

Understanding Students with Communication Disorders

Defining Communication Disorders

- Communication: Entails receiving, understanding, and expressing information, feelings, and ideas
- Speech disorder: Refers to difficulty in producing sounds
- Language disorder: Refers to difficulty in receiving, understanding, and formulating ideas and information
- Two forms of language: Expressive and Receptive
- Cultural diversity
- Difference does not always mean disorder.
- Dialects are various forms of language.

Prevalence of Communication Disorders

- Of all students receiving special education services, about 1.7% were classified as having a speech-language disability
- 24.1% of children 3–5 served under IDEA have speech-language disorders
- Most are in the general education classroom

Typical Development

- Speech: Oral expression of language
- Language: Structured, shared, rule-governed, symbolic system for communicating

Speech Disorders

- Articulation: Production of individual or sequenced sounds
 - Substitutions, Omissions, Additions, Distortions
- Apraxia of speech: Motor speech disorder affecting the planning of speech
- Voice disorders: Pitch, Duration, Intensity, Resonance
 - Hyponasality, Hypernasality
- Fluency disorders: Interruptions in the flow of speaking
 - Stuttering

Language Impairments

- Language disorders may be receptive, expressive, or both
- Language disorders may be related to another disability or may be a specific language impairment

Language Impairments

- Phonological disorders: Difficulty in discriminating differences in speech sounds or sound segments
- Morphological difficulties: Problem using the structure of words to get or give information
- Syntactical errors: Problems involving word order, incorrect structure, misuse of negatives, or omitting structures
- Semantic disorders: Problems using words singly or together in sentences
- Pragmatic disorders: Problems in the social use of language

Determining the Causes

- Organic: Caused by an identifiable problem in the neuromuscular mechanism
- Functional: Those with no identifiable origin
- Congenital: Present at birth
- Acquired: Occurs well after birth

Partnering for Special Education and Related Services

- Collaboration
- Roles of speech-language pathologists
- Four types of activities that speech-language pathologists engage in while working in schools:
 - Direct services to students
 - Indirect services to implement students' education programs
 - Indirect services to support students in the general education curriculum
 - Activities as members of the community of educators

Determining Supplementary Aids and Services

- Augmentative and Alternative communication (AAC) systems
 - AAC systems are components that supplement the communication abilities of individuals
 - May include an AAC device, which is a physical object that transmits or receives messages
 - Communication books, communication/language boards, communication charts, mechanical or electronic voice output equipment, or computers
 - An AAC device has two components: a symbol set and a means for selecting the symbols.
 - Devices can range from low tech, such as line-drawn pictures in a notebook or wallet, to high tech

Planning for Universal Design for Learning

- Vary the ways in which the teacher communicates
 - Use audio and text formats
 - Visual representations with verbal information
 - Graphics, graphic organizers, and controlled vocabulary
- Vary the ways that students demonstrate their knowledge
 - Asking a student to convert a written report to a PowerPoint® presentation
 - Supplementing a demonstration with visual supports
 - Using a taped oral report
 - Performing a skit solo or with others

Planning for Other Educational Needs

- Building Social Relationships
 - May need to be taught specific social skills
 - May need support to initiate and sustain interactions because of their limited expressive language
- Social Stories
 - Describe social concepts, skills, or situations by providing information about the situation and people involved

Making Accommodations for Assessment

- Accommodations:
 - No accommodations
 - Additional time
 - Access to a word processor/computer software
- Present information in a manner that assists the student's comprehension
- If the student has difficulty expressing him- or herself, he or she may benefit from a format that does not require long verbal or written output
- Format should complement the student's most common means of expression