

1940

## 50,000 Words a Day

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# 50,000 Words a Day

*Betty Bice tells you how to choose those words which will help you to mirror your personality for others*

**DO YOU** speak for yourself or are you merely a retailer for the pet phrases and current slang of the campus?

Being a voice of the people has its advantages, of course. It's much easier to copy the crowd's conversation than to develop one of your own. It requires less concentration, too. You needn't really listen to what your roommate's saying—just daydream and interject a "you said it!" or a "yes, isn't it the truth?" now and then.

But reverse the procedure sometime. Really listen when someone's talking to you. Watch her lips move and the expression of her eyes. Listen to her choice of words and the emphasis put on each. Stop planning what you're going to say as soon as you can tuck in a word. Refrain from shifting your eyes about and moving your hands and feet.

The results will probably be immediate. In the majority of cases, she'll respond to your interest and fairly sparkle with conversational attempts to hold your attention.

If you want people to listen when you talk, you must earn their attention. Time is money to most people. If your conversation can't offer them anything they want, then they'll spend their money elsewhere.

But how can you tell what people want? It's easy—

just watch them when you talk. If they shift and fidget when you describe at length your gruesome chemistry test, assume they haven't taken the course yet and don't care to hear preliminary reports.

If they display indifference at your account of the last formal, rest assured they've already heard about it. If they doodle when you give a resumé of your last trip to the hospital or your roommate's current love affair, decide they're just not interested. But whatever you do—change the subject until you hit one that does agree with your audience.

Let's assume you do have something to say. Maybe an incident occurred in class that should be of interest to everyone. You've an audience within earshot at the dining table—and the floor is yours. How are you going about talking? Don't just open your mouth and let the words come out any which way, unless you want to spoil a good story.

Are you going to announce immediately that this incident is extremely funny? Not unless you want them all to determine in advance not to be amused no matter how funny the story is. Are you going to interject such phrases as "if you know what I mean—?" If they already know what you mean, why tell them?

Are you going to hook such sidecars on their train of thought as "She's the one who did that other funny

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# Alums

## in the News

IOWA STATE'S Alumni Visitor Plan, which was inaugurated in 1928, is one of four which has been adopted by colleges to provide alumni participation in institution affairs. The plan operates through committees composed of graduates who have been invited to advise in such matters as curriculum changes, course content, teaching problems, research and physical plant extension.

It is optional with department heads, and the use of visitors differs among the divisions of the college. In home economics, visitors are asked to study the progress of the division and give suggestions on policy.

Five Alumni Visitors will serve the Home Economics Division in 1941 and 1942. Josephine McMullen Bierbaum, '26, taught in the Cherokee High School before her marriage, and then became State Supervisor of Home Economics. She is now living in Cherokee with her family.

A journalism major and former editor of the *Homemaker* is Grace McIlrath Ellis, '22, of Marengo. In continuation of her journalistic career, Mrs. Ellis is doing free lance writing.

Alice Dahlen Rosebrook, M. S. '32, came to Iowa State as a fellow in the Home Economics Education Department. Mrs. Rosebrook has had teaching experience in the North Dakota high schools and was a member of the home economics education staff at Iowa State for several years. She is now the wife of an Ames physician.

Record of outstanding community service and activity reports of Olivette Pehrson Werling, '31, may be found in news letters which have been published by the State Department of Vocational Education. Following graduation she taught in Tipton.

Ethel Wilson Yungclas, '21, is prominent in Farm Bureau work and is president of the auxiliary unit of the Farmers' Grain Dealers Association of Iowa. Her farm home is near Webster City. In addition to car-

ing for her own family of seven children, she finds time during summers to give a group of boys from the Bronxville area in New York the experience of living on a farm for a week.

In the Journalism Department, also as an Alumni Visitor, is Genevieve Callahan, '20, who was formerly on the editorial staff of the *Ladies Home Journal* and then *Successful Farming*. Later she became editor of *Sunset Magazine*, and now she is a home economics consultant in San Francisco. She is combining food advertising work and editorial writing. Her office and testing kitchen are in her own apartment.—*Bette Simpson*



Genevieve Callahan

## Conversation

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thing I told you about yesterday and who has that cute brother, you know, who's on the swimming team? Well, anyway—?" Are you going to season your story with trite slang, mispronounced words, assumed accents and poor English? Not unless you want to lose your audience altogether!

But besides right choice of topics and correct manner of speech, one should consider her voice quality. Shakespeare wasn't being old-fashioned when he described the voice of one of his heroine's as "ever soft, gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman." That fact holds true today, for much of our communication, especially in business, is by telephone with someone who perhaps seldom sees us in person.

Besides making a favorable impression over the phone, such a voice is wonderfully effective in holding attention. Try it out for yourself at a gathering. Shout something to a friend and she can barely hear you above the noise everyone else is making. Try to whisper something and just see how quiet the room becomes all of a sudden.

Any public speaker can tell you that lowering one's voice is the best way to bring a restless audience to attention. When one shouts, nobody has to listen in order to hear what is being said, but when one speaks softly, everyone has to put forth an effort to understand.

There are times when it's best to speak so softly no one can hear you, or better, just don't speak. Theater and concert gabblers are high on the list of public nuisances. The loquacious in libraries come under the same heading, according to many people. Some even object, fervently, to discoursing dancers, but that's between you and your partner, of course.

There's no question as to the importance of conversation. One speaks on the average 50,000 words a day. Some of them you toss to your roommate; some you use to impress your professors; others you offer to casual classroom acquaintances or throw out to strangers at exchanges and teas. But no matter who hears them, your words mirror your personality, the image too often being blurred.

Your conversation can make enemies or friends for you. It can get a job or lose one for you. It can make you stand out in any gathering or leave you hopelessly in the background.

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