Transcript – Teaching deaf students in the inclusive classroom: Part 2

**Kathy Metzer (00:10)**

Often, depending on the hearing loss, the deaf student might benefit — or if we have a child that’s more hard of hearing — would benefit from being able to see the teacher as well as the educational interpreter. So we have to help them learn not to turn around and write on the board and talk at the same time. Help them learn to talk directly to the deaf child, versus looking at the interpreter and saying, “Tell him or tell her.”

**Mary V. Compton, Ph.D. (00:45)**

Generally speaking, a deaf child needs to be near the front, but not so near that the child can’t turn around and see what’s going on behind them. It’s important for a deaf student to know what’s going on around them in the classroom, because many times there’s a little lag time, say the teacher calls on another student to answer, by the time the child, a deaf student, has attended to what that other student has said, the answer has gone through the air, whether it’s through audition, or through signs. So, and think about how we learn a lot of information as hearing people through context, through overhearing other people say things, so a deaf student can miss that, so many times it would be very helpful if a regular classroom teacher could reiterate what the other student has said. That gives the deaf student a little more processing time to understand what the content of the answer was.

**Kathy Metzer (01:40)**

Go before school starts and see how the classroom is set up and talk to the teacher about where would be the best place for the deaf child to sit and the interpreter. And look at that in, okay, now if you go and read a story, where do we need the interpreter to be and the deaf child. So a lot of it’s educating. And we do that; the interpreter helps out with that role, as well as myself. So, I’m a firm believe that it has to be a team effort.

**Interpreter (02:20)**

Ms. Dixon, can you see this right here?

**Ms. Dixon (02:21)**

I can. I can.

[classroom chatter]

**Mary V. Compton, Ph.D. (02:29)**

Think about the acoustics of the classroom. Many times teachers use tennis balls on the bottom of chairs because if you’ve ever listened through a hearing aid to something scraping, it’s almost like scraping your nails against a blackboard, and that’s very uncomfortable. I think there are some things in general that would lead to a deaf student’s success in a regular classroom, but there are some modifications in the instructional procedures that can contribute to a deaf child’s success. Manipulative objects, using a lot of real objects, that can be very helpful, because that helps the deaf child transfer the information from real life experiences to the classroom, and help make those connections. So really what you’re trying to do is to help the child make connections between this academic content that they already know, to the new information, and to experiences in their real life.

**Kathy Metzer (03:29)**

Some of the things, is, of course, if the teacher can give the books or the videos, even, we usually get the lesson plans from the teacher the week before, like the Thursday or Friday before the next week. So the interpreter and I know what they’re going to teach. And that way if we need to pre-teach anything we can. I work closely with them in to try to pre-teach, because I think that’s a very valuable piece so that, the deaf child then has more confidence. And you know, okay, I’ve seen this before, I think I can, you know, I know the answers. It’s a lot of effort. But it’s good, it’s fun.

**Kathy Metzer [in classroom to students in sign language] (04:19)**

Tonight you will take your reading books home. Read the story one more time with your mom, you can read it to your sister Jewel if you want, okay? Then tomorrow, what’s going to happen? You’ll have to take your little short test about the story, okay?

**Mary V. Compton, Ph.D. (04:37)**

Some other things that you could do also is to, to give like maybe pre-tests of the information to see what does the child really know about something. Questioning strategies and helping the deaf students make inferences and connections between the information is also very helpful. You can use question prompts, and what you do when you do question prompts is, let’s say you ask the question initially, and you either see confusion on the child’s face or “I don’t know what you’re talking about.” One thing you can do is to repeat the question, or to reiterate or rephrase the question. Then if you’re still not getting any response, you could maybe use a picture prompt or a picture clue to give the child some additional context. If that doesn’t work, you could almost use, let’s say an elliptical sentence, or give the child some choices, and let the child make a choice of one of the possibilities there. What you’re doing in that, you’re helping frame the information for the student to help them put the contextual clues in there. So there’s a whole series that Luetke-Stahlman and Luckner have developed; they’re like ways of reiterating questions, or, I call it back-stepping, because you start up here at a certain level with the initial question, then if that’s not successful, there are certain steps you can take to get the child to answer correctly. But once you get the correct answer, you need to go back and put it in context.

**Kathy Metzer [in classroom to students in sign language] (06:11)**

Okay, but why do you think it’s hard to take care of a baby bird, do you think hard or easy? Hard? Why? Why? What for?

**Student [in sign language, translated by Kathy] (06:19)**

It’s a lot of work

**Kathy Metzer [in sign language and speech] (06:24)**

What else Ryan? Tell me another idea. Why is it hard, what for, to take care of a baby bird. Think, remember when we read stories, we use what we already know.

**Student (06:44)**

I know!

**Kathy Metzer [in sign language and speech] (06:44)**

Do baby birds live inside houses, or outside with the trees?

**Student (06:50)**

Inside

**Kathy Metzer [in sign language and speech] (06:50)**

Normally? Normally a baby bird lives outside with other birds, they [makes swishing noise], right? Okay.

**Mary V. Compton, Ph.D. (07:02)**

So it’s this sort of subtle between the student and the teacher, it’s, you’re constantly repeating the information, but it’s not like you’re sitting there, you know, just sort of rote repetition, you’re in your conversations, you’re using that vocabulary in different kinds of sentences. So you’re letting the child see or hear the new vocabulary so that he or she just becomes integrated into the child’s experience. That’s very important, it’s in a conversational style.

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