

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TEACHING DEAF CHILDREN

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1. INTRODUCTION

Because I am involved with teaching deaf children, I am too well aware of the **strangeness of this problem and the consequences** it has for the child and for teaching and educating him. I wish to use this time to provide a broad perspective on this particular teaching in terms of the following:

1.1 The deaf child as a distressed child in a problematic educative situation.

1.1.1 Who is a deaf child?

1.1.2 What are the superficial, generally known consequences of deafness?

1.1.3 From a pedagogic perspective, what are the deeper-lying consequences of deafness for a deaf child?

1.2 Methods of teaching the deaf.

1.2.1 The shortcomings of these methods in the past in light of the deaf child's educative stress.

1.3 New developments in teaching the deaf.

1.3.1 The significance of these developments for teaching and educating the deaf child.

1.4 The orthopedagogic (i.e., orthodidactic) task for the deaf child's educators and teachers.

2. THE DEAF CHILD AS A DISTRESSED CHILD IN A PROBLEMATIC EDUCATIVE SITUATION

2.1 A deaf child

According to one of the criteria of the Department of National Education (in South Africa), a deaf child is one with a bilateral hearing loss of more than 65 percent. However, in practice this means a child who mainly uses a visual-receptor channel of communicating in contrast to a hearing or hard-of-hearing child who is able to use an acoustic-receptor channel. Thus, a deaf child is dependent on speech lessons to understand what others are saying because his hearing is inadequate. Even so, I want to show that he is not dependent on the visual only because of his serious

degree of hearing loss. Other factors play a role such as the stage at which he became deaf, his ability to give meaning to what he does hear, his home circumstances and the attention he received before entering school at three years of age.

2.2 Generally known consequences of deafness

A deaf child cannot adequately hear a human voice in order to discover language or to learn the spoken language. Thus, he cannot acquire in a natural way a human way of communicating, namely, "hearing" language and learning to speak it.

Without deep reflection, it can be concluded that in the primary educative situation the parents will have difficulty initiating education with such a child. Also, often these children who are admitted to school at three years of age are not able to eat regular food, haven't learned eating and toilet habits and, for the most part, do not have language, in the true sense of the word, at their disposal.

Thus, communication is the greatest single problem and if a good system of communicating can be found for the deaf, the problem will be solved. It is in this **seeming** solution that the problem of teaching the deaf lies. Methods of communicating are primary in thinking about teaching the deaf. In fact, this holds to such an extent that the deaf child, as a human being in distress, is pushed into the background.

To see the deaf child's problem, we have to go to the pedagogic situation in which he finds himself. Then, from a pedagogic perspective we have to search for hindrances in his course of becoming and for methods of communicating that can best bridge these hindrances so the course of educating him can be as normal as possible.

2.3 The pedagogic implications of deafness

Fundamental pedagogics and psychopedagogics, two part-disciplines of pedagogics, are used to highlight the implications of deafness which then will lead to orthopedagogics.

2.3.1 From a fundamental pedagogic perspective, the pedagogic structures have to be actualized in order to help a child become an

adult. The deaf child and his educators experience problems in implementing these structures and this does not allow him to flourish in the direction of independent, responsible adulthood. To pedagogically evaluate existing and new methods it is necessary to briefly consider the actualization of pedagogic structures and their hindrances experienced by a deaf child.

2.3.1.1 The relationship structure

In a pedagogic situation, certain relationships between the educator and child have to be established before the educator can adequately guide him to become an adult. Implementing these relationships is greatly dependent on language, in particular on spoken language. A deaf child's language preparation plays a negative role here and this is looked at closely in terms of the relationships that need to be actualized.

2.3.1.1.1 The relationship of pedagogic trust

On the one hand, the educator has to trust that the child he is guiding has the possibility of becoming an adult. The educator of a deaf child who doubts this possibility and who has doubts about which methods of communication to use cannot establish an adequate relationship of trust and thus cannot adequately educate him. The educator has to accept a child as he is in order to constitute a relationship of trust.

