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CULTURAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE DEAF.

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Cultural activities for the deaf are described and discussed in seven conference papers. Two papers by P. R. Wisher of Gallaudet College treat "The Role of Physical Education and Athletics for the Deaf in a Hearing World" and "Psychological Contributions of Dance to the Adjustment of the Deaf." Also included are three papers from Poland: H. Burno-Nowakowska, in "Forms and Methods of Raising the Culture and Shaping of Personality of the Deaf and Their Contacts with the Hearing," reports on the use of leisure time by the deaf; B. Gluszczyk, in "Exit from the Circle of Silence," describes a pantomime theater of the deaf; and M. Krysztalowska offers "Remarks on Purpose and Organization of Education through Art in Schools for Deaf Children." In "Artistic Activities of the Deaf" N. A. Klykova describes the Moscow Theater Studio of Mimicry and Gesture for the deaf; and S. Bjorndal of Norway considers the role of the visual arts, including film, in "How Can One Develop the Esthetic Experiences of the Deaf Child?" (JD)

**Cultural Activities for
the Deaf**

**Selected Papers from the
Fifth Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf
Warsaw 1967**

**compiled by
Alexander Graham Bell Association
for the Deaf
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Preface

Cultural Activities for the Deaf is a collection of 7 papers selected from those presented at the Fifth Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf, Warsaw, 1967. These papers were collected and compiled by the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, Washington, D. C. Other collections of papers from the Congress have been compiled and are available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service. Other collections announced in this issue of Research in Education may be found by consulting the Institution Index under World Federation of the Deaf or the Subject Index under aurally handicapped. Titles of these other collections are:

Communication Methods for the Hearing Impaired
Diagnosis of Hearing Loss
Education for the Hearing Impaired (Auditorily Impaired)
Psychology of Deafness
Rehabilitation of Hearing
Sociological Aspects of Deafness
Training and Qualifications (Teachers and Workers For the Deaf)
The Very Young Hearing-Impaired Child

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N.A. KLYKOVA

The Theatre Studio of Mimicry
and Gesture

Moscow - USSR

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ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES OF THE DEAF

/The paper/

For those who cannot hear and thus are not in full contact with the world around the acting is the most resultant means to meet the insufficiency of these contacts.

Therefore it may not be considered accidental that a pronounced striving for any form of the theatrical art is observed among the deaf.

.. It is the wide scope gained by the amateur talent activities among the deaf in our country that serves in support of this striving. Amateur theatre groups and teams at various offices, enterprises and educational institutions concentrate talented people and afford them any opportunity for development of their gifts.

An exclusive attention is paid by the Central Board of All-Russia Society of the Deaf to the amateur talent activities and conditions favourable for this work are created everywhere. Multi-round reviews of amateur talents are organized by the Central Board every two years and the winners are awarded diplomas. To improve the

qualifications of amateur talent associations and groups' instructors, special courses are organized which cultural workers from every corner of the country come to attend.

They have an opportunity during the courses to hear a series of lectures in stage acting, staging, make-up, theatre history, etc.

The repeated reviews of amateur talents confirmed clearly the existing opinion regarding the outstanding acting capacities of the deaf and suggested an idea to the Central Board of establishing a special theatre studio where talented youth may be trained to become professional actors.

Such studio was established in Moscow in 1958.

One of the biggest theatre higher educational institutions of the country, B.V.Schoukin Theatre School of Vakhtangov Theatre, has undertaken to help the studio. Guided by the School's body of teachers under its director, B.E.Zahava, RSFSR Peoples' Artist, the future actors have been professionally trained in accordance with the requirements of the Schoukin School's curriculum.

In April 1963 Moscow Theatre Studio of Mimicry and Gesture, the first and the only one theatre of deaf actors, was founded on the basis of the first graduation of the school.

There is no doubt that the principle and primary task of the similar theatre company is to serve the deaf and communicate to them the aesthetic pleasure conveyed to the man by the theatrical art, to educate them ideologically and culturally.

The theatre is also of undoubted interest to the common spectator as the language of gesture on its stage is developed to the maximum plastic expressiveness, the elements of pantomime are widely employed in its performances and, into the bargain the actors' mute speech is masterfully reproduced by dubbing actors through an audio system,

For three and a half years of its existence the Theatre of Mimicry and Gesture went on tour to over 56 towns of the Russian Federation and Union Republics.

Over five hundred thousand spectators have seen its performances and 15 new productions. The Theatre's performances have had permanent success and numerous and quite favourable press reviews are good indications of this.

The theatre's company, seventeen at the beginning, was soon added by young actors of the Studio's second year graduation and is 30 now.

The number of actors in the company will be further increased as in the current year a new admission to the studio has been announced and another sixteen have presently started the course of training for stage acting.

Apart from the fact that the Theatre's company presents a variety of bright talents a number of features generally typical of the majority of deaf actors are observed in it. They have the very rare capacity to play a broad range of parts, from deeply dramatical to stark comedian, enjoying equal success; a very delicate and peculiar feeling of inner rhythm; deep emotions and, of course, plasticity.

The mentioned features of the company afford an opportunity not only to include dancing, fencing and pantomime into performances, but they have also suggested the idea to produce a separate pantomime performance under the name of "There lived people" on the motive of the early stories by M. Gorky, which have brought the Theatre a number of artistic feats.

The plasticity and expressiveness of deaf actors are to play an essential part in the speech education of deaf spectators.

The Theatrical stage with its ability of making every gesture beautiful, efficient, exact and always to the point should be a school of correct language for people using mimic speech.

The creative connection between the teachers, followers of the Vakhtangov School and their former pupils, now actors, has proved to be strong. Former teachers are now carrying out direction of the Theatre and they are its leading producers. It is due to this that the new theatre company follows in its creative activities the best traditions of Russian realistic art.

As a rule the staging of plays is done following the principle of the best discovery of the actors' individual abilities. Scenery and costumes are designed, though not at the expense of the colour, in such a way that they do not interfere with the right understanding of gesture and remove any excess of useless accessories preventing the spectator from seeing the mimicry of actors.

Choice of the repertoire is guided by the Theatre's main task, i.e. ideological and aesthetic education of spectators. At the same time plays of the repertoire should facilitate the discovery of the actors' abilities. It is due to these reasons that the Theatre's repertoire is diversified. On its playbills one can catch sight of such names as "Life and Crime of Anton Shelestov" by G. Medinsky and V. Tokarev, "Battle with Shadow" by Volery Tour - all are works by soviet playwrights, "Lev Gourich Sinitchkin", an old classical vaudeville by D. Lensky, "Perfidy and Love" by F. Schiller, the "Twelfth Night" by W. Shakespeare and "Medecin malgré lui" by Molière.

"Cinderella", stage composition after the play by T. Gable and film script by E. Shvartz, "Nedorosl" by D. Fonvisin and "Two maples", a fairy tale by E. Shvartz are the works which are shown by the Theatre to the children audience.

The singularity and originality of the theatre afford its company an opportunity to interpret characters of the classical and soviet drama in the new manner and through the language of gesture, and open for them a broad way of creative search.

Theatre of deep emotions and great passions, this is how its future creative character is seen now.



Sigmund BJØRNDAL

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Jevnaker - NORWEGIA

HOW CAN ONE DEVELOP THE ESTHETIC
EXPERIENCES OF THE DEAF CHILD?

/The paper/

What is an esthetic experience? We can say that it is that which we experience when we come in contact with the artistic values that society has to offer. Our society has much to offer. Our society has much to offer in the way of artistic values. We have literature, pictorial art /painting etc./ music and drama, to name a few. The normally equipped person is able to gain esthetic experiences from these art forms, but can the deaf person also have these experiences?

We must first look at what the deaf person cannot fully participate in. One can probably say that few people born deaf can receive any great pleasure, for instance, from literature. The language is too difficult. Poetry also gives great esthetic pleasure to those who possess a sufficiently developed language to understand and appreciate its meaning. But a deaf person will generally not be able to enjoy this literary form, as he lacks a sufficiently developed language.

When it comes to music, it is obvious that one cannot enjoy what one does not hear. Some will say that the deaf person acknowledges rhythm, thereby experiencing music as rhythm. But is experiencing the rhythm enough to obtain an esthetic experience? If everything but the rhythm of a Beethoven symphony, for example, is taken away, what is left of the composition to give an esthetic experience? I believe

we can say almost nothing.

