

REPORT FROM CAPTIONED FILMS FOR THE DEAF

by

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INTRODUCTION

Being assigned to make some report on the Media Services and Captioned Films Programs, I shall try to do that briefly. Last year, when we had the Symposium, I was privileged to give a short greeting and then had to depart almost immediately to get a plane back to Washington, D.C. because of a budget crisis.

Up until the 1967 session of Congress, the Captioned Films Program had been in what is termed the Salaries and Expenses budget of the Office of Education. This is the money that is allocated by Congress to operate the office, to pay salaries, travel, conference costs, consultants, and things of this nature. It so happened that in the tremendous growth of the office and the number of demands that were made by the President for various kinds of conferences and crash programs, the "business management" found that they were a million dollars short. Captioned Films had about \$700,000 left for the last quarter of our operations. My rush home was to defend that, but it wasn't completely successful. We were very substantially reduced.

I mention that not as a matter of complaint, but only to justify, or rather explain, why some of the things that we have talked of developing have not eventuated at this point. We were held back on printing the motion pictures for the lipreading instruction developed by Dr. Withrow's project and later modified and put into cartridge form for teaching basic primary vocabulary. These will be available by the end of the school year, although not to every one of the 700 schools and classes in the country. There are 75 cartridges for individualized lipreading instruction. As I said, this distribution was held up, but we are about to catch up. The situation was further compounded by the fact that the administration has had very strict limitations on what we might go ahead and do. In other words, we were able to fund existing projects that were established, but we've not been able to make new starts on anything until just recently. So you might say that since last April, we've almost been out of business except for what has been going on principally through our Regional Centers. We hope to pick up momentum again.



Dr. Frank B. Withrow developed 8mm films for CFD to teach lipreading.

Before going further about the program, I'd like to digress for a moment. Having mentioned the Centers and what they have been doing, I would like to pay particular tribute to the Center here at Nebraska for the fine work that it does throughout the year and particularly for the excellent work that Dr. Stepp and his staff have done in bringing off this Fourth Symposium. When we first talked about Symposia, I wasn't sure whether we wanted to get involved on an annual schedule. As Dr. Stepp indicated earlier, these Symposia are funded on an annual basis, but each one of them seems to come off a little better than the previous one. I think with the kinds of problems that we have and the growing identification of needs that arise out of such meetings, we probably shall be coming back to Nebraska for a long time to come. It is certainly a pleasant place to visit.

May I also thank not only the Center and the staff and the University, but the participants who prepared papers and demonstrations for this meeting. I hope there will be some sense of reward in what you've done, in the kind of questions you've stimulated, and in the fact that the papers will be published in the *American Annals of the Deaf*. It seems especially significant that we have architects and school administrators here together and that the flexibility suggested for school rooms or school buildings of

the future is equaled by the flexibility that we have seen in the people who have talked together here. This is certainly important.

ACQUISITION

Now a few words about our programs for the benefit of the architects who probably never heard of Captioned Films before they came to this meeting and still may not know quite what it means. Let's begin with our acquisition program. The acquisition section is headed by Mac Norwood. Something was expressed yesterday in one of the papers—an excellent paper by the way—to the effect that deaf people don't want to think for themselves, they don't want to learn, and so forth. It seemed rather negative in its estimate of deaf people. You have seen George Propp operate and would recognize in a moment that he is a deaf person who does not conform to that kind of an estimate. I could point out many similar deaf people. The thing that brought this to mind is that our acquisition program in the office is handled by a deaf man, Mac Norwood. He does an outstanding job. I mention this not to pick a quarrel with the person who made the statement, but rather to emphasize the fact that there is no stereotype of the deaf and that we need to look at them as individuals. This is true of all kinds of handicapped people. We need to see them first as people and second as handicapped.

In acquisition, we have actively dealt with hardware and software, and I'd like to report to you people who are heads of schools that through our distribution contact under Howard Quigley's direction, we hopefully will be ordering enough overhead projectors, filmstrip projectors, screens, and tables so that there will be one of each of these in every classroom for the deaf in the United States. We are ordering about 3,000 extra acetate rolls. Equipping classes has not all been done by Captioned Films. Actually, Public Law 89-313 has supplied more funding to state supported schools than we do. Our ratio would be about \$50 per capita as against more than \$200 per capita from that other source. In short, a great deal of this equipment has been bought with federal funds other than ours, but I think that to a considerable extent we started the trend. We are trying now to complete that job.

TRAINING

Another part of this program is training, and in that, we are trying to assist both in-service and preservice training. With Dr. Stepp this week, we have had a preliminary meeting of some of the teacher trainers and hope to begin to involve them in more use of media in the training of teachers of the deaf. Eventually, that will spread all over so that, as new teachers come out of training, they will be better equipped than they are now to utilize the media that they are beginning to encounter in the classroom.