On the other hand, a deaf child has to have trust in the educator. He acquires this by feeling that he is accepted as he is. Initially, this only occurs with loving care but later by emotionally knowing, via the adults' appeal, that he can trust him. Here is where a deaf child is seriously handicapped by his lack of hearing. It is in the human voice, in its rhythm and tempo, in its patterns of intonation and in the loudness of speech that the affective aspects of communication come to the fore--and for a deaf child this is missing. From these brief comments, it is clear that generally there will be an impoverished relationship of trust between a deaf child and his educator.

2.3.1.1.2 The pedagogic relationship of understanding

To successfully educate, the educator has to understand the child. A deaf child, with his deficient language and communication, is very

difficult to understand. Further, the educator does not always understand how deeply the deafness touches a child. We know how difficult it is to obtain a clear person-image of a deaf child and how seldom it is done. But even in practice, it is difficult to know what his needs and fears are. A deaf child has much difficulty expressing his inner feelings.

On the other hand, a deaf child has difficulty understanding. He does not understand the actions of his educator when, e.g., he reacts to sounds in the environment. Why does he open a door only when someone is standing outside? (He doesn't know the sound and function of a doorbell). It is clear that mutual understanding is difficult to achieve and this can impoverish the relationship of understanding.

2.3.1.1.3 The pedagogic relationship of authority

Among other ways, the relationship of authority is actualized by an adult exemplifying and a child following the norm-image of adulthood. A deaf child's deficient communication makes it difficult for him to recognize and to accept authority. Further, the relationship of authority is dependent on adequate trust and understanding between the educator and a child. When these two relationships are impoverished, as with a deaf child, this will also have a restraining effect on forming a relationship of authority. Just as with the relationships of trust and understanding, an impoverished relationship of authority will appear.

2.3.1.2 The pedagogic sequence structure

From fundamental pedagogics one knows that there is a particular course or movement to educating. Each activity of educating moves from association to encounter to assuming educative responsibility (engagement), etc. This course is dependent on an intensification of the relationship between the educator and the child. As a consequence of the poor pedagogic relationship with a deaf child, this intensification will be difficult. As a result, educating will not take its entire course. It might be that there is a falling back to a relationship of association before pedagogic intervention occurs or that pedagogic intervention will be actualized inadequately.

2.3.1.3 The pedagogic aim structure

The aim structure of educating represents the norm-image of adulthood. To actualize this structure, the relationship and sequence structures have to be actualized. An impoverished relationship structure and a weak sequence in the activities of educating, as is the case with deaf children, will lead to problems in actualizing the aim structure; i.e., the deaf child will encounter serious hindrances on his way to adulthood.

2.3.2 A psychopedagogic perspective on the deaf child actualizing his psychic life

The following is based on psychopedagogics as developed Sonnekus and his co-workers over the past few years.

Actualizing his psychic life means that a child enters into dialogue with reality and gives sense and meaning to it. In doing so, he establishes his own experiential world. This occurs in terms of the modes of actualizing his psychic life, namely, **experiencing**, **willing** and **lived-experiencing**.

By **experiencing** a child goes out to the world; this is given with being human. Experiencing includes an initiative to go out to things and persons in his surrounding world; it involves lingering with things in order to give them meaning and eventually retaining, as possessed experience, this meant content as part of his experiential world.

Experiencing is dependent on **willing**. How strong is his will power to go out to reality, to linger with the content, to attribute meanings which are unique to him? The stronger the will, the more successfully an experiential world is constituted; in other words, the stronger his willing, the stronger will actualizing his psychic life be.

Lived-experiencing is the other mode of actualization mentioned. It has a two-fold function:

First, lived-experiencing occurs on several levels. There are **pathic-affective** lived-experiences that can vary from the sensopathic via the pathic to the affective. There are **gnostic-cognitive** lived-experiences that can extend from the sensognostic via the gnostic to the cognitive. The pathic-affective and gnostic-cognitive aspects flow hand-in-hand. The sensopathic is labile and through gradual stabilization a child moves to the pathic and

eventually to a stable affective lived-experiencing. Sensognostic lived-experiences are unordered, diffuse and bodily bound. With gradual ordering and distancing, there is movement via the gnostic to the ordered and distanced cognitive aspect of lived-experiencing.