The theatre also has little to offer the deaf person. First of all, dramatic language is very difficult and foreign to one who is not familiar with its usage. Secondly, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to read from the lips of an actor.

Can we find then, anything of artistic value for those who cannot hear? We shall look at two art forms, pictorial art /including films/ and pantomime, which, I believe, are capable of enriching the life of a deaf person.

First I must emphasize the importance of vision to one who lacks hearing. It is through vision that appreciation of art is made possible to a deaf person, as the vision is the one connection he has with the outside world, and it also serves as an entrance into the inner life of such a person.

The two art forms mentioned are visual forms which are visually perceived by the deaf child. Early in life he comes in contact with pictorial art. But even then he is suffering from his handicap, because his lack of hearing puts him at a disadvantage in learning. Children that can hear are able to obtain a greater number of concepts and ideas through hearing a language, and can increase their knowledge and vocabulary, thereby enriching their visual experiences. Due to a better knowledge of the language the child who can hear has a richer imagination than the deaf child. It is important to be aware of this fact. In educating the deaf child one must try to develop its imagination. It can be observed that the imagination grows as the deaf child acquires a language, whether it is a spoken or a symbolic language. But theoretical education alone is not sufficient. The deaf child must get an opportunity to draw, to paint and to experiment with moulding clay himself. It is important that the assigned work corresponds to the child's level of maturity and personality, because when the child draws or paints an object, the result not only reflects that which he copies, but it also contains elements

of his own personality. If deaf children receive an education which takes their individual qualities into consideration, one will notice that they develop and make use of their visual advantages, and may even become superior to children with normal hearing.

Some people would probably stop here and be satisfied with the results arrived at. In my opinion that would be an error. Besides being able to produce a good work of art, a deaf child should also get acquainted with pictorial art. First he should learn about national art, and then about the world art. It should not be expected that by showing a deaf child reproductions or by taking him to museums, the esthetic experiences will arrive by themselves. If the child is to obtain full benefit, he must get systematic education.

The deaf child should be introduced to the various "-isms". He should learn about the famous artists and become familiar with the correlation that usually exists between a particular work of art and the epoch in which it is produced. He should also learn about colours and how pictures are constructed etc. This is what is called art history.

One probably should not begin too early with this type of education. It would seem to be preferable to wait until the child starts wondering and asking, for instance, why a certain picture is the way it is.

For the past eight years I have included art history as a part of the curriculum at our school, and in my opinion it has proven to be of great value. My teaching method consists of showing slides and reproductions, and of visits to the museums. First I lecture about the artist, and then we look at reproductions and slides and discuss the various pictures. I try to help the students discover and understand that which characterizes an artist's work, and the epoch he represents. Only by creating something themselves and by being influenced by the art of others, will the students obtain the most valuable esthetic experiences.

Film is probably the art form that most deaf people come

in contact with. Most of the films that are shown here in Norway have subtitles due to the fact that they are foreign made. Norway has a relatively small film industry and must therefore import foreign films. Of course the deaf children in Norway will benefit from seeing films. But films are more than living pictures with subtitles. They are picture stories constructed after certain principles and rules. This is something that a deaf person will not discover by himself. If he is to get full benefit from a film, he must have some knowledge of films and film making. He should be introduced to, and learn about, camera technique, mounting, cutting and methods of operation.

In the near future the compulsory educational program of deaf children is going to be lengthened. New subjects will then be introduced, and I hope that knowledge of films will be among the new subjects of the program for deaf schools. Not only should the students receive knowledge about film making; they should also get the opportunity to make some short films themselves.

The other art form to be mentioned in this connection, is pantomime. What is pantomime? In order to answer that question I would like to quote the well-known Polish theatre director, Henryk Tomaszewski, of the Wroclaw Pantomime Theatre. He once said: "A pantomime is a battle in which the truth fights with itself. In pantomime we take off the mask which we usually wear. Then we are really ourselves, acting directly from the human organism and its functions, from the body, from the respiration and from the muscles etc."

When we recognize the difficulties of the deaf children in identifying themselves, something that Dr. Terje Basilier has pointed out, we will understand that in pantomime we have a means to develop the personalities of such children.

Some people probably will say: "But the deaf children know this. They do not need to learn anything about pan-

tomime. They know it already." I have my doubts about the correctness of such a statement. At our school I have occasionally given the students exercises of a pantomimic nature, and I have then observed that they begin using the conventional sign language, rather than expressing themselves by way of pantomime. I believe that it is very important to teach the deaf children, as early as possible, to use pantomime in expressing themselves. They should be trained to do this all through the school years. Since pantomime can be such a valuable means for deaf children in expressing their thoughts and feelings, they ought to get the opportunity to see pantomime performed by professional actors.

I want to emphasize one thing. What we show the deaf children of pictorial art and pantomime must be good, artistically good. Since there are only a few ways to influence deaf children, the influences must be of the very best quality.

To sum it all up, I would like to say that many of the art forms which give people with normal hearing esthetic experiences, mean little or nothing to the deaf. However, two art forms, pictorial art and pantomime, can give deaf people great esthetic experiences. But for this to happen it is essential that one begins with the deaf children. They must be taught systematically to receive the values that these two art forms have to offer. Since it can be so valuable for the childrens' personal development, it is important that the two art forms be approved as part of the new school program for deaf children.



Maria KRYSZTAŁOWSKA

Teacher
State Educational Institute
for Deaf Children

Cracow - POLAND

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REMARKS ON PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION THROUGH
ART IN SCHOOLS FOR DEAF CHILDREN

/A paper/

1. Art as educational contribution toward the development of thinking capacity and forming the emotional life of a child

Discussing the role which art plays in the life of a deaf child, one ought to emphasize the communicative and imagination activating function of art, simultaneously stimulating interest in various manifestations of life thus establishing a closer contact with it. It is apparent that education through art is extremely important to the comprehensive preparation for life. The teacher must bear in mind that everything what is being done in a school for deaf children must be subject to the principal task which is forming of thinking and development of speech, therefore art lessons have to be closely correlated with the subjects taught in mother tongue classes. As the children grow older the art classes contribute in ever increasing degree toward development of abstract thinking.

Education through art develops not only sensitiveness to works of art but first of all, especially in younger children, to the beauty of surrounding nature, to tidiness and order, as well as to attractiveness of objects of everyday use. Artistic creativity may also

appear as a subsidiary form of expression of states and emotions, considered, of course, as a transitory form on the way toward mastering of thinking and speaking.

Education through art exercises considerable influence on the whole of deaf child's rehabilitation: Every creative act of a child, as well as his successful artistic work, must be regarded as having dynamic aspect and greatly influencing the increase of self-assertion. It has tremendous importance for deaf child's psyche and contributes towards establishing closer and fuller contact with environment. In order to attain the aims put before the teacher and the children - the work must be well organized.

2. Organization of work

Touching upon organization of work, I want to take under consideration, first of all, the length of so, called, "lesson unit" and the amount of hours devoted to art classes during a school term.

Basing upon the experience of multitude of teachers, the shortest unit of time necessary to organization continuation and completion of work - two "lesson-hours" must be accepted. This period of time I consider as minimum conditioning proper conduct of an art lesson. It is well known that the teaching process of other subjects makes the child take, to a greater or smaller degree, an attitude of a receiver of information. A child either learns by heart or coordinates received information in order to arrive finally to certain conclusions.

