

*University's program of
speech pathology-audiology is*

SPEAKING Loud AND Clear

THIRTY MILES SOUTHWEST of Columbia in Cooper County, the small rural community of Pilot Grove (population 680) seems an unlikely place for a University of Missouri classroom. But that's what its high school became one Saturday in April when students and staff in the area of speech pathology-audiology conducted a speech and hearing clinic.

For Paula, pictured at right, and the 20 other youngsters who were evaluated during the day-long session, the clinic was a bright, new experience. To the University visitors, however, the event was a familiar one. Since 1946, when Dr. Charlotte Wells began the off-campus program at the request of a Mexico, Mo., nurse, University personnel have visited more than 50 communities in Missouri, many more than once, and evaluated almost 3,000 children, most of whom had speech troubles.

"More than half of the problems have been in articulation," reports Dr. Wells. "Stuttering ranks next and hearing loss, third."

Dr. Wells has been director of the speech and hearing clinic since 1946, but the program itself which started 10 years before, was one of the early ones in the nation. It reached new heights last December when the master's degree program in speech pathology became accredited by the American Boards of Examiners in Speech Pathology and Audiology. "Fewer than 10 schools have this accreditation," Dr. Wells points out.

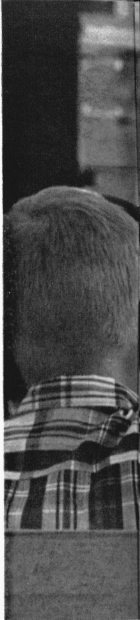
The Missouri program is based on the dual premise of training and service, one complementing the other. During the 21 years of the off-campus clinics, for example, more than 200 University students have received training impossible to duplicate in a campus classroom. And thousands of parents, children and teachers have received information—and help. Many of the communities used as centers for county programs have employed speech clinicians in their public schools since the first off-campus program was

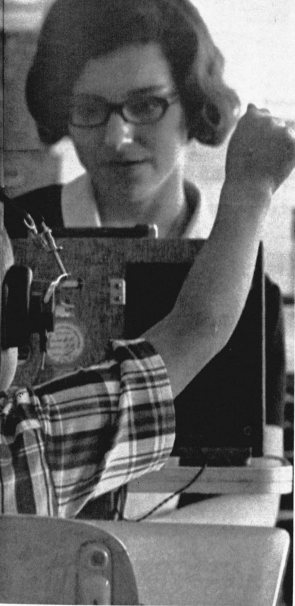






If Rhoda says the right word for Leslie Zalk, student clinician, and Dr. Charlotte Wells, director of the clinic, she may blow a bubble as a reward. Below, Leslie helps three-year-old Rhoda learn about the word, "puppy" by using pictures and a real "puppy," actually a full-grown collie, Bobby.





A school boy from Pilot Grove tells the audiometrist Antoinette Chivetta that he heard the sound produced on the audiometer. Below Dr. Donald G. Williamson explains Bexsxy audiometer to students.



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held in their particular area. The only cost to the community for the clinic is a mileage charge for the trip to and from Columbia plus lunch for the University staff and visitors.

Here is how a typical evaluation is conducted: First the child listens to tones from an audiometer. The clinician can tell by the child's report whether or not his hearing is within normal limits.

"Since people learn to speak and check their speech by hearing themselves and others," Dr. Wells says, "this is an important part of the testing program."

Next comes the speech evaluation. The child reads sentences or selected words, repeats words that are said to him and tells what he sees in pictures. Unconsciously, he reveals his general speech ability, as well as specific problems.

After the clinician checks speech habits and observes the child's physical tools for speaking—such as palate, nose, tongue—a staff member and student therapist meets with the child, his parents and teacher, showing them what can be done to help improve the speech situation in the home and school. Often, the child is recommended for additional evaluation and out-patient therapy at the University facilities in Columbia.

Off-campus clinics, of course, are only a small part of the total speech pathology-audiology story. Adults, as well as children, are evaluated and treated in the Parker Hall headquarters. All students in the University's severely handicapped program are evaluated. Other settings for training-service clinics include the University Laboratory School, the Mid-Missouri Mental Health Center, the Missouri School for the Deaf in Fulton, University Medical Center, Woodhaven Home for exceptional children, and the Cleft Palate Clinic.

"Not only are the facilities unusually fine for training, the reports also make valuable source material for research," Dr. Wells points out.

Research is an important part of the total program, and, currently, there are five dissertations underway. One, as an illustration, is a study of possible relationships between disorders of communication and delinquency.

If one measure of a school is the quality of its graduates, then the area of speech pathology-audiology certainly is doing its part to uphold the University's image. Among those who have received degrees from the University are Dr. William H. Perkins, director of the Center for Speech and Hearing at Southern California; Dr. Donald Kline, director of research at the University of Idaho; Dr. Gene Ritter, who heads up the department of speech pathology and audiology at the University of Hawaii; and Dr. Thelma Trombly, who is on the staff at the University.