These different levels of lived-experiencing influence the strength of willing which guides experiencing. A labile pathic paired with an unordered gnostic lived-experiencing results in a weak willingness to explore. Moving to higher levels of pathic-affective lived-experiencing depends on affective guiding (educating) that, in turn, is dependent on the affective element of language. The fact that a deaf child cannot hear language and that the affective in language is not visible to him in a spoken lesson results in the deaf child remaining firmly held in a labile (pathic) emotional lived-experiencing. No method of communication is adequate enough to break him out of this firm hold and elevate him to the level of ordered cognitive lived-experiencing. Thus, as far as his pathic-affective life is concerned, a deaf child is hindered and this restricts his experiencing, constituting his own experiential world and thus leads to his psychic life being underactualized.

The movement to a higher gnostic-cognitive level of lived-experiencing is also restricted by the deaf child's impoverished language. Language, in particular speech sounds, involves distancing: this distancing is restricted in the deaf. Further, language is a medium for thinking necessary for achieving order on a gnostic-cognitive level of lived-experiencing. It is for these reasons that it is so difficult for a deaf to lived-experience what he knows and how he knows.

Second, lived-experiencing concerns ways of giving meaning to experiential activities. Once again, giving meaning is dependent on language. So, e.g., merely naming an object or activity is already attributing meaning. Here it also is clear that a deaf child's attribution of meaning is restricted and thus adversely influences his constituting his experiential world.

The above view of a deaf child's psychic life clearly shows an underactualization that adversely influences his entire becoming toward adulthood. In summary, then, the impoverishment of language and communication have the following consequences in educating and teaching a deaf child:

- 2.3.2.1 there can be difficulty in establishing an adequate pedagogic relationship with a deaf child;
- 2.3.2.2 because of this, the course of pedagogic activities is restricted;
- 2.3.2.3 this retarded course leads to problems of bringing a deaf child into harmony with the norm-image of adulthood; and
- 2.3.2.4 a deaf child has problems constituting an experiential world through actualizing his psychic life.

These deductions will now be used to evaluate existing methods and recent developments in teaching deaf children.

3. "METHODS OF TEACHING" THE DEAF

"Methods of teaching" has been put in quotation marks because over the years teaching the deaf child has been a contest among methods of communication. This contest is so severe that methods of communication often hold a primary place at conferences, in research and in planning instruction.

From the previous discussion of a deaf child's problems, it is clear that these methods really are of great importance. The most important methods can be divided into three main groups, namely, oral, gestural and mixed methods.

3.1 Gesturing and signing (finger spelling)

3.1.1 Signing

With this method, words are spelled letter by letter with the fingers and hands. Here one also distinguishes among the one-handed, two-handed and the dactyl alphabet.

If correctly applied, the greatest advantage of this method is that it corresponds to written language and is related to the syntax and structure of the spoken language. One objection is that, as a means of communicating, it is too cumbersome and difficult to manage. An additional objection is indicated later.

3.1.2 The natural system of gestures

This is incorrectly labeled "natural" as though a deaf child discovers this system himself as a hearing child discovers spoken language.

Often this way of communicating is referred to as a deaf child's mother tongue. The fact is, however, that this is a system developed by the deaf and which they acquire from each other. The gestures exist in that certain movements and signs are made with the hands to express thoughts, e.g., "I am going to the city on the bus".

As far as communicating is concerned, this system offers limited expressive possibilities. For example, the same sign is used for a substantive noun and a verb. Indeed, for many words there is no gesture. Furthermore, as far as structure is concerned, this system differs entirely from written or spoken language--the word order and sentence structure are entirely different.

3.1.3 The systematic system of gestures

There are several such systems that try to reproduce the entire structure and meaning of normal spoken language by gestures. The greatest single problem with this type of system is that it is so intricate and complicated that the deaf find it unmanageable and revert to their informal gestures.