During art classes the child must change his psychological attitude of a passive listener to that of an active doer /within own personality/ of values. This process requires certain period of time, which, by the way, depends upon mental development of a particular pupil. In my opinion the time, necessary to switch child's thoughts onto new tracks and on new psychological organization,

amounts in average 15 minutes. The lesson begins with introducing the child into the problems of his task. In case of deaf children such introduction must be so suggestive as to create the vision of their purpose. Next, the means to execute the task are explained and technicalities of the lesson are prepared. All this work take exactly about 15 minutes and when the lesson lasts only one "lesson unit" /45 minutes/ there are only 30 minutes left for the child's own work and its discussion. If we take under consideration that when the child begins his work during the initial 15 minutes and at the same time must change his psychical and thinking attitude and must be, let us say, drawn into action, then for his full and effective work only 15 minutes are left. As result the end of the lesson comes when the child works with the greatest test. Therefore many a time, especially in lower grades, one has to take from the children their brushes nearly by force and then they beg: "A little bit longer". It is still worse when the lesson constitutes a conclusion of a particular task and must be finished by a discussion on performed work. In higher grades when during art lessons the drawing from nature is being taught, the time unit containing two "lesson-hours" becomes a still more important problem. One has to bear in mind that in the work of such kind, every pupil ought to have at least two corrections by the teacher. These become very difficult while working with deaf children. A deaf child must see what the teacher says. It is being done in this way that in turn the child's attention is drawn first to the drawing or rather to the faults in the drawing, then to the model and finally to teacher's lips. This all makes the work lengthy and allowances must be made for the limited amount of concepts and wrong lip-reading. In such cases it is necessary to use the blackboard. Thus one correction actually takes at least 5 minutes. If the initial 10 minutes are devoted to the introduction of the lesson problems and preparation for work

/implements, material, etc./ - then within 35 minutes one correction can be made for 7 pupils, while the class has 12 to 14 pupils. Under such conditions it is impossible to make even one correction for each pupil. Furthermore... it is known that the longer are the intervals between particular lessons the more the child loses interest and the smaller is his effort in exploiting his possibilities. Thus the introduction of one lesson-hour a week is equivalent with the liquidation of education through art classes... This problem cannot be solved by organizing, as it is sometimes suggested, of art circles, because such circles group selected children only and the most talented and keenly interested in art, whereas the idea is to give all the children certain amount of knowledge, experience, habits, etc.

I pay particular attention to through planning of the art lesson and considering the smallest detail. This influences not only the course of the lesson but has important educational values, too. In my work I distinguish following items:

- 1/ accommodation and its setup
- 2/ materials and implements
- 3/ technicalities of the lesson and their organization

A separate accommodation for art workshop such as we dispose of at our Institute is undoubtedly still a dream of many a school. The room is sufficiently large with northern light which every artist would like to have in his studio... There is a backroom with running water and an electric range. The workshop room is equipped with a blackboard which I consider to be extremely helpful while working with deaf children. The children work sitting at their desks. There is a difference in opinion whether they ought to sit at the desks or stand in front of their easels.

In the famous French Académie de Jeudi which conducts art classes for children 5 to 15 years old, their teacher

Arno Stern, an artist himself, solved this problem in the following way: The children work standing in front of a wall to which sheets of paper are pinned. Colours, water and other implements are placed in the middle of the studio on a table. This gives an extra educational value teaching them to participate harmoniously in common materials. This would be however difficult in case of deaf children: walking back and forth between the paper and the table with colours would prevent their concentration and make them soon tired, therefore the sitting posture is the best for them. Sometimes I introduce a work of a larger size either for individual pupils or for a team. In such case a child or children work standing having at hand a small table with implements and materials.

The floor in my workshop is covered with easily washable and water resistant tiles. I think it important as water is being spilled frequently and colours drip over the place in fervour of creative zeal. As far as materials and implements are concerned the matter of good quality of paper, colours, brushes ought to be emphasized as important in children's work. Good quality material seems to create a psychological necessity to have it treated with care and conscientiousness and this is being followed by more serious approach to the task.

From the very first lessons I try to inspire the pupils with a notion that their and their mates' work is valuable and ought to be treated with respect. For this purpose I pay great attention to cleanliness of hands, neatness of implements and to control of movements of arms which are sometimes violent thoughtlessly crushing and folding sheets of paper. Then I demonstrate with exaggerated care the delicacy in handling paper and implements. Such control and culture in movements will be useful for a child both in school and in future life.

When drawings are finished, the children of the IVth and Vth grade paste them on larger sheets of paper and

inscribe them with neat signatures. In VIth, VIIth and VIIIth grades where they use large sizes of sheets it would be too expensive to paste all the drawings. It is done with the best ones what becomes a sort of distinction in itself.

We have to remember that in future the children will work in real workshops and factories and at our lessons we ought to impress on their minds certain respect to materials and implements under their care, neat and careful execution of work and such habits which will be so important in their future profession. As I have mentioned, the organization of technicalities has for its purpose not only creating convenient working conditions but also developing the sense of responsibility, good maintenance of tools, efficiency and discipline. All this ought to be taught from the very first lesson of an art class.



B. GZUSZCZAK

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Drama stage manager

Chief of the Olsztyn Pantomime of Deaf

Olsztyn - POLAND

EXIT FROM THE CIRCLE OF SILENCE

(The Paper)

Every person during his whole life is longing and dreaming about being somebody else, somebody better and more perfect than he is. Longing for beauty and perfection is deep inside the man's nature. It might be fulfilled by means of a wonderful change that accomplishes in a theatre when one is creating a scene character. One gets free of any imperfection and loses consciousness of the real state.

In the case of deaf people, due to the pantomime they created, this wonderful change is achieved and their greatest desire fulfilled - the desire of an exit from the circle of silence.

"I would like to create a theatre for deaf and hearing people, because a normal theatre is inaccessible for us. I would like to act in this theatre. I would like everybody to understand me and I would like to hear once at least the sound of applaudissements."

These words explain best the reason while a small group of deaf in Olsztyn created a pantomime theatre. First they wanted to be all together because in a collective they would feel less abandoned than among hearing people. So they came to the town hall and then to the District House of Culture. They felt normal people, only deaf and they wanted return to hearing people in order to convince them that they are normal. This was their aim and I think that due to it the problem of instable personel does not exist. Seven persons are members of the group for ten

years, and nine persons - for eight years, in spite that they live far away and must come to rehearsals from distant places.

The environment of hearing people never revealed deep interest for the deaf. At most they sympathize with them. But this compassion is painful for the deaf or even humiliating.

In the present paper I would like to make use of examples from the Olsztyn district and the Olsztyn Pantomime of Deaf, on the basis of my 8 years experience during my work with deaf people.

The Olsztyn environment is typical for many Polish towns, and the problems of deaf do not differ from those which arise everywhere. However, due to the activity of the Pantomime, the problems of deaf become the center of common interest and now they are any more typical for other environments. The activity of the Olsztyn Pantomime overstepped the limits of playing theatre a long time ago, and it became a unique, unrepeatable phenomenon acting in a wide social circle.

When, 8 years ago, being a stage manager, I got the post of the artistic chief of the Olsztyn Pantomime which already existed for 2 years, I started reflecting what does the problem of rehabilitation consist in, and what role can be played by the artistic factor forming the psyche of the deaf. Watching this problem in Olsztyn, and having travelled around Poland, I can authoritatively ascertain that even most organized ideal conditions of professional work and the possibilities of earning someones life do not rehabilitate the hearing of an invalid as far as the hearing community is concerned. He still remains for them a deaf with all the consequences in mutual relations. I find that professional work itself is not able to bring out the deaf from the circle of silence and introduce him to the normal community.

I do not want to be misunderstood, I do not depreciate the problem of productivity and professional revalidation, but I find that by means of organizing professional work for the deaf and, hence, by means of ensuring their financial existence we only create a base for the entire problem of rehabilitation.

The deaf, working in invalids' cooperatives, in spite of contacting hearing people, still remain in their locked and isolated circle. After all, everyday and common living together in an environment and its contribution to various matters decide upon the place of a person in the community.

Full rehabilitation takes place when the invalid executes activities or tasks which according to the opinion of normal community are unaccessible and impossible to be done by an invalid. Then, sympathy and compassion turns out into admiration and respect for the handicapped person which bears consequences and positives and becomes the simplest.

However, such an achievement or an impossible thing should be shown to the community in a direct and perceptible way.

The deaf gets full rehabilitation if he, for instance, dully masters lip reading, if he speaks in a way which is understandable for everybody. Then, he stops being a cripple for the environment. Any show and any performance in a theatre in a theatre (especially the Pantomime and dance) are the purest form of a universal pronouncement and they create a platform of a mutual understanding.

But to be sure that the show fulfilled and reached the intended aim it must represent high artistic and aesthetic values and by means of them convince the onlooker and affect him. It also must be readable concerning its content and form and persuasive, and it cannot reveal any sign of a disabled condition. What the onlooker sees on the stage must exclude his consciousness that the performing artists are deaf. If we want by means of a theatre show reach the aim of an "exit from the circle of silence", I am against the use of the gesture

language on the stage as this language is artificial and nonorganic for people and it limits the circle of onlookers, keeping us still in the output point.

