices are usually the results of tension and strain. Voice quality can be improved by getting rid of unnecessary tension from the intrinsic muscles of the larynx. It is not easy to relax the small muscles of the voice-box, but it can be done through exercises and thus prevent restriction of the vocal cords. Quality is improved when the relaxed muscles of the throat permit the cords to vibrate unhampered.

The speaker should think of the throat as an open channel through which the tone flows. The larynx, rather than the throat, produces the sounds, and the throat muscles should not be strained in an attempt to force the tone. Strained throat muscles hamper the vibrations of the vocal cords.

Exercises which help to relax the throat before speaking were given in lesson 3 in the discussion on controlling fear and nervousness. The following exercises should be done regularly to improve resonance.

1. While standing, tense the larger muscles of the body and then relax them. Raise one arm slowly and then let it fall limply to the side. Relaxing the larger muscles is preliminary to relaxing the throat muscles.

Match the following:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| ___ Fundamental tone | a. produced by the vibration of smaller parts or segments of the vocal folds. |
| ___ Overtones | b. produced by the over-all vibration of the folds. |
- (Compare your answers with the text.)

Use the following words to complete the statement:

larynx, vibrate, quality, muscles, tension

Voice _____ can be improved by getting rid of unnecessary _____ from the intrinsic muscles of the _____ and relaxing the _____ of the throat to permit the cords to _____ unhampered.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

2. From a standing position, bend forward from the hips and permit the upper part of the body to relax completely. Rotate the body in as large a circle as possible. Let the head and arms dangle listlessly.
3. While standing erect, let the head drop forward and roll it on the shoulders. Permit the jaw to sag.
4. Use the hand to move the jaw back and forth without resistance, almost as if it were unhinged, until you feel it swinging loosely.
5. Yawn several times.
6. Stand erect with the jaw slightly dropped and the head leaning forward and downward in order to maintain relaxed muscles in the neck and jaws. Say "a, e, i, o, u." Then take a deep breath and utter each vowel again steadily, smoothly, purely, and through an open throat.

Improving Resonance

As the tone leaves the vocal folds after vibration, it must gain greater volume and resonance before it can be effective for speaking. The vocal mechanisms, which are the resonators above the larynx, amplify the tone. The hollow box below the strings of a cello and the sounding board of a piano reinforce and amplify the sounds of the strings. If a string is removed from the body of the cello and stretched tightly between two fixed points, only feeble scratching and scraping noises can be produced from the string. If the sounding board is removed from a piano, the rich tones are lost. Likewise, the human voice needs a sounding board to reinforce and amplify the sounds (resonance) coming from the vocal folds. The cavities of the throat (pharynx), mouth (oral cavity), and the nose (nasal cavity) serve as the human resonators. The sound waves are reflected or bounced off the surfaces of the cavities and produce a megaphone effect.

The pharynx is a tube-like muscular passageway extending from the larynx to the cavity behind the nasal passage. It is approximately five inches long and it may be shortened or lengthened slightly by raising or lowering the larynx. Place a finger on the larynx (Adam's apple), change the pitch of the voice from low to high, and the raising and lowering of the larynx can be felt. If the muscles of the pharynx (throat) are tight and constricted, the rigid walls will possibly emphasize and give prominence to the higher overtones

Resonance is the _____ and _____ of sounds coming from the vocal folds.

The resonators are cavities of the t _____, m _____, and n _____.

(reinforcement, amplification, throat, mouth, nose)

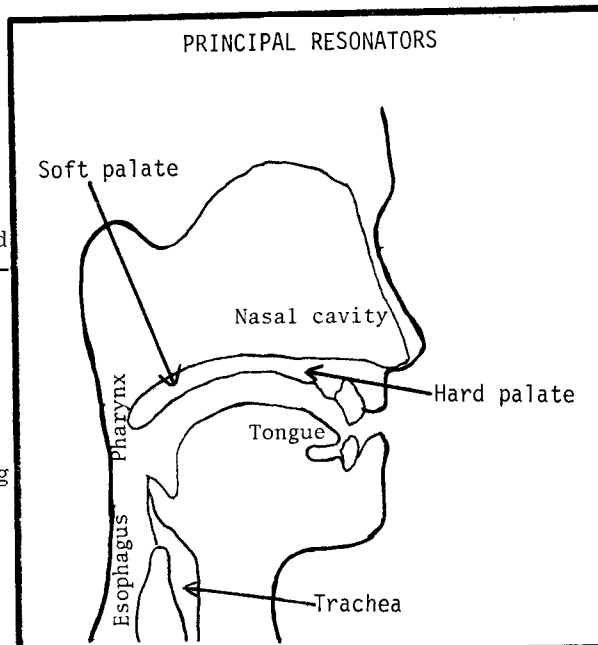
and frequencies. The voice quality becomes strident and harsh. An open and relaxed throat gives prominence to the fundamental and lower overtones, and a relatively mellow, full, and rich quality results.