3.1.4 Evaluation of "gestures" as a method of communicating

3.1.4.1 Not one of the gesture methods can be anthropologically founded in an accountable way. Normally, a human being communicates by speaking and hearing, and the gesture methods deprive a deaf child of this human aspect by diverging from the system of speaking and hearing.

3.1.4.2 These methods are not true means of communicating for the deaf because their communication is restricted to only what these systems have acquired. Because of the nature of gestures, for many hearing persons they are unacceptable and "abnormal", and hence they view the deaf as abnormal.

3.1.4.3 The gesture system is pedagogically unacceptable for the following reasons:

3.1.4.3.1 It provides no opportunity to establish a pedagogic relationship.

3.1.4.3.1.1 Trust: a deaf child cannot arrive at trust because he is unable to follow the conversations his educators have with others. On the contrary, distrust becomes increasingly prominent in those deaf children who are not able to "read" speech and to talk.

3.1.4.3.1.2 Understanding: as a result of the systems' limited possibilities, mutual understanding is not completely actualized. For a deaf child, these gestures seem natural but for his educator they are strange and inadequate for understanding and guiding him to adulthood.

3.1.4.3.1.3 Authority: as a consequence of a weak relationship of trust and of deficient understanding, only an artificial relationship of authority can arise which is not adequate for true educating.

3.1.4.3.2 It is difficult to actualize the **sequence structure** in a pedagogic situation merely by using impersonal gestures, e.g., to intensify association (as **being-by** each other) into an encounter (as **being-with** each other).

3.1.4.3.3 With respect to a deaf child actualizing his psychic life, the following can be said:

First, gestures seriously limit a child's going out to the world, via **experiencing**, and to making it his own. Reality does not make itself knowable in terms of gestures--here a child is dependent on someone to continually interpret reality for him by gesturing;

Second, actualizing the psychic life occurs on different levels of lived-experiencing. The emotional aspect of language is completely missing from a system of gestures. Things are worse still: as a result of his bodily involvement in communicating, a deaf child is held on a sensopathic, labile level of lived-experiencing. This system is unable to help him eventually lived-experience in an affectively stable, distanced way;

Third, with a hearing child, language contributes to ordering, systematizing and abstracting on a gnostic-cognitive level of lived-experiencing; gesture language contributes to the sensognostic level of lived-experiencing having a firm hold where his body remains the center around which everything revolves.

In summary, as means of communicating, systems of gestures are pedagogically unacceptable.

3.2 Mixed methods

Here "gestural and oral" methods are used in different combinations. The oral methods are considered last. However, briefly they involve speech reading, speech and the supplemental use of residual hearing.

The mixed methods are extremely diverse in points of departure and in the results achieved hence it is difficult to describe them here. For the sake of completeness, I will indicate a few applications of these methods that are found in schools in different countries:

First, there is simultaneous use of oral and gesture methods in all classes throughout the school;
second, in some schools oral methods are used in the lower grades and gesture methods are used in the higher grades;
third, is the Rochester method where oral methods are used simultaneously with one-hand spelling at the level of the mouth;
fourth, is "Total Communication". Here all methods of communication are used simultaneously and interchangeably so a deaf child will have the right to claim all methods. This is a new name for an old use--it remains a mixture of methods.

3.2.1 Evaluation of mixed methods

The greatest single criticism that can be made against these methods is that as soon as gestures or finger spelling are used in communicating, oral communication is pushed entirely into the background. The reason is that speech reading and gestures (in any form whatever) have to be perceived by the deaf and the subtler mouth movements are ignored; thus, he focuses only on gestures. The proponents of mixed methods recognize this difficulty but, in practice, they remain primarily gestural. The valid objections of gestural methods merely can be applied to these mixed methods.

These methods do not rest on an acceptable anthropology and are not pedagogically accountable.

3.3 Oral methods

The main point of these methods is the deaf are expected to understand spoken language and even speak it to express himself to others.