One can create neither a theatre of stammerers or lisping people nor, in my opinion, of people using the gesture language, as such a theatre does not present art and does not fulfil our expectations. The theatre art should reach the organic elements of any pronouncement, gesture of mimics, motion, dynamics, expression, colours, internal rythm up to the elements based on nature phenomena and it is out of them that the theatre art should draw the power, means of expression, content and inspirence for its artistic processing. The above cited elements are the essence of the art of a pantomime and dance, which, drawing expression means from the organic human predisposition, therein a deaf man too, are also a kind of theatre art which is the nearest for deaf people from the side of performance as well as from the side of reception. These are fields of art, according to Marcel Maeceau "lasting like the time and grown out of the traditions of folk rites". They have general human values not limited by any language barriers.

The pantomime is governed by its own laws and its own wythm based on the internal rythm of the performer, not limited by any external stimuli. Music in a pantomime is only its emphasizing not the didacting element. The accompaniament which underlines the movement rythm and the action of the scene, creates an illusion of a full concordance of music and rythm and thus it takes away the onlooker's consciousness that he deals with or looks at a show performed by deaf people. Here, I would like to return to the exemples of the Olsztyn Pantomime and present the way the troup members had to pass in order to reach the planned aim - the desire of an "exit from the circle of silence". I shall do it on the basis of the history of

this troupe activity. Thinking in the above said way and on the basis of the above given motivation, while starting to work with the troupe, we have chosen the pantomime as such a kind of art to which, in my opinion, the deaf are most predisposed and which, being a theatre, provides the possibility to act upon a large circle of receivers. The purpose of my work was to create a theatre not for the deaf but a theatre about the deaf - a tribune from which the deaf could speak about their problems by means of a show they have created.

I considered that Poland has a sufficient amount of theatres for the deaf, like theatres or ballet troupes and the Wrocław Pantomime, and therefore I looked for another sense and task for the troupe. I got interesting observations thanks to numerous visiting of the above mentioned theatres. The receipt was quite right. The first première of the pantomime show and the first public performances ascertained my conviction of having found the right way.

The interest the audience showed for the pantomime caused a numerous turnout of hearing people to our performances (in total during 9 years we presented 112 shows for the Olsztyn audience, the attention of which has been attracted to the problems of deaf). The show has been evaluated as an interesting phenomenon which in turn awoke the interest of creative environment to the troupe and its work. This resulted in a film "In the circle of silence" produced by the "Manufacture of Documental Films". The international success the film got in Cannes and Florence, as well as its high estimation were due to the acting of artists too. And this has given to the troupe the exit from the circle of silence. The film, and then the success of further premières gave rise to 3 performances of the troupe at the television. They also got many invitations to perform in other towns. Numerous performances executed in Poland - there were 58 - won a big number of true friends to the Olsztyn Pantomime due to its contents and artistic value.

We have met outstanding representatives of the artistic world, the well-known outstanding Polish artist M. Cwiklińska, prof. J. Hryniewiecka, prof. B. Korzeniowski, prof. A. Bohdziewicz - the creator of the Wrocław Pantomime, dyr. H. Tomaszewski, K. Krukowski and J. Jurandot. We have had numerous meetings during which we got into contact with pedagogs from the theatre and film school in Łódź and the theatre school in Warsaw.

These meetings and the presence of the above mentioned creators to our performances were a great experience for the troupe which provided the deaf with the feeling of self-value and released them of the inferiority complex. These meetings proved how very appreciated the work of the troupe was as also its artistic and ideo-educational value. Many of these contacts turned out into a permanent care and help.

At the moments when the artistic factor started to be the main thing, when due to the film "In the circle of silence" and after having obtained the reward of the Central Committee of Coordination of the Ministry of Culture and Art, the demands to the troupe rose and the help of experts appeared to be necessary, as without it the troupe itself would not be able to attain a higher degree of development.

Disinterested help offered to the troupe by the most outstanding creators of the Polish pantomime - Mr. H. Tomaszewski and the care he took for the troupe, are of priceless value and they left a lasting trace on the artism of performances. The meetings with Mr. H. Tomaszewski resulted in a constant friendship of both theatres - the professional and the amateur pantomime. The deaf recognized the Wrocław theatre as their own and being created for them. They went to the shows given by the Wrocław Pantomime to Kraków, Wrocław, Warszawa. They were the host in the Olsztyn Pantomime. After each performance which always finished with a meeting of both troupes, they felt enriched by new recognition values, new expressive means.

The aim of reaching full social rehabilitation finding its own and due place in the community thanks to art which acted on hearing people and was the factor that educated the personality of a deaf, has been gained at the Great all-Polish Festival of Amateur Troups in Łódź, 1964.

There, the problem of deafness was not the factor influencing the estimation of the jury. The troupe took part at the competition under similar conditions as the troupes of hearing artists, and it won, which was ascertained by the press reviews, jury's estimation and that of the audience. Apart of the word "deaf", the Olsztyn pantomime was estimated as the most interesting phenomenon of the Festival.

And suddenly, these handicapped deaf with limited predispositions and possibilities of life, the ones with the misfortune of which one should sympathize, attain things which are, according to them, unattainable. The film, the television are an independent theatre art, and, moreover, a kind of art which can be interesting and which wins when competing with hearing people under the same conditions. All this cannot be of no significance as well for the approach of the environment of hearing not only in Olsztyn but in entire Poland (everywhere were the troupe made its way to) as for the psyche of the deaf themselves, and especially the members of the troupe.

The approach of the authorities, employers, fellow lodgers, work colleagues and of the entire environment got changed. The deaf were looked at with esteem as people for which the unattainable things do not exist, and the fact nobody in Olsztyn says "the deaf" but simply "ours from the Pantomime" seems also not to be without significance.

The deaf actively joined the life of the community in our town and they certainly made their "exit from the circle of silence."



Helena BURNO-NOWAKOWSKA, M.Sc.

The State Institute of Special
Pedagogics
Warsaw - POLAND

Art.Cult.--6

FORMS AND METHODS OF RAISING THE CULTURE AND
SHAPING OF PERSONALITY OF THE DEAF AND THEIR
CONTACTS WITH THE HEARING

/The Paper/

One of the basic problems in our community is to prepare every person to an independent productive life. The task of the special pedagogics and education is to return to the community life the people who lived on its margin as a result of physical handicap.

But apart from the preparation of the invalid to a useful work, to a full utilization of rights in the material and social fields, the need arises to prepare a deaf person to proper use of free time after work hours.

Education as how to spend vacations and holidays is one of the factors of progress in the political, economic and cultural spheres. The effectiveness of this kind of education is dependent on the political, economic, administrative, urban, etc. factors. The culture of spending leisure time is linked with the general mode of life of a given person. In our opinion the time of leisure devoted to the all-round and full development of a deaf person becomes one of the basic components of his personality. The mode of our everyday life is a mode of active life, and not only in the professional field, but in the social and cultural aspects as well.

The basic functions of leisure time are not only a sensible recreation activity which in a most efficient way restores physical and psychical energy, but the perfection of a person by means of self-teaching methods. This is the more so necessary as the technical civilization in the present world makes ever speedier headway.

"Our life is not only toil, but leisure as well". The empty time or simply a passive rest do not give much pleasure and satisfaction. What should do a deaf person if he cannot even read and understand a printed word? If the interest in various aspects of life is not awakened in him or he cannot satisfy it, if he does not take up on his own initiative the activity which would promote his intellectual, physical, ethical, technical and social development?

If he has not attained the habit of participating in sporting games, dances or visiting museums, exhibitions, going to theatres, watching television; if he has not been taught to take interest in the life of his native land, its nature, the creations of human genius, and if he does not feel any necessity of self-teaching?

We, pedagogues of special education service are interested in the methods and ways of introducing the deaf into the work on the raising of their own cultural level, on the shaping of their personality. We thus are interested in their physical, manual, intellectual and social life and activity. For more than a dozen years we have been conducting observations and collecting materials in the Polish Association of the Deaf. These materials concerned the utilization by the deaf of the means of mass spreading of culture. We aim our activity in the cultural and educational work with the deaf at the attainment of the state of affairs at which the deaf were prepared to the absorption of impressions connected with the creations of arts and with the amateur artistic activity, so as they could be its participants and even co-creators.

If often happens that the deaf persons cannot express their emotions and thoughts in the form of words, but they

can do that with the help of their mimic, gesture, dance, drawings or even the works of art. We can awaken and develop in them comprehensive interests life by means of visual arts.

