

Visual Hearing

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Visual Hearing or Lip-Reading is one of the most important special subjects that provides the most important means by which the deaf children can intercommunicate with the social world. The sense of hearing is closely associated with human relations and lack of it presents the greatest difficulty in social adjustments. So the deaf children should seek compensation through other channels of reception—"VISUAL CHANNELS." Instead of hearing speech, he must read, not only written, but oral speech. The reading of oral speech involves the ability to derive meaning from the movements of the lips and facial expressions of the speaker. Such an ability is an art and very difficult to master. It needs special guidance and technical training. It calls for the full harmonious coordination of the physical, mental, personal, and social powers of the learner.

Lip reading or speech reading or visual hearing is defined by Bulwer as a subtle art which enables an individual with observant eyes to hear what any man says by the movements of his lips. Porter, a successful educator of deaf children, employing the "Oral Method," (a modern method of demutizing the deaf-mutes) defined lip reading as "watching the mouth of a person who is speaking and understanding the thought so conveyed." He emphasized the understanding of the thought and not the seeing of sounds, nor seeing the words.

Similarly, Nitchie, another famous educator of the deaf, defined lip reading as the art of understanding spoken language through the observation of the speaker's lips and facial expressions.

From the aforementioned definitions, it is apparent that lip reading is a psycho-physical process which involves the coordinated functioning of the eyes and the mind in order to get a good comprehension of the speaker's speech.

Before the commencement of instruction in any field of education, a cooperative and sympathetic

* "Visual Hearing" means comprehending speech through the visual receptors — the eyes, which take the place of hearing among the deaf individuals.

relationship between the pupil and the teacher is imperative. This is much more needed in dealing with children with aural infirmity or deficiency for these children are more emotionally sensitive and easily discouraged. Brunshwig in her extensive research of the personality and emotionality of the deaf arrived at these conclusions:

"The deaf are inclined to have an unstable emotional development due to two main causes. First, many of our finer emotions are developed through hearing, which is affected by the modulation of the human voice, by music, and by the melodies of nature. Second, authorities on mental hygiene are agreed that emotional upsets and confusions are caused by a child's attempting to learn two languages at the same time, attempting to think and express himself in two distinct ways. It is more trying when a child has no language with which to express his emotions as in the case with deaf children before they come to school."

The next step is optical sensory training which is a preparatory step toward lip reading, from which attention, interest, memory, concentration, and critical observation are developed. Listed are some suggested ways of training sight:

1. Sight may be trained through motion.
 - a. The children make movements in unison, imitating and following the teacher.
 - b. The children practice gymnastics of hands, arms, fingers, lips, tongue, etc.
2. Sight may be trained through color.
 - a. The children match colored balls, blocks, ribbons, paper, etc.
 - b. The children match colored objects with the colors in the charts; or they match colored squares, circles, rectangles, triangles, etc.
3. Sight may be trained through form.
 - a. Children recognize geometric forms solids.
 - b. They match geometric tablets.

- c. They reconstruct outlines on the slate or with sticks.
 - d. They trace forms of subjects, geometric outlines on the slate or on papers.
4. Sight may be trained through number. The child can learn to recognize different numbers of similar objects, marks on the slate, etc.: common objects in the locality may be used. The selection depends upon the resourcefulness and ingenuity of the teacher.

As soon as the children are able to match different forms and different colors, charts which contain illustrations of animals, and other familiar objects may be used. All charts should be hung where everybody can see them. Duplicate pictures should be provided on flash cards. From these materials, a matching game can be given. After giving a simple direction of the game, show a card to the class. Give a card to a child, ask him to match it (picture) with one on the chart. If the child fails, ask another child until everybody in the class understands the game very well. It is suggested that those who fail should be given one or more times to learn the game.

Lip reading should start on the very first day of school and carried on at all times. This special pedagogy should permeate all school activities. All oral communications should be done in speech and lip reading though how meager and clumsy these may be. Teachers, parents, administrators, and all those who come in contact with the child should never, never sign to the young growing deaf child because once sign language is learned, it is very hard to teach him to speak for the simple reason that sign language is very easy to learn. To enhance the learning of speech and lip reading, every deaf child should be treated as a individual learner and should be given ample opportunities to participate in all activities in the school and in the homes. All communications with the deaf should be expressed in complete and natural conversations, for one of our primary aims in educating them is to teach them to speak and lip read normal speech. Pupils should be called by their own names — by the teachers, parents, classmates, etc.

The first formal lesson in lip reading may start with action words as young children are energetic and love to play. These are some suggested action commands:

Bow.	Open the box.	Comb your hair.
Cry.	Clap your hands.	Pull the chair.
Dance.	Sit down.	Pull the table.
Yawn.	Stand up.	Pull your hair.
Frown.	Fall.	Nave your hand.
Laugh.	Cough.	Wave a flag.
March.	Sneeze.	Wash your face.
Open the door.	Run.	Wash your hands.
Shut the door.	Hop.	ash your feet.
Shut your eyes.	Roll the ball.	Fold your hands.

Spin a top. Brush your teeth. Brush your hair.
 Take off your shoes. Put on your shoes. Put on your socks.
 Go the window. Go to the door. Go to the table.

