

PLĀ-ACT. A LANGUAGE REMEDIATION PROGRAM

Author: Jacqueline Marlowe Rosenberg
Supplier: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co.
Cost: \$40 (US)
Reviewer: Jill Fowler
Carleton Board of Education

Purpose

To develop speech and language skills including vocabulary, figurative language, morphology, syntax, memory and listening skills. To reinforce turn-taking, organizational skills and team work. To provide positive feedback from a speaking situation, with a consequent increase in self-esteem and self-confidence.

Description

Plā-Act consists of a professional's guide, scripts and an instruction manual. The 12 scripts are based on fables, stories and fairy tales. They are 5 to 15 minutes long and designed for two to five characters. The instruction manual contains a pretest, definitions and a variety of student exercises which accompany each script.

The target population includes children with language ages between 6 and 12, with reading ability at the beginning grade two level or above. The author indicates applicability with a wide variety of language and speech problems.

Instruction time for one script is two, 30-minute sessions per week for 10 weeks. Following such instruction, the children can perform their play in front of an audience.

Critique

Plā-Act is appropriate as an enjoyable supplement to more structured tasks. Areas receiving the most emphasis are memory, vocabulary and idioms. As a self-contained program, Plā-Act would be a useful general language stimulation tool to suggest to other professionals.

The most obvious limitation is that the scripts do not necessarily include the specific language or speech structures you are targeting during regular therapy.

P.O. VOX COMPANION

Supplier: A.S. Telecom Inc.
(Can) 9915 St. Vital
Montréal-Nord, PQ M1H 4S5
Cost: Approx. \$215 (US \$155), with standard battery only
Reviewer: Agnes Friesen, Ottawa Civic Hospital

Description and Critique

The P.O. Vox Companion is a relatively new intra-oral electronic larynx. This speech aid was introduced

by Speech & Rehab Consultants of Castleton, New York, and is distributed in Canada by A.S Telecom Inc. of Montreal.

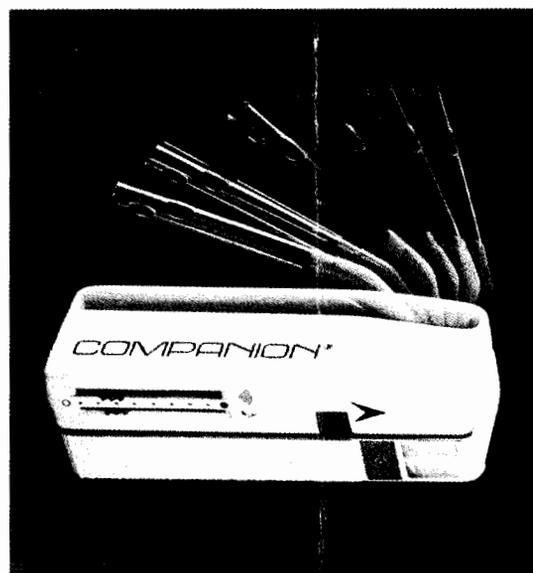
A single compact unit measuring 1 1/2" x 1 3/8" x 4", the Companion fits neatly into the palm of a hand and weighs only 3 ounces. The pop-up and retractable oral wand serves simultaneously as the on-off mechanism. The retractable wand also contributes to the unit's compactness and ease of storage in pocket or purse, though it could be a potential source of mechanical breakdown.

Power is supplied by a standard 9-volt battery, but rechargeable nickel-cadmium batteries and a charger are also available; this is a definite plus in terms of reducing operating costs for regular or long-term users. Sound is easily activated by a very light touch bridging two contact plates, thus requiring a minimum of fine motor coordination.

Tone quality is good. However, relative to the tone quality of the Cooper-Rand speech aid, probably the most commonly used intraoral speech aid until the present time, the tone quality of the Companion was judged to have a more vibratory or reverberatory quality.

Slide controls allow for volume and pitch/frequency adjustments. However, dropping the pitch below the top 1/4-1/3 of the total range significantly reduces the tone quality through increased vibratory noise.

At approximately two thirds the cost of the Cooper-Rand electronic speech aid, the Companion is an attractive alternative for intraoral users, particularly those who are prepared to forego some reduction in tone quality for the reduced cost and/or an esthetically compact and lightweight unit.



