

# 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.ncds.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>