3.3.1 Speech reading

This means to visually perceive speech on the face (mainly the mouth) of a speaker. This method has serious limitations. The greatest of these is that a very large number of spoken sounds are not clearly discernible on the mouth:

- * that many spoken sounds are difficult to distinguish from each other;
- * that the emotional element of spoken language is totally lost to the speech reader;
- * that such an intense concentration is required because:

3.3.1.1 Mouth movements are subtle and occur quickly; and

3.3.1.2 along with perceiving, constant cognitive amplification is necessary to acquire a full image of what was said:

- * that a person can speech read only under favorable circumstances such as the right lighting;
- * that a conversation which continues to develop reasonably in a particular direction requires the speaker to hold his head relatively still and pointed in the direction of the speech reader.

On the other hand, speech reading has indispensable benefits:

- * it is a method by which the deaf can understand normal spoken language;
- * speech reading is a key to discovering the authentic human way of conducting a dialogue;
- * speech reading can be used whenever anyone is using a language known by the deaf (e.g., English); in other words, a child is not just limited to educators who have mastered a particular system;
- * through speech reading, a deaf child perceives the facial images he has to use to form spoken sounds and, thus, speech reading is an aid to acquiring speech; and
- * speech reading helps a child acquire language in its global

form as it naturally appears.

3.3.2 Speech

Essentially, these methods expect that a deaf child understand spoken language and even use it to express himself to fellow persons. Acquiring speech is dependent on a child's face, feelings in his fingertips (held to his throat) and in his mouth.

The greatest criticisms against the deaf acquiring speech are that:

- * it is not acquired in a natural way;
- * it requires enormous effort and time to acquire it;
- * the expressive ability of a deaf child is defective, especially regarding the idiomatic and the affective; and
- * the speech of a large number of deaf children is relatively incomprehensible.

The benefits are:

- * the deaf child uses the modes of expression unique to humans and this provides him with dignity; and
- * his spoken language is usable with all persons, and even though his articulation and vocabulary are poor, he can make himself more understandable to unacquainted persons than is the case with any other form of communication.

3.3.3 Hearing

During the last two decades, the use of a deaf child's residual hearing has played a prominent role in developing his oral communication. Actually, there is no such thing as **no** residual hearing. In the past it was assumed that residual hearing could be of no use. However, with the enormous progress of sound enhancing equipment, new views have arisen. Until now, the use of residual hearing was largely viewed as assisting a child's speech reading. The benefit is that the assistance is through another sense and does not rely solely on perceiving the face as is the case with mixed methods.

Many teachers still hold the prejudiced attitude the only consolation for a deaf child is to provide him with a hearing apparatus or apparatuses. The possibilities and pedagogic serviceability of this

use of residual hearing is still not followed fully. Consequently, residual hearing is not always used in teaching the deaf.

3.3.4 Language as a medium

Traditionally, the deaf acquire language in a formal way word by word. This often occurs in situations unrelated to the language being acquired. In order to acquire the structure of a language, use is made of particular systems. For example, columns can be used in which each sentence has to be written to insure correct word order and sentence structure.

The entire image of language content at the disposal of most deaf children is artificial. Language is acquired and used without the child as a person playing a real or genuine part. The origin of this language problem can be traced back to a way of teaching language that is not pedagogically founded.

3.3.5 Evaluation of the oral methods

3.3.5.1 Speech reading promotes serious deficiencies in a deaf child's perception of language. These deficiencies are in the quantity and quality of what he perceives. As to the latter, the most serious deficiency is the absence of the emotional in speech reading. As a consequence of the inability of speech reading leading to an adequate discovery of language, language is broken up (analyzed), and it is then artificially acquired by a child without it always having meaning for him. Then the structure of language is connected in artificial ways to its use.

3.3.5.2 A pedagogic evaluation of oral methods brings to light the following:

Although they lead to an authentic form of conducting a dialogue, normally this dialogue is seriously impoverished. From a fundamental pedagogic perspective, the oral methods are limited in actualizing the pedagogic relationship and sequence structures. By communicating orally, with the aid of speech reading, speech and hearing, the educator and educand experience problems in adequately actualizing relationships of trust and/or understanding and/or authority in ways that do not restrain a child's becoming adult. The restraints are especially experienced in attempts to bring about a normal course of educative activities. This then leads to

attempts to educate a child in artificial ways. In these attempts, the child has little or no role and they become more matters of training than of educating.