I would like to inform those present here about the information and the pronouncements of the deaf people which they have imparted to me in response to the questionnaire elaborated by me and entitled "Your Leisure Time".

Out of the three functions of the holidays^{x/} that is rest, games and developing activity the latter interests me most, though all the three functions usually overlap. Observing the spontaneous development of forms and functions of leisure time I will, first of all, analyse the ways of deepening knowledge by the deaf persons. The questionnaire circulated among a number of selected urban and partly rural communities of the deaf has been regarded as a criterion used for the assessment of the cultural and educational activity of the Polish Association of the Deaf.

The questionnaire was filled by 150 deaf persons, of whom 120 graduated from special elementary schools. Of this number 76 finished vocational schools. The elementary school for the hearing was attended by 22 persons, the school for people with insufficient hearing was finished by 2 persons. Several people attended additional courses: one person attended the accountant course, one the archival course. Besides, 20 persons have a high school education, of whom 10 finished the general high school, 2 a pre-war gimnasium, 3 technical high schools /of which one person finished a phototechnical high school/, 2 persons finished a commercial school, one person graduated from the extramural high school and one person passed high school examinations by the "extern" method, obtaining

x/ They are studied by theoreticians like Joffre Dumazedier in France, G. Prudienski in the USSR and Aleksander Kamiński in Poland.

thus a high school diploma. Among the mentioned above 22 persons 2 graduated from the higher school and 4 continue their studies at higher schools.

Among the 130 persons embraced by the first part of the questionnaire were 44 women and 78 men, 8 persons did not mention their sex. About 80% of the people filling the questionnaire were from 18 to 40 years of age, and 15% above that age.

As for the budget of their time, it can be said that the time spent in their professional work, the time taken by the travel to and from the work, as well as the time taken by home activities do not show great difference from the similar data accessible from the information on the time budget of the hearing.

The deaf devote from 2 to 6 hours a day to the active rest or self-teaching. Among those who graduated from vocational schools only a small part shows a steady systematic interest in the planned deepening and broadening of their knowledge. The slogan born in England, this cradle of self-teaching for grown-ups "Education during the whole life" is a reality in the life of to-days Poland. Poland is the country of the people who constantly learn. This is of considerable importance for our economic, social and cultural life, influencing it very favourably.

What are the data about reading of the persons who filled the questionnaire? The press and periodicals are read, or using a more precise word, looked through by all the persons who have answered the questionnaire. They mention the daily press, the "World of the Deaf" gazette and almost all the illustrated journals. Answering the question what subjects they like most they underline political, economic, sporting themes; they also like humour. The majority also indicate that they read novels, giving data on the number of read books during the two last years /for each separately/. This number varies from 2 to several score books. A part of the deaf do not answer that question at all. As for the column "the favourite

author, book, hero", they usually mention the names of the classics of the Polish literature of the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The titles of the books read are indicated by those who finished special schools or by those who know them from films they watched. This includes "Pharaon", "Knights", "Ashes", etc. Among the authors mentioned were Sienkiewicz, Prus, Kraszewski, Konopnicka, Orzeszkowa, Żeromski. Among the contemporary writers Morcinek and Meissner were mentioned. As for the foreign authors, the names were mentioned of Hemingway, Tolstoy, London, May, Dumas, Sholochov, Cooper, etc. The deaf with high education emphasize that any book does not offers difficulties to them. They give the names of Breza, Parnicki, Kawalec. Among the foreign writers their favourite ones are Camus, Mauriac, Feuchtwanger. The deaf who studied together with the hearing ones, are interested in various fields of science, arts, etc. They are interested in the biographies of famous people, etc.

Among the painters they mention Goya, Lautree and among poets Mickiewicz, Slowacki and Boy-Zelenski.

The deaf have the need of writing and undoubtedly some of them wish to increase their knowledge. Some of the deaf buy for their own money not only periodicals but books as well; they visit libraries and reading rooms. The source of books they borrow is usually the cultural club of the deaf, or their friends. It should be pointed out, on the whole, that among the mentioned above 130 people not many make use of books with the purpose of deepening their knowledge. Nobody mentioned, for instance, popular-scientific literature, and only two people mentioned that they use dictionaries and encyclopaedia. On the other hand, all the deaf with the high education continue active self-instruction and self-teaching. Those who studied together with the hearing emphasize that they obtained knowledge in the same way as the hearing, that is, by reading and understanding the oral speech of the speakers at home,

at school, etc. They seek to satisfy their intellectual requirements. They do this with the help of books, museums, manuals, periodicals, educational films, exhibitions, etc. They also make frequent excursions into the "unknown" world. They can plan, organize and use their leisure time for that purpose. Sixteen persons mention that they mastered foreign languages, in this four people, using a self-instructor method, mastered Russian, English, Serbian, Slovak and Czech languages, and at a school they learned Russian, Ukrainian, French, German and English. All these deaf persons master knowledge on their own initiative. A part of the deaf persons attends lectures, etc. Four persons made use of privately paid lessons only in mathematics, during their studies at a high school.

One of the deaf persons out of the 130 covered by the questionnaire, a woman 38 years of age, a tailor after a 3-year vocational school, supplemented a questionnaire by the letter in which she writes that most often than not she spends her leisure time in reading good books. She states: "I owe all my knowledge to reading. Thanks to it I can discuss with the hearing all the problems, and I can say with pride that frequently I know more than my colleagues with good hearing".

Analysing film and TV as a means of mass spreading of culture as well as forms particularly accessible to the deaf, it should be pointed out that the majority among the people covered by the questionnaire is for the foreign films which have a simultaneous written translation into Polish. They like to watch coloured, particularly panoramic, films. As for the TV they like to watch serial films. Among the films which do not possess written translations, they prefer to watch the ones which are based on books already read by them. The deaf like most westerns, criminal films, travel films, adventure films, historical and geographical, films, as well as passion films, based on the books known to them.

The deaf with the high school education add that they are interested in documentary and psychological films as

"Les Miserables", "Monde Cano", "Gold Fever", etc.

As for the TV which they watch in their flats, at their friends', most often at the clubs of the deaf, they like most to watch film chronicle, sports events, fashion shows, ethnographical films, ballet and comedies. They also complain that in the TV latest-news programmes they have difficulties in understanding the spoken language. And they suggest that TV should, at least once a week, transmit a programme in which spoken language in the latest-news programmes would be accompanied by the same text in a written form. This concerns both the news about Poland and the world.

Not many deaf persons go to professional theatres, and those who do so, go there rather rarely; they mainly visit ballet and pantomime theatres. Some deaf persons also mention that they like comedy and variete theatres. One of them emphasized: "I go to the drama theatres when they stage plays whose content I know from books".

In which surroundings do the deaf mostly spend their leisure time? It results from the questionnaire that the bulk of them spends their leisure time among relatives. 70% of those who answered a questionnaire are married and have families. Only 13 persons among 150 wrote that they do not like to spend their time with their families. As many as 132 spend their leisure time among the deaf, and only 52 out of 150 questioned said that they would like to spend their leisure time with the hearing. The majority of the deaf stated that they spend their leisure time outdoors only during the walks, excursions, tourist events picking of mushrooms, berries, etc. A part of the deaf say that they spend their leisure time outdoors while taking up some sport such as light athletics, water sports, football, shooting, skiing, skating, bicycle sport, etc.

To the question "Do you possess own transport means?" some answered that they have bicycles, two wrote that they have motor cycles, and two that they dream about own motor cars.

The majority took part in tourist excursions, a part of the deaf went to workers' holiday camps. Two score of the deaf visited Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, the GDR, Rumania, Hungary, the USSR, Yugoslavia, and a part of the deaf brain-workers visited Western European countries, countries of the south Europe, Asia and North America. Among the deaf covered by the questionnaire 22 persons have small gardens, and a certain percentage, particularly those living in the countryside help to their family in farm work. Many, mainly women sew, knit, grow plants, etc. during their leisure time. One of the deaf even runs the breeding of high-breed rabbits.

Among their favourable modes of time-spending the deaf mention dances, including modern dances, as well as waltz, tango, Polish folklore dances, etc.

As their hobby many of the deaf name tourism, sport, television watching, improvement of home interior, photography, letter writing, collections, etc. The latter collect post stamps, match-box labels, photos of actors and actresses, famous sportsmen, post-cards, illustrations, coloured photos of capitals of countries, etc. One of the deaf collects souvenirs, another old curiosities, one folklore artistic products, two deaf persons collect memoirs of the deaf about their work and life.

