

Chapter 1

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNICATIVE DISORDERS

Content Outline

- COMMUNICATION
 - Definition: an exchange of information (thoughts, feelings, or ideas) between at least two individuals through symbols, signs, or behavior
 - Majority of population communicate primarily through verbal expression
 - Other forms of communication involve reading, writing, understanding facial expressions, using gestures, and touch
 - Reading: Knowing where to go or what to do is understood through reading
 - Writing: We try to improve our writing skills to avoid ambiguity when sharing information
 - Facial expressions: Most facial expressions are involuntary and they show our internal emotion. Six universal expressions include:
 - * ○ Disgust, sadness, happiness, fear, anger, and surprise
 - Gestures: Manual communication, sign language, and finger spelling are the primary gestures
 - American Sign Language (ASL): natural language of the Deaf community in the United States and it does not follow typical English grammar
 - Defined as: a conceptual language with its own structure and rules
 - It is important to understand that some gestures used in the United States might mean something very different (and even offensive) in a different country
 - Touch: Touch can be used to comfort or reassure, used as a handshake when greeting, or used to show love or affection
 - All these forms show that communication goes further than simply talking to an individual to convey information
- COMMUNICATIVE DISORDERS
 - When an individual has a communicative disorder, a communication breakdown exists between the speaker and listeners
 - Four concepts that identify the nature of communicative breakdowns include:

- Formulating: the ability to put thoughts and ideas into words, signs, or symbols
 - Transmitting: organizing and coordinating speech muscles or limbs (signing) with thoughts and ideas
 - Receiving: ability to use our sensory systems to transmit information to the brain
 - Comprehending: decoding and understanding the message that was sent
- EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATIVE DISORDERS
 - Articulation disorder: when an individual encounters a problem producing a specific sound
 - e.g., saying “wabbit” for “rabbit”
 - Dysarthria: weakness of speech muscles due to brain damage
 - Language disorder: an array of problems which could affect expressive and/or receptive language
 - e.g., unable to name common objects, unable to follow multi-step tasks, misuse of pronouns, and unable to maintain a conversation
 - Stuttering (fluency disorder): an individual producing sound and/or syllable repetitions or prolongations that disrupt the flow of speech
 - Voice disorder: voice disorders are perceptual events that are identified by speech-language pathologists or otolaryngologists. They can occur from misusing and overusing the vocal mechanism, neurological disorders, and organic diseases
 - Professions such as teaching or singing can result in voice disorders due to continuous abuse or misuse of the voice
 - Hearing loss: depending on the severity of loss, individuals may find it difficult to understand speech. Individuals born with a hearing loss may have a hard time acquiring speech
 - PROFESSIONALS WHO WORK WITH DISORDERED COMMUNICATION
 - Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs): trained to identify, diagnose, treat, and help to prevent communicative disorders
 - The profession works with individuals who have articulation, language, fluency, voice, hearing problems, and swallowing disorders

- In order to become an SLP, an individual must obtain a master's degree from a graduate program accredited by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
- After obtaining 36 hours of graduate work and 400 hours of client contact, an SLP must complete a clinical fellowship:
 - 36 weeks of mentored practice
- After the clinical fellowship, an SLP must pass a national exam
- Once everything is complete, the person is awarded the Certificate of Clinical Competence in SLP (CCC-SLP):
 - Qualifies the individual to provide services in any work setting: educational, hospital, nursing homes, long-term care facilities, private clinics, not-for-profit clinics, home health care, university clinics, or consultants
- Audiologists: trained in the nonmedical treatment of hearing, balance, and other related problems
 - Audiologists work with individuals to determine their level of hearing and to recommend amplification devices (e.g., hearing aids or cochlear implants)
 - They also work alongside otolaryngologist (ENT – Ear, Nose, and Throat physician) to determine the best amplification device
 - To become a trained audiologist, majority of graduate programs will offer a clinical doctorate in audiology (AuD).
 - Students must complete 75 hours of coursework and 52 work weeks under supervised clinician practicum experience within a 3 – 4 year period
 - Students must also pass the national exam to receive the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Audiology (CCC-A)
 - Certification and licensure is required in order to dispense hearing aids to patients
 - Possible places of employment include:
 - Hospitals, ENT offices, outpatient care facilities, university clinics, hearing aid manufacturers, and on rare occasions serve as expert witnesses in legal cases regarding hearing losses in the workplace, etc.
- PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
 - American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
 - Professional organization representing and credentialing SLPs, audiologists, and speech-language and hearing scientists

- The organization has created a code of ethics to maintain the welfare of clients being treated, maintain professional competency, provide accurate and honest information to the public, and to monitor the professional standards of colleagues
- Additional Professional Organizations
 - Other organizations exist that specialize in different areas of the speech and hearing field such as:
 - International Fluency Association
 - American Academy of Audiology
 - Academy of Doctors of Audiology
 - Academy of Neurologic Communication Disorders
- CONCLUSION
 - Communication goes beyond speaking to another individual; it involves writing, reading, facial expression, gestures, and touch
 - A communication disorder may cause a communication breakdown when formulating, transmitting, receiving, or comprehending is impaired
 - Speech-language pathologists and audiologists are trained professionals who practice in the field of communicative disorders and hearing loss, respectively
 - ASHA is the professional organization for SLPs and audiologists
- RESOURCES
 - Academy of Neurologic Communication Disorders and Sciences
 - <http://www.ancds.org>
 - American Speech-Language-Hearing Association website
 - <http://www.asha.org>
 - American Board of Audiology
 - <http://www.americanboardofaudiology.org>
 - International Fluency Association
 - <http://www.theifa.org>