ZYGO NOTEBOOK

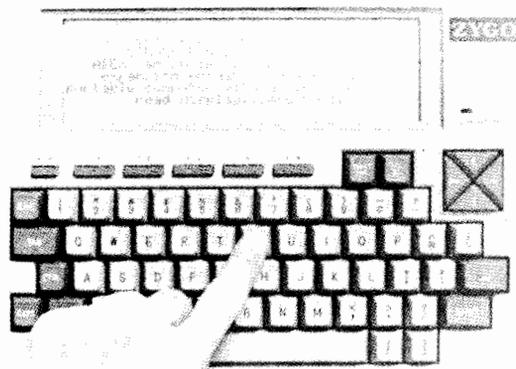
This instrument is a new cost-efficient, versatile aid for single keystroke typists. It is a complete word proces-

sor with single-finger access and Abex, an unlimited abbreviation/expansion program in a four-pound portable computer no larger than a three-ring binder. A large eight-line, 40-character LCD display provides easy readability. The unit has a full-size typewriter keyboard with 10 function keys. It runs on either Ni-Cd rechargeable batteries or AC power. The ZYGO Notebook can be coupled to other computers to transfer or retrieve files. Enhanced information processing can be achieved through the addition of a data recorder or compact floppy disc drive.

Cost: Writing aid w/ABEX 16 K — \$895 (US)
 Writing Aid w/ABEX 32 K — \$1050 (US)
 The unit is available for rental.

Contact: ZYGO Industries Inc.
 P.O. Box 1008, Portland, Oregon 97207

Phone: (503) 297-1724



ZYGO LIGHTWRITER

This instrument is a unique assistive communication system for nonspeaking people who can manage single stroke keyboard access. The system, weighing five pounds and packaged in a secure attache case (13"W x 4"H x 12"D), has a full-size typewriter keyboard, a rechargeable Ni-Cd battery unit, a user programmable memory, dual bright fluorescent visual displays, a built-in dot matrix impact printer with automatic 'word-wrap', and 20 prestored common phrases. An optional internal speech synthesizer is available.

Cost: Lightwriter Communication System
 — \$1995 (US)
 Lightwriter Communication System with Speech
 Synthesizer — \$2995 (US)

Contact: ZYGO Industries Inc.
 P.O. Box 1008, Portland, Oregon 97207

Phone: (503) 297-1724

EARSCAN

Earscan is a compact instrument that can be configured as an impedance instrument and/or audiometer. Tympanometry, acoustic relax plots and manual and/or automatic pure tone audiometry functions may be purchased in one system or installed separately. Tympanometry and ipsilateral acoustic interpretation are available in automatic operation while the audiometer may be used in either the manual or automatic microprocessor controlled modes. Graphics liquid crystal display reports multiple screens of stored test data. A hardcopy report may be generated with an optional printer. A serial port transmits test data to a personal computer.

Dimensions: 7.5"W x 3"H x 9"D

Weight: 3 pounds

Contact: Micro Audiometrics
 3744-B S Nova Road
 Port Orange, Florida 32019

Phone: (904) 788-9331



MICROLAB

Microlab is an upgrade to Earscan that provides the additional capabilities of running application programs and saving the results in a large data buffer. Each program tailors the testing procedure and report format to suit individual requirements. An 8K battery powered RAM stores hundreds of individual tests. The memory allows options and calibration values to be changed by the user. Microlab is capable of sending data directly to a printer or a host computer or receiving commands from a host computer to simplify test administration.

Contact: Micro Audiometrics
3744-B S Nova Road
Port Orange, Florida 32019
Phone: (904) 788-9331



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear CASLPA Members:

I recently received a letter from an Australian speech-language pathologist who would like to exchange with a Canadian speech-language pathologist.

Jane Dougall is presently working as a pediatric speech-language pathologist, specializing in cleft palate, at Westmead Hospital. Westmead Hospital is the newest hospital in Sydney and is located in the western suburbs.

If anyone is interested, or would like more information, please contact me.

Laurie Denley
507-73 Gorge Road West
Victoria, BC V9A 1L9
Phone (604) 383-6275 (home);
384-7125 (office).