Classroom Communication

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Presentation Outline

- Assessment of Audience
- Assess Your Deaf Student(s)
- Assess Your Communication Skills & Knowledge
- Basic Communication Principles
- Benefits of Effective Communication
- Tips for Classroom Communication
- Working with Interpreters
- Resources
Assessment of Audience

- How many of you...
  - Have yourself any specific communication needs that we should accommodate for?
  - Use sign language?
  - Teach or have taught deaf students?
    - In high schools? Postsecondary education?
    - In self-contained or mainstream classrooms?
  - Use interpreters? Notetaking? Captioning? Assistive listening devices?
Assess Your Deaf Student(s)

- Intake interviews with incoming students
  - Contact information
  - Primary/secondary disability
  - Pertinent medical history
  - Background information (education history, accommodations history, career/vocational history)
  - Sources of financial aid
  - Major & educational goal
  - Career goal
  - Request for services
  - Other concerns/needs
Assess your Deaf Student(s)

- Identity
  - Deaf
  - Hard of Hearing
  - Late-deafened

- Communication
  - Sign language Proficiency
  - Speech/ speechreading abilities
Assess Your Deaf Student(s)

- Education
  - Mainstreamed
  - Residential
  - Experience with access/ support services

- Family
  - Deaf
  - Hearing
  - Mixed
Assess Your Deaf Student(s)

- Etiology of Deafness
  - Cause/ type
- Age of onset
  - Pre/ post lingual
- Use of assistive devices & technology
  - Hearing aids/ cochlear implants
Assess Your Deaf Student(s)

- Relationship of hearing loss to language acquisition
  - Reading/ writing characteristics
  - Evaluation of writing samples
Assess Your Communication Skills & Knowledge

- Knowledge of Deafness & impact on learning
- Sign language proficiency
- Skills in facilitating classroom communication
- Knowledge of assistive devices & technology
- Knowledge of available resources

(Classroom Communication, Sidney Barefoot, Speech/Language Faculty, NTID at RIT, Rochester, New York, U.S.A., 2004.)
Basic Communication Principles

- Communication with a deaf person takes sensitivity, common sense & courtesy
- Effective communication is a joint responsibility
- Ask the students, ‘What can we, as individuals, do to make it easier for us to communicate?’
- There are many ways to communicate depending on the situation

(Working Together: Deaf and Hearing People training package, NTID Center on Employment, Rochester, NY, 2005)
Benefits of Effective Communication!

- Learning is easier
- Instructional goals are better met
- Students & faculty connect
- Trust & respect
- Better use of resources
- Positive college experience
Tips for Facilitating Classroom Communication

- The First Day
  - Be proactive! Set the tone
  - Determine students’ communication preferences
  - Include communication guidelines in syllabus and discuss them in class
  - Put all information in writing
  - If you know any sign language, use it
  - Name cards
Telephone Game

- Lets take a few individuals and play the telephone game.
- When the message is at the end of the row, first the players, then everyone, assess what accommodations/strategies might make communication clearer.
- Story of this game in a class with deaf students.
Telephone

- Some members of the group play the game
- Group discusses why communication gets altered
- Group makes a list of suggestions for improvement
Tips for Facilitating Classroom Communication

- Room set-up
  - Clear lines of sight
  - Deaf students should sit at front
  - semi-circular or circular seating, not rows
  - Limit pacing
  - Environmental sound & distractions
Tips for Facilitating Classroom Communication

- Pace/ Flow
  - Slow down
  - Sip water, use pauses for transition to new topic
  - Display presentation outline on overhead
  - Write key words & formulas on board
  - Re-think & reduce amount of materials covered
  - Pacer Spacer
    - [www.rit.edu/~classact/tools/pacerspacer.html](http://www.rit.edu/~classact/tools/pacerspacer.html)
Tips for Facilitating Classroom Communication

- Labeling & Referencing
  - Use proper terminology
  - Allow time for students to see what you’re referring to

- Introducing New Vocabulary
  - Write words on board & provide images
  - If using a notetaker, be sure vocabulary is included in notes
Tips for Facilitating Classroom Communication

- **Visuals**
  - Diagrams, formulas, pictures, graphs, slides & computer presentations
  - Distribute copies of materials

- **Attention-Getting**
  - Hold same expectations for all students
  - Flashing lights, shoulder-tapping, desk-knocking
Tips for Facilitating Classroom Communication

- **Speechreading**
  - Only 30% of spoken English is visible on lips!
  - Don’t speak while writing on board or looking down at computer
  - Face students while pointing to visuals
  - Repeat questions/ comments
  - Avoid bright light sources
  - Use microphone & FM/ Loop systems
  - Minimize arm/hand movements
  - Provide handouts
Tips for Facilitating Classroom Communication

- Managing Discussion
  - Communication ‘free for all’ not effective
  - Use object for turn-taking
  - Hand-raising, call on students & repeat statements
  - Extra time for students to receive/respond to information
  - Notecards
Tips for Facilitating Classroom Communication

- Other
  - Captioned videotapes
  - Email & computerized interactions
  - More time for tasks
  - Extended testing time
  - Individual meetings
  - Refer to institutional resources, e.g. tutoring
Working with Interpreters

- Interpreters facilitate communication between hearing and deaf persons. They are not there “for the deaf person”
- Discuss with interpreters and students the best locations and procedures
- Discuss special situations for lighting or other changes
- Do not talk “to” the interpreter but to the student directly. Look at the student when “listening” too.
Resources

- Handbook of Templates. To create handbooks for support service providers, faculty and students. [http://sunsite.utk.edu/cod/pec/products.html#h](http://sunsite.utk.edu/cod/pec/products.html#h)

- Northeast Technical Assistance Center at NTID/ RIT Tipsheets. Brief informational tipsheets on various topics pertaining to deafness. Over 30 topics available. [http://www.netac.rit.edu/publication/tipsh eet](http://www.netac.rit.edu/publication/tipsh eet)
Resources

- PEPNet “Online Orientation to Serving College Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing”. Online training for educators, service providers, prospective employers, and students preparing for careers in deafness-related fields. [www.pepnet.org](http://www.pepnet.org)

Resources

- “Make a Difference: Tips for Teaching Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing” CD for faculty members teaching students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in all educational settings. [http://www.pepnet.org](http://www.pepnet.org). Go to PEPNet Resource Center, Product #1151.

References

- Postsecondary Education Network-International Project, National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), Rochester, New York, U.S.A. (http://www.pen.ntid.rit.edu)
- Postsecondary Education Programs Network (PEPNet) (http://www.pepnet.org)
References

- PEPNet Resource Center (http://prc.csun.edu/)
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