From a psychopedagogic perspective, the deaf child is defectively addressed by his world. The consequence is a going out to reality (experiencing) reality and establishing an experiential world that are deficient. Also, as a result of his inability to enter into dialogue with reality, and particularly with fellow persons because of his artificial means of communicating, his constituted experiential world falls short. As far as the psychic life of a deaf child is concerned, the most serious implication is the absence of the affective in his communicating with fellow persons. This has serious restraining influences for his establishing a meaningful world and, therefore, "the world of a deaf child" is seen to be totally different from "the world of a hearing child".

4. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TEACHING THE DEAF

In spite of the shortcomings of the oral methods, they remain the most pedagogically accountable. Therefore, I will concentrate only on recent developments that can help bridge their shortcomings

4.1 Acoustic-pedagogic approach

I have already shown that the use of residual hearing has a place in the oral methods as supplemented by speech reading, which also contributes to improving speech. I have also indicated that the use of residual hearing has not been fully evaluated pedagogically.

The fact is the two greatest shortcomings of the oral methods readily can be solved by harnessing residual hearing. The shortcomings already indicated and which I have in mind are:

- (i) the absence of the affective aspects in speech reading with its extremely negative implications for a deaf child actualizing his psychic life; and
- (ii) the large number of spoken sounds which are not distinguishable by visually perceiving speech--that is, the problem of different sounds looking exactly alike on the mouth.

As far as the first is concerned, feeling is carried in speech by three elements, namely, the loudness of spoken sounds (stress, accent),

the change in pitch (melody, pattern of intonation) and the duration of the sound (rhythm). If a child's residual hearing is maximally stimulated and should he learn to perceive these three elements as meaningful, this can be of utmost importance to him with respect to his affective becoming even though he cannot differentiate them in speech reading.

As for the second shortcoming of speech reading, perceiving by hearing, although on an extremely low level, if a child is taught to purposefully do this, it will help him discriminate speech sounds that are not visibly evident or are difficult to differentiate and recognize.

Two additional benefits of the maximum use of a deaf child's residual hearing are:

- (i) the experience of sound as part of the world in which he finds himself. He experiences that things have characteristic sounds and this opens an entirely new world for him. This creates for him a qualitatively richer experiential world which his understanding of things doesn't have in his world of silence. Of course, hearing things is not normal--acoustic perception is weak, but this is sufficient for him to create a world of sound;
- (ii) a very important benefit from residual hearing is that a child hears that he speaks. Although he doesn't hear what he says, the fact that he hears that he speaks is of extreme importance to him for his dignity as a person. Not only is speech important for a person but so is the experience of his own speech, and this can best be achieved by acoustically playing back his own speech.

The acoustic-pedagogic approach amounts to the fact that a child and his family can work together on an intensive program of training him to use his hearing. The proponents of this approach aim to develop the slightest possible hearing residual to such a level that a child can communicate mainly via the acoustic receptor channel and to then become fully integrated into normal society.

The basic principles of the acoustic-pedagogic approach are:

- (a) Children are not classified according to the percent of hearing loss but according to their ability to use their residual hearing;

(b) **the early discovery of hearing loss.** A congenital hearing loss has to be discovered as soon after birth as possible. To accomplish this, hearing has to be tested in the following cases:

- (i) whenever there is a "high risk" baby;
- (ii) whenever the parents are concerned for some reason;
- (iii) whenever a change in a child's reaction to sound is noticed; and
- (iv) whenever a child's speech or language is delayed or deviates from normal.

(c) **Binaural amplification.** Two hearing aids should be fitted as soon as there is a diagnosis of hearing loss. (There are even proponents of hearing amplification for "high risk" babies because it is believed that early stimulation will eliminate the possibility of the sense of hearing being underdeveloped). Hearing aids should be worn at all times--awake or sleeping.