The majority of those who were given questionnaires to answer are members of the Polish Association of the Deaf. 20 of them actively participate in the organization of events during the leisure time of the deaf and do some social work. 50 persons inform that they belong to the cultural clubs of the deaf, 11 that they belong to the tourist societies, 7 to sport clubs, 3 to a film club, 8 took up photography, 6 persons belong to the pantomime ensemble, 3 are philatelists, 3 belong to a dance ensemble, 2 to a TV club, 5 to a chess club, 2 to a shooting club, 2 to the Society of Book Friends, one to the protectors of relics club, 2 to the Country's Defence League, 2 to the Polish Red Cross, 2 to the Club of Drawings Enthusiasts; in all,

47 persons, that is about one third part of the deaf questioned spend their leisure time in an organised group.

All of the questioned participated in the social life, but, as I have already mentioned, mostly among the deaf persons only. Apart from personal contacts in private houses, they also have them with their acquaintances in cafes and restaurants, but much less frequently; usually they have their social meetings at clubs, culture houses for the deaf, etc. 20% of the questioned participate in the trade unions, cultural associations, political organisations, social associations, etc. Better educated deaf persons organise usually more variagated cultural and social events, mainly for their family and friends.

About 70% of the questioned have good or relatively good living conditions, and several people very good living conditions.

It can be said, on the whole, that among 130 deaf persons answering the first type of a questionnaire only a small percentage have definite interests in some fields of knowledge, or definite methods of mastering and deepening this knowledge. On the other hand, the deaf with the high school general education, that is all who studied with the hearing, have large and various interests not much differing from those of the people with normal hearing. They are interested in ancient history, contemporary history, the history of arts, literature, in politics, achitecture, geology, technique, austronatics, mathematics, psychology, pedagogics /and particularly in surdopedagogics/, geography, law and even luguistics. As for the methods of obtaining and deepening knowledge as well as its broadening, they do not much differ from those applied by the people with normal hearing. This of course, with the exception of the methods in which hearing has the main say, that is singing, music, radio, gramophones, electric gramophones, tape recorders. But all the methods which can be based on visual technique are quite accessible to the normally developed deaf people. One of the main

keys for obtaining knowledge, culture and art is the mastering by the deaf of articulated speech and reading speech from lips. While imparting information to larger numbers of the deaf people, the articulated word can be supplemented, for the sake of clear sense, by dactylographic means or by sign language, on the condition, of course, that the signs are known to every deaf persons, just as the Braille alphabet is known to almost all the blind.

The question "What revolts you most?" was answered mainly by the brain workers /for this question was not put in the first type of questionnaire/. The answers were: 1. the fact that the hearing do not understand the deaf; 2. the fact that the hearing underestimate good results of the work done by the deaf. 3. strange attitude of the hearing towards the deaf. 4. difficulties in making the hearing to understand the deaf and vice versa; 5. unpleasant atmosphere at work; 6. struggle for the maintaining of the normal level of life; 7. conflicts in the community; 8. wars; 9. failures in the personal affairs; 10. economic situation; 11. bureaucracy; 12. egotistic inclinations of the people; 13. general situation; 14. everything that is bad; 15. one of the deaf stated that he is more troubled with the "deafness of the reason than with that of the ear".

I shall cite also the statements made by the two persons who answered the questionnaire /questionnaires No 135 and No 136/:

1. "I have noted the fact which revolts me, this is the prejudice of some of the hearing to the deaf people, even to those who attained the same level of intelligence, or sometimes even surpass it. The hearing I speak about do not realise that they can speak normally with those of the deaf who have learned normal articulated speech and that the deaf can read the meaning of the words pronounced from the lips; when they are talked to by means of signs and primitive words they are being pushed back into the ghetto. These people should

understand that only by speaking normally /but more carefully moving their lips/ they can help the deaf who have not yet achieved a good level of lip-reading; only in this way can the deaf be brought into the active participation in the life of the community and can forget, at least partly, about their handicap".

2. "I would like to turn your attention to the fact that among the normal-hearing people there live a certain number of stron-willed deaf people who managed to study and learn in normal conditions, who obtained a high or higher-school diploma. They are often used as guinea-pigs in interviews, in press-conferences, etc. What is the result? It is a pity that they are left to their own fate, without any help, though they need it. The voice of these people is a voice of man lost in the maze of ministries and social organisations. It is difficult to understand why there are so few people who take interest in the fate of those graduates, in their life, their joys and sorrows. And at the same time senior officials do not oppose to those who waste time in scientific-like theories, reforms, etc."

As there is not much time left I do not dwell on the role of the amateur activities and the valuable results of the spending of leisure time in the various types of physical, intellectual, emotional and social line. I would only like to emphasize their significance as compensatory, de-frustration and rehabilitating factors. This is the matter not of the fictional compensation of real handicaps, but the meeting of the needs of the community. Prof. B. Suchodolski defined that as the need of reconciling with life. The need to attain the level of cultural communication of men with each other. And only on that level will disappear prejudices and barriers between the normal-hearing and the deaf people, barriers which have no right to exist in the really democratic community.

Compensatory psychological emotions are provided to the deaf by the participation in the excursions, tourism,

sport, amateur art activities, technical amateur circles, etc. Still too few deaf grown-ups support the motto: "Do it Yourself", and only boy-scouts realise this motto in their campus life.

The grown-up deaf people usually spend their leisure time in line with their vocational and family interests, that is book-binding, sewing, production of fancy articles made of leather or metal. They often do this for utility purposes, for instance, they repair locks, make keys to them, breed rabbits, grow plants /on a small scale of course/. It should also be pointed out that nobody in the questionnaire answers mentioned the pigeon breeding, dog keeping, as well as keeping of canaries or fish.

As for the entertainment it is difficult to say what kind of entertainment on the basis of questionnaires do prevail, particularly in informal cases out of the cultural clubs, associations and organisations.

I do not know to what extent the deaf people can avoid the "margin" kinds of leisure time spending /alcohol drinking, primitive flirting, etc./. But I know that sometimes card playing becomes a passion with some of the deaf, and family-like exchange of news becomes gossiping. It is not very frequent that the discussions of matches or plays or films have been taking place. In their local unions of the deaf they usually speak about the events taking place in their localities or at work, and still more often they speak about difficulties met in home, family, etc. It should also be stated that the Association of the Deaf in Poland, apart from the care about the living conditions of the deaf, about their vocational education, etc. spreads among them the ideas of patriotism, citizens' duty to the motherland, cultural aspirations and improvement of educational level.

It aims at the development of various forms of book-lover's clubs, film clubs, television clubs, etc. It makes all the efforts aimed at the more active participation of the deaf in the various amateur artistic teams and clubs,

both in the field of visual arts and in other fields.

It is necessary to make all the endeavours aimed at the creation of more suitable conditions for the deaf with the purpose of their more active participation in the social life of the community. The deaf people can be pulled out completely of the "spiritual deafness" by means of well conceived cooperation with the workers in the cultural, educational, medical, psychological, social fields, with the workers in all the branches of science and art.

As the work was ennobling the leisure time in the past, so at present the well spent leisure time will make the work more human. Culture becomes the source of pleasure and entertainment. Love, arts, politics absorb both intellectuals, workers and peasants. The deaf will not create a ghetto if they are given large possibilities of establishing contacts with the hearing people; if the conditions created will meet their need in satisfying ambitions, if they have the feeling of their own value and dignity, and if all this will be taking place in the constantly improving cultural and social conditions.

It is necessary that the deaf people should not only accommodate themselves to the community of the hearing ones, but enter it. While contacting them they will get to know them better and, consequently, will be more interested in their life. And then only the motto "The Deaf among the Hearing" will be fully realised /and I would also add to the motto "And together with the Hearing"/.

I therefore suggest:

- 1/ To open a wide road for the deaf into all the schools, organisations, and institutions open for the hearing;
- 2/ To conduct the control and check the existing statutes of the Associations of the Deaf;
- 3/ To conduct a constant research and information activity concerning not only the work of the deaf, but the education and spending of leisure time by them.

It is necessary to organise centres and branches of institutions investigating the problems of leisure time spending by the deaf. The following commissions should be organised:

- I. The Commission of Sports and Tourism;
- II. The Commission of Films, TV and Cinematography, as well as of Photography;
- III. The Visual Arts Commission;
- IV. The Commission of Theatres, Pantomime, Ballet and Dance;
- V. The Commission of Technical and Polytechnical Studies, Craft and Breeding;
- VI. Popularization of General Knowledge Commission by means of publications, leaflets, etc./.