The oral cavity is bounded by the lips and jaw in front, by the tongue below, and by the hard and soft palates above. Its size is increased or decreased by raising or lowering the tongue or opening and closing the jaw. The tongue itself can be lengthened, shortened, thickened, thinned, broadened, arched, or grooved. The position of the tongue is very significant in the resonance and articulation of sounds. The hard palate, which is towards the front of the mouth, acts as a reflector of sounds. The soft surfaces of the cheeks, lips, and tongue perhaps have an absorbing or a dampening effect on certain sounds.

When a guitar is plucked, the full length of each string vibrates at a certain frequency. At the same time, it vibrates simultaneously in halves, thirds, and fifths. The vibrating segments produce pitches which are higher and weaker than the fundamental pitch. The tone which is heard actually is not a pure simple tone from a single vibration, but it is a composite of the fundamental tone and the overtones. Like the string of the guitar, the vocal folds produce a great number of different simultaneous vibrations. Sounds of particular letters become distinct as the resonators amplify certain overtones and absorb or subdue others. The raising and lowering of the soft palate, the shape and position of the tongue and lips, and the position of the jaw determine which overtones are amplified and which are subdued.

The nasal cavities are divided by a wall of thin bone and cartilage between the nostrils. The cavities extend back to where the soft palate is joined to the hard palate. The soft palate can close off the rear or posterior opening of the nasal chambers. These cavities are primarily responsible for resonating "m," "n," and "ng." Strong, ringing tones are impossible without nasal reverberation. When the membrane tissues of these cavities are inflamed and enlarged by the infection of a cold, voice tones are muffled and lifeless. Often what is called a nasal tone is actually the lack of nasal resonance. This lack can be demonstrated by squeezing one's nose and shutting off the nasal part of his tone while talking.

The ribs, chest, and bones of the face may add some amplification to sound by the principle of forced rather than reflected vibration. This principle is illustrated by the sounding board of a piano, which is caused to vibrate by the sound waves from the strings, thus increasing the volume of the sound waves. Flesh and clothing, however, absorb much of the potential amplification of forced vibration.



Sounds of a particular

Sounds of particular letters become distinct as the resonators _____ certain overtones and _____ others.

(amplify, subdue)

Underline the correct word or words.

The nasal tone (is, is not) actually the lack of nasal resonance.

Lack of nasal resonance results from _____ and _____ of the membrane tissues of the nasal cavity.

(is, inflammation, enlargement)

To improve the quality of the voice, the throat and mouth passages must be relatively open, relaxed, and free of unnecessary tension. The lips, jaw, and tongue, should be agile and flexible. The proper place for projecting tone is the front of the mouth. The walls of the resonators must be in good health in order that they will not be swollen and coated with mucus.

Resonance is improved with exercises which relax the throat, jaw, and tongue. It has been suggested that any faults in resonance can be discovered and corrected by closing one's eyes and concentrating on the use of the sounding board of the cavities. Proper resonance and projection come from reflecting the sounds from the front of the oral cavity. Exercises for forwarding the tones include:

1. Humming slowly and steadily through the nasal cavities with the lips closed. While sustaining the sound of the letter "m-m-m-m," let the jaw drop. While concentrating on the nose and its cavities, force the humming sound through the chambers of the nose.
2. While the whole face is vibrating on the hummed "m-m-m-m," open the lips and let the sound become "m-e-e-e-e." Do the same with "n-e-e-e-e." Repeat on different levels of pitch.
3. Repeat the above exercise with "m-o-o-o-o," and "n-o-o-o-o."
4. Repeat the exercise with "m-ah-ah-ah-ah."
5. Tense the throat and jaw muscles and then swallow. After maintaining extreme tension for a few seconds, say "ah." Observe the vocal quality. Then, for contrast, place the tip of your tongue behind the lower front teeth. Relax the jaw and yawn gently as you inhale. With the same degree of easiness, say "ah" on exhalation.
6. With the throat and jaw relaxed and the tip of the tongue behind the lower front teeth, repeat each of the following words ten times with one breath: "yah, you, yoh, yay, hah, hoo, hoh, hay, yah."