The other aspect of training is continuing education. This refers to training prospects or possibilities for the adult deaf. We're not much involved in this as yet. About the only thing I can really point to is that at the present time in Baltimore, they are using film lessons that we have developed for the adult deaf in keypunch and typing. The adult deaf are carrying on an adult program there for upgrading their skills and getting to a level where they might get better jobs. We hope to expand this kind of effort. \

DISTRIBUTION

The distribution aspect of the program is under Mr. Edward Carney's surveillance. Distribution goes to both deaf children and to deaf adults through recreational films that are distributed through White Plains, New York, Indianapolis, and Colorado Springs. Our total population served is estimated at 200-250 thousand.

RESEARCH

The research aspect of the program is not extensive. We are really doing research and development, and this is not a large part of our program. In this area, one of the most significant projects that we are involved in is the development of what we hope will be a multimedia package in language instruction. This includes instruction for beginning deaf children who are at reading readiness age. At present we have enough for about 30 hours of such instruction on filmstrip. It will be in field testing by the end of this month. If this works out as well as it seems to in the development stage that it has been going through for some three years, it could make a significant difference in the rate at which deaf children begin to learn to read. This again is not the whole story, by any means, of the development of language, but it is something that is structured and will go along with other unstructured kinds of experiences we saw in Dr. Leitman's film.

As we talk about the education of the deaf children, I think that we need to bear in mind the fact that being busily engaged in activities of one kind or another does not necessarily develop language. There must be some input of language if we are going to get any out. Language must be cranked in as part of any ongoing activity. Language doesn't take place spontaneously with deaf children in anything like the way that it does with hearing children who are chatting and conversing. Well, at any rate, we are endeavoring to develop some structured materials that will be supportive perhaps to other kinds of language and group activities in the school.

PRODUCTION

With regard to production, we are doing certain types of in-house production, principally filmstrips. You who have been receiving Captioned Films output know of the auditory training materials and some of the other things that we have been releasing. When I say "in-house," I mean this is supervised within our own staff although done by professional companies. And finally, we have extramural productions such as those that are going on here at the University of Nebraska in the form of lipreading films, or with Dr. Wyman, in the form of transparencies and perhaps soon, with Dr. Jackson, on the development of teacher-training materials and so on. Rather than enumerate a list of the things that we have been involved in this year, may I mention an item or two that you may be looking forward to. I've referred to the lipreading films. These will be on super 8 sound film for use in the Technicolor 1000 projector. I believe the projectors have already come in. We have a hundred of them for loan, and we'll be ordering another hundred soon. I venture to predict that before too long, 3-5 years, virtually everything that we have and most of the things that you have will be on 8mm film. We're moving rapidly in that direction. It's easier to use, somewhat cheaper, and has good quality picture and sound for the size of groups that we normally have. The Technicolor 1000 retails at about \$300.00 and in quantity should be a good deal less than that.

There is already beginning to be some variety of material available for this projection system. For example, the ten films on language teaching that we produced through United World Films are now available in cartridges which can be bought commercially. At this point, they are close to the price of a 16mm film because the cartridge itself costs something. We can foresee, however, that these are going to come down in price. We will be supplying some of these things to you on the usual free-loan basis.

We have just begun to receive from the John Tracy Clinic the start of some films on teaching speech. This is to be a whole series of films produced first on videotape. Transfers to regular 16mm film are being made, and these will be broken into cartridges. With these, teacher-trainees will be able to use audio tapes for listening to imperfect speech and then see pictures of expert teachers of the deaf

actually working at correcting this speech or developing new speech skills. This will be a multimedia package of workbooks, tapes, and films.

We have going in California the development of a program for teaching electronic assembly. This is designed for the rather slow, deaf person. It is scheduled to be ready for the next fiscal year. Things like this that are programmed carefully take a great deal of time to develop. Unfortunately, the people who know something about programming and who can be drawn into the area of the deaf are a rather scarce commodity. Recognizing that, our Southwest Regional Media Center is planning a workshop this summer for teams of people—a supervising teacher and a classroom teacher in the same department from a number of schools—to get together and spend some weeks working with expert programmers, people who are good in theory as well as the practice. Through this approach we may begin to develop a cadre of people who will spread basic knowledge about how we can go at programming materials for deaf children.

CONCLUSION

Well, we have many, many balls in the air these days. If I keep juggling them here, I shall probably drop some so maybe this would be a good time to stop. Let me say that we are delighted that you all came. I trust that we may be able to implement the suggestion made a little while ago that we do some follow-up on this conference to provide specifics that people might be able to use in developing new facilities for deaf children.



Dr. John A. Gough, first chief of Captioned Films for the Deaf.