(d) **Unisensory training.** The development of hearing mainly is directed to becoming aware of and interpreting sounds. In the acoustic-pedagogic approach, the initial use of speech reading is seen as detrimental to the development of listening. Visual cues are used only **after** the function of hearing is maximally developed. I personally believe that careful work has to be done here so the ideal of developing a child's hearing does not lead to a loss of opportunities for extremely valuable matters of educating. Here, the development of hearing easily can become the primary goal and the child, as a person, can be pushed into the background.

(e) **Use of auditory playback.** The proponents desire that a child learn from an early age to control his speech by listening to his own voice. His attention is continually directed to it, and he is rewarded if he corrects his own speech on the basis the auditory playback of his own voice. At an early stage, correct articulation is not stressed because this can lead to tension and force the child to dwell on the kinesthetic control of his speech.

(f) **Language instruction.** This has to occur in natural ways.

A child has to be placed in situations where there is a need for language and it should be offered in such a way that he discovers that language is itself meaningful. Especially with younger children, language instruction should not occur in analytic ways.

(g) **The acoustic-pedagogic attitude and atmosphere.** A child has to have the opportunity to be in an atmosphere of sound and speech in order to develop his hearing and language. He has to be communicated with in normal ways.

(h) **The mother is the first model for communicating.** Speech and language have to be learned from the mother within a particular mother-child relationship. In a child's daily, familiar situations, his mother has to direct his attention to the sounds and language he needs and which lie within his sphere of interest. She has to provide normal environmental sounds to enrich his auditory stimulation.

During the preschool years, it is important that a child is not placed in a group situation with other deaf children.

4.1.1 Evaluation of the acoustic-pedagogic approach

The acoustic-pedagogic approach is largely pedagogically accountable. It can contribute to solving the problems of the oral methods. However, an overemphasis on hearing potentialities can retard a deaf child's becoming if he is not able to adequately use his residual hearing to acquire speech and language.

On the other hand, proponents of this approach have shown that in practice even the usability of a very small hearing residual should not be underestimated in acquiring and using language and speech. Acquiring language in a natural way is extremely important for a deaf child's experiential world. Acquiring language in this way can make a greater contribution to actualizing his psychic life than can a formal, analytic acquisition of it. A child acquires language in a situation where he has a need to see it as meaningful-for-him and in doing so, language becomes his own and no longer something others give to him.

4.2 Home instruction

The aim of this approach is to educate the small deaf child within the family as far as this is possible. Its practical implementation is dependent on a guidance clinic for parents of hearing impaired children. The methods followed by such a clinic are:

- (a) to determine as early as possible that a child is deaf;
- (b) to provide him with suitable hearing aids;
- (c) to give guidance to the parents in handling their child (Note: the child is evaluated only at the clinic).

The parents receive guidance in the following areas:

- (i) knowledge of deafness and its consequences;
- (ii) understanding the problems and potentialities of their child;
- (iii) use of hearing aids; and
- (iv) speech and language acquisition by a deaf child.

4.2.1 Evaluation

In practice too little attention is given to the deaf child's pedagogic distress. Too much revolves around communicating and nothing more. More attention should be given to his emotional life.

Today there are too few such clinics, and they are too medically oriented. In the earliest years of childhood, the concern is with a deaf child's becoming adult and, therefore, this is a pedagogic concern.

4.3 Television

The use of television as a teaching and learning aid in instructing deaf children has progressed greatly overseas. The greatest single benefit of this aid is that it provides the opportunity to help a deaf child attribute sense and meaning.

A situation that ordinarily can be experienced only once by a deaf child without him being able to lived-experience it can be recorded on video tape and he can experience and lived-experience it repeatedly. With the teacher's guidance and by elucidating and providing the needed meaningful language, a deaf child eventually attributes meaning and in doing so he broadens the horizons of his experiential world.

5. ORTHOPEDAGOGIC/ORTHODIDACTIC TASKS

From the perspective of teaching a deaf (orthodidactics), it is clear that the modern equipment at the teacher's disposal, as such, is totally insufficient to insure that he will become an independent, responsible adult. Only if this equipment is used in orthodidactic situations that are orthopedagogically founded can one claim to be teaching and educating a deaf child in accountable ways.

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