The proper place for projecting tone is the front of the _____.

(mouth)

Exercises which relax the jaw, throat, and tongue will improve _____.

(resonance)

7. Repeat the above exercise by beginning each word softly and gradually increasing the volume without permitting the throat to tighten.
8. On a sustained breath repeat each of the following sounds as many times as possible with steadily increasing volume: "sing, ding, dang, dong, hum-ming."
9. To project the tone to the front of the mouth, chant the following: "ee-ee-ee ee-ee-ee-ee; oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh; aw-aw-aw-aw-aw-aw-aw-aw." Repeat and try to give the "oh" and "aw" the same placement and brilliance as "ee."

Articulation

Articulation is the shaping of the resonated tones into the sounds of speech. Pronunciation is the joining of sounds of speech to make words and phrases. The lips, jaw, tongue, and soft palate change shapes and/or positions to form sounds of the alphabet from the resonated tones. The word "adventure" has seven different speech sounds and each sound requires its own particular adjustment of the articulators which produce it. The seven different speech sounds can be formed and the word pronounced in half a second. The articulating mechanisms must move rapidly if words are to be pronounced clearly. It usually takes a child from four to seven years to perfect his speech.

Defective articulation arises usually from lazy, inactive lips; stiff jaws; a thick, clumsy tongue; or a placid, inactive vellum (soft palate).² The tongue and lips must be flexible and adequately controlled to produce articulate speech. The jaw and vellum need to move freely. Flexibility and freedom of movement can be improved by exercises.

1. Exercises for the lips:
 - (1) Protrude the lips as far as you can and then pull them back tightly into an extreme smiling position. Repeat this exercise several times.
 - (2) Rapidly repeat the following words: "pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat."

²Glenn R. Capp, Basic Oral Communication (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), p. 255.

Write articulation or pronunciation in front of the phrase which defines each word.

_____ *The shaping of resonated tones into speech sounds*

_____ *The joining of sounds to make words and phrases*

(articulation, pronunciation)

- (3) Exaggerate the lip movements while saying the following statement: "If Peter Piper pecked a pick of people pippers, did Peper Piper peek at peering peepers?" Use the same exaggerated lip movements and say: "wee-way-wee-way-wee way-wee-way."

2. Exercises for the tongue:

- (1) Double the tongue back against the soft palate as far as you can, then thrust it firmly against the inside of the left cheek and then the right cheek.
- (2) Repeat each of the following words ten times on one breath: "paw, law, daw, raw, yaw."
- (3) Repeat several times: "Three thrifty rural rats ran through thirty-three threaded thrones."

3. Exercises for the jaw:

- (1) Drop the jaw easily as if to say "aw" and move the relaxed jaw from left to right with your hand.
- (2) Exaggerate the jaw movements while saying the following: "taw, taw, taw, taw; er-aw-er-aw-er-aw-er-aw; oo-aw-oo-aw-oo-aw-oo-aw-oo-aw."

4. Exercises for the vellum (soft palate):

- (1) Yawn several times. Yawning causes the vellum to rise.
- (2) With the mouth open wide, repeat the sound "aw."
- (3) Alternate the sounds "aw" and "m." The first causes the vellum to rise and the second causes it to lower.

Some sounds exercise more than one articulator. "Bah, fah, pah, wah, and mah" are good sounds to exercise the lips, jaw and tongue when they are uttered explosively and when the lips and tongue movements are exaggerated. Exercises for the articulators should be repeated frequently in order to keep the lips, tongue, and jaw flexible. If a recording of one's voice reveals that certain sounds are not clear, special attention should be given to exercising the

Is this statement true or false?