V KONGRES ŚWIATOWEJ FEDERACJI GŁUCHYCH - WARSZAWA 1967

V Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf - Warsaw 1967

V Congrès de la Fédération Mondiale des Sourds - Varsovie 1967

Dr. Peter R. WISHER
Gallaudet College
Department of Physical
Education and Athletics.
Washington D.C. - U.S.A.

20002

Phys. Train. - 7

THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ATHLETICS FOR THE DEAF
IN A HEARING WORLD

/The paper/

This paper is concerned with a discussion of the role that a sound program in physical education and athletics can play in promoting rapport between the hearing impaired and their hearing societies. Since the subject is too broad to be properly presented in one short paper, only a summary of important considerations is possible.

It should be stated that the observations expressed herein are based primarily upon philosophy, practices, and conditions currently existing in the U.S.A. It is felt that the best approach in reporting the results of these observations would be to discuss briefly: the general situation of the deaf; some characteristics of the deaf; the aim of the physical education and athletic program; the objectives of such a program; and the recommended activities.

Situation

The major force in the present education of the hearing impaired in the U.S.A., and for that matter throughout the world, is the philosophy of education held by administrators. This philosophy in turn determines the method to be used in educating the deaf. The focal point in the various systems of education is, of course, the prescribed manner of communication.

Since there are several methods, ranging from the strictly oral to some incorporation of the manual, it is no wonder that the deaf and those associated with them are confused. In fact, one authority states that "none of the methods currently used in American schools for the deaf has produced results which encourage any optimism".

/4, p.13/.

Nonetheless, even if the pace is slow, gradual advances by the deaf are being made in America, socially, economically and educationally. That they have not yet reached the full level of their potential is granted. However, efforts are being made in this direction through the improvement of elementary and secondary education and by the making of more kinds of higher education available to the qualified deaf: the program in liberal arts at Gallaudet College has been expanded, and soon a program in technical studies for the deaf will be offered at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Mention should be made that the general public is gradually becoming aware of the contributions that the trained deaf can make in business, education, and government. News media have played an important part in educating hearing persons in this regard.

The deaf, because of the nature of the hearing difficulty and various factors related to it, sustain a deaf society. This society is often referred to as a subculture: the deaf intermarry and are otherwise closely associated in their social lives. The common bond that unites this group is, of course, a hearing loss; social needs and interests are satisfied through participation in the activities sponsored by this organization.

The term subcultural is offensive to the speaker because it implies a subnormal condition. The deaf are intrinsically below normal only in their ability to hear. The fact that studies show they are also subnormal in achievement is due very often to the environmental

conditions imposed upon them by their hearing teachers and the attitudes and practices of the hearing world in which they live.

In passing, it should be pointed out that in many ways the deaf society can help to change these attitudes by acting as a bridge between the deaf individual and his hearing society. This organization, the World Federation for the Deaf, is an excellent example.

Characteristics

From antiquity to the present, much misunderstanding regarding the hearing impaired and related problems is evident. Prejudices and unfounded opinions are prevalent in all countries. Contemporary educational practices, it seems, have tended to perpetuate misconceptions that in turn tend to retard the progress of the deaf. Many of the reported characteristics found in literature may be attributed to unsatisfactory educational programs. The criticisms directed at the deaf should be shifted to those responsible for their education.

The following characteristics have been reported; how valid they are will not be debated here:

1. Normal acquisition of language is not possible for the deaf. The degree of hearing loss and age of onset are influencing factors. /2,4,6/
2. Deaf children tend to be better adjusted if their parents are deaf. /2, p.184/
3. Language difficulties lead to social difficulties. These problems are reflected in relations with parents, peers, and society in general. /9/
4. Extremes in behavior are noted; these range from complete withdrawal to violent outbursts of rage. /2,4,5/
5. Regarding educational advances, the deaf appear to be from four to seven years behind their hearing peers. /8, p.213/
6. Most hearing impaired adults use either the language of signs or the simultaneous method, signs, alphabet and speech. /2, p.19/

7. On the basis of three studies /2,4,5/, the following traits are reported: social immaturity, impulsive behavior, egocentricity, rigid standards of behavior and etiquette, and certain deficiencies with respect to abstracting and conceptual ability. /4/
8. Children, regardless of the means of communication used in a particular school, tend to communicate manually when not supervised. /4, p.13/
9. One researcher /6/ found that the deaf are concerned more with the attitudes of their peers than with those of authorities.

How much the traits mentioned are influenced by inadequate educational practices can only be surmised.

Aim

Traditionally, physical education and athletics have played an important role in the education of the hearing. In the education of the deaf, this area is indispensable. It affords an environment for learning that is unsurpassed. Advantage must be taken of the many possible contributions that might result from participation.

The aim of a sound program should be:

To develop each hearing impaired individual to his optimum effectiveness, socially, physically, emotionally and intellectually, through the medium of physical education and athletics, so that he can achieve a wholesome personality and live successfully with both the deaf and the hearing.

Objectives

The concept that the mind and body are separate entities has long been abandoned. One does not train the mind in the classroom and the body in the gymnasium. When a student comes to a school, he should be treated as a unit; his whole person should be served. This includes the social, physical, emotional and intellectual aspects. /7/. Although they are all interrelated, for the sake of discussion they are described separately.

Social. At any time when two or more persons are involved in an activity it becomes a social experience, and therefore provides a situation for learning such things as honesty, cooperation, sportsmanship, and other desirable ways of behavior.

It has been reported that the deaf are socially immature and behave in antisocial ways. This is not necessarily true. At Gallaudet College, no marked differences have been noted between the behavior of the deaf and the hearing in the physical education environment. This may be due to the fact that on the playing field, or in the gymnasium or swimming pool, communication is not as critical as it is in other situations.

It should be mentioned that the deaf social club is an excellent place to learn acceptable behavior. It is particularly desirable to have the clubs involve hearing people: this promotes association, and in turn understanding. Since both sexes are involved, proper social graces can be learned. Incidentally, the separation of boys and girls in dining rooms, and classrooms during adolescence is a questionable practice. What better means is available for them to acquire social understandings that could be useful throughout life?

Physical. This topic was purposely not listed first. It is an important but by no means the only contribution resulting from physical education and athletics. If leadership and program are adequate, physical growth and development will be a natural outcome.

Recently, the speaker became impressed with the importance of the image that the deaf person presents to society. If he is strong, has skill, good posture, and a generally attractive appearance, he is apt to be socially acceptable. The reverse is true if he presents a depressing picture.

Emotional. That some deaf have emotional problems, in the light of their educational and living conditions, is understandable. Physical education and athletics have much to offer in ameliorating minor maladjustments. Activity is recognized as a catharsis for tensions.

The classroom, with its artificial environment, is a woefully weak place to learn about life. The real laboratory can be the playing field and the gymnasium where uninhibited actions reveal the true personality and competitive situations provide a setting for the teaching and the learning of proper behavior. The child who does not participate in play is one for whom there should be the deepest concern.

Competitive activities should be encouraged: they are essential to proper growth. Stress situations, which are inherent in competition, are experiences that can add much to character and personality development.

Intellectual. This term has reference to mental activities that are part of any good program. These can range from learning a specific skill to the development of language and communication. Learning the rules of a game, studying the strategy involved, and learning the history of a sport are examples.

Such concomitant disciplines as learning to be punctual, to dress properly, and to follow instructions can come almost automatically from a properly organized physical education program.

A particularly distressing situation was reported recently. Hearing athletic teams in the vicinity of a school for the deaf refused to play against the deaf teams.

The reason advanced was, "we have no fun playing against a team that does not know the basic rules of the game". It appears as if the teachers and administrators in this particular instance demonstrated complete dereliction.

Activities

In planning activities, provisions should be made to include all children. Even those excused for medical reasons should be assigned some duty, if only to watch others play and report what was observed.

Opportunities should be provided for free play for the very young. For the adolescent, one should provide:

- a. individual and dual sports - tennis, badminton, gymnastics, etc.,
- b. team sports - soccer, basketball, etc.,
- c. rhythmic and all forms of dance,
- d. aquatics, swimming, life saving, boating,
- e. conditioning activities for fitness, weight lifting, hiking, exercises.