Then, the teacher should start with two objects which are familiar to the children, easy to recognize, and easy to differentiate on the lips such as: "top" and "basket." The first word, "top," has an initial letter that is revealed by the tongue and a final letter that is revealed by the lips, and its general configuration is different from the second word, for it is much shorter. The second word, "basket," has an initial letter that is revealed by the lips and a final letter that is revealed by the tongue. These contrasting features are excellent guide posts in lip reading for the deaf beginners.

Each child progresses in accordance with his ability and needs. Below are some common nouns which may be added to the lip reading vocabulary of children from time to time:

face	ball	dog	table	mother	orange
mouth	top	cat	chair	father	corn
teeth	table	fish	paper	sister	cake
tongue	shoe	cow	pencil	brother	soap
lips	knife	goat	book	boy	glass
ears	fork	duck	eraser	girl	water
eyes	spoon	horse	ruler	teacher	toothbrush
head	cup	bird	blackboard	rice	milk
hair	bag	carabao	desk	papaya	tree
nose	comb	hen	chalk	coconut	comb
hands	plate	rooster	chalk-ledge	mango	mirror
feet	glass	plg	crayons	lanzones	ice-cream

(Other nouns should be added from time to time upon the needs of each child in the class.)

Upon mastery of the different nouns given above, these should be incorporated into simple commands or used when ever feasible in other subjects or in any social activity in the school and at home. To illustrate this, for example, the nouns learned in concept and lip reading are: ball, top, and fish. Commands like these may be given:

Give me a ball.	Show me a ball.
Give me a top.	Throw a ball.
Give me a fish.	Roll a ball.
Show me a ball.	Spin a top.
Show me a top.	Etc.

As soon as the children can lip read the commands with ease and facility, the teacher should write these commands on the blackboard and print them on flash cards, from which incidental reading from printed forms may begin. In presenting the written commands on the blackboard, the teacher should first read each sentence with correct phrasing, inflection, and pronunciation. It is best to do it this way in spite of the obvious fact that the deaf pupils cannot hear the speaker, because a correct and natural speech carries and conveys subtle elements of naturalness and spontaneity of expression. The true movements of the organs of phonation together with the expression of the face of the speaker help give vital clues to synthe-

is: understanding a unit of thought observed in speech through contextual process and not by part or parts or by word or by words. The teacher should be very careful not to exaggerate the movements of the lips, the tongue, etc., because by doing so the objective of lip reading is defeated. Lip reading should be learned in a natural setting and anything unnatural in our everyday speech such as speaking very slowly for fear that the deaf child may not understand us or speaking too fast or speaking while we face the blackboard are pitfalls in teaching lip reading.

It is through imitation and proper conditioning of sight that the beginning lip reader learns to recognize and differentiate one command or statement from another on the lips of the speaker or as written on the blackboard and flash cards.

All the phrases and sentences taken up in lip reading should always be followed in oral and silent reading drills and exercises. These should be written on the blackboard and printed on the flash cards for speech practice and incidental reading. There are no hard and fast rules in teaching lip reading; neither is there a single method because there are so many variable factors that are intricately involved in this process.

There are some important principles to observe in teaching the art of lip reading for young beginners. They are:

1. Good lighting is important. The teacher should sit in a good light, with the light on the teacher's face and not in the eyes of the children. At the same time, the room itself should be well lighted. Such precaution should be taken, for lip reading is twice as difficult in a poor light.

2. The teacher or whoever is the speaker should face the deaf children, because their only means of understanding speech is by watching the various movements of the organs of phonation of the speaker and if the speaker faces the opposite direction, it is impossible for the deaf individuals to comprehend him.

3. Care should be taken that movements of the head, hands, or eyes of the teacher, do not indicate what the answer should be.

4. There should be no mouth exaggeration or the like; speech should always be as natural as possible; to do otherwise, defeats the purpose of teaching lip reading. The deaf children are being trained to live in a normal speaking world wherein they are supposed to read lips, lips in their natural speaking movements and shapes, and not labored or exaggerated to convey thoughts and meanings. If the deaf children learn their lip reading lessons in an unnatural manner, they will find difficulty in understanding common everyday conversation, a major objective in teaching lip reading.

5. For beginning lessons, objects and actions which appeal to the interests of the children and which are in the realm of their experience, should be selected.

6. Also, words that are easily seen on the lips should be selected.

7. When two or more words are presented together, they should be words of marked contrast to each other in their formation, for example:

ball automobile fish apple etc.

8. All words should be spoken with expression and meaning.

9. Care should be taken that the class does not form the habit of requiring repetition, but should be trained to expect to understand what is spoken the first time.

10. Natural speech should be emphasized with voice and using words phrased or grouped in their natural order

11. All words learned should be used in sentences within the experience and comprehension of each particular child in the classroom.

12. Lip reading principles are not only observed during class hours in lip reading but in all subjects and in the homes and in the community where they live. Lip reading as a special art of comprehending spoken language by observing the lips and the facial expression of the speaker, finds its usefulness and importance only when the deaf child gains experience through it, learns through it, laughs and feels through it, and gain further happiness and adjustment through it.