It is unnecessary to continue exercising articulators after they have become flexible.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

articulator which is primarily responsible for forming those sounds. Access to a tape recorder provides opportunity for the speaker to hear himself as he reads a selected passage. Attention should be given to any sounds or words which are not distinct and clear.

Requirements for Improving the Voice

There is no easy or mechanical way for achieving good tone quality. Improvement is possible, however, if the speaker is willing to discipline himself. A number of suggestions are given which, if followed, will lead to the improvement of the voice.

1. The speaker must become aware of the areas of weakness. Since his own ears have become accustomed to the sound of his voice, it is not easy for him to discover his own faults. The first step is to become conscious of his own voice and compare it to the voices of others. As you listen to others, determine why you are attracted to the voice of one person and repulsed by that of another. While listening to others speak, analyse what kind of impression their voices make upon you and determine why they are pleasant or unpleasant to hear. Examine your own voice and discover if some of the same displeasing qualities are present.
2. Determine if stage fright and tension are hindering you. Your voice may be strong and animated when talking informally, but it may change when you are speaking to a large group. This problem can be solved by proper exercise before speaking.
3. Determine if the pitch of the voice and the rate of speech are hindrances to clear and distinct pronunciation. These problems may be discovered by listening to a tape recording of a sermon which you have preached. Their solutions will require concentrated effort and planning before the delivery of each message.
4. If the voice is not pleasant, quality can be improved by doing exercises for respiration, phonation, and resonance. If words are not uttered

What characteristic is necessary if one is going to improve his voice? _____

(self-discipline)

In order to improve his voice, the speaker must:

1. *Recognize the areas of _____;*
2. *Exercise to prevent stage _____ and _____;*
3. *Improve _____ of voice and _____ of speech;*
4. *Do exercises for r _____, p _____, and r _____.*

(weakness, fright, tension, pitch, rate, respiration, phonation, resonance)

distinctly, special attention should be given to exercises for improvement of articulation.

5. Schedule a period each day for breathing and voice exercises. A successful pianist must practise for hours each day. A singer with a beautiful voice must spend much time in developing respiration and good voice quality. A poor voice can be improved significantly with practice. Careless voice habits can be replaced with good habits that eventually will become natural to the speaker. Breathing exercises can be practised while walking, phonation and resonance while in the shower or in a secluded area, and articulation while driving an automobile or doing manual labour.

Breathing exercises may be done while

w _____, s _____, d _____

an automobile, or doing m _____

l _____.

(walking, showering, driving, manual labour)

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. What should the voice reveal about the preacher? _____
2. How did Demosthenes become a great orator? _____

3. What is articulation? _____
4. Name three kinds of bad articulation. _____
5. Name four types of poor voice quality. _____
6. List four phases in voice improvement. _____

7. What causes air to be inhaled? _____

8. What kind of breathing is required for speaking? _____

9. What is phonation and how are speech sounds produced? _____

10. Distinguish between fundamental tone and overtones. _____

11. How is phonation improved? _____

12. What is resonance and what are the resonators? _____

13. How do the resonators help to form the sounds of particular letters? _____

14. What is meant by a nasal tone? _____

15. How is resonance improved? _____

16. How does articulation relate to pronunciation? _____

17. List four suggestions for improving the voice. _____

18. On 3 x 5 cards, write down the exercises for improving respiration, phonation, resonance, and articulation. Carry these cards with you and go through the exercises several times each day.

Supplementary activity (Levels 2 and 3):

1. Write an essay on the subject, "Speech is an 'overlaid' function of breathing." Use an encyclopaedia and any other reference books which are available. This essay should show why proper breathing is essential to good speech.
2. Sketch and label the organs of speech. Refer to an encyclopaedia, a book on speech, or a biology book.

Advanced activity (Level 3):

Write an essay on how to improve phonation, resonance, and articulation. The essay should go beyond the exercises suggested for improving the speech processes. It should explain how the organs of speech are affected by the exercises. Help can be found in almost any book on speech.

Seminar Discussion

1. Give several reasons a good voice is essential to the preacher.
2. Distinguish between phonation, resonance, and articulation.
3. What is the relation of respiration to speech?
4. Practise the exercises for improving respiration, phonation, resonance, and articulation.
5. Distinguish between fundamental tones and overtones and forced and reflected vibrations.