

TOTAL COMMUNICATION- AN EFFECTIVE METHOD TO TEACH HEARING AND SPEECH IMPAIRED STUDENTS

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Abstract

This paper focuses on explaining the concept of total communication technique used for students with hearing and speech impairment. It investigates how the total communication approach influences the teaching learning process of the students with hearing and speech impairment. The objective of this paper is to identify the influence of Total Communication techniques applied in the teaching of learners with hearing and speech impairment, to establish the influence of teacher's characteristics on transition of learners with hearing and speech impairment and to find out the influence of teaching and learning resources on transition of learners with hearing and speech impairment. The paper explains in detail about total communication along with its goals, benefits, learning outcomes, its working, issues and debates. It emphasizes on the point that the original intent of the Total Communication philosophy was to provide each child with the communication tools needed for that child to develop language competence. This should continue to be the goal of every teacher for every child. However, the philosophy of Total Communication has often been over-simplified and has been confused with the Simultaneous Communication methodology that simply combines sign and spoken language. Sign and spoken language can be effectively combined, but teachers and trainers need to be sure that language competence is being developed optimally taking into consideration the strengths and needs of the individual child.



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Introduction

Total communication is using any means of communication — sign language, voice, finger spelling, lip-reading, amplification, writing, gesture, visual imagery (pictures). The sign language used in total communication is more closely related to English. The philosophy of total communication is that the method should be fitted to the child, instead of the other way around. Another commonly used term for total communication is simultaneous communication, known as sim-com.

Total Communication (TC) is philosophy of educating children with hearing loss and speech impairment that incorporates all means of communication; formal signs, natural gestures, finger spelling, body language, listening, lip-reading and speech. The goal is to optimize

language development in whatever way is most effective for the individual child. Total Communication is truly a philosophy rather than a methodology. As a result, the implementation of the TC philosophy with one child may look entirely different than its implementation with another child.

The main objective of education is preparing learners for higher education levels. This can be achieved if only the learners are supported to make academic progression (transition) through the various levels and classes. Total communication techniques such as sign language, Speech, writing, lip reading and miming) are the independent variable which when applied rightly under a supportive environment and together with positive intervening variables that include teachers' attitude and level of hearing loss enhances teaching and learning process for improved performance of learners with hearing and speech impairment. Improved performance positively influences transition (dependent variable) of learners with hearing and speech impairment to the next level resulting to high graduation rates. Total Communication is variable that allows the learner to enjoy communication approach that is most suitable for him/her (Kaplan, 1996).

McFadden (1999) advocates for inclusion of modes of total communication because they are successful fashion which include listening, speech reading, facial expression and sign language.

What modes of communication are facilitated in the philosophy of total communication?

- Total Communication considered as aural (listening), oral (speaking) mode to be the primary mode of communication.
- Sign system is used simultaneously along with aural/oral mode. The communicators use listening speaking and listening at the same time. This combination works as the means of primary communication.
- Speech reading (lip reading) is mostly used as a support system.
- Reading writing as for most important secondary mode of communication is not only allowed but also focused upon.
- Gestures and group codes are strictly disapproved as the legitimate mode of primary communication in classroom or at home.

How does total communication work?

The childhood is the best possible hearing Gates and is given exposure and training for comprehending language through listening. After this too many children need parallel visual support full stop find system is used along with spoken language in classrooms and at home. Teachers are well trained for such simultaneous use speaking and sign system.

Trainers too are given training for sign system. Literacy and school subjects are taught to children through such communication of sign system + speech. Because this communication option simultaneously uses auditory and visual modes it is called total communication. Opening speech from a child with hearing impairment exposure of speech + sign system is the motto of total communication.

From theory to practice

Total communication is a philosophy which aims at achieving development of verbal language through the simultaneous use of speech and sign system. Advocates of total communication consider speech to be essential and desirable for a child with hearing impairment. However, it is considered to be non-attainable without the support of signs. Effortless access to communication consumed over grammar of verbal language and benefit of the words spoken and signed are claimed to with strength of total communication.

When you are the arguments used for supporting total communication as the base of common sense something that appears workable in theory. But what seems plausible and possible in theory and common sense may not work well in reality. On the other and there could be unnecessary features about a tree with leads to smooth transition. It is necessary to look at research evidence of the efficiency of total communication as a means of communication in order to judge its success in terms of transition from theory to practice. This one is examining the evidence of the attendance of total communication educated children with hearing and speech impairment.

Issues at the fore front of total communication

There are several parameters on the basis of which success or failure of the communication approach can be measured. Research studies are discussed in the light of these parameters. Chemistry latest information to Indian context in general and classroom situation in particular. For India, application of total communication is a very crucial issue since Indian

children to name good models of all the communication options. Many a times, it is observed that the schools that claim to be oral do not fulfill requirements of oral philosophy. Classroom acoustics, quality of amplification, parental involvement and early identification could be the common concerns of successful implementation of oralism in Indian schools. Understand circumstances other options which are less dependent on aural - only input can be implemented. Total communication is one search option which have potential of getting success in India. However currently successful total communication models are not commonly available in India for others to follow.

The term Total Communication is often confused with “Simultaneous Communication” or “Sim-Comm,” which, unlike TC, is a methodology, not a philosophy. Simultaneous Communication refers simply to the simultaneous use of sign and spoken language. It is driven by the natural word order of English, and most often does not include function words and word endings. The completeness of the sign component of SimComm is dependent on the skills of the signer. Although flexibility is at the very core of the Total communication philosophy and teachers are encouraged to use whatever communication tools are most effective for the individual child, it is often the predisposition, skills and experience of the teacher rather than the needs of the child that determines how Total Communication is implemented. An individual teacher may be very committed to the use of sign language, and in their enthusiasm to sign may neglect a child’s auditory and speech potential. Conversely, a teacher may lean toward the auditory/oral aspects of Total Communication and may not provide a child with sufficient sign support to optimize language development. The reality of Total Communication is often an “anything goes” methodology, lacking in objective measures, guidelines and strategies. A significant area of concern related to the simultaneous use of sign and spoken language is that the child does not get a clear representation of either English or sign language.

Given that sign language does not follow English word order, it cannot be “spoken.” Spoken language is, by nature, difficult to see on the lips, so the child is not getting the complete English message either. Some feel that is more effective to use either sign language without voice or spoken English without sign. However, when used appropriately, sign can effectively facilitate the development of spoken language.

Conclusion

The research indicates that teachers can on the whole understand their children better when they used signs as well as speech. There is even more marked improvement in the students understanding of their teachers' is communication when using speech and sign. This is encouraging for total communication because it indicates overall improved communication with the teachers. Easy and complete communication with no missing gaps in the information transmission is something that one needs to answer for students with hearing and speech impairment full stop it could be the biggest strength of a communication. This is important because complete access to information transmission will have positive impact on development of grammar and literacy.

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