STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING STUDENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

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There are many strategies for teaching students with hearing impairments. These strategies can all benefit hearing impaired students and students with full hearing capabilities. Students with hearing impairments include those that are completely deaf and those with some measure of hearing. The students with some measure of hearing use a device to amplify sounds.

There are some general rules of courtesy that should be used when speaking to someone with any type of hearing impairment. These rules are especially important in the classroom because they will maximize the students learning. Get the attention of the student before speaking to them and always face them. Use visual aids, outlines, or an interpreter to aid the student. Eliminating background noise will be very helpful. The students may not be able to hear everything, but sometimes white noise can be distracting because of the frequency. Do not talk with your back to the student because they may lip read.

Lip readers benefit from speech just as much as any other student. There are several strategies for teaching students that lip read. The student should be seated close to the lecturer. Three to six feet is a good distance. Speaking slowly, naturally, and clearly will enable the student to read the speakers lips easily. Do not shout because it can distort the normal lip shape. If the students do not understand what the speaker is saying the speaker should repeat what they said, rephrase what they said, give clues to the meaning of what was said, and finally write things down if it is necessary.

If the student is not a lip reader an interpreter may be provided for that student. The interpreter should not give their opinion to the student or about the student. The interpreter should always have copy of the lesson or multimedia being used. This will help the student and
interpreter keep up with the teacher and rest of the class. Interpreters should never answer questions for the students they interpret for. The student should answer the question directly to the teacher and the interpreter should then tell the teacher what the student said. The same rule goes for the teacher. The teacher should always talk directly to the student rather than the interpreter.

Some students may use a hearing aid or a radio aid. The radio aid is simply a microphone and receiver device. The teacher wears the microphone and the student places the amplification device in his/her ear. If the student uses this device the teacher should repeat any questions other students ask. This is because the microphone may not pick these sounds up. If the teacher does not repeat the question the answer should make the question obvious. For example, if a student asks “What is two plus two?” the teacher should say “Two plus two is four” rather than just saying “four”.

Written materials are the main source of knowledge intake for students with hearing impairments. To aid them all long sentences should be broken into shorter phrases. Difficult vocabulary should be reduced or simplified. This is because English is a second language for students with hearing impairments. Important technical words should be taught and used in more than one context. This will help make the meaning of any new words clear.

According to http://www.as.wvu.edu all of these strategies will work for some students but some strategies will not. The most important thing to remember when using any of these strategies is all students are different and require a personalized plan to learn. All of these strategies provide “access to the classroom: however they do not ensure access” (Carlton &
Hetrzfeld 1). The Americans with Disabilities Act requires all materials and information to be available in alternate formats if possible.

Resources

http://www.shef.ac.uk
http://www.as.wvu.edu
http://ericec.org/faq/def.html
http://www.washington.edu
http://frcc.cc.co.us

Carlton, Patricia and Jennifer Hertzfeld. Fast Facts For Faculty: Teaching Students with Sensory Impairments. The Ohio State University Partnership Grant.