

## IT'S MORE THAN "SPEECH": CONSIDERATIONS WHEN WORKING WITH DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING INDIVIDUALS

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### Introduction

- Graduated from Ball State University – Bachelor's 2013
- Graduated from Ball State University – Master's 2015
- Worked in public school system 2015-2016 school year
- Started at Indiana School for the Deaf in 2016-2017 school year



### [Disclaimer...]

- Get to know your Deaf/Hard of Hearing clients just as you would get to know any of your other clients
  - Not all individuals who have hearing loss identify as a member of the Deaf community
  - "Little d" deaf vs. "Big D" Deaf
- Learning about and respecting the culture that your client(s) identify with is just as important as learning about and respecting the culture of your Deaf/Hard of Hearing clients!!

### Objectives

1. Learn about the main aspects of Deaf culture and the Deaf community
2. How speech-language pathologists can gear their therapy approaches while considering the bilingual-bicultural philosophy
3. Considerations when working with various ranges of d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing clients

## DEAF CULTURE AND THE DEAF COMMUNITY

### What is Deaf culture?

- "Culture and language intertwine, with language reflecting the characteristics of culture."
- American Sign Language (ASL) is **NOT** a universal language!
  - Italian Sign Language
  - British Sign Language
  - Chinese Sign Language
  - Swedish Sign Language
  - ....the list goes on!



Source: Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center – Gallaudet University

## Values, traditions, and behaviors within Deaf culture

- 1. Promoting an environment that supports vision as the primary sense
  - *Vision offers access of information to individuals who are d/Deaf around the world*
- 2. Valuing children who are d/Deaf as the future of d/Deaf people and Deaf culture
- 3. Support for bilingual ASL and English education of children who are d/Deaf so they learn competency in both languages.



Source: Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center - Gallaudet University

## Values, traditions, and behaviors (continued...)

- Deaf culture also values inclusion of specific rules of behaviors in communication in addition to conventional rules of turn taking
- Unique strategies for gaining a person's attention
  - Eye contact
  - "Tapping"
  - Waving
  - Flicking light switch
- Perpetuation of Deaf culture through a variety of traditions



Source: Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center - Gallaudet University

## The Deaf Community

- Diverse individuals who come from a variety of backgrounds
- Deaf culture is the aspect within the Deaf community that brings its members together
  - *Films, folklore, literature, athletics, poetry, clubs, etc.*
- Hearing people can also be welcomed into the Deaf community



## THE BILINGUAL-BICULTURAL EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

## What is the bilingual-bicultural educational philosophy?

- Providing a fully accessible environment for the child in which he/she can be a **fully participating member**
- A fully accessible language is needed for the child to acquire world knowledge
  - *Incidental learning opportunities*
- The focus is not on speech therapy or spoken English
- Speech should not take precedence over the need to ensure a fully accessible learning environment

## Therapy and the bilingual-bicultural educational philosophy

- ERASE the misconception that sign language will harm a d/Deaf child's language development!
- ERASE the misconception that supporting visual language means excluding spoken language approaches
  - *Why do we have to choose??*
- We must make sure that we are supporting language development

Source: American Society for Deaf Children

## What can we do as professionals?

- We have a responsibility to recognize the benefits of early language exposure
- For the individuals with whom we are working, spoken English is accessible to them via the use of amplification
  - *Varying role of therapy within this population*
  - *LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT is the most important*
- Technology usage
  - *Educating professionals around you on the importance of consistent amplification usage*
  - *Supporting the individual*
  - *Supporting parents*

## CONSIDERATIONS WHEN WORKING WITH VARIOUS AGE RANGES OF DEAF/HARD OF HEARING CLIENTS

## Language Deprivation in d/Deaf children

- 90% of d/Deaf children are born to hearing families
- Language "window"
  - *Critical period hypothesis*
- Negative effects:
  - *Language Delay*
  - *Difficulty acquiring other languages*
  - *Social implications*
  - *Behavior problems*
- Poor communication skills can be linked to levels of delinquency, violence and even incarceration

## Language Deprivation (continued)

- Early language acquisition equals...
  - *Greater success in acquiring language skills*
  - *Meeting developmental goals appropriately*
  - *More ease in acquiring a second language*
- This is all regardless of which language a child learns first

## Common technology in the classroom

### Hearing aid



### Cochlear Implant



## Hearing aid

- Sound enters from the individuals' environment and into the microphone of their hearing aid
- FM Systems are available within the classroom
- Hearing aids AMPLIFY sound, not CLARIFY it





Q&A/Discussion Time!