Where facilities are not available at institutions for the deaf, efforts should be made to use those provided for the general public. When the deaf go to public events, integration of the deaf and hearing becomes natural. Also, emphasis should be made in schools on activities that will be continued throughout life.

Many deaf clubs support athletic teams. This is an excellent means of continuing wholesome relations with hearing teams after schooling is completed. The International Games for the Deaf is an outgrowth of the needs of the deaf throughout the world. This competition has done immeasurable good for the deaf on the international level.

Because the deaf are precluded from enjoying many recreational activities that depend on hearing, they seem to have an especially keen interest in athletics. Advantage should be taken of this interest: outstanding performers should be invited to demonstrate and explain skills; the

deaf should be taken to sporting events. This type of exposure can serve as an educational medium.

Concluding Statement

Evidence seems to indicate that the effectiveness of contemporary methods of educating the hearing impaired is open to serious doubt. Studies also show that the intellectual achievements and mental attitudes of the deaf often deviate from those of the hearing population. In view of this situation, it is no wonder that some deaf have difficulty living in a hearing society. Physical education and athletics provide an environment that can do much for improving learning and in so doing tend to bring about a natural integration of the deaf into the hearing world.

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Dr. Peter R. WISHER

Art. Cult. - 3

Chairman

Department of Physical Education and Athletics

Gallaudet College

Washington D.C. - USA

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF DANCE
TO THE ADJUSTMENT OF THE DEAF

/The paper/

After a decade of teaching dance to the deaf the speaker feels that participation in this activity has much to contribute to total education in general and to personal adjustment in particular. This same feeling does not seem to be shared by other educators, since inclusion of dance into the curricula for the deaf has either been ignored or given but minimal attention.

Education is often described as a process that strives to produce desirable changes in the behavior of individuals. The development of a satisfactory personal adjustment should be a primary consideration in any educational plan. An attempt will be made in this paper to show how dance can be of service in achieving this desirable end.

That a serious problem of personal adjustment exists today is recognized by educators both of the hearing and of the deaf. In regard to the general population, Cole and Bruce feel that, "the public conscience had been awakened to the number of immature and poorly organized persons we were turning out in our schools" /3, p.v/. As for the deaf, Myklebust states that, "the area of emotional adjustment is one of the most neglected of all problems in the psychology of deafness" /8, p.156/.

Personal adjustment is conceived as an individual's characteristic behavior pattern as shown by the manner in

which he generally reacts to situations. No single aspect of development - intellectual, emotional, physical, social - can be studied as an entity; all are bound together inextricably, and can be understood only when viewed in relation to each other.

Dance in this report is considered in a broad sense as rhythmic body movements executed with or without music, and includes all dance forms from elementary rhythmic play games through highly sophisticated creative dances.

The four major components of adjustment - intellectual, emotional, physical and social - will be discussed in that order.

Intellectual

When one looks at the general scholastic achievement of the deaf, he sees a depressing picture. They are retarded from four to seven years behind their hearing peers /4, p.117/. The primary cause of this situation is that deafness interferes with normal acquisition of oral and written language, and the third language to which most deaf resort - the language of signs - has inherent limitations as far as intellectual development is concerned.

The results of some studies have indicated that the deaf are weak in concept formation and in ability to think in abstract terms /4,8/. There is much reason to surmise that these differences may be due to linguistic deficiencies.

In general, it can be stated that there is a close correlation between unsuccessful adjustment and lack of intellectual development.

Dance experience can contribute much to the intellectual development of the deaf. Purposeful motor activity should be instrumental in promoting physical growth and development, and furthermore, "physical efficiency and the efficiency of learners are closely related" /3, p.174/.

Rowan states, "that for children language and movement go together" /9, p.10/. The dance setting is ideal for the introduction of new concepts, words, principles; the relaxed environment encourages oral practice. In this regard, Dr. De Sa feels that, "the rhythm in movements of the body developed in association with qualities of music eventually becomes the rhythm of speech" /8, p.1075/.

As for conceptual improvement, "as children work with rhythm patterns in movement, understanding of number concepts will evolve" /9, p.2/. As for dealing in the abstract, anyone who has taught dance movement is well aware of the principle that for any movement to become dance it must be "abstract", otherwise it is not dance.

Altshuler /1/ and Levine /4/ have reported the following emotional problems in the deaf population: 1/ throughout school years the deaf children resort to frequent outburst of rage; 2/ they demonstrate frequent frustration patterns; 3/ they seem to possess marked emotional immaturity; and 4/ they appear to be egocentric. It might be interesting to note that a study by the New York State Psychiatric Institute revealed that the deaf felt that hearing people tended to dislike, pity and misunderstand them /5, p.129/.

A medical doctor, T.E.Shaffer, makes a statement that suggests a general antidote for the negative traits attributed to the deaf: "the need for activity is present from earliest infancy, but it is heightened in adolescence. I believe, muscular activity, creative, or aggressive, is a mechanism for relief from stresses and anxieties which occur at this time... and he needs to have release through activity" /8, p.367/.

Dance has long been recognized as an effective means for the reduction of tensions. Although the main responsibility of the school is instruction and not therapy, it is obviously desirable to gain concomitant therapy by providing an environment where students can externalize feelings, beliefs, and fears through dance.

Physical

Physical development of the deaf is generally normal, so no great special problems resulting from deafness affect this aspect of adjustment. However, proper physical development is important for its beneficial effects on other adjustment components of either the hearing or the deaf. Even if "full physical stature does not guarantee intellectual and emotional maturity" /3, p.107/, still, "personality depends on the properly functioning body machine" /p.560/. It may be added that physical deviation from the normal can cause emotional problems. The teacher has an important role here, not only to be competent in dance, but to be aware of possible causes that might lead to maladjustments.

It is imperative that the student make an effort to acquire proficiency; no one wants to dance or socialize with a person who is not skilled. It would seem reasonable to think that a skilled deaf person would have fewer emotional problems and be more acceptable socially to both the deaf and the hearing.

The human body should be considered as the outer aspect of personality, for it is the agent through which we receive impressions from the external world and by which we communicate our meaning..... for it is only in art that all aspect of man's complex nature are united in expression" /2, p.207/.

Social

The social life of the deaf is greatly affected by their degree of facility in communication. Because very often language deficiencies interfere with normal relations with the hearing, they turn to other deaf in order to satisfy social needs.

Since deaf people tend to feel that hearing people "dislike, pity, and misunderstand them" /5, p.129/, it is no wonder they seek the company of other deaf. Some writers refer to this situation as a subculture, implying

that it is a form of isolation from the hearing society that is presumably undesirable. The speaker, on the contrary, feels that it serves a useful function in the lives of the deaf by permitting them to gain social experience with their peers. However, he believes that the deaf should not mingle solely with one another; social experience with the hearing is also needed.

Here again, dance can help. Throughout history expressed himself through dance. Since it involves groups of people, it becomes a social experience.

That the deaf enjoy dancing and have achieved a high degree of success as dancers has been demonstrated at Gallaudet College. A group of deaf student dancers has traveled all over the U.S.A. and Canada and has appeared on national television in both countries. One can see the tremendous effect this type of exposure has on the deaf participants: they seem to be more socially at ease with hearing people; tendency toward isolation is negated; they are enriched through new educational experiences. Within the group as it functions in practice sessions, in travel and in performance, many social lessons are learned. Positive social outcomes result from exposure to and participation in dance.

Concluding Statement

In this paper the speaker has pointed out the possible beneficial effects of dance on the intellectual, emotional, physical and social components that in their sum make up personality adjustment.

These thoughts are ably and succinctly expressed by H. Doublen as follows: "of all the arts, dance is peculiarly suited to such a fulfillment of personality. It serves all ends of individual growth; it helps develop the body; it stimulates the imagination and challenges the intellect; it helps cultivate an appreciation for beauty; and it deepens and refines the emotional nature." /2, p.207/.

Thus the speaker contends that the dance should not be considered simply as an end in itself but as an effective

means of assisting the deaf individual to live in harmony with himself, the deaf, and the hearing.

In closing, your attention is invited to part of a poem written by a deaf girl that expresses her feelings towards dance:

"... I feel the rhythm of music in my soul.
I dance, and know I'm master of the art.
For dancing is like music on the whole,
They give both joy and solace to the heart.

Then let me murmur not, with loving care
God made me feel His music everywhere."

/7